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THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL NOTES	1
A PLEA FOR BETTER CRITICISM	8
ONE ASPECT OF RABINDRANATH'S MYSTICISM	...	...	...	14
BIRTH TAXATION : A MEASURE FOR SOCIAL UPLIFT	...	...	...	20
THE GREECO-ITALIAN CRISIS	...	...	...	30
THE LAST STRUGGLE	...	...	...	34
SOMETHING FROM NOTHING	...	...	...	36
THE UNKNOWN GOD	...	...	...	39
SCIENCE AND POLITICS	...	...	...	39
ANCIENT INDIAN LIBRARIES	...	...	...	45
A LONELY DELL	...	...	...	52
THE GRASS OF THE FIELD	...	...	...	54
A GLIMPSE OF THE SNOWS	...	...	...	56
THE BEGGAR	...	...	...	58
THE IDEAL OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION	...	...	...	64
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF SOVIETISM	...	...	...	68
THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.	...	...	...	72
LIBRARY BULLETIN	...	...	...	73
FINAL NOTES	...	...	...	78
বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্য সভার বার্ষিক অধিবেশন উপলক্ষে শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রুচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়	
মহাশয়ের অভিভাবণ	81

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 does not undertake to return rejected articles unless accompanied by stamped and addressed envelope.

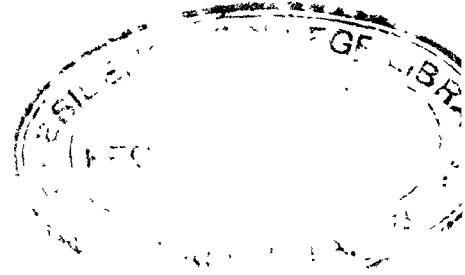
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Editor,

Subodh Chandra Sengupta,
Editor.

Printed at the Biswabhandar Press, 16, Galiff Street, Calcutta, and published by Subodh Chandra Sengupta, Presidency College, Calcutta.



THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Editorial Notes	87
Some Notes on the Imperial Education Conference	94
A Plea for Finer Prose	99
Joseph Mazzini—An Apostle of Democracy	108
A Flower Poet of Bengal	110
The Fascist Movement in Italy	115
The Problem of Pauperism	121
The Goal of Education	136
Ajatasatru	139
The Essential Characteristics of a True Novel	143
Reports	152
Library Bulletin	183
জ্ঞানদণ্ডে একমাসিন।	189
পুনরাগমন।	194
আহ্বান।	197
পত্র।	198

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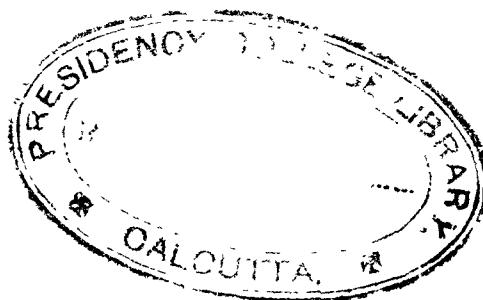
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THE PRSIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

CONTENTS.

	Page
Editorial Notes	201
Monmohan Ghose	206
The Two Maidens	220
Monmohan Ghose (Reminiscences of a Pupil)	221
Monmohan Ghose (A brief life-sketch)	224
Prof. M. Ghose (An impression)	233
Monmohan Ghose (Impressions of a year's acquaintance)	238
Monmohan Ghose (An appreciation)	246
Sam, Smiggin and the She-Man	251
The Drama of To-day	267
The Epitaph of Glory Fled	272
নারীসমস্যা	277
অমুবাদ ও স্মিগিন—	289
সপ্তসিঙ্গু—	292
মনোমোহন শুভি-সভায় রবীন্দ্রনাথের অভিভাষণ —	305

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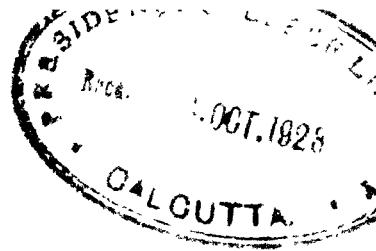
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THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

VOL. X.

SEPTEMBER 1923.

No. 1

EDITORIAL NOTES.

AS there are wines that improve with age, so there are customs which become the more savoury, the older they grow, and of these the Editor's time-honoured privilege of welcoming new students is certainly one. The College is the bond of unity which binds together all its alumni—the young in their 'teens' and the old in their 'ties.' It is pleasing to reflect that the chain is getting longer year by year and the editor has genuine pleasure in welcoming the 'freshers' just admitted to this illustrious roll.

* * *

There are many who have come here with fond dreams about College-life. It will be unwise to undeceive them. But fact is fact, and we are afraid that here also the mist of dullness and monotony would soon close in upon their bright dreams, and that of the two elements in 'College-life,' the second is too often and too cruelly atrophied by the first. It is hoped, however, that 'all students will try to hold the balance even between them, and to have as much of '...,' as of "College".

Openings there are—the magazine, the athletic club and the various societies. In the Inter-College athletic competitions, our College is no longer 'Premier.' The secretaries complain of a woeful lack of general enthusiasm. As for the magazine, the editor who has to collect articles cannot rehearse a more refreshing tale.

When beginning our old activities anew, it is good to remember and lay to heart all this. It is never too late to mend. We may shake off our apathy and put on more steam henceforth. But shall we ?

* * *

Leaving aside this 'periodical wail' (to quote an Ex-Editor), let us look out for something refreshing. The results of this year's I. C. S. Examination held at Allahabad reflect much credit on the Premier College of Bengal. True, we have not been able to dislodge Madras from its pride of place but we have occupied the second place, and one third of the successful number is from our College too—a result we can well feel proud of.

The hyper-critical editor of a local monthly is not very fairly disposed towards this achievement of Bengal. He says that Bengalis are, of course, successful in their scramble after service and lag behind the Marwaris and Bombay-people in other competitions, chiefly in those of industry and trade. We simple people can talk other about these bigger topics. To us the academic aspect of the question is all-important. It would be a good thing certainly if our luminaries in all spheres shot forth from here ; but granting that we have not produced a Tata, that is a very bad reason why Presidency College as Presidency College should be any the less proud of a Romesh Dutt or an Atul Chatterjea.

* * *

We confess that this year's results in the B.A. B.Sc. and the Intermediate Examinations have not been up to our traditions. In the I.Sc. we have taken the first place as also the second, but have yielded some of the succeeding top places. In the I.A. too we are not much better off. There we have occupied the First place, but have lost the Second. In the B.A. and the B.Sc. many of our monopolies have been wrested from us, the Economics-department being

the only refreshing exception. We hope, however, that this is but a temporary set-back, presaging glorious success in the future.

* * *

Since we appeared last there have been many important changes in the staff. First, Dr. Cullis has finally retired from service. Dr. Cullis's is a name which will ever remain indelibly impressed on the history of Mathematical research and teaching in India. In the region of Pure Mathematics he has opened up many a "fresh field and pasture new", and has thereby incalculably added to the glory of the College and the University which were both so proud of him. It is a pity that in these times of materialism we should not show adequate recognition of our thinkers and teachers. In this City, for example, which is honey-combed with busts of Commissioners and Governors, what memorial is there for a Cullis or a Percival? We do not think of one even. Probably it is because they don't need any. Their names are enshrined in books that will not die and embalmed in memories that will not fade.

Professor Holme has left us and joined the LaMartinere College as its Principal. This is a loss to the College which can hardly be overestimated. Mr. Holme had been here since 1910 and during this long tenure of office he captured the hearts of all his students by the sterling qualities of his heart no less than by his wonderful scholarship and excellent teaching. His scholarship had that sedate solidity which is the reverse of vaunting shallowness. Then this magazine was an object of particular affection with him. He was for a long time its Editor-in-Chief, nay, its life and soul.

Much the same can be said of Professor B. B. Roy, who has left us and joined the Scottish Churches College. He was young in years but old in wisdom. He was kind, genial and amiable and, though possessed of a vast learning, he was not at all bookish. We congratulate the LaMartinere and the Scottish Churches College on their respective acquisitions.

The smiling figure of Professor Khastagir is not also to be seen now in our College, he having been transferred to Chittagong. For a dozen years he was a professor of this College and his departure has left a real void in our College life, a sense of irreparable, almost personal loss, which we have not yet been able to get over.

His University life was as brilliant as his career as a professor was successful. He was never tired of expounding the abstruse intricacies of Mathematics to his students. He never lost his temper and the most exacting demands of his students found his stock of patience and good-humour quite inexhaustible. We wish him all success in his new surroundings ; and in the meantime we pin our faith in the assurances of the Principal that his transfer is likely to be a temporary affair.

Dr. Cullis has been succeeded by Professor B. M. Sen and in place of Professor B. B. Roy, has come Professor Manjugopal Bhattacharyya. Mr. Sen is an "Old boy"—one of the most distinguished 'old boys'—of the College. His University career both here and abroad has been uniformly brilliant, and as a professor too he has been no less successful. We hope that in the field of research also he will prove worthy of his illustrious predecessor. Professor Bhattacharyya is new to this College but he has already won our hearts by his efficient teaching no less than by his engaging geniality of manner.

* * * *

THE Retrenchment Axe is beginning to make itself felt. Already we have had a reduction in the Mathematics Staff and Mr. Holmes' place has not been filled up either. A committee which is still in contemplation will recommend further 'cuts'. The Government, it is said, will try to reduce the staff by increasing the work of each professor. That is, after all, not a very wise step, we are afraid. In education blind arithmetic is an unsure guide, and drastic economy cannot but tell on efficiency, for the work of a professor is not judged by the number of hours he works at the College, but by the amount of energy, thought and study that is brought to bear on it. Hence the fewer the subjects he teaches and the fewer the hours he works for, the better will his work generally be. A staff therefore to be efficient must first be sufficient.

* * * *

The talk of retrenchment brings us on to another question, viz. the introduction of Geography into the College course. Professors Zachariah and H. C. Dasgupta have been insisting on it for a pretty

long time with no tangible results. Now, in the face of an all-besetting retrenchment, any proposal involving expenditure would seem to be idle and even wild. But nobody can deny the utility of Geography in a scheme of all-round education and it is further impossible to have a thorough mastery of History and Geology without the aid of Geography. Such instruction is sorely maimed. Will the authorities in their anxiety to prune away weeds also cease to sow useful seeds? That would be poor husbandry indeed.

* * * *

On August, 30 last we had the Anniversary of the Bengali Literary Society. This is the first commemoration of the Anniversary of the Society though it was established as far back as the year 1916. The Society this year invited the renowned novelist Sriji Sarat Chandra Chatterjea, to deliver an address. In Europe many a noble contribution to thought and culture arises out of such periodical society-addresses. In our country Presidency College ought to be the pioneer in this direction, and we congratulate the Secretary on his setting the ball rolling.

* * * *

Sarat Babu looms large before the public of Bengal. He is, so to say, the inaugurator of the Strum and Drang movement in Bengali literature, and we hope out of the stir that he has given to the cultural life of Bengal will sprout forth a national literature as rich and impetuous as that which Winckelmann, and Herder ushered in Germany. But Sarat Babu is a recluse and therein is his failing, and if the Presidency College Literary Society can bring him into touch with the budding literateurs of Bengal, it will have rendered a service which is pregnant with mighty possibilities.

* * * *

The name of Sarat Babu is now much talked of as a possible winner of the Nobel prize. The names of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and of another Indian writer Mr. Egbal have also been suggested. About Mr. Egbal we confess we know nothing. Mrs. Naidu is of course one of the brightest luminaries of India. She is one of her best poets and greatest political leaders. Her politics has been much coloured by the high-pitched emotional strain of her poetry.

As a poet, she is not new before Europe. Long ago her works were introduced and extolled by eminent critics like Mr. Arthur Symons and Mr. Edmund Gosse. Her poems have a strong lyric note about them, being mostly "short swallow-flight of song", and *lyrisme*, we know, is the stuff of genuine poetry.

Sarat Babu, again, is one of the greatest novelists of modern times. In him we have an apotheosis of the outcast and the forgotten. He has found what is called the human touch in those whom society unfeelingly oppresses as dull machines and upon whom it has hitherto turned its back with thoughtless complacency. Sarat Babu has set society a-thinking and lashed it into a sense of its duties and imperfections.

Where merits are so evenly balanced, it would be unwise to rush to any hasty distinction. If either of them gets it, Bengal will feel the same amount of pride and glory.

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A few weeks ago we had three performances of Tagore's 'Bisarjan' by the members of the Biswavarati. The Bengali stage is at present in a very bad way. The thing is it has not kept pace with our progress in culture and education. We have had no good drama in recent years. The plays that are produced are not written as works of art but are only a medium by which the actors may exhibit their skill. The result is that both dramas and their acting are getting conventionalised. All plays contain the same puppet-show and repeat the same melodramatic platitudes. Recently there have been attempts to improve acting, but in default of good dramas such attempts must fail. Before we have a Booth or a Kean we must have, at least an approach to a Shakespeare. The dramas acted must be good works of art, and must be produced by masterminds and not by uneducated hirelings. They must keep in touch with the culture of the country, or the stage will be a place for puerile pastime to which educated Bengalees would be ashamed to go.

Dr. Tagore has recreated many a branch of Bengali literature. But in drama he has not given us of his best. His plays are often too symbolic, his characters do not often walk. Bengal would *eagerly* look forward to him, in his old age, as a master play-wright

and we hope that his pen will create a rich dramatic literature in Bengal and arouse the stage from its present somnambulism into new life and fresh activity. Our Edmund Keans and Herbert Trees will then sprout forth in numbers and our Hazlitts then will be influenced by our Siddonses. If the Biswavarati can do this it will have rendered a much better service than it can hope to do by periodical banquets of lectures and choral songs.

* * * *

A bit of politics now. The first Reformed Council is coming to its close and 'elections' for the second are now ahead. Already various parties have set about their campaign. Even a number of non-cooperators have (of course without repudiating their original creed!) entered the lists. They have drawn up a programme which aims at reconciling contradictions and at least displays forensic ingenuity. It is a pity that even now, while we have had so little of real power, our national life should be so muddled by party politics. The most important work of the new council will be to decide the fate of the University. We can only hope that in the wash and welter of politics, the serener streams of Truth and Beauty will not be lost.

* * * *

The biggest event by far, of the world this month is the woeful destruction of Japan by a violent earthquake and volcanic eruption. Such a cataclysm is one of those mysterious heavings from the Unknown Abyss which make us at once theists and atheists and give a rude shake to human vanity, showing that inspite of his much vaunted civilisation how helpless man is against the great unloosed forces of nature.

* * * *

Europe is still busy settling her post-war international disputes. It is five years since the Armistice was concluded but still an impartial observer may ask, "where is peace"? The League of Nations which sought to end all wars is unable to close the one from the dying embers of which it arose. It seems that peace won't come, and that appears to be the lesson of the war. Some time ago a leading dramatist of England, Mr. John Galsworthy said, "Modern civilisation is like a man running down a road followed at a respectable distance by his own soul." The war is a demon facing this soulless man, and

unless he turns back to get rejuvenated by his soul, the demon will not be crushed. We must listen to 'the greatest Political Economist of all times, the author of the Sermon on the Mount'?

* * * *

Let us close with a word about ourselves. It is a word of complaint about the Library Catalogue. Sometime ago, in a rather trenchant letter Mr. P. B. drew attention to the "masses of musty papers that are shamelessly flaunted on the counter". We have been assured that arrangements are being made for getting a printed Catalogue. Printing a Catalogue is not the matter of a day, but we are being fed with such assurances for more than four years, and the inconvenience has now become almost an abuse. We hope that the authorities would look sharp about the matter and put an end to this long period of weary waiting.

A PLEA FOR BETTER CRITICISM.

Mr. B. B. Roy, M.A.

I.

Critical writings are pretty much of a piece nowadays ; a languid air of sameness and monotony hangs over all interpretative effort, shutting out from the casual observer ever so faint a stir of virile thinking. A smart phrase or a paradox ; a cackle or perhaps a growl ; a pose of cheap omniscience—and the critic seems more than qualified for his occupation. Yet, possibly, the fault rests not so much with the critic as with an education which standardises culture and drags a finger of coarseness over the fine material of art and letters. Hence it is that to generations of youths Shakespeare has been a matter of four periods and Milton of three ; Bentham's Principles of Legislation a factor in the Romantic Movement ; and the dates 1660 and 1798 touched with a strange magic—absurdities over which they have wasted many an intense hour till literature and life have become pale, meaningless things, and a hundred finer activities of the brain maimed at their birth.

Far be it from the present writer to condemn altogether the bygone modes of critical thought ; they were needed in their time and in a subtle way they are still working to fashion a clearer understanding of art. And education, undoubtedly, takes its colouring from the reigning thoughts of the age. But even so, there was never a

period in the history of education when theories have had greater play, even to the point of crushing individuality, than the one which is just beginning to close. The over-worked dicta of Matthew Arnold never seemed quite spent up. There had been revision; but of the tamest and the most gingerly type—a phrase knocked over or a saving clause brought in. Even Pater and Oscar Wilde had their little day; and just when they were thrown into the dustbin of discarded gods, their idiosyncracies in style and thought started to work in a hundred incalculable ways amongst a race of wondering adoloscents, so that but for a scholar here and a journalist there, criticism stands today practically where it did two or three generations ago. So far from enlightening it has ceased to inform; and even the gentler art of reviewing has not produced any delicate or illuminating result. Yet, beneath this superficial dullness, older critics have seen the stirrings of a new criticism. And possibly they are right. For already a good many cherished canons of criticism have become antiquated in a slow, almost underhand fashion; and a good many people feel it, even if not all think it necessary to speak out.

II,

Most ideas get antiquated more quickly than most of us imagine; and a regular comedy occurs when whole sets of ideas get antiquated all at once, with, apparently, little or no warning. Yet such comedies have taken place in literature several times over; and one has been on the boards for some time now. Ideas, theories which seemed but a moment ago to be alive and active are as it were seized with palsy; and presently we are called to their death bed. Let us for a moment remember the modes of criticism we were used to in the hand-books—the long faces we pulled over the chronological arrangement of Shakespeare's plays or the search for a meticulously correct text or the reading of literature in the light of a movement; the devout beaming eyes with which we pored over histories of literary forms or the literary intercourse between nation and nation. Yet all this smacks today of German Scholarship, of the plodding and unilluminated type—things more suited to the writers of laborious theses than to those other students who can never quite

untwine themselves from the roots of life. For them the book remains or perhaps the author and the twin eternal problems of Style and Life, which other forms of scholarship merely darken and obstruct. And they desire that Education should sharpen men's eyes to these and mark off as things secondary, if not without a certain distant usefulness, all the other phases which convention has overemphasised.

For them the book remains—a thing which has grown out of life and which therefore evades all mechanical ways of capturing it—a thing which grows with the life of the reader and becomes at moments inexplicable like what it has arisen from—a thing which is, to use a much-abused phrase, 'a human document.' For them the author remains too—no mechanism to be chronologically cut up and labelled according to a formula; but a soul which hasn't yielded all its secrets to the pen; which can be plumbed only in moments of insight; whose immensities can be seen through the none too facile medium of style. And they depend for their criticism on these intermittent moments of vision and insight, accepting the services of the patient scientific worker, giving him his due but never allowing him to stand between themselves and their perceptions.

This is the position to which criticism seems to be drifting, hesitatingly—not for the first time certainly, for nothing in the history of knowledge happens only once—but it has a wealth of meaning for us which we cannot well lose sight of. It is this attitude glinting amorphously out of shy reviewing-work done by younger men which makes the older people rejoice; and it is a hopeful one even if it takes long to crystallize. It is practically an intelligent return to a primitive mood, which is often more profitable in the long run than persistence in a foolish convention of adulthood.

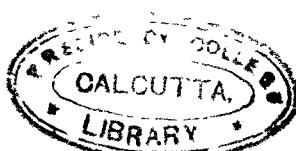
III.

Criticism of the older type hardly ever tackled with the real issue—The older critics took literature to pieces, as though it were a machine, instead of what it actually was, a complex product of life and mind. The history of a form, the sonnet or the blank verse is after all an abstraction—arising out of a too hasty application of the theory of Biological Evolution to literature. When

Milton improves upon Shakespeare's blank verse, it is quite as much because Milton was Milton as because he came after Shakespeare. Possibly he might have done no worse if he had come before him. The theory of a history of literature has been ridden too hard ; although in itself it is a sound theory and works safely so long as it does not forget the incalculable element of personality. Similarly the relation between nation and nation touches only the surface of literature ; it brings in a sheaf of new words, sometimes words with a peculiar colour and flavour ; or perhaps a new sentiment passes like a delicate spray over comedy or the more formal poetry ; or again, more rarely a hurricane of maddening ideas works loose and produces perfervid poetry ; but in all cases, without exception, the effects are at best transitory ; they never make for lasting literature for such literature is personal or at most national. Italy and France and India have had their influence on England ; but a Shakespeare or a Wordsworth or a Kipling were made not so much by them as for them. They are English in soul and style ; they have permanent interest by reason of this only ; and the exotic flowers they gathered on foreign lands have merely a decorative value.

An equally fatuous air seems to brood, in retrospect at least, over the herculean labours of a Furnivall and a Skeat over Shakespearian and Chaucerian chronology. For the physical order in which the plays were produced is no trustworthy guide to the mental development of Shakespeare and Chaucer. This development may quite possibly be independent of chronology. To say this is perhaps to be wise after the Event ; yet one need not fear a rebuke of this nature ; scince it is nothing new in the history of knowledge. But surely the fact remains that the professional critic has up till now studied literature more externally than internally. He has rightly believed in literary chronology ; but he expected miracles from it, which it could not obviously give.

The abstract studies of the history of rhythm or style have much the same air of illusory beauty. Rhythm or Style are personal things ; they are less the product of history than of personality. Even if there is such an abstract thing as 18th century English prose style ; it becomes vital and intelligible only when it is spoken of with reference to Dr. Johnson or Addison or Swift ; and then



the 18th Century element becomes a very thin if still important affair. The style of Oscar Wilde is doubtless a fascinating style by reason of its delicate artificiality ; its avoidance of pain ; its search for strange effects ; its attempt at creating a beauty wholly external to life. Obviously Wilde took great pains with it and caught from Pater hints and suggestions of no small importance ; but a really profitable study of O. Wilde's style cannot be made unless it is closely referred to his internal and partly external life.

All this might seem touched with the violence of heresy and the insolence of ingratitude. The fact is, however, that these old modes of scholarship have begun already to stultify themselves. They have been regarded not as means to an end but as an end in themselves ; hence those cartloads of unnecessary theses that annually stream out of America and Germany. And they stand like a stumbling-block in the way of higher intellectual activity. Kept in subordination they will still do useful work, in clearing the path for the right kind of reader in suggesting clues where left to himself he might have blundered. But they must in order to be helpful be the province of groups of patient, laborious Scholars rather than part of the curriculum of general Education. For more harm than good comes out of mechanical attempts at enlarging the bounds or deepening the efficiency of literature.

IV.

Lastly, the courtly pastime of building aesthetic theories of criticism has not yet quite gone out of fashion. Essays towards a theory of art have filled in the uninspired intervals of poets' lives. Which poet hasn't written them ? But we have not yet had a sound theory of criticism just as we have not had a final theory of knowledge. What is forgotten is that literature drives at practice and not at theory ; like most activities of man literature is highly practical in methods and in aim. Hence it jibs in harness with philosophy ; hence the disaster arising from applying philosophical formula to literature. Alike the maker of literature and the man in the street, the only two parties that matter, get along well without a theory. System and terminology which are the life of philosophy are death to

literature. It shrinks from their touch ; it ceases to grow ; it begins to die. For literature obeys an irregular law like Nature's own movements, like her own air that bloweth where it listeth. That in literature which matters come unaccountably ; plod he never so well, the literary historian will never succeed in accounting for it. Hence literature must be approached just as Nature is approached with less a scientific than a spiritual mood ; with just the emotion with which the deeper things in life are contemplated, the burst of sudden happiness or the crash of unexpected misfortune, the birth of children or the solitary dialogue between a man and his soul. Not the history, not the biology, not the environment, but the thing that is *art*, that is literature that counts. Those may be left to scholars ; this is necessary for seekers after truth. Often enough it shrinks into the compass of a single book, the *Bible* or the *Quoran* or the *Gita* or sometimes even a *Shakespeare*. Even so it is helpful, it leads one into light.

The man that gains most from literature need be no scholar at all. He may know nothing but his own dialect. He may be a humble worldly man. But the life of simple duty and pure enjoyment will fit him to profit by literature more than if he had read a hundred books. For not until literature is read with an aim at practice does it become profitable. Therein it resembles religion, which becomes mere formality, mere priestcraft as soon as it is made into an abstraction. And scholarcraft in literature is no less dangerous than priestcraft in religion. Real criticism comes not from that quarter, but when a man tells in plain language, how exactly and in what way a book has profited him.

V.

Possibly the new critic whose profile has been hinted at above will be a man of fewer books and more life. But he will be no loser thereby ; but a truer and bolder critic. The late professor Walter Raleigh's hunger for life and latter day distaste for books is significant, like the parallel and older instance of Hazlitt. One wonders at the encyclopædic reading of a Saintsbury or of an Elton and impertinently asks oneself if they had not felt at times that they had been paying too much for the whistle. Monumental scholarship is good ; but the windows of the study must be thrown

open to let warm life in. Youth might be bookish overmuch in the ecstasy of adventure but age draws nearer and nearer to life and Prosperolike buries the book. Hence it is that in criticism the words of the old go deeper than those of the young, a chance phrase of Goethe or an obiter dictum of Carlyle shooting like an arrow into regions of the heart and the brain, sealed for ever to the suavities of Pater or Oscar Wilde.

With the quest of life goes the quest of truth—a thing never boldly in evidence in most current criticism. With some scholarship becomes a mania, a thing which becomes an end in itself or else an object of vanity, a form of egotism and thus what is gained in the end is not truth but profound self deception. Criticism ceases to inform, ceases to kindle, becomes a sort of mirror for the dandified form of the critic to reflect itself in losing the quality of sincerity it loses its usefulness.

The deepest criticism flashes out of a sort of mental suffering, out of two souls—the reader's and the writer's—colliding meteorlike across the infinitude of life; and recorded in the privacy of a letter or a diary than in an article of formal criticism. It is these that matter, for they are like slits or chinks giving us private glimpses into things that we live and die for. All the rest is mere acquisition, more like a high road on which undistinguished crowds gather and pass with a dull uniformity of feeling and a hurry which allows of no high emotion.

ONE ASPECT OF RABINDRANATH'S MYSTICISM.

NIRANJAN MOHAN BARDHAN, *Sixth Year Class.*

IN "Prachin Sahitya" Rabindranath has made an interesting remark on the psychology of love, which gives a keynote to an important aspect of his mysticism. In tracing the emotions of that supreme lover, the Birahi Jaksha (বিরহী বক্ষ) of Meghduta, he incidentally alludes to the barrier which, in this world, continually separates one individual from another and renders perfect union impossible. The world, he goes on to say, is a place of continual

separation (চিরবিরহ) where, like the lover in Meghduta, one can only send messages of love to one's beloved but can never meet her in perfect union. But amidst this separation there lurks in the lovers a common feeling which is worth quoting in the exact language of the author. “কিন্তু আমার মনে হয় আমরা যেন কোন এককালে একত্র এক মানসলোকে ছিলাম, সেখান হইতে নির্বাসিত হইয়েছি ।” This lurking sense of a previous union in some unknown existence, now broken off by birth into this world, is an aspect of Rabindranath's mysticism which has found beautiful expression in many poems of his Gitanjali and Balaka. Love, in Rabindranath's poetry, is not a mortal thing confined to one particular life alone ; it proceeds from birth to birth. It forms a link between two souls who are vaguely aware of having been once united in some unremembered bygone existence, but who have since then begun their unending march from birth to birth, for ever yearning after each other but never meeting in perfect union. It is this supreme truth about love that the poet in his capacity of a lover tries to express in such lines :—

আজ মনে হয় সকলেরি মাঝে
তোমারেই ভালবেসেছি
জনতা বাহিয়া চিরদিন ধরে
তুমি আমি শুধু এসেছি ।

Love is therefore so far as this world goes, a continued state of separation (বিরহ), sometimes lighted up with hope and sometimes darkened by gloom, but never ending in realisation. Rabindranath's love poems are for this reason a continued chorus of বিরহ which gathers strength and poignancy from the sights and sounds of the universe.

হেরি অহরহ তোমারি বিরহ
ভুবনে ভুবনে রাজে হে
কতুপ ধরে কাননে ভুধৰে
আকাশে কাননে সাজে হে ।

This separation is however not an unmixed sorrow, not without a tinge of sweetness in it. This yearning for love, though it

may never bear fruit, has yet some inherent sweetness which makes even sorrow agreeable.

চারিদিকে সুধাভর।
 ব্যাকুল শ্যামল ধরা।
 কাঁদায় রে অনুরাগে
 দেখা না পাই, বাথ পাই
 সেও মনে ভাল লাগে।

This yearning arising from separation, which the loving soul endures from birth to birth, is coloured with many fine shades of emotions and touched to a variety of evanescent hues which give to it the appearance of an evening sky that changes colour every moment. Sometimes in a cloudy night the lover imagines his beloved as an "abhisarika" (অভিসারিকা) who will be coming to him on a visit of "abhisara". Sometimes he is full of regret that he has missed the desired visit while asleep. Sometimes, again, on a cloudy morning of "Sravana" he imagines his beloved as a traveller wandering in search of shelter and he keeps his doors wide open in vain expectation. Amidst all these vicissitudes of বিরহ, its alternate passions of hope and fear, the lover all the time has the haunting sense of a close kinship with his beloved from birth to birth. He is dimly conscious of a bygone unremembered existence when he had been one with her, and the unending journey which the two entered upon through a course of alternate life and death, for ever drawing closer and closer to each other but never meeting.

জানি জানি কোন আদিকাল হতে
 ভাসালে আমাবে জীবনের স্নোতে
 সহসা হে প্রিয় কত গৃহে পথে
 রেখে গেছ প্রাণে কত হৰমণ।

কতবার তুঁগি মেঘের আঢ়ালে
 এমনি মধুর হাসিয়া দাঢ়ালে
 অঙ্গ কিরণ চরণ বাঢ়ালে
 ললাটে রাখিলে শুভ পরশন

সঞ্চিত হয়ে আছে এই চোখে
 কত কালে কালে কত লোকে লোকে
 কত নব নব আলোকে আলোকে
 অরূপের কত ক্লিপ দরশন ।

কত যুগে যুগে কেহ নাহি জানে
 ভরিয়া ভরিয়া উঠেছে পরাণে
 কত স্মৃথি ছুথে কত প্রেমে গানে
 অমৃতের কত রস বরষণ ।

It is only when the poet attains to such an inspired vision sweeping his whole existence from birth to birth, that he becomes truly the mystic poet of the East. For, such a conception of love as a predestined bond of union between two souls is a purely Eastern idea running through many of our ancient lores.

In order to appreciate Rabindranath's conception of love, one has to bear in mind another important significance attaching to it viz, that his love coincides with his love of God. Frequently, in his poetry, he applies to God the attributes of an ordinary beloved soul, and feels for Him all the thrills of emotion that a lover experiences for a human being that he loves. His soul yearns after the Divine, but he is at the same time confident that this yearning is mutual, that the divine Soul also must feel an equal yearning for his own. Like the child in *Dakghar* (ডাকঘর) he perfectly knows that his beloved God is also eager to come to him :—

আমাৰ মিলন লাগি তুমি
 আসছ কৰে থেকে
 তোমাৰ চন্দ্ৰ সূর্য তোমাৰ
 রাখবে কোথায় দেকে ।

And the poet's own remarks, at the outset, with regard to the psychology of ordinary love between two human souls, hold good when he takes up the attitude of a lover of God. In this attitude also he feels as if his soul had been at first one with the Divine, and then separated and sent out on a continual march through

One Aspect of Rabindranath's Mysticism.

life and death. But the love has remained in tact, and the yearning that one feels for the other has gathered freshness at each birth :

আমায় তুমি মরণ মাঝে লুকিয়ে ফেলে
কিরে ফিরে নৃতন করে পেলে । (বলাকা)

The poem from which the couplet has been taken beautifully expresses the poet's fancy that the Divine Soul feels an yearning for him as much as he does for the Divine ; as if he and God are two lovers, feeling for each other all the thrills and raptures of love.

যেদিন তুমি আপ্নি ছিলে এক।
আপ্নাকে ত'—হয়নি তোমার দেখা ।
সেদিন কেখাও কারো লাগি ছিল না পথ চাওয়া ;
এপার হ'তে ওপার বেয়ে
বয়নি দেয়ে
কাদন ভরা বাধন হেঁড়া হা ওয়া ।
আমি এনেম্ ভাঙ্গল তোমার ঘূম
শুন্তে শুন্তে ফুটল তোমার আনন্দ কুস্ম

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আমি এনেম্ কাপল তোমার বুক,
আমি এনেম্, এল তোমার দুর্ধ
আমি এনেম্, এল তোমার আগুনভরা আনন্দ,
জীবন মরণ তুফান-তোলা ব্যাকুল বসন্ত
আমি এনেম্, তাইত তুমি এলে
আমার মুখে চেয়ে
আমার পরশ পেয়ে
আপন পরশ পেলে ।
(বলাকা)

We will conclude with another poem from "Balaka," which expresses the mystic love of God to which we have alluded with a unique depth and beauty. It records a moment when the poet suddenly becomes aware of his kinship with God through ages beginning from

time immemorial. All his previous existences pass before his vision in a panorama, and he discovers how his soul has been yearning after God at every birth and feeling His approach, though never actually realising it,

ଆজি ମନେ ହସ୍ତ ବାରେ ବାରେ
 ଦେଖିଯାଛି କତ ଦେଖା
 କତ ଯୁଗେ, କତ ଲୋକେ, କତ ଚୋଥେ, କତ ଜମତାର
 କତ ଏକା
 ମେହି ସବ ଦେଖା ଆଜି ଶିହରିଛେ ଦିକେଦିକେ
 ସାମେ ସାମେ ନିମିତ୍ତେ ନିମିତ୍ତେ
 ବେଗୁବନେ ବିଳମ୍ବିଲି ପାତାର ବଲକ ବିକିମିକେ ।

 କତ ନବ ନବ ଅବଶ୍ଵନେର ତଳେ
 ଦେଖିଯାଛ କତ ଛଳେ
 ଚୁପେ ଚୁପେ
 ଏକ ପ୍ରେସନ୍ଦୀର ମୁଖ କତ ରାପେ ରାପେ
 ଜନ୍ମେ ଜନ୍ମେ ନାମହାରୀ ନକ୍ଷତ୍ରେର ଗୋଧୂଳି ଲଗନେ ।
 ତାଇ ଆଜି ନିଖିଲ ଗଗନେ
 ଅନାଦି ମିଳନ ତବ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ବିରହ
 ଏକ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବେଦନାୟ ବକ୍ଷାବି ଉଠିଛେ ଅହରହ ।

This ପ୍ରେସନ୍ଦୀ of God is none but the poet himself and the ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ବିରହ is the eternal separation between the Divine Soul and his own.

The attitude of love towards god is not an altogether new thing in Bengali poetry, for it forms the basic principle of the Baishnava religion and has found beautiful expression in the poems of Chandidas and Vidyapaty. But what is absolutely new is the mystic note attaching to the love of God, a conception of the love as enduring through ages from birth to birth, beginning from an unremembered time when one's soul had been detached from the Divine and sent out on a long-continued march through life and death. This mystic note is a permanent asset to our literature and has made Rabindranath pre-eminently a poet of the East.

BIRTH TAXATION: A MEASURE FOR SOCIAL UPLIFT.

PAVITRA KUMAR BASU, B.A.

THE modern state has declared the child to the most important member of society. He is most important because he is the latest representative of the species. He is also important because he is the superman of the Future. As the modern state is too wise to be ignorant of its limitation it has given up the idea of arriving at the Utopia in the present age. Its only hope is in the Future and it is honestly thinking of making provisions for the future.

Thus the modern state lends to insist upon the education and the nurture of children and comes in more and more between the parents and the child in the interests of the Future. It is taking over the responsibility of the general welfare of the children more and more, and, as it does so it is time to consider which procedure is most amenable to reason and practice.

Let us then turn to our country and try to realise what is the position of the child in our society and what improvements are desirable without being impossible. Of course the problem does not belong exclusively to us, but surely it presents itself most dangerously and most imminently to this country, and unfortunately it is also this country in which the problem is most persistently ignored. We shall therefore begin by making the uncomfortable confession that this most important member of society has been most persistently neglected among us. In India children are too often born to die in childhood. The most tragic event—the death of a child—is the most commonplace occurrence in our country. People here first compete to give birth and then compete to escape death and wretchedness *in as pathetic ways as possible*.

Marriage is universal without being compulsory and takes place at a shamelessly immature age; and procreation starts as soon,—at the earliest occasion nature allows, for these are the only performances for which no initial preparation is thought necessary. Even the pettiest government officer has to show a minimum of personal efficiency—

of health and *conditions*. But parenthood is unconditional and any man and woman may conspire to become parents without encountering the least opposition from society. "Thus in our world at present through the defects of our medical science and nursing methods, through defects in our organisation, through poverty, carelessness and ignorance and through the birth of children that never ought to have been born, one child out of every five born, dies within five years. And a large number of those who happen to live, live ineffectually the dreary, dismal and disabled life of paupers and criminals. Yet such is the logic of our conventional morality that nobody makes himself responsible for this sheer waste of life and sheer torment of suffering. We imprison and hang criminals but we are too full of pity towards the makers of these criminals and cry Poor Humanity !

Poor indeed, when it chooses to make itself so ! Everywhere around us there are signs of obvious over-population, people are undertaking bigger concerns in parenthood than their means allow. The extravagance is most conspicuous in the middle class where the conquest of bread is daily involving a more frenzied struggle. The occupations of the class are limited above and below by convention, and within the enclosure fresh crowds are increasing the suffocation. Children are emasculated from underfeeding, untaught and unprovided. There is such a lamentable want of capital that children cannot wait to gain any skill or experience for their living. So from poverty they turn to despair and from despair to cynicism. Thus our strength in number has become a weakness in resources. We are individually so little because we are collectively so many.

Such widespread and deeprooted misery naturally calls for drastic reform. But hasty measures do not hasten improvement particularly among a conservative people. The evils which have accumulated with ages must take time to eradicate. As the saying goes, the ground must be prepared before the seed is sown. It is the inevitability of this practical wisdom that makes us suppose that every scheme of reform that has been dreamt of by European idealists is not equally applicable to India. In truth most of these schemes are still unrealised ideas even in the country of their origin. For example, it has been said that parties to a projected marriage

22 Birth Taxation : A Measure for Social Uplift.

should first obtain licenses from the state. These will testify that both the parties are, in health and condition, free from certain transmissible taints and sufficiently energetic, intelligent and moral. A still more centralised programme was given by Plato, the proposal of what may be called the human stud farm.

But these reforms have not been accepted in Europe, however ideally desirable they may be. And they will not be accepted in India. The ideas these proposals involve, are surprisingly new to Indians. They have not learnt to regard parenthood as a social function, or a service which every body is not privileged to render. They have never recognised the interference of the state in family affairs as legitimate and desirable. They are not sufficiently conscious of the fact that children do not come but are fetched and "they have not that philosophical insistence which holds that things which can be explained shall be explained and that what can be done by calculation and certain methods, should not be left to chance." And to be sure, they will be scandalised by all the talk about control and prevention which is so common in America and France.

Thus social reforms should be administered to them only in doses and the new mentality should be created in them and fostered with the greatest caution. We must take such steps that they may be gradually made to think and feel, but be not overwhelmed by thoughts. The changes should be gradual so that they may appear to be automatically evolved out of the growing sense of consequences and responsibilities.

What then is this healing dose. It is a birth tax imposed progressively on higher standards of living. At its inception, for a period of years, it should be low so that people may get accustomed to it and realise the morale of the tax. Afterwards it should be raised on all incomes and should at the same time be progressive.

I realise quite well that my position is unfortunate, for I have proposed to rob people of their money, and nobody finds it comfortable to be taxed particularly for the accident of having given birth to a child. Surely it is a most unnatural and inaesthetic occasion for a visit from the tax assessor. But a little honest thinking will show that there is nothing more inaesthetic in a birth-duty than there is in other taxes —i. e. the fact of having to pay at all. I shall

endeavour to show that a birth-tax is as natural as other taxes and altogether more desirable

The object of such a tax is obvious; directly, it is the welfare of the children that are born; indirectly, it is the discouragement of prolific and indiscriminate procreation. Children have till now been so mercilessly neglected by their parents that they can no longer be trusted absolutely with their parents. The state must step in for the sake of the baby and make itself responsible to some extent. And if the state becomes responsible for the prospective children it must also be allowed to make its rules so that the responsibility can be carried out. Thus it may rightfully seek to limit the number of undesirable children, and to demand that the father should give a proof of economic fitness.

This tax does not insist on the physical fitness of the married couple. It is assumed that the proportion of tainted or devitalised births is not very considerable, but that the proportion of the underfed and unprovided is immense. It is also assumed that a child born of healthy parents may become enfeebled by underfeeding, but that a child born feeble may yet grow to be plump and bright, if the parents are rich enough to afford scientific nurture. Thus it is that this tax emphasises economic fitness. This tax does, again, impose no restriction on marriage, for it has been observed that postponement, though otherwise desirable, is not sufficient security against overbreeding. In fact, statistical studies have proved that postponement rather serves to increase the fertility of each marriage. Statistics have also shown that the longevity of the married is greater than that of the unmarried. We therefore disapprove of marriage restrictions, as an uncomfortable hindrance to personal happiness and long life, particularly as it does not save us from over-population. Of course, from the point of view of a statesman, marriage is the union of man and woman in a manner so intimate as to involve the probability of offspring. But the responsibility of the state begins definitely only when a child comes in, for then comes in also the future of the species and the state intervenes as the guardian of interests wider than the individual's. But a legitimate union of which there is no offspring calls as yet for no such intervention. Here the adult's private life is an entirely private life into which the state

24 Birth Taxation: A Measure for Social Uplift.

may not intrude. Thus parenthood and not marriage is of primary importance, and a tax is proposed to be levied, not upon marriage, but upon births.

The imposition and collection of such a tax are rather easy. The government can make the registration of birth compulsory, and the tax can be received as a registration fee at municipal offices or police stations in the country. As is suggested above the rate shall vary with the income which can be determined with sufficient exactness by considering, say, the "choukidari" Tax, or a declaration of the Panchayet or other reliable men of the locality. But I need not run into the details of tax gathering. Obviously, the case is easy enough and the government will have to undergo little additional trouble or cost for collection. At the same time we need not fear default. If a father has the slightest sense of self-respect or social prestige, he will not bring upon himself the humiliation of declaring that he cannot pay the birth tax for his child. For any attempt at evasion or falsification of his income will disgrace and ridicule his parenthood, and the occasion of a child's birth will be the occasion also for scandal. Undoubtedly, there are many fathers who deplore their unfitness in their heart of hearts. But to declare this most delicate and lamentable secret from the housetop to jeering neighbours is more than any man with nerves can undertake to do. Nobody will make the mean and cowardly confession that he is not entitled to have the child he has brought into the world and so taxes will come in promptly to the government officers.

The government will thus find itself in possession of an ample fund to conduct its welfare schemes. Every one of us is painfully conscious of the wretchedness of Indian mothers and their children. Each item of their destitution will become an object on which the government can profitably spend its money.

The first requirement seems to be that of qualified state nurses with medical establishments spread broadcast over the country. Our people are too ignorant of the elementary facts about the physiology of sex-life and motherhood. For the Indian mother the period of gestation is a period of danger. She finds herself inconvenienced and suffering in a thousand ways, she wants to be advised and attended to. But her shyness stands in the way, and still more, the ignorance

and carelessness of her people. The mother, too,—often a baby mother—bears her child in neglect, gives it birth in neglect and brings it up in neglect. Many die in confinement from the criminal ignorance and unscientific handling of the village nurses and their babies die oftener than they live. Or else both live a life of prolonged misery and decrepitude. This is the condition of our Indian nursery.

In such a typical home there are apparently many things to be done by the nurse. We can hopefully look to a time when she will rule over a small knot of villages and like a ministering angel make herself the friend of the village wives and the sweet god-mother of the village urchins. She will visit prospective mothers, prescribe medicines and diet. She will help at child-birth and advise the mother about the necessary precautions for her baby's life and health. Till the child grows to a certain age, say three, within which period infant mortality is most appalling, it shall be the business of the nurse to visit the child at intervals and supply medicine when necessary, free of cost or at a reduced price.

Special provisions will be made for those who have lost both parents, or the father. Orphanages will be started and assylums for the unclaimed, the neglected children of bad characters and the unprotected family of the convict.

Again the intellectual vigour of the future generation will be provided for equally with its physical proficiency. From the surplus income of this tax free primary education will be financed. To everybody who keeps his eys open, the illiteracy of our common people appears as the most tragic event in our society. Even if the advantages of an elementary education be not put higher than a capacity to read and write its universal diffusion will be no mean achievement. But as the great Gokhale said, elementary education for the mass of the people means more than a mere capacity to read and write. It means for them a keener enjoyment of life and a more refined standard of living. It means the greater moral and economic efficiency of the individual, and an altogether higher level of culture for the community in general. Hitherto the government of our country has not listened to the crying need for free elementary education. But the ample funds which the birth-tax will put into its hands will

26 Birth Taxation: A Measure for Social Uplift.

be a practical argument more convincing than any that has ever been suggested and the government will no longer decline to educate the masses when it has been provided with the means.

It may be doubted whether the income from the birth-tax will be as large as it is tacitly supposed to be. But considering the number of births that usually take place in our country and the rate of taxation which we have never hinted to be small, there is absolutely no reason why the income should not be large. Indeed the rate should be considerably high. The indirect effect of the tax which we have defined as the discouragement to indiscriminate procreation can never be realised if the taxation is not felt as a burden and if it does not make people pause and be less adventurous.

Now we shall first deal with the subjective effect of this tax. In fact the most important effect of such a tax will be that it will make the people think. It will at once appear to all—it must appear sometime—that parenthood is not a pleasure to be enjoyed at will, but a social function to be undertaken after preparation, that all affairs of the family are not private, that the State may and ought to intervene to supervise and to superintend. It will emphasise in their mind the inevitability of an economic basis for the family and the parents' responsibility for the child's future. It will teach them that the death of their babies and their wretchedness are not all the work of a capricious destiny, but the consequences of their economic folly. Thus, altogether, a definite movement will set in for a more enlightened understanding of the economic foundation of the family and a sincere respect for the oversight of the State. This is a distinct gain, as regards both a cultured civic life and individual welfare.

And when once the attitude of the masses towards parenthood has changed, when once they have realised the necessity of preparation and calculation, that is to say, when once the end is fixed, there will not be any want of means and methods. Here, as everywhere else, necessity will be the mother of invention. People will not wait for dazzling things occurring to them mysteriously, but shall want to accomplish the great object by an active policy. They will find the means of having just as many children as they decide to have and no more. The child will not come as a byproduct, as if by accident, and be a nuisance and a vexation to the parents. Every child that

is born will be a child that was positively desired by the parents. It will be a welcome guest and not an intruder. Its position in the ethical and economic world of the family will be highly improved.

There is no fear that the percentage of marriages will suffer an abnormal fall accompanied by a corresponding outburst of promiscuous relations. We have anticipated this fear by insisting that only birth should be the occasion for taxation and not the bare fact of marriage.

There is again nothing in the taxation to make the relations between man and woman more pronouncedly physical and egotistic. The feelings and emotions which most serve to differentiate the union of husband and wife from their lawless perversions are the considerations of health and morality, good taste and love. There is no sinister influence in a mere birth-tax to weaken the vitality or to pollute the sacredness of these finer feelings. What is there then in the tax to degrade marriage! The logic of that morality must be very strange which accuses the tax of being a corrupter of conjugal relations—the tax which aims at inculcating the higher responsibilities and a sense of the enduring consequences of parenthood and asks the parents to restrain and control themselves for the sake of the child.

The next possible argument against the birth-tax is that if the parents do not restrain themselves out of foresight and love for the child, that if they are not stopped by the consideration that they should have to feed and clothe and teach the child till the time when it can look after itself, that is to say, if they are not stopped by the inevitability of long and heavy charges, what can a special assessment at a particular point of time do to restrain their folly. To be sure it can do much, much more than love or the prospective costs of maintaining a child have hitherto succeeded in doing. That the tax is to be paid not by annual instalments, but in a lump, is a great point in its favour. Again the minimum charge is never to fall, in the case of the poorest father below the minimum cost of maintaining a child for one year. Thus the prospective father is obliged to lay aside a considerable amount of capital and this will act as a great check in a country where there is a deplorable lack of capital. The child does not eat much, nor does it dress richly, so its charges add only

28 Birth Taxation: A Measure for Social Uplift.

an imperceptible amount to the family budget, and are apt to escape notice, as if nothing exceptional had taken place beyond a slight rise in prices which are beyond the control of the individual consumer. But when the demand comes from outside as a special charge on capital in the shape of something like an insurance payment, the father can no longer pretend to be unconscious of the responsibility which he has thoughtlessly undertaken, but should have thoughtfully declined. To his so called consideration of love and care for his child's future is added the more tangible, more imminent and more uncomfortable demand of money. He is at once shaken out of his let-it-go-hang attitude, and begins contemplating seriously what he can do to protect himself from these unexpected raids on his capital.

The birth-tax may also be attacked from a quite different quarter. It may be urged that it may hasten the decay of the race by bringing about an abnormal fall in the birth-rate. This however assumes that the tax is to be abnormally high. The state surely is not interested in killing out the race, nor is it out for robbing the people or penalising the natural desire for children. It strives to protect itself from the nuisance of a mushroom growth and does not aim at urging racial suicide.

A somewhat similar argument is that the birth-tax will seriously reduce the birth-rate, so that fewer occasions will be found for taxation; and the whole scheme of welfare movements detailed above will collapse for want of funds. This argument however does not look to the other side of the shield. For if fewer births are recorded, the responsibility of the state will be correspondingly lightened. The reduction of the state's income is preceded by a reduction in the number of children to be tended. If the fall in the birth-rate is not undesirably sharp, it is rather a proof that the tax has so far been successful in carrying out its purpose of restraining the tropical fertility of marriages.

There may be other arguments against a birth-tax and they may be more convincing than those we have considered above. An honest desire for truth should prompt us rather to challenge and invite those unknown oppositions than to avoid them. For the problem presented is believed to be one of great practical importance, and not a mere academical puzzle for showing off one's power

in defeating others with sophistries. Besides, the question is an economic one and it is a point which people can be made to understand only with the greatest difficulty. I have therefore assailed the present wretchedness of our children from all obvious quarters and tried to prove the necessity of a birth-tax by inventing oppositions and refuting them.

As a consequence I have found it impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that the birth-tax is a general remedy as overpopulation is a general problem. But considering the problem I have thought particularly of my own people, and it is to them particularly that I venture to propose this remedy. We have complained that the reformed councils have not given us enough space for free movement. But here is a new and wide world ready to be taken over by our ministers of health and education, if they are really anxious for the freedom and the good of their country. It may be argued that the schemes for child welfare are admirable but they may be financed by retrenchment in other directions. Perhaps they may be, but by such a procedure we shall make the task stupendous for the government. Retrenchment may be desirable for its own sake but it shall not involve any discouragement to indiscriminate parenthood. It shall not challenge the people to think, it shall ask them to reform their ideas about the duties of a father. One impetus given to an intellectual understanding of things, and a scientific handling of affairs shall be lost. It may also be urged that such progressive, and as they appear to the people subtle and far-fetched ideals of eugenics cannot be advanced mechanically through taxation, that they have already spread in our upper classes so that we need not be in haste to advocate an arrogant and centralised control by the state. But it is certainly not enough that only the upper classes should know. The evils of overpopulation are almost nil among them. No considerable improvement can be expected if the masses are not awoken to a livelier sense of the consequences and responsibilities of parenthood.

But this superior knowledge, if left to advance at its snail's pace can reach the multitude only after a long lapse of time. Shall the mass of the people continue to suffer till that time to avoid wounding the delicate sensibility of some overfine people who will shrink

from forceful methods though they recognise the end as desirable. These delicate persons have declared a holiday from economics and method. Anything which is decided, tangible and practical is rejected by them as materialistic and inaesthetic. But it is through these materialistic ways that we can easily and promptly approach the masses. The methods of economics, the birth-tax, will have instantaneous and tremendous effect on them. And considering the advanced stage of our social disease, nothing short of these active steps can ensure a recovery within a reasonably short period. The opposing party may at this point produce their trump card and urge that the people are already over-taxed and impoverished. But fortunately poverty is an argument not against the birth-tax but rather in favour of it. For it is the poor who are given to the most indiscriminate procreation, and it is among the poor that over-population assumes most serious aspect. A high birth-rate means misery, and misery in turn increases birth-rate. It is this vicious circle which presents the greatest difficulties in the way of the social reformer and if there is any class where the restriction of birth is more urgently needed than anywhere else it is certainly the substratum of the poor and the destitute. If the poor desire to escape poverty they must cease to multiply at a break neck pace. A birth-duty should be launched to act as a lever for raising their standard of living.

Thus however hard we may try to avoid and ridicule the idea of a birth-tax, we are repeatedly forced back to it by every fresh, honest and sensible line of thought. From the points of view equally of morality, economics and public finance, the arguments in favour of a birth-tax seem to wield an irresistible logic.

THE RECENT GREECO-ITALIAN CRISIS.

SANTOSH CHANDRA CHATTERJEA—*Third Year Arts Class.*

ONE morning the world was shocked to read the flashing headlines of Reuter—"Warclouds gather over Greece". Next day, the more appalling news that Italy had bombarded Corfu, a Greek possession, roused widespread horror and surprise.

The war-weary nations were rudely disturbed out of their apathy. The last Great war had pauperised the world: another such war would annihilate it completely.

What had happened was this. An international commission was sitting in Greece to settle the boundary question between Greece and Albania. The Italian delegation to the commission consisted of General Tellini and his colleagues. It happened that they were motor-ing in Janina, a town near the Albanian frontier, when they were fired upon by a number of bandits in ambush, and were killed. Italy was horrified at this re-enactment of the Sarajevo murders. A wave of wrath and indignation swept over Italy, and Signor Mussolini, her premier declared that the culprits must not escape with impunity. But the assassins had done their work so skilfully that no clue whatsoever could be found as to their whereabouts. But Mussolini suspected Greece of complicity in this affair, and a suspicion in the case of a strong mind as Mussolini's was as firm as conviction. Greece, he decided, must pay the penalty.

An ultimatum, worded in the strongest possible terms, was immediately despatched to Greece. The situation created was strikingly analogous to the prewar events of 1914, when Austria had thundered forth her terms to Servia. Greece replied in a firm but conciliatory tone. "We are no less horrified at these cold-blooded murders, and we shall spare no pains to make a thorough search to hunt the criminals out and bring them to law. We are also prepared to show every possible respect for the deceased members of the delegation. But there are several demands in your ultimatum, for example the occupation of Corfu, to which we cannot accede. Greece cannot allow the principle of sovereignty of states to be infringed in her case. We are, however, quite ready to refer this matter to an international tribunal and agree to abide by its decision."

Such a soft reply did not suit Mussolini. Italy must not be weak and vacillating now, she must vindicate her position as the greatest power in the Balkans. Mussolini resolved to take drastic steps and commanded the Italian admiralty to bombard Corfu. He was obeyed: Corfu, the Greek island, occupying a strategic position, was forced to surrender.

What was the League of Nations doing now? Where were Sir

Robert Cecil and Viscount Ishii, the much-vaunted champions of peace? It is to be remembered that both Italy and Greece are members of the League and the most important clause in the Covenant of the League provides that none of its members should engage in war with each other before the matter of dispute has been referred to the Council of the League. In case any member violates this injunction, the penalty is to be very severe. "Should any members of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Arts 12, 13 and 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade and financial relations....." (Article 16).

Was this all empty nonsense, or did the Leaguers mean business when they had put down the clause? The covenant put in their hands a very potent weapon, namely international commercial boycott, if it could be carried out actually. But the League hesitated and preferred to open negotiations with Mussolini. The result was that Mussolini's hands were strengthened and the League undermined its own prestige.

The League sent a note to Mussolini demanding why Italy did not observe the rules of the Covenant thus almost precipitating a Balkan War. "Mind your own business", came the hot ringing reply of Mussolini, "I want none of your meddling into what is purely a private affair. We and Greece shall settle it between ourselves. If you persist in poking your nose, we shall cut off all connexion with the League."

This is the typical attitude of an international bully. It smacked curiously of the dictatorship of Napolean in Europe when he was at the height of his power. It is strange, but none the less true, that, in all disputes, he who shouts the loudest, has everything to his advantage. Thus the defiant mien of Mussolini cowed down the League of Nations into a ridiculously tame attitude. If the Leaguers were worth their salt, if Britain and France were as ardent devotees of the League as they outwardly professed, could such a monstrous thing have happened? This insult would have been flung back in the face of Mussolini and his challenge accepted. The punishment for such a recalcitrant nation is commercial and poli-

tical boycott, and if those big powers had the grit and stamina to carry out the threat of international ostracism, it would have been interesting to see the dictator change his tune. But the French Press secretly rejoiced, and only a few papers of the British Press voiced forth their indignation against the conduct of Italy. The moral prestige of the League has been shattered and it would take a long time before the League can aspire to be the same pre-eminent force for peace and stability in European Politics.

Having scored this remarkable diplomatic victory, Mussolini was too astute a statesman to spoil it by an unrelenting policy. An adroit strategist, he understood that even patience has its limits. He had created the necessary impression ; he now came down from the heights to offer something like an explanation. "In occupying Corfu", said he, "Italy meant no aggression ; she only wanted a guarantee to obtain adequate reparations from Greece". If bombardment of a foreign territory does not imply aggression, I wonder what it means. It is a pure and simple jugglery of words. He may triumph for the time being, but the murder of the innocent orphan children of Corfu will blacken the name of the Fascist leader for ever.

However, the League swallowed this explanation with the best grace it could muster. The worst has been averted, war, at least temporarily ; and the League suggested that a conference of allied ambassadors would be summoned for the purpose of settling the dispute. Mussolini fell in with the suggestion and the Italian ambassador drafted the note to Greece. The allied ambassadors, anxious to avoid any hitch, have endorsed it practically as it stood except that the monetary penalty to be inflicted upon Greece has been left to the arbitrement of the Hague Tribunal. No ambassador had the audacity to raise the question of the legality of the Italian occupation of Corfu ; in fact, Italy retains it as a pledge that her opponent will adhere to the terms of a hard bargain. As might be expected, Greece has accepted the conditions of the note in toto.

Thus under the threat of a war, the Fascist leader has strengthened his already commanding position in the Balkan : he has given us one more proof of his daring strategy.

What do all these recent events teach us ? They show what

a rickety structure Europe is : the mighty edifice built on apparent professions of goodwill and amity is apt to tumble down at the slightest shock. They have shown how a strong determined power can at any moment force things to a crisis and precipitate a war. The Kaiser demonstrated it in 1914 ; Mussolini could prove it now, had he only wished.

When the last great War crushed German militarism, peaceloving men all over the world thought that an era of peace would begin. But passing years bring bitter disillusionment : over the grave of the German militarism, other spectres, grim, gaunt and severe, have arisen—French terrorism, British imperialism, Italian Fascism. These sit on the breast of Europe like a hideous nightmare, slowly but surely throttling the life out of it.

“The brotherhood of mankind,” said Wilson, “must no longer be a fair but empty phrase”. These passionate words are still far from being translated into the actualities of life. The League of Nations was founded for the realisation of that idea. But after four years of seeming activity and widespread propaganda, it is suddenly revealed to us that the League stands exactly where it stood before. Nations, at least the big ones, still take war lightly ; and what Tagore saw with his clairvoyant vision in 1900 still remains true. “The naked passion of self-love of Nations, in its drunken delirium of greed, is dancing to the clash of steel and the howling verses of vengeance.”

THE LAST STRUGGLE.

DEBIDAS BANDYOPADHAYA, *Fourth Year Arts.*

At last the day of the final struggle had come. For centuries, Satan and his people had been idly busy with little things. Little had to be done save tempting two or three couples here and there. His eventful career had closed with the unfortunate Adam-affair. And sheer boredam would have killed him since, had it not been for a few old-fashioned believers in a ‘goody goody’ God and world. This too had been proving tiresome, for Satan was after all as old

as the old, old man and he wanted something more real to be left for the Satan to be.

He had long been waiting for this day of days. The Scriptures told him that it would come, and that morning Satan had been morally convinced that it had. For the census-officer of the worlds had confidentially told him that there were now only thirteen angels under God. 'Unlucky thirteen and all infirm,' Satan had chuckled and sent for his surviving followers.

The war-council was held and the ultimatum was given. In fact everything passed off quite smoothly. You can't expect bald-headed, toothless people wasting words, as they did in Milton's time. They had grown in wisdom !

Armoury-affairs gave a little trouble. Everything there had grown rusty. Old quaint broad-swords, sixth century brass breast-plates, 'Ivanhoe' head-gears—all had been lying in a dusty heap for ages. But the proverbial demoniac energy had still something of it left and Belzebub had not forgotten what Vulcan's daughter had taught him in the old mythological days. So everything was all right.

At last ready and fully equipped, Satan marched out. The fight was to take place in the 'deep-domed empyrean'. Michael had come down earlier with his grey-bearded, white-robed host.

The battle-cry was raised. It was a hoarse, piteous, long-drawn wail,—some a- a- a and the mighty onset began.

* * *

Little Ivy ran all excited to her mother.

"Mummy, mummy, I've seen the angels and Satan in our grotto." The mother was listening to a song some thousand miles off. "Seen whom ?"

"Angels—such old, wrinkled, little dears ! And they were fighting with little imps—all black. It was so funny. And I pulled their tails and beards and the one with the longest beard told me he was Michael fighting with Satan—"

"What nonsense you are talking" "But they told me so"—pouted the girl.

"Tut, tut, it was a BAD DREAM",—and she took up the receiver of the radiophone.

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING.

SATYENDRA NATH RAY,—*Fifth Year Physics.*

THE title gives us one of those battle-cries that strike a responsive note in every heart. In the matter of universal appeal it has *Esperanto beaten hollow*. The pedlar with his “new lamps for old” made the maid-servant run after him; had he cried “new lamps for nothing” probably the castle of Aladdin itself with the princess would have walked after him.

The world however is growing sadder and wiser. People are learning that it is only gentlemen known in America as ‘suckers’ who are taken in by such cries. A certain gentleman offered a ten-rupee note free to passers-by in College Street one day but he had only a crowd of onlookers trying to find out where the ‘catch’ of the offer lay. It was however a plain and above-board offer which incidentally won him a bet. Verily as the Scriptures say “Except ye turn and be as little children etc. etc.”

We shall now trace the attempts to get something out of nothing in various departments of our life.

(1) Mechanics: Examinees at various times make heroic attempts to master laws of energy which after various if’s go on to say that you can’t get something for nothing. A deduction from this is that if you go along the surface of the earth, no work is done. Tourists who go round the world do not do much work thanks to Cooks’; but they spend a lot of money. However as the intrinsic work equation 1 Rupee = n foot pounds is not known, the laws carry the day. Then again, these laws have placed a ban on Perpetual motion. But inventors are rarely put off by such petty obstacles; scores of patents are yearly applied for for such delicate machinery as a motor driving a pump, the pump driving a turbine which again drives a dynamo keeping the indefatigable motor working. Scientists however, keep on shaking their heads for such a machine is against all laws of their Mechanics and Thermodynamics. “But why?” we ask in despair. It is only Trade Unions who have a right

to protest against "work for nothing" and "working for ever." When a boy, the writer had visions of a great project (patent *not* applied for). A motor was to be coupled to a dynamo which would generate the current for the motor; anything you wanted to drive could be driven off the shaft. But a wise friend shattered all this with a "But this is Perpetual Motion!" The "Sweets to the sweet, Farewell" touch was given by a Useful Tables which said—i. h. p. equals 746 watts. That "equals" did it

(2) In everyday life: To the best of my knowledge the laws of work etc. were only once defied in actual life. Patrick was engaged by the hour to carry some packages from the warehouse down to the wharf. A friend noticed him bringing a package up from the wharf. He enquired the reason. "Hush," said Pat "I am doing in my employer. It is the same package I am carrying up and down."

Coming down to more literal attempts to get something for nothing we can meet with many masterpieces everyday. But the masters generally find themselves enjoying His Majesty's hospitality for nothing. The fact that this lavish treatment is resented is not very wonderful; if you offer a man a paltry thing like a little trouble gratis and post free, the chances are that he will grumble orally if not physically, at all this trouble for nothing."

A few years back a genius broadcasted a brilliant project for getting large sums of money for nothing or next to nothing. The scene of his project was to have been one of those dreary wastes (in Canada I believe) where if you want to take 500 acres, the government offers you an additional 1000 acres as bonus. This gentleman wanted to take a few thousand acres and divide the estate into two portions. On one he would start a cat plantation and the other was to be inhabited by rats. The initial cost as every one can see is practically nil. The promoter then went off into statistics of the fecundity and mortality of cats and rats. The nett result went to show that in any given time sufficient rats could be spared to feed the cats and sufficient cats could be killed to feed the remaining rats without interfering with the numerical strength of these colonies. "So" he summed up "the cats eat the rats and the rats eat the cats and we get the cats' furs for nothing." The facts and figures were flawless but still

we have heard no further of the scheme. Here seems a golden opportunity for the Unemployed Bengali graduate. We can only hope that the scheme will not be forestalled by a greedy company promoter working with bigger animals to get larger profits.

(3) There now remains one department in which the task of getting something out of nothing is dead easy. It is the domain of speakers and writers. They do it almost all the time. One day I heard a heated debate on "Is Man Good?" The speeches were of that wellknown type which cheers in 15 minute doses but larger doses like other poisons make you either run away or go to sleep. I preferred the first alternative. Had I been the judge of that debate, the decision would have been—"Is man good?—not here."

To show how speakers succeed in getting a lot out of nothing I shall give only a fragment of a speech on any subject—say "Little Jack Horner." It would run thus :

Ladies and Gentlemen : I am here to speak on a nursery rhyme familiar to you all. It may be familiar but it is not trivial. A closer review will reveal that we are indeed on the threshold of a striking sermon in a stone. For decades the children of our land, the props of our nation have had the choicest bits of knowledge instilled into them in the very acceptable form of a sweet rhyme. But for this, I put it to you, how many could tell me offhand where we get our plums and raisins from? How many indeed could even tell me what mincepies are made of?

"Little Jack Horner sat in a corner eating a little mincepie." Here, mark well, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have none of the restlessness and hastiness that characterises the modern youth at the table. The Horner family was apparently a very well-regulated family. There is no mention here of unwholesome pastries prepared by indolent chefs with high sounding foreign names. Jack was content, in the peaceful seclusion of his home to eat a wholesome pie made by his loving mother. "Oh home! it is a sacred place, or was in olden days" as the poet says. It is only a return to this beautiful simplicity of the olden days as idealised in these elevating verses that can put off the ruin towards which we are rushing head-long in our mad career:—And thus the speaker goes on *ad libitum*,

As an example of how writers do it these few paragraphs will serve as a modest example.

In concluding we must not forget the obituary writer. When the rich but miserly uncle of the editor dies this gentleman (the obituarist, not the uncle) puts up a heroic effort the finishing touch to which is something like this :

“The late lamented knight was also renowned for his charity. So varied and extensive were the ramifications of his generosity that the number and magnitude of his benefactions are equally unknown. Of him it can truly be said, that not only his left hand but also the recipients themselves did not know what his right hand gave.”

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Mystery of Mysteries, what art Thou,
 That, from the dawn of the Primeval Past,
 Benign but unbeknown and hid, dost cast
 On Nature thy myriad rays, dost e'er endow
 Her with creation, Life, and clothe man's brow
 With a Spirit, Light and Power, resistless, vast
 As Eternity, sublime, strong to outlast
 Death, variegated as thy endless Now !
 What halo'd from is thine. O Source and End,
 Revealer unrevealed ! Or is there none
 Which lesser things created comprehend !
 Must man, with pious awe, but name the One,
 Omnipotent, Creator, Being, and spend
 His prayer on Water, Fire, Moon, Stars and Sun !

P. E. D

SCIENCE & POLITICS.

DEBABRATA CHAKRAVERTI, *Fourth Year Science Class.*

WHEN Europe just emerged out of the bewildering chaos of the last great war, the world heaved a sigh of relief, for it believed

that the curse that had overwhelmed mankind had passed over and it stood on the open road to progress and prosperity. But before the people could scarcely recover from the stun of the great crisis, scepticism often peeped into their minds and they began to fear if their optimism had not gone too far. For though the world stood on the threshold of a new era, yet many still were the barriers and hindrances that lay across its way and it had to strain its every nerve before it could move forward and make any perceptible progress. The problems of Peace were found to be no less difficult than the problems of the war.

What is the train of events that have taken place in the world, and what are the courses that the nations are adopting, are the questions that await the pursuit of a historian. But one of the main questions that have beset all the nations ever since the war, is to discover the exact relation that exists between Science and Politics.

At the first reading it may appear to be quite paradoxical to be told that Science is really closely related to Politics. These two wings of knowledge have all along been supposed to be so wide apart that any attempt to point out any relation between the two is sure to elicit nothing but laughter and ridicule. Indeed, there was a time when a scientist, quietly sitting in his laboratory in the midst of its flasks and retorts, never troubled himself about anything except his own experiment and scientific investigations, while a politician, busy with his House and platform, paid little heed to his scientist friend. But things have changed now, and people now looks upon them *in a different light*.

When Science began to march forward in rapid strides and work wonders on the face of the earth, people at first paid little heed to it. They looked with awe on a wonderful discovery; they appreciated the ingenuity of an inventive mind, they clapped their hands at any forward step of the human intellect. But at the outset they could scarcely imagine that they were having in their hands an invaluable treasure—a formidable weapon at the same time—that was to work out the salvation of humanity in some future day.

Perhaps never before in the history of the world has the power of Science been brought so prominently to the view of the world as

in the last war. When Europe shook under the weight of the howitzers, when the air was filled with the buzz of the engines of the aeroplanes and air-ships, and the submarines roamed about under the depth of the vast oceans, people began to closely realise that they had reached a stage when all power rested on nothing else but Science and that Science alone was a measure of the strength of nations.

And it was then that people looked to Science for help. Politicians now remembered of the scientists and flocked to them to beg their help. The scientists were also ready with their services, for they owed a moral obligation to the nation and the countrymen could rightly claim the services of their brains and intellect.

Now the war is over but the bond that it has tied between Science and Politics remains intact. For each of them has come to realise that the alliance is for the good of all. Politics has come to respect Science, for it has experienced full well that it can scarcely stand without its assistance and Science has quite ungrudgingly offered its services for the nation, for the true ideal of Science can be perfectly realised only when it can serve humanity.

Many people often impute to Science the serious fault of being the inventor of the best methods of destruction. Surely from the study of the gradual development of methods of warfare, and particularly the annals of the last war, one cannot successfully refute the charge. But the mere fact that Science has degenerated into a designer of the best man-killing machines, does not throw the responsibility on its shoulders. The politicians, the nations, the entire humanity is to blame for that. It may clearly bring to light the base mentality, the savage spirits of mankind, but it keeps the fair name of Science untarnished. Science can give power only, the way in which it is used depends upon the people, upon those who wield it.

But if we leave this question of warfare aside, the instances of its beneficent workings are sufficiently numerous to evoke our respect and admiration for this noble branch of knowledge. In fact there is no discovery in Science that has not come for the good of mankind, and on the other hand there is scarcely any want of the people that has not been closely examined and in most cases removed by the new inventions of Science.

No discussion on the subject can be said to be complete without a brief historical sketch of the gradual growth of harmonious co-operation between these twin factors of Science and politics in different states of the world. But the subject is vast and beyond the scope and ability of the present writer. So nothing more than a running review is to be attempted here.

In any discussion on the political applications of Science, the first country that draws our attention is Germany. The vast scientific progress of the German people is a matter for history. Their industries, that had faced the competition of other nations under most unfavourable circumstances, and invariably won the field in the world market, were the outcome of the most advanced modern Science. The wonders of physical and chemical sciences, that had surprised other nations to a sense of their comparative backwardness during the last war, were the result of silent research and hard labour for years and decades. But the main cause of the greatness of Germany in the scientific world lay in the fact that Germany had learnt the truth long ago that there cannot be any real progress without a close and harmonious alliance of science and politics. The state lavishly patronised all scientific investigations, the whole nation encouraged them and the scientist in his turn placed all the result of years of experiment and research at the disposal of the nation.

America, England, France and other powerful nations of the world have now realised this fact so thoroughly well that all of them have already started numerous Research Stations, National Institutes of sciences and many other laboratories for scientific investigations all over the land. Many of them are maintained by the States while the others receive subsidies from the Government and public bodies. Truly some of them carry on research for the better equipment of the army but most of them work for the development of the industries, the betterment of the human life, the elimination of terrible diseases from the face of the earth and for such other solutions of the problems of peace.

When we come to consider the case of India, we are hopelessly disappointed. The scientific progress of the country is surprisingly slow, the scientific researches and their applications to the fields of industries, agriculture and other branches of life, are very few in

number and the field is very limited in scope. So India is lagging behind while the world is progressing on; she is in the fairy land of dream and romanticism, while the world is fighting on its way upward. And it is why the industries of the country cannot eke out an existence in the face of the foreign competition and her agriculture cannot supply the poor peasants with their daily bread. And it is why Malaria and other diseases can have an unobstructed sway over the poor villagers year after year, and famines can count their victims in thousands and millions.

Whenever we speak of the backwardness of our country, the political degeneration of the land is invariably held forth as the cause of our miserable position. I do not intend to discuss the question here. That our backwardness is partly due to our political slavery is beyond doubt. But one very pertinent question may be put in here—we are lagging behind in world progress because we are not politically free or we are not politically free because we are lagging behind in world progress,—in scientific, industrial and general intellectual advancement? Which one is the cause and which one is the effect? This is the question that I am not in a position to answer, and so leave it untouched.

In India there are a number of people who seem to be under the impression that the political regeneration is the only problem that faces the nation. When they are asked of the scientific and industrial problem of the land, and how India should fare in international politics when she is free, they, with Micawberian philosophy nod their heads and ask us to wait for these things as something must "turn up". But how something is going to "turn up" if nobody turns it up, is a question that naturally arises in our minds.

In any way, we should not be surprised at this mentality of the people. It is the old way of absolutely separating politics from science. And they have to learn it still that if the political cause is to be advanced we require as much energy and labour for the scientific and industrial development of the country as for the political uplift. Political uplift without the corresponding scientific development is like a lame man without his crutch; it has no legs to stand upon.

A misunderstanding with regard to scientific investigators is

often latent in the hearts of the people of the country. They seem to consider scientists as men of the most selfish stuff who care for none except themselves and who are perfectly callous to all the woes and miseries of the land they live in. The notion is quite natural and we cannot find fault with the people for it. But if they would care to scrutinise the matter more closely they can not but come to the conclusion that though the investigators live far apart from the din and bustle of political movements, they are serving the country no less than those who are nobly sacrificing their all for the political progress of the nation. Politicians may lift up a nation, but it is the duty of the scientists to see that it does not slide down. Scientists, in a way, supplement the work of the politicians:—the latter work for the present needs of the nation, while the former look to its future wants.

So it is obvious that the bond between science and politics is securely fastened in every case. Some times there may be a gulf between the two, but even this estrangement is but the prelude to the formation of a closer relationship at a no distant point. It is for the self-interest of both that they must go together, and they cannot part.

But the close relationship between science and politics often causes our hearts to shudder in fear and pain. How can humanity gain at all if science progresses at such rapid strides and the course of international politics does not take a different turn? How should mankind fare before a hungry lion or an angry bear?

But we have nothing to despair of, for science itself is working for its solution. The modern advancement of science convinces us beyond all doubt that it is very soon going to gain such power that it will be in a position to annihilate a nation in a day, or even in an hour—through her agencies of destruction. And in fact when that happens it will be a blessed day for mankind. Every nation will be in possession of such tremendous power at its command that the trumpet of war will be looked upon at the death-knell of all the nations concerned. The power to destroy will save humanity from destruction, and it will be the surest safeguard against the horrors of war. When science attains that perfection it will do incalculable good to mankind. The terror and horror of science

will remain but fights and wars will be things of the past, and peace arising out of mutual fear and respect, if not out of mutual love and good-will will reign all over. And where treaties, conventions and leagues have failed, science will triumph.

THE ANCIENT LIBRARIES OF INDIA.

GOKULNATH DHAR, *Librarian.*

IN the modern sense of the word, a Library is a collection of printed books or written scrolls *kept for use*. The term is not applicable, therefore, to printed or written sheets collected together for sale or awaiting despatch to the paper mill. "Typically, of course," observes the librarian of an American University, "the modern library does include many books, a whole separate building and a librarian, but even if the books are few, place only a room, a chest, a book-case, or a single shelf, and even if it is only the owner who is at the same time the keeper, it is still recognised to be a library if the books are kept for use and not for sale."

Libraries, in some form, are said to have existed even in prehistoric days ; the oldest of all alleged libraries being "the libraries of the gods." Brahma, the Creator God, appears thus to have been regarded by Hindu mythologists (in one sense) as an "incarnate library",—which contained or was the *Vedas* !

Mythical libraries apart, one is struck to find "libraries" mentioned incidentally in the *Upanishads*. Says Mantra 13 of the *Tejobindoopanishat* :

শীতোষ্ণঃ ক্ষুৎপিপাসঃ সন্ধানঃ বিকল্পকম্ ।

ন ব্রহ্ম কুলদর্শকঃ ন মুক্তিগ্রহ সংগ্রহম্ ॥

So it appears that in the age of the *Upanishads*—which falls within the Epic Period of Indian History (roughly, B. C. 1400-1000)—there were people given to book-collecting or forming libraries,—some at least led on by the pleasing delusion that they would attain to salvation by hoarding up religious treatises !

In the seventh chapter of the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* (Mantras 1, 2) *Nārada* speaks of the *Itihāsā-Purāṇas* as one of the subjects he

had studied. This passage and analogous ones in the literature of the Epic Period would seem to point to the existence of regular historical treatises. Savants have taxed the resources of their intellect in serious endeavours after the exploration of such supposed treatises ; and have ultimately come to the disappointing conclusion that "if such annals existed, beyond what we find in the Brāhmans themselves, they have long since been lost. Probably such annals were preserved in the traditions of the people" and formed what can be supposed as the earliest kind of human library, viz.—"the memory library". The Vedas themselves in mortal hands were indeed a *memory library*. "Most persons," remarks Professor Max Muller in his *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 'acquainted with the history of popular poetry among the principal nations of antiquity would be ready to admit that the original composition and preservation of truly national poetry were everywhere due to the unaided efforts of memory". The Vedic books, as well as the major part of the literature of the Epic Period were "gathered and handled down by a rigorous organised system of memorizing".

Regular libraries, and in the modern sense, cannot therefore be conceived as having come into existence before the invention of the art of writing, the earliest use of which is supposed to have been the recording of important religious events and political transactions. "These records would naturally be preserved in sacred places, and accordingly the earliest libraries of the world (properly so called) were probably temples, and the earliest librarians priests."

It is impossible to ascertain when writing first came into vogue in India. Heeren affirms that "it is...perfectly certain that it must have been employed from very remote antiquity." That there have been several forms of writing in use in this vast Peninsula for many centuries past, has never been questioned ; and materials of writing have always been abundantly to hand. "The leaves and bark of trees furnish a natural *paper* of which the Hindus made use from very early times. The leaves of the palm-tree ...were always in great request for this purpose ..To be duly prepared, they have to be dried, boiled, again dried, smoothed with stones or shells, and then cut to an oblong shape." Palm-leaf manuscripts have been discovered in all parts of India.

Paper is said to have been invented by the Chinese about the second century of the Christian era : according to Dr. Barnett, "it does not seem to have been largely used in India until the Mughal Period." Father Paulino, however, attempts to prove in his *Samskradamicoe Linguae Instituto*, and, it appears, with some success, that the use of cotton paper in India extends beyond the commencement of our era. Writing must have been known before even the introduction of paper ; and besides the easily accessible palm-leaves already spoken of, "stone, both in the natural state and dressed, naturally recommended itself to those who sought to inscribe a lasting record, and a vast number of such documents have been preserved. They include such disparate subjects as the records of Asoko's pious administration, the publication of grants of land, love-sick scribbles on the walls of a cave theatre *a propos* of a pretty nautch-girl, and long poems and dramas by Kings and Court-poets". All such written records, whether on palm-leaf, copperplate, plates of gold and silver, natural or dressed stones, or on paper, collected together in one place went to form the early libraries of India.

Such libraries would naturally divide themselves into two classes,—the secular libraries of kings and nobles, and the religious ones of temples and monasteries ; and these were the places which sheltered and nurtured the Sanskrit literature of hoary antiquity. It has been estimated that some ten thousand Sanskrit works exist in the manuscripts now available. In the civilised society of to-day when printing presses are to be met with in every nook and corner of a large city and when book-production is fast growing, this number might not appear so large. We should however, pause to reflect how much industry, devotion and love of learning *for its own sake* were needed in the dark ages to build up even a small library ! "Each single copy was the result of the patient, devoted labours of a skilled writer, a monk, perhaps, if it was a monastery, or a State calligraphist, if it was a royal court, working at it through days and months, and sometimes lavishing on it all the hereditary skill of his profession to make it a perfect work of art." Nor could the work once done be expected to last for ever ; manuscripts would be crumbling away and might be altogether destroyed under outward climatic influences ; their possessors must keep their eyes

wide open to detect any destructive influence that might have set in, and the copy affected should be *re-copied* without loss of time : and this had to be done very frequently. "As a rule" therefore, observes the German Indologist Dr. Albrecht Weber, "the more ancient Indian manuscripts are only from three to four hundred years old ; hardly any will be found to date more than five hundred years back". In striking contrast to the good old days it would seem an easy matter to start a library in our own times when the question is only of a room, a few shelves, and a few thousand rupees to buy from the shops in one lump a large number of volumes ; whereas each individual copy in the ancient manuscripts-libraries was the product of infinite labour and has had a life-history all its own.

It is no easy task at this distant date to form a correct estimate of the number of libraries in old Hindustan and ascertain the localities where they were situated. One has to be guided chiefly by the Reports submitted to Government by learned Sanskritists on the searches made for Sanskrit manuscripts, and occasionally by those of the Archaeological Department. State libraries, it was brought to the notice of the Government, of some of the independent and Protected Chiefs possessed many old manuscripts of Sanskrit works. About the middle of the third quarter of the last century, therefore, Government issued commissions for the search of Sanskrit Manuscripts. The results attained were highly satisfactory. The palaces of Hindu Rājāhs revealed several large and important collections. "The most extensive collection", according to Dr. Rājendralāl Mitra, "is perhaps the Sarasvati Bhāndāram of His Highness the Maharaja of Tānjore. It is said to comprise upwards of fourteen thousand manuscripts, the whole of which has been examined and catalogued by the learned Dr. A. C. Burnell of Madras". The Durbar Library of Nepāl, however, yields to none in the antiquity of its contents,—some of its palm-leaf manuscripts being written in later Gupta character. It houses about five thousand manuscripts which, says Dr. Cecil Bendall, "contain the Royal collection of Nepāl from the remotest antiquity, every successive king trying to add to the number".

Of the other royal libraries sheltering ancient lore, the State libraries of Kashmir and Mysore and those of several Rājput princes

deserve special notice. From treasures they have revealed it would not be far wrong to assume that their nuclei must have been formed in very early days. Of the State collections of manuscripts to be found in Jaipur, Professor Shridhar R. Bhándárkar asserts that the rarest books were liberally collected by the owners of the *gádí* "from the time of Rájá Mán Sinh." In the course of a search for Manuscripts in Rájputáná and Central India, the same Professor came upon sixteen private collections at Bikáner besides the fine State library of Sanskrit and Persian books maintained in the fort. At Udaipur eleven collections were discovered including the State,—the last-named being by far the biggest library, and "well preserved and in good order." The princes and chiefs who ruled in Dárbhágá Muzáffárpur and Bettiáh were "staunch Hindus and patrons of learning, and under their auspices many pandits flourished and carried on their favourite studies with great success." Gautama, the father of Nyáya philosophy, indulged in his learned dissertations not far away from the modern city of Cháprá. Tirhut, in North Bengal, witnessed the same operations later on, under the leadership of the great logician Gangesa Upádhyáya and his pupils; until the scene was shifted to Nayadwipa about the fourteenth century of the Christian era. Pupils flocked to the *Asramas* (hermitages) of such renowned Gúrús (preceptors) from the four points of the compass : and although the teaching had to be done chiefly by word of mouth, important treatises on the main theme were written down and stored in the *Asrama*, while precocious youths jotted down the preceptor's exposition of difficult texts and veteran *chelás* (pupils) busied themselves with elucidating important passages in *bháshyas* or commentaries. And all this is equally true of the other systems of Hindu philosophy, and indeed, of all branches of learning. It is conceivable how small libraries in each department were thus in the course of forming in the days long gone by. In fact, these Asramas were the oldest Hindu Universities.

The libraries attached to the Hindu temples, and Buddhist and Jaina monasteries were exclusively religious in character ; those of the *maths* (monasteries) of the different orders of *sannyásis* (ascetics) representing different types of culture. The Sankara *math* at Puri is reported by Dr. Rájendra Lál Mitra as having contained "over

twelve thousand works." Kámákshyá, for a long time a stronghold of Tántric worship is looked upon by the Tántriks "as the best place where to find the rarest texts of there scriptures." The Buddhist monasteries of Nalanda, Vikramasílá and Odantapuri could boast of libraries of no mean order. So also Taxilá, ..which enjoyed a great reputation as a university town in the fourth and fifth century B. C. and had become, in the words of Sir John Marshall, "famous for the arts and sciences of the day, as is evident from numerous passages in the Buddhist Játakas."

Libraries appear to have been indispensable adjuncts of the Buddhist *Viháras* (or, Colleges built by the Buddhist monarchs of India) No less numerous were the *Bhándáras* (or, libraries attached to Jaina temples) of the Jainas in Upper and Central India. In regard to the Jaina palm leaf manuscripts of Anhilvad Patan in the Baroda State Dr. Peterson remarks that "the oldest of them goes back as far as to A. D. 1062—I know of no other town in India, and of few in the world, that can boast of so great a store of documents of such venerable antiquity."

The mountainous district of Jaisalmer lying in the midst of sandy desert contains some ancient libraries, the principal Jaina *Bhándár* being far-famed for manuscripts. In Ujjain fourteen collections are reported to have existed in 1905. Similar collections have been found at Indore, Alwar and other places. Even the Jaina *upásrayas* (or, halting-places for itinerant priests) had such *Bhándáras* attached to them. In his report for 1883-84, Dr. Bhándárkar gives an elaborate account of the *Upásraya* libraries of the Jainas "Each *Gachcha* or sect of the Jainas residing in a city possesses a halting place called *Upásrayas* for their itinerant priests, and each of these *Upásrayas* is provided with a more or less extensive library. This library is the property of the *Gachcha* and is in the charge of the prominent lay-members of the sect. When, however, a priest makes an *Upásraya* his permanent residence, the library always in his charge and practically he is its owner." It happened not unoften that a *Bhándár* was left to the care of the *Panches* (or trustees); when such was the case, "each *Panch* (or individual trustee) put on his own padlock and kept his key, so that the *Bhándáras* could not be opened unless all the keys were brought together. Under these

circumstances it would happen that a *Bhāndār* could not be opened even if there should be a single dissentient *Panch* against that being done, unless his padlock were to be forced open"! Irksome and disgusting must have been at times the lot of the poor pandits who were sent out to visit the ancient libraries and draw up lists of their contents, as the men in charge, it has been put on record, "are mostly narrow-minded, and have no end of excuses to throw difficulties in the way of the pandit readily and regularly doing his duty"!

In Bengal the honour of possessing the largest collection of Jaina writings belongs to Azimganj, near Murshidābād. "Rai Dhanapat Sing alone," observes Dr. Rājendra Lāl Mitra, "possesses over six hundred works of considerable extent and value, and enriched by two to four commentaries." Besides other collections in the possession of well-to-do people of the sect, the local wealthy communities of Jainas "maintain several monasteries, locally called *Panishāls*, each of which has a collection of religious works of more or less value."

The contents of the old libraries of Southern India have been ransacked by competent persons, including Professor E. Hultzsch, Government Epigraphist of the Madras Presidency; and most of them have found a lasting abode in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library of Madras. One of the most valuable libraries discovered by the indefatigable labours of the touring scholars appears to have been in the possession of a Mārhāttā Brāhman, named Jambunāth Bhatta. A large number of ancient manuscripts was found in his collection "evidently copied in Northern India."

Some of the Mughal Emperors of Delhi, notably Akbar the Great Mughal, are said to have emulated the Hindu Rājās of old in their endeavours to attract round the throne men of remarkable erudition. A regular literary circle followed the Imperial Court of Akbar who had realised to a large extent the old Hindu ideal of royal court and made it the centre of varied culture. The Mughals had already, it appears, an Imperial Library at Delhi; it grew richer in Akbar's time by the additions made by the Emperor. He acquired the library belonging to I'timad Khān Gujrāti during the conquest of Gujrāt. On the death of Faizi, his library of 46,000 volumes was removed to the King's Library. The successors

of Akbar increased the library gradually, till it became the largest library in the East. "But the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857," to quote Professor Jadunāth Sarkār, "brought about the fall of Delhi and Lucknow. The Imperial Nawwabi-treasures were dispersed. The Nawwāb of Rāmpur (Rohilkand), who had joined the English, got the best of the loot, as he had proclaimed among the victorious loyal sepoys that he would pay one rupee for every Ms. brought to him."

Persian and Arabic Manuscripts were stored also in large numbers in the libraries of Tipoo Sultān (in Mysore) and Ranjit Singh (in Lāhore); but they were certainly far less pretentious than the Mughal Library just spoken of. In our own times the Pātnā Oriental Library is, as Mr. O'Connor puts it, "one of the finest collections of Moslem literature in the world"; the State library of the Nawwāb of Rāmpur (a Native State in Rohilkhand) is another splendid library of Persian and Arabic manuscripts, and contains an exceptionally valuable collection.

A LONELY DELL.

Mr. B. B. Roy, M. A.

Inside a ring of low hillocks there is a dell known to all the children of the neighbourhood and all the kine. I have sometimes wished to call it a valley but sheer modesty has kept me back. For the best part of the day it enjoys a shadowy and shiny seclusion; it is only in the afternoons that the boys gather and play and the kine are led along in unsteady, spirals down the path that winds downhill. But now the boys come no longer, for the schools are closed; and from sunrise to sunset, there is little or nothing to disturb that inviolate loneliness.

For a man that keeps much to himself and lives in the odour of looks, an afternoon walk here proves bracing and even medicinal. It lifts the mists off his mind; and his leaden melancholy soon resolves into a jubilant participation into the beauty and quiet of things. For the trees are in bloom and mid-summer flaunts its pride in a wealth of red and white and yellow; even the close-bitten

grass shows up its tender green ; and down the hill side comes a pageant of contrasted colours in the deeper or lighter green of foliage and the darker hues of older trees. Patches of naked sand, with not a blade of grass to hide their shame with ; and brown sunburnt strips on the hillside add a sombre touch to the whole.

Round about the dell men live and work and bustle ; one sees little bungalows lifting their tiny heads with, perchance, a little effort ; shy lights twinkle from within as soon as their shyer brethren appear in the sky. But all forms of human activity seems to shrink from this place, modestly, as though any emphatic assertion of themselves would be a gross breach of manners. I have walked here at broad noonday with a blazing sun fixed steadily overhead ; and here have I whiled away many a morning, alone or with a friend ; but it has always seemed to me that this place doesn't belong to man and is better left to itself. I have sometimes fancied that there is a machiney of Government in Narture as there is in human society the old tree yonder, with its grand circular top, brooding at noonday over a smaller shadow, safe, for yards and yards round, from the intrusion of other trees, I have fancied, to be the king. Its age and aloofness imposes upon it nothing short of a kingly responsibility and seriousness. Behind, up irregular tiers, rise younger and lustier trees, as though to protect the person of the king. Farther off, two tall trees, rivalling each other in height and girth, stand permanent centry. And they all stand in a fixed unchanging attitude, as though they are aware of vast decisions going on in the kingly chamber, state secrets of moment and weight which must not ooze out before they have gathered a final shape. There is something in the stillness of noon which gives rise to such thoughts and fancies which are not altogether fantastic, but which one discovers afterwards contain, as in a womb, seeds of melancholy and despair, so that, even this fancy, with which I have often pleased myself, strikes me with an uncanny feeling, as I think of it now.

Of an afternoon, however, symbolic fancies cease to occur. The hill path as it twists and turns gives every minute a changing view ; and as it stops on the other side you get into another dell, more poetic perhaps but not quite as lonely. It is a flowery dell ; the red flowers of kristochura trees which go in dozens in these parts

are snatched off in armfuls by the rushing breeze and deposited there ; but it nestles right where men toil and moil for bread or are tended when they fall sick—a humming office and a busy hospital. Possibly one feels tempted to rest here longer ; for the sight of man and woman going for a walk is pleasing ; and there are no skeletons of lank, leafless trees such as you saw in the other dell to put bitterness into your mind.

Presently the shades steal ; it gets dark sooner than you had perhaps expected. But you are in no mood to go away ; for, right from the sea, comes one steady tide of breeze which catches top after top of tall trees on the hill-side, till it almost seems to you as though they passed high words to one another, as they wrestled and writhed under the impact. Then perhaps at a moment you understand what a hundred poets have fancied about trees in the forest—fancies which are as old as the trees themselves, fancies, which in some subtle way, make the whole world a kin—Meanwhile, to your abstracted mind, and enchanted senses, the breeze and the trees, and the clouds that move along like continents in a leisurely procession seem but the one and the same thing or but the rapidly coalescing trifold forms of the one elusive thing that smiles and smiles and heeds not our questioning.

THE GRASS OF THE FIELD.

HIRANMOY BANERJI, *Second Year Arts Class.*

Water, it has been prettily said, is the eye of the world. Grass, let us add, is the soft mouth of Nature's face. It is only with water and with grass that the earth can smile ; the bare ruggedness of her appearance is removed and she puts on a smiling face. When the wind blows over the ocean and sets the water in motion, or passes over the tall grasses gently shaking their heads, the face of the earth changes ; she forgets her antiquity ; she loses all traces of the tragedies and desolations which were wrought upon her fields ; she becomes like a babe in the cradle, with all its freshness and buoyancy.

To an ordinary man the common grass of the field, which we see all round us, has nothing remarkable in it that may catch his fancy. The grass that we treat so roughly, even treading upon it with our feet, is not at all worth looking upon. Yes indeed, but the grass is worth to us more than all the lilies and roses in our gardens. If you have eyes to see, you will find in it something very great and wonderful.

Look for a little time upon a broads expanse of grassy fields, extending far and wide, and see what it teaches you. It is more than common grass. It is more than a collection of tiny blades. It is a great poet, a great servant, and a great teacher. How good it is to escape from the burning pavements of a city street, with sky-kissing buildings towering all round us and have a walk across the green fields ! How pleasant to come out of the four walls, and breathe in an open space resting our eyes upon the green expanse of the grassy lawns ! And if these things be pleasant, what shall we say of the great Autumn pageant, when, after the rains, the valleys and plains stand high with waving grass, flicker and dimple, overflow with the ripple of their joy ?

You dwellers in the city, whose eyes are so sorely disgusted with the hackneyed scene of city streets, come out to the open grassy fields and see what an infinite source of joy it is to you. The vast expanse of the wide fields, with the blue sky resting above, an agreeable loneliness pervading, you take your seat there, upon the green velvet and refresh yourself. The gentle breeze will wait upon you, the sweet warbling of chirping birds will treat you to sweet music, and the bluish green of the grassy fields, meeting the horizon where it touches the earth, will soothe your eyes.

When after the torturous heat of the summer, the rains begin to pour in full vehemence, the fields and plains are all covered with sprouts ; and, as the rainy season advances, they put on a dark green colour, growing in density and thickness, till they cover up the whole surface of the earth with a thick soft carpet. How grand the earth looks then ! Her worn out form is no more to be seen ; attired in a thick velvet gown she appears again in the full blossom of youth. How luckless he is, who misses this sight, how foolish, who fails to enjoy it ! We have been given our eyes to see things and enjoy

their beauty, and how disappointing it would be if, even though endowed with this valuable gift, we fail to appreciate the beauty of Nature.

A GLIMPSE OF THE SNOWS.

HUMAYUN KABIR, (*2nd Year Arts*).

IT was last summer that I had my first glimpse into the mystery of the 'Everlasting Snows'. The world shone forth in life and beauty in the merry month of May—the birds reeled under the "divine madness of melody", and "the soft wind did gently kiss the trees."

The hills burst forth before my wondering gaze as day was dawning. The east was aglow with the radiance of the rising sun and saffron clouds cast a scarlet shade over the whole world. The hills loomed large in the horizon, like dark, sombre thunder-clouds and were clearly silhouetted against the calm morning sky.

The path by and by winded in and out of primival 'Sal' forests. On both sides of the narrow road stood huge 'Sal' trees like sentinels guarding the eternal secret and silence of the hills. A brook in the distance, listlessly murmured on and the solitary call of a bird came floating from far away. The red earth showed here and there out of a maze of fallen 'Sal' leaves, that were strewed thick upon the ground like a soft carpet. A large piece of barren granite only added to the wild charm of the scene and a creeper twined its soft tendril round it, like the soft ministration of love round the stern duties of life.

On reaching Darjeeling in the afternoon, I eagerly turned to the North, but could only see grey undulating clouds stretched from horizon to horizon. Snows, clouds and mist were all lost in one huge, blurred mass, damp and grey.

Next morning I woke up very early to see the sun rise upon the snowpeaks. To my great joy, the sky was serene and blue as the

bosom of the deep on a cloudless day. It was yet dark and the deserted streets were lighted by man's poor contrivance for day light. I got up, dressed, and went out into the cold road from the friendly shelter of the house.

Now, a difficulty faced me. I had come to Darjeeling only once before, and that only for one day. So I did not know the way to Observatory Hill, from which the best view may be had. Trusting to my sense of direction, I started and came to the foot of the Observatory Hill, near the Old Post Office, but now I could not find the way to the top, nor did I know that the hill in front of me was the Observatory Hill. So like a moth, I went round and round it. Then, I asked of the Nepalese sentry at the Governor's Places the way ; he pointed out to me the road to Birch Hill Park (as I later came to learn). I started according to his directions and after going for a good long distance. I started to find that the scene was growing more and more wild and houses were becoming scarce. It was still dark, and I was in an unknown wildlooking place and only the night before I had heard of bisons and wolves coming down from the higher hills. To my great relief, I saw a Lama coming from the opposite direction and asked of him my way. "Vatory Hill" he exclaimed, "O hám nehi jánta" (I know nothing of it). Then I said, "The place from which people see the snows". A smile flickered in his wrinkled face and he said, "Oh Mahakal, but this is not the way there." Then I retraced my steps with him and again came to the foot of the Observatory Hill. He pointed to me the way up and as day was almost breaking, I thanked him and started up running.

Just as I ran up to its top, the sun tinged the virgin breasts of the Snows with the first blushes. Before my wondering gaze lay unfolded the glorious range. Far as the eye could follow, snowpeaks rose upon one another—like a thousand milkwhite tents upon a wide plane. Each peak caught the light touch of dawn and woke up from sleep—ruddy. Beneath—the snowline showed clear against the horizon at an immense height and overtopping all, like a king in his regal splendour Kanchanjangha lifted up its proud head, while at its feet bowed the other peaks, like courtiers before a king.

The Snow crimsoned, deepened into bloodred and again a

delicate tint of rose shivered on the surface. The sun's rays dyed it scarlet, purple and then gold—the melting snow flowed down its side in a golden stream, and, as a blast of horn is echoed from hill to hill, so the colours were reflected from a hundred peaks.

The snow became more and more dazzling white and after some time it was too bright to look at.

* * *

The next view I had of the snows was in the deepening shades of evening. Slowly darkness was enveloping the earth like a shroud—the west was burning with gold and Kanchanjangha was deep blue. The mystery of evening softened its dazzling glow and an indescribable, undefinable exquisite charm floated in the air. Bluer and bluer grew Kanchanjangha, looking a heaven of peace and calm, while the peaks all around glistened bright with the last radiance of departing day. Like the facets of a diamond they reflected the evening glow in all the colours of the rainbow. Enthralled, I looked upon the scene, charmed and speechless till darkness enshrouded it and the fairyland vanished in grey mists.

Then one cloudless morning, when the city was yet asleep, I left Darjeeling. As long as I could see, I kept my eyes fixed upon the Snows of Kanchanjangha, which I saw first glimmer with the dawn, then turn crimson and scarlet as day broke out and finally dazzled till I had to turn my eyes away. When I looked back, a hill intervened and the glories of the snows were shut out.

THE BEGGAR

MR. Bernard Shaw had said “those who minister to poverty and disease are accomplices in the two worst of all crimes” Mr. Bernard Shaw always says something peculiarly pat to the rebellious mood of youth, but for me who had just emerged from my academic lessons of “laissez faire” and the survival of the fittest, Mr. Bernard Shaw was particularly irresistible.

Impetuous by nature, I immediately became the fervent exponent of this Shavian maxim, and no amount of intellectual duelling with my club-mates, of an evening, could make me budge an inch from the position I had taken up as the staunch champion, the dialectic Napolean, I had almost said, of the new and true humanitarianism.

Of all the Philistines against whom I thus pitted myself, the most formidable, because the most calculating, was the eldest son of a wealthy, self-made merchant. A small square-built youth of about my years he was known at the club to be, for all his academic advocacy of philanthropic liberality and old world largesse, as hard-headed, practical and tight-fisted as I was impulsive, idealistic and extravagant.

It was in the course of one of our frequent jousts from which, after much bruising and shattering of lances, we were accustomed to rest for the day, equally undaunted and invincible, that I received a dangerous wound which remained open half the night and cost me a lot of intellectual blood. To put aside metaphor, however, the cause of a troubled Saturday night, which I have good cause to remember well, was a hint, thrown out by my Philistine friend that evening, that the idealism of the West, particularly when it was rooted in sordid selfishness, was, "to put it mildly, inaplicable, by a long chalk, whatever practical value it may have elsewhere, to the social conditions and humane temper of the East."

This 'twain-shall-never-meet' sentiment, to which I had hardly given a thought on the present matter, kept my mind none the less busy, though I had an engagement early next morning which necessitated my turning out at an ungodly hour. The more I wanted to auto-suggest myself to sleep, the more obstinate and active and acute my thoughts tended to become.

2

Morning found me at the trystingplace. It was all right. My auto-suggestive powers, I was proud to reflect, were, if not perfect, sound enough and in good working order. I had succeeded, in spite of my own headiness, in tumbling out in very good time, and taking my stand at the head of my lane, before my friends came round. It was to be a holiday drive across the river and along the Grand Trunk, and I wasn't going to miss it if I could help it.

I was there, keeping my tryst, long before time and I began

to potter aimlessly about the pavement in the quiet, fresh, summer morning. Things were just beginning to look up for the day. Milkmen and vegetable carts, market-bound, were most in evidence. The “pānwalla” on the farther side of the street was sleepily and mechanically preparing for the day’s sales.

I am not good at observation; I am afraid I am too much given to morning to be that. The nightmare had not left me quite. I was debating with myself about it, as I paced dreamily to and fro along the footpath when my attention was arrested by the familiar figure, a few yards off, of an old, doubled-up beggar sitting, as was his wont, at the head of the lane, with his right hand stretched out to the passer by. I had long known him to be a regular feature of the landscape, in the busy hours of the day. I had recently known him to be an impostor. He pretended to be blind, and he was not blind. He was only a white-bearded, short-featured, tall, lank, stooping old man. Physically, I had always associated him in my mind,—not least because of his glittering eye—with the Ancient Mariner. In respect however, of the precision of his presence and position with his back to the corner house, and also of what I believed to be his moral propensities, I had often playfully speculated with myself as to the possibility of his being old Silas Wegg, reincarnated on this side of the Mediterranean.

This latter analogy, as you can easily understand, only dawned upon me after I had repeatedly seen him, as that English worthy has been reported to be seen, in all weathers at his post. It was substantiated by my accidental discovery, one fine day, of his beggarly pretensions. He was clever enough to bend his head over his breast and to stand or sit with closed eyes, so as to appear to pedestrians, hurrying along their work, a blind, broken man. But he was not clever enough to keep himself in when a street accident took place a few paces away from him. His curiosity got the better of his cleverness. The moment he gave a slight edgewise, furtive glance in that direction, our eyes accidentally met. He had betrayed to me, at least, the secret of his stooping posture in the momentary vision I had had of those two glittering eyes.

And there he was this morning, as usual bent and apparently blind, silently and therefore the more appealingly, imploring the

charity of the hurrying "guāla" and the labourer out early to bear the burden and the heat of the dawning day. But this time I didn't think of the beggar and his wiles. I couldn't find it in my heart to be hard on that quiet harmless old man, for all that he was not blind. He was, I argued to myself, if with vision, certainly without youth, energy, hope, perchance, without support. He seemed to be at grips, with life itself. He must live, and, if he couldn't work for his bread, why, he must beg it.

And here I saw him beg it, almost in spite of himself. All my harshness had fled like the night before the bright May sun; which was just beginning to peep in at the horizon. How could I call him bad names to myself when my eyes told me, plainly enough, that the wretched man was only half awake; was continually relapsing into the half-finished sleep from which his dire need alone had roused him and sent him on his day's work of beggary. I saw it unmistakably, the grey-fringed head drop, protestingly, inevitably on the uncovered breast. It was futile, perfectly futile, for him to seek to hold it up, to arouse himself out of that stupor. The streets were quiet; he had nothing to do, as he sat there on the pavement, with his staff by his side and his back to the wall, save holding out his hand,—and he could not help himself dozing off in his misery and vacancy.

At last, he would not bear it up any longer. He must shake himself and feel more alive. He took up his staff and raised himself on it, and learning forward on his support with curved back put himself into a standing posture.....

He had not long thus installed himself when a new form, offering a curious contrast to the one I had been so far observing swam into ken. It was that of the Street-sweep out on his day's work, and at it with remarkable gusto too. On closer inspection, he offered a little, little chubby aspect. He had certainly not seen a dozen summers, but his joys had apparently, already within those few years, rivalled the shock of glossy black hair with which he was profusely gifted, and he seemed to have treasured up the memory of all his happiness in the sunny, boyish smile he wore.

He came along our side of the street and passed by me, intent upon his mop, which, like a farmer's boy behind his plough, he kept

pushing gaily away and away from him. He was mopping his way in the direction of the old man leaning on his staff. I was interestingly following his triumphant progress, when the harsh swish-swish of the procession was feebly, almost apologetically, broken into by a thin voice.

"Little one, just come here a moment ; do me a favour, my son." It was the old man, unpretending, open-eyed, addressing the lad. But the boy was too busy ; he was preoccupied with the music of his march. He seemed not to have heard. A second appeal, however, proved successful. He looked up. "My son," the old man continued, now that he had won a hearing, "go and fetch a poor old man a pice worth of 'biris' from the shop on the other side of the way." The boy kept looking on for a trifle longer ; then, as if still discussing the move to himself, began doubtfully to approach his suppliant. He looked crest-fallen : and I immediately thought of the Wedding-Guest.....

He had but timidly approached and seized the proffered coin. In a moment, he had, once armed with the copper, besieged and attacked the unwary shopkeeper, forced his own terms upon the enemy, and, like a loyal general, returned to his lord with the spoils of the campaign. He placed this copper-worth into the outstretched hand and turned to go.

"Here my boy, take this" he heard behind him. His spirits had just revived ; he was again troubled. I dare say he didn't want to run errands for that queer old man any more. He had better things to do. He so wanted to finish his work right off and then have the day all to himself and be moreover just in time when his pals were getting out into the side-street to make a ripping week-end of it. No, he didn't want to be troubled any more. Nevertheless, he turned round and faced that pestering nuisance.

"Child here is one of these 'biris' for you. Have a good smoke and may Allah's blessings descend upon you". The old man's manner was gentler than ever as he, a wise prince, shared the spoils with his general.

The loud tooting approach of my Philistine's car just then, docked further observation.

When we turned the corner, the curtain finally closed for me,

on that touching scene but not before I had caught a glimpse of a chubby lad engaged at the shop in raising the free end of a dangling coir rope to his mouth.

3

A couple of days later, there were seated at the club some six of us variously occupied. My Philistine with the Samaritan's philosophy in him, suddenly looked up from the daily that he had been, for some minutes past, deeply engrossed in. "Here is something for our self-styled humanitarians; he appealed to the wall in front of him, before he turned to me, as I was thinking he would and added "Put this in your pipe, old chap, and smoke it". He handed me the paper, indicating the particular column which I was to use, apparently in place of tobacco, for my edification.

I had been nervously watching him running his eye along that page. But it was clear now that he had seen and read it, the stuff, I had in my usual headlong way, communicated to the press on my Sunday morning's experience.

"The third column there, a little lower down"; he interrupted me, as I fumbled, clumsily and evidently effectively with the sheet before me. "The author", he continued, "a fellow, who with all his heart is certainly suffering from a slightly swelled head, talks a lot of what you'll", of course, call tosh about a beggar,—an Ancient Mariner looking bloke he calls him—who made our correspondent blush, and a sadder and a wiser man, and all that sort of thing, by being impossibly grateful and charitable to a little crossing-sweep for fetching him some smokes,—and all particularly because he himself, inspite of his niggardly principles, and, as he puts it, not wisely but too well, had forked out the coin which happened to do all the trick. He had, you see, stood Sam, as it turned out, for both the beggar and the kid.

He stopped to regain breath after this vast delivery which he might have done without or shortened into "Queen Victoria is dead," for all the information he gave me. But he soon went on. "The fellow is like the hip bone; apparently has no name. However, the stuff's worth reading though he hasn't quite dressed it up and his style is as jerky as yours" (I dived into the paper). Any way it's good enough to knock the conceit out of your sordid stinting,

tinkering, mukers." His philanthropic enthusiasm, the anonymous writer and the summer had worked him up to this outburst.

A general feeling of "A Harpagon come to judgment" seemed to me to have at this instant pervaded the room. It found expression, at least in the case of the communicative soul next to me in a very knowing nudge and wink.

THE IDEAL OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

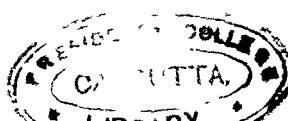
SUBODH KUMAR DUTT, *Ex-Student.*

THE necessity and benefit of education has been recognised from the earliest times. Education makes the mind broader and helps us to have a clearer view of things in life. It stimulates the good qualities of man and develops the power of judgment. It makes us realise better the importance of social and religious injunctions. The value of Education does not lie solely in learning facts and dates, but it lies in the training that it gives to the mind. Education trains us to think and act for ourselves and to know why we are doing it. Taken in this light it does not matter much how we are educated or what we are learning. Any kind of education—whether received at home, or in a University, or in Nature's fields—provided it is right, will always stand a man in good stead. But mass education is only possible in Universities and the educationists have evolved the curriculum of the Universities which experience has shewn to be the best designed to train the faculties of the average boy. Thus literature is necessary to cultivate our minds and to enhance the sense of beauty and mathematics develops the power of clear thinking. It may not always be apparent of what use a certain subject is going to be in after life and every subject may not be equally congenial to all, but there is no doubt that every task exercises and strengthens some part of the machinery of mind and makes us more fitted to cope with things in after life. The ideal University equips us mentally, physically and morally to deal with

life when we go out into the world and to make us capable of thinking and acting for ourselves.

Now in so far as this ideal is concerned, there is nothing in it which can warrant us to say that University education tends to make a man unfit for a business career. A man can be none the worse for his knowledge of Philosophy or Literature, or Science. On the other hand if he can successfully employ his acquired knowledge in the field of business, he is sure to have much better prospects than the man who is ignorant, provided they are equal in other respects. A good knowledge of Commerce and Economics is sure to help substantially a man who is engaged in trade and such other businesses. But if in acquiring this knowledge we have to suffer a loss which is not compensated by the corresponding gain, we cannot hope to achieve as much success as we otherwise would have expected; moreover, this loss may even make us too disabled for a business career.

Let us then examine whether we do suffer such a loss in our University life. The traditions of a University require us to lead a life of some amount of seclusion for a part of the best years of our lives. It makes us live only in the veiled atmosphere of the colleges, quite separated from the general mass of people. This seclusion does not allow us to mix freely with all sorts of people and thus we get no opportunity of studying the nature of man under all circumstances and conditions. Thus our knowledge of the nature of man and his ways gets very limited, and in later years we also lose the power of mixing freely with all kinds of men. Again, the atmosphere in which we lead our College lives does not make us familiar with the nature of the difficulties that we may encounter in life. No obstacles cross our paths in the sheltered lives we lead in a University, and we get into the habit of thinking that life hereafter will be as much of the nature of a plain-sailing as heretofore. This habit has the effect of robbing us of our power of resourcefulness, and when we come face to face with the difficulties we see no way of surmounting them and so suffer irreparable losses. Our Universities give us no idea of what life really is, but only make us familiar with its shadow which is immune from all dangers and difficulties, and thereby we lose the power of bearing stoically the



reverses which we are sure to suffer later on. Another defect of University education is that it carries specialisation too far. This specialised knowledge, though it comes to use sometimes (especially in Science) does not improve the mental faculties in the same proportion, and so an all-round education which alone serves a man so much in after life, becomes impossible. The University also induces a bookish tendency and a spirit of disdain and false pride. The former does not allow us to find ready solutions of the problems that we encounter in life, and the latter prevents us from gathering knowledge from all sources and from people of all classes. Hence it is seen that though we no doubt gain a large amount of theoretical knowledge in Universities, we do not do it without paying a price for it; in fact, we suffer a loss in our mental qualities which cannot be ignored.

Knowledge is strength, but knowledge is not the only thing that is required in business. Business requires a sound common sense and an alert mind always ready to drink at all fountains and to profit by the experiences of others. A man to be successful in business should be able to mix with all kinds of men, should have a good knowledge of human nature and a ready resourcefulness in the face of danger, a keen fore-sight and an unfailing courtesy. These qualities of the head and the heart cannot be acquired in a University as we have already seen. If we read the lives of the most successful businessmen and merchant-princes in this world, we shall see that most of them had no University education to speak of, and yet they had reached the topmost rungs in the ladder of life only by an indomitable grit and patient perseverance. Without a high ambition and an earnest desire for attaining it, a man cannot succeed and make his mark in business. But though this ambition may not be absent from the mind of a University man, yet the University education is not conducive to the growth of the strong will by which that ambition could be realised. So it is seen that many highly educated men who have made their marks in the annals of a University fail ignominiously in following a business career, and that they for the most part go in either for service, or for the learned professions of teaching, law and medicine. This is proof of the fact that a high University education is not at all necessary for being a successful businessman. Again, we

cannot expect a University to infuse into the mind the business instinct. That is outside the functions of a University. This instinct can only be acquired by a practical apprenticeship in the field of business and by patience and perseverance. The failure of so many joint-stock companies in Bengal is only due to the ignorance of the promoters in sound business methods, though they were for the most part highly educated. At the present time also though the Bengalis are acknowledged to be the most intellectual race in India, yet they are being continually pushed to the background in the fields of trade and commerce in their own land by people who may be termed dunces in the matter of literary education and who do not care a jot for the University. The long process of University education and the system of frequent examinations generally weaken the brain and leave a man dull, they rob us of the stamina to boldly face and surmount the difficulties and accidental setbacks that characterise a business career.

Hence University education even at its best is thoroughly unsuited to any one who wishes to be a successful man of business. But we must confess that the education we generally get at the Universities is not at all up to the ideal. The ideal is more often than not entirely forgotten, and boys are made to cram their lessons without understanding them. The practice of learning things by rote widely prevalent amongst the average class of boys leaves no mark in the mind and does not improve the mental powers. So we do not get even the training of the mind which would have resulted if the ideal had been always kept in the foreground, and this faked education makes us even more unsuited for a business career. The prosperity and affluence of a country is proportional to the degree in which its people are successful in trade and business. The present poverty and degradation of the Bengalis are solely due to their lack of interest in business (which is rather the fault of their education than of themselves). But if we can reform our Universities such that they would teach every one to use his hands and feet together with the brains and would educate us without creating an artificial environment where the hard realities of life cannot touch us (as was the practice in ancient Athens and Sparta), then we may hope to be as much business like as learned, and then bring prosperity and wealth to one and all.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF SOVIETISM

MR. NIRMAL KUMAR BHATTACHARYYA, M. A.

Karl Marx, like Rousseau has had the good fortune of presiding over a great revolution. The revolution conceived in his name is, however, more far-reaching in its effect than that inspired by the fore-runner of the French Revolution; for it has attacked not only the social and political systems but also the economic structure of society. Like the French the Proletariat Revolution is, nonetheless, regarded as the panacea of all social ills by a class of men who have not worshipped Marx this side of idolatry. The ruthless logical precision with which his dogmas have, not infrequently, been carried into practice by the Russian revolutionaries has extorted grudging admiration from even the sworn enemies of Sovietism.

New Russia besides dealing successfully with the English, French and Polish invasions has had to face the Counter-revolutionary movements of Kolchack, Denikin, Yudenitch and Wrangel in the very first and the second years of her birth. Moreover she had to check anti-Sovietism in Siberia and Asia. Inspite of these initial difficulties she has grown up into a vigorous child and is bidding for a "place under the Sun."

It is undeniable that Revolutionary Russia draws a good deal of inspiration and strength from the idealism that pervades her constitution. The Declaration of Rights of the Labouring and Exploited masses incorporated into the constitution of July 10, 1918 affirms by implication the fundamental principles of the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Russian constitution proposes to make the three doctrines of liberty, equality and fraternity a practical reality. It attempts to carry into practice universal suffrage which remained only in the mind of the French revolutionary theorists. The constitution of July 10, 1918 lays down: "The right to vote and to be elected to the Soviets belongs to all citizens of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic without distinction of sex, religion, or nationality and without any residential qual-

fication provided that on the day of the election they have reached the age of eighteen." Such a liberal franchise law brings democracy to the door of practically everybody living in the state by the inclusion of a large number of landless and houseless people. Moreover, "The electors have the right at anytime to recall the delegates whom they have sent to the soviet and to proceed to new elections" (Soviet Constitution ch. XV. Art 78). This provision of the constitution may be looked upon as a distinct step towards direct democracy which alone is democracy in the real sense of the term.

The Russian workers' Revolution of November, 1917 produced its constitution in July 1918. It embodies the political and social significance of the radical changes effected in the structure of society apart from a description of the governmental machinery. Looking at the constitution we find that it possesses the supreme virtue of flexibility and has already undergone some important changes in the light of later experiences. The principles of federation and decentralisation have been very largely availed of; and they are seen at work side by side.

The town and the village Soviets constitute the germ cell of the Soviet Leviathan. These councils, comparable, for certain purposes to the urban and rural parish councils of the English system of local government, represent an honest and bold attempt to realise "government of the people, by the people, for the people." It has been described as a gigantic step forward in self-government and self-administration compared with any system previously prevailing in Russia, or indeed anywhere else in the world. Mr. Kameneff reporting at the seventh All Russian Congress of Soviets in Dec. 1919, on the proposed amendments to the constitution said "we find that if only fifteen or twenty men take part in administration they must against their own will become bureaucrats however much they speak against bureaucracy. The wide participation of the workers themselves is imperative." The town and the village councils afford ample opportunities for such participation. The next higher unit of local government is the rural district, often equal in size to half an English county; the vyezd or county is frequently as large as two or three English counties; while there are gubernii, or provinces as large as England. The government of these local bodies is carried on by Soviet council.

which were given a large share of autonomy by the original constitution of 1918. Gradually however central control has been strengthened for tiding over the difficulties of reconstruction. Soviet authorities assert that after the period of reconstruction full autonomy will be granted to all the various local government bodies.

Soviet state like the Maxian state is an industrial and agricultural community. Soviet definition of the state believing, as it does, in "economic materialism" lays great stress on the economic aspect of state-life. Marx in Capital gives us a picture of an industrial Community. "Let us picture a community of free individuals" says he "carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community. The total product of Community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production, and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion among them is consequently necessary. The social relations of the individual producers, both with regard to their labour and to its products are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, both with respect to production and distribution." This is the sort of economic community that is the ideal of the Russian socialists. The third All-Russian Congress of Soviets prepared its constitution "with the fundamental aim of suppressing all exploitation of man by man, of abolishing for ever that division of society, into classes, of ruthlessly suppressing all exploiters of bringing about the socialist organisation of society, and of establishing the triumph of socialism in all countries....." It further decreed the abolition of private ownership of land and capital. Thus Russia has carried out what Marx passionately declared in his communist manifesto: Theory of the communists may be summed up in the single sentence: "Abolition of private property." Moreover Article 18 of the Soviet Constitution clearly lays down: "The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic proclaims it the duty of all citizens to work on the principle, 'He that does not work neither shall he eat.'" Russian Republic therefore is the industrial democracy of free workers so well described by Marx in the Capital.

Russia has accepted in toto all the three dogmas of Marx—eco-

conomic materialism, surplus value and class war. Her socialism is also the International Socialism of the writer of the famous communist manifesto. It calls upon the workers of the world to unite to overthrow the capitalist regime. "The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletariats have nothing to lose but their claims. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries unite !" The famous manifesto of Marx ends with this appeal to the wage-earners of the world to rise on behalf of communism. Bolsheviks likewise do not make a secret of their intention to bring about a world revolution. It was Marx who founded the workers' Internationale and today it is Russia that is the great patron of this International organisation of workmen.

In the economic organisations of socialist Russia is traceable a distinct influence of the two great advocates of State Socialism —Lassalle and Rodbertus. They advocated the full control of the agents of production by a strong national governments. The central authority would lay down and carry out the economic policy of the state. Supreme Economic council later on named the Council of Labour and Defence, in Russia performs function of economic reconstruction. It works in cooperation with those departments of the state which perform duties of an economic nature. The council of Labour and Defence is assisted by a number of committees whose activities extend over the entire field of the economic life of the nation. Its economic policy is the policy of nation. Thus so far as economic organisation is concerned Russia has imitated Lassalle and Rodbertus.

Soviet Russia is therefore a worshipper of the proletarian deities Marx, Lassalle and Rodbertus. The new state is a living and forceful reality today. She has been accused of all conceivable offences against humanity ; inspite of this however many civilised nations have entered into commercial treaties with her. She has been a party to more than one international convention and it may be safely concluded that Russia has virtually received international recognition as an independent sovereign state. Bolshevism stands for a new social and political order which is hated in most of the countries. But it must

72 The Presidency College Cooperative Society, Ltd.

admitted that Russia has been carrying on a huge experiment which if successful is sure to affect the social, economic and political structure of all nations.

THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE COOPERATIVE SOCIETY, Ltd.

The Annual meeting of the society was held on Friday, the 28th of September. The Society was registered under Act II of 1912 on the 10th of March, 1922. During the short period of its existence the society has enlisted 73 members of whom 47 belong to Presidency College, 13 to the Hare School, 12 to the Hindu School, and 1 to the Eden Hindu Hostel. The membership includes Professors, Lecturers, School-teachers, Clerks and menials. It is a perfectly democratic institution.

The authorised share capital of the society is Rs. 20,000 divided into 2000 shares of Rs. 10/- each. On the 30th of June, 1923, the actual amount of share capital paid up was Rs. 3,743 and the total amount of deposits received was Rs 4,851. The total amount of loans issued upto the 30th June, 1923 was Rs. 14,104. The purposes for which loans have been issued include repayment of old debts at higher rates, house-building, purchase of land expenses on account of illness, performance of compulsory social ceremonies such as daughters' marriages and sradhs etc. Repayments of loan kists have been generally regular. The rate of interest charged on loans contracted during the year was 9½ p. c. per annum or 1½ pies per rupee per month.

The society has made a profit of Rs. 434/13/6 and it is proposed to pay a dividend of 6½ per cent. The following is a list of office bearers in 1922-23 :—

Chairman—Rai J. B. Bhaduri, Bahadur.

Hon. Secretary—Prof. P. Mukherji.

Hon. Jt. Secy.—K. N. Chakravarti.

Hon. Treasurer—Prof. K. C. Ray.

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Vesal Shirazi	Rasa-i-Ahl-i-Bait.
Nasir Khun Uln	Diwan-i-Hakim
” ”	Safar Namai Shah Eran.
Mirza Sayeb	Diwan-i-Sayeb.
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Clodd, E.	As a man thinketh.
	The Question.

FINAL NOTES

The Christian Scriptures tell us that the best wine is served last. And last come, therefore, the two following letters which we have as much pride as pleasure in re-publishing from the Calcutta Review of September. These letters not only show appreciation of the merits of Dr. Ghoshal and Mr. Mukherjea, but also reflect much credit on their old Alma-mater the Presidency College :—*Ed.*

—o—

Mr. P. D. Mukerjee on Co-operative Movement.

International Labour office,
Geneva.

23rd May, 1923.

League of Nations.

Dear Sir,

Your book on the Co-operative movement in India has recently arrived at the International Labour Office and has been passed to me as chief of the Co-operative service. I am very glad of this opportunity of stating that I have read it with great interest and profit, and can assure you that it will be favourably mentioned in our International Labour Review.

I must say that we have been very anxious here to contribute towards spreading in other countries the knowledge of the growing Indian Co-operative Movement, and have been very fortunate in securing from Mr. Henry Wolff an article on "the Co-operative Movement and Labour in India" which appeared in the International Labour Review (February, 1922). Your book, which of course possesses greater fulness of documentation, will, I am sure, serve the same purpose.

Although it seems intended mostly as a reliable guide for Indian practical co-operators and also for students of Economics, it shows such a sound and sympathetic understanding of the fundamental

principles and supplies such accurate and upto-date information on the efforts, development and needs of the Indian Co-operative Movement and even of the various Co-operative Movements in other countries, that in my opinion it places the general public considerably in your debt.

Yours faithfully,
 Dr. G. FAUQUET,
Chief of the Co-operative Service

—○—
 Dr. Ghoshal on Hindu Political Theories

Edinburgh
 4, Crawford Road
 25th July, 1923.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter Misc 8258-XXVIII of the 27th of June forwarding to me a copy of Dr. Upendra Nath Ghoshal's work on 'A History of Hindu Political Theories.'

I have read with much interest this work and I am glad to be able to say that I think it is unquestionably one of the most considerable contributions yet made to this interesting topic. The author's information is extensive, and what is more important in this matter, his judgment is normally extremely sound. His acceptance of the traditional date of the Arthashastra is a matter on which I disagree, but fortunately comparatively little turns in this case on the date.

I have accordingly to ask you to convey to the Vice-Chancellor and the Syndicate my high appreciation of their courtesy in sending me this work and my sense of the valuable service which they are rendering to the cause of Indian studies by the publication of scholarly treatises of this kind which are calculated to remove prevalent misconceptions regarding Indian political thought.

Yours very truly,
 A. BERRIDALE VEITH.

The Registrar,
 Calcutta University.

APOLOGIA

As the College is closing rather unexpectedly early, we have had literally to rush through the Press. And hence this issue of the Magazine is much thinner than it would otherwise have been. The reports of the various organisations of the College and the Hostel Notes, in which are reflected our manifold activities have along with some articles been withheld from publication. There may also be some other shortcomings which but for such feverish hurry would not have occurred. For all these we sincerely apologise to our readers, and while wishing all a very enjoyable vacation, we hope our contributors will not forget during the holidays their old friend
—The Magazine

—*Ed.*

বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্য সভার বার্ষিক অধিবেশন উপনিষদ—
শ্রীযুক্ত শরৎচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের অভিভাবণ।

আমাকে আপনারা আজ এখানে আহ্বান করে পরম গৌরব দান করেছেন। কিন্তু পাঁচ বৎসর আগে রবিবাবু এখানে দাঢ়িয়ে বলেছিলেন—সেজন্য সক্ষোচ বোধ কর্তৃ। আমি লিখে থাকি, কিন্তু বলতে আমি পারি না—সকলে সবকাং পারে না। আমি কতকগুলি বই লিখেছি; কিন্তু বক্তৃতা আমার কাছে বেশী প্রত্যাশা করবেন না।

আমি সাহিত্যিক—কাজে কাজেই সাহিত্যের বিষয় বলাই আমার স্বাভাবিক। রাজা রামমোহন রায়ের সময় থেকে হতুল পেঁচার নজর প্রত্তিই মধ্য দিয়ে বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্য কেমন করে বড় হয়ে উঠল, সে ইতিহাস আমি টিক জানিনা; দীনেশ বাবু সে বিষয়ে টিক বলতে পারবেন।

আজ দশবৎসর পূর্বে প্রথম সাহিত্যক্ষেত্রে দাঢ়িয়ে। “যমুনা” বলে একটা কাগজ ছিল, তার গ্রাহকসংখ্যা মোটে বত্রিশ—কেউ তাতে লেখেন। আমি তখন বর্ষা থেকে এখানে এসেছিলাম। সম্পাদক বলেন—কেউ লেখা দিতে চায়না, তোমাকে লিখতে হবে। (কেউ লেখা দিতে চায় না বলে আমার লিখতে হবে, সেটা আমার পক্ষে খুব গৌরবের কথা নয়)। বল্লুম—ছেলেবেলায় লিখিছি বটে, কিন্তু তার পরেতো লিখিনি। সম্পাদক বলেন তাতেই হবে। তারপর বর্ষা ফিরে গেলুম। ক্রমাগত টেলিগ্রামের পর টেলিগ্রাম পেশে লিখতে হলো। সেই থেকে এই দশবছরে এই বইগুলো লিখেছি। কিন্তু আগেই বলেছি—সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস বিশেষ জানিনা। কিন্তু আধুনিক সাহিত্য যাকে বলা হয়, তা যখন বুঝনা কর্তৃ; তখন জানিনা বলে সেটা বোধ হয় অতিরিক্ত বিনয় হয়ে পড়বে। যদি কিছু অপ্রিয় সত্য বলে ফেলি তাহলে ক্ষমা করবেন।

আমি প্রথমেই দেখলুম—ছোট ছোট গল্প বড় দরকার। রবিবাবু আগে লিখে গেছেন তারপর আর তেমন কেউ লেখেননি। আমি লিখতে লাগলুম। সম্পাদক বলেন—দেখ, প্রেম-ট্রেম না। ও একেবারে পুরানো হয়ে গেছে। দুর্নীতি না থাকে এমন সব ভাল গল্প লেখ। লিখলেম। তাঁরা বললেন—ভাল হয়েছে। ক্রমশঃ সাহিত্যের মধ্যে যখন আসতে লাগলুম দেখলুম—দুর্নীতি প্রাচাৰ করো না; প্রেমের গল্প লিখনা; এ করো না; ও করো না—এ সব বলে তো চলবে না। তখন “চরিত্রানীন” ঝুঁক করি। সে বইটা বেশ প্রসিদ্ধ হয়ে গেছে! যখন লিখি তখন—মেসের ছাত্রদের চরিত্র থাকল না; দেশ দুর্নীতিতে ভুবে গেল, সাহিত্যের স্বাস্থ্যরক্ষা হলো না—প্রভৃতি অনেক গালাগালিই শুনতে হয়েছে। কিন্তু বর্ষা চলে গেলুম,—গালি তত্ত্ব পৌছিল না।

ভাবলুম—ভয়ে লিখব না, সেতো ঠিক নয়। কেননা সব জিমিবই বদলায়। আজ যা সত্য হয়তো দশ বৎসর পরে তা আর সত্য থাকবে না। আজ যা অসত্য, আজ যা অন্যান্য হয়তো একশো বছর পরে তার স্বরূপ বদলাবে। যারা লেখক তাঁরা যদি পঞ্চাশ বছর, একশো বছরের কথা এগিয়ে করনা কর্তে না পাবে তবে চলে না। আজ যাঁদের মনে হচ্ছে—লোক বিগড়ে যাবে; তখন তাঁদেরই আর সে কথা মনে হবে না। মানুষের “idea” ক্রমেই বদলে যাচ্ছে।

সাহিত্য শৃষ্টির কাজে দ্রুই রকম লোক আছে। অনেকে লিখছেন না; কাজ করে যাচ্ছেন—জানছেন না—তাঁদের কাজ আমার মত সাহিত্য বাবসায়ীকে আঁকবার চারিত্র যোগাচ্ছে, আমরা আর এক দল লিখি—এই সব চারিত্র শৃষ্টি করি। এ ছাড়াও আর এক দল আছেন, যারা শুধু যাচাই করেন। আমরা সমাজের বাইরে যাচ্ছি কিনা, দুর্নীতি প্রচার কর্ত্তি কিনা—এই সব দেখেন। রবিবাবু সেদিন বলেন—ও ইঙ্গল মার্ষারের দল আমরা মান্ব না। ওদের বিধিনিষেধকে ঠেলে যা খুসি করবো। আমার কিন্তু মনে হয়—একথা বলা যায় না। তাঁদেরও চাই। তাঁদেরও বলবার right আছে। আমরা সকলে মিলেই ভাষাকে পর পর গঠিত করে যাচ্ছি।

আমি সেদিনও বলেছি, যে আজকাল একটা ব্রহ্ম উঠেছে—বক্ষিম বাবুকে কেউ মানে না, তাঁর ভাষা লেখে না। আমার মতে বক্ষিমবাবুর কাজ হয়ে গেছে, তাঁর ভাষাকে ডিপ্পিয়ে যেতে হবে; তাঁর ideaকে ছাড়িয়ে যেতে হবে। আমার বোধ হয়—“তাঁর অনেক চারিত্রেই খুঁত আছে। অনেক চারিত্রে সামঞ্জস্য নাই। এইটা করা দরকার, এইটা মন্দ—এই ভাবেই তিনি লিখে গেছেন। যাকে ভাল করেছেন—তাকে ভালই করেছেন আর যাকে মন্দ করেছেন, তাকে মন্দই করেছেন। তার বেশী তিনি এগুতে পারেননি। হয়তো দরকার হয়নি, কিন্তু সমাজের মান রেখে বলতে পারেননি; কিন্তু ফলাফল ভেবে বলেননি—বলতে পারি না। তাঁর সঙ্গে তো আমার আলাপ ছিল না। কিন্তু, এখন মনে হয়—চারিত্রের দিক দিয়ে তাঁর অনেক ভুল আছে। আজ কালকার দিক দিয়ে দেখলে—এখানে থেমে থাকা চলে না। সত্য কথা বলতে হবে।

সম্পাদক মহাশয় বলেন—আমি সত্যকথা সোজা করে বলবার চেষ্টা করেছি। বাস্তবিকই আমি দেখেছি—এ জিমিটা দরকার। তাই এতে আমি কুঠা করি না। সাহিত্য গড়বার শক্তি হয়তো আমার নেই। কিন্তু গোটা কয়েক সত্য কথা বলবার চেষ্টা করেছি, অনেক রকম লোকের সঙ্গে মিশে যা দেখেছি শুনেছি—তাই লিখে যাচ্ছি, আমি তা বলতে ভয় করিনা। কাবণ আগেই বলেছি—একশো বছর পরে হয়তো মনে হবে এই সত্য এ সব বোধ হয় কারো বলবার দরকার ছিল।”

নিজের সম্বন্ধে অনেক বলে ফেলেছি। সেটা দেখতে তেমন ভাল দেখায় না। আমি যা বলছিলাম, তাই বলব। আজকাল একটা তর্ক উঠেছে—আমরা দুর্বীতি প্রচার কর্তৃ, যা খাবাপ, মন্দ তাই সব লিখছি। রবিবাবুও এজন্ত অনেক গালমন্দ খে়েছেন। আমি তাঁব শিয়, আমিও বড় কম থাইন। কেবল যুবক সম্প্রদারিই বোধ হয় আমাব পৃষ্ঠপোষক। যে, যা আমাৰ বয়সী, কিম্বা আমাৰ চেষ্টে প্ৰবীণ, তাঁৰা রব তুলেছেন আমি ক্ষতি কৰ্ত্ত। আমি এমন সব জিনিষ অনেছি, যা আগে ছিল না, যা নাকি অত্যন্ত নোংৰা। অবগু আমি মন কৱিনা যে সব সত্যই সাহিত্যে স্থান পেতে পাৰে। অনেক কুৎসিত ব্যাপাব আছে, যাতে সাতিত্য হয় না। (এ আমি বল্লুম কাৰণ এ নইলৈ অনেকে আমাকে ঠিক বুবৈনে না।) কিন্তু আমি যে জিনিষটা দেবাৰ চেষ্টা কৰেছি সেটা ক্ৰমাগত সমাজেৰ মধ্যে এমে পড়ছে, আমাদেৰ চোখেৰ উপৰ চলছে—সে সমাজেৰ অঙ্গ, তাকে কুৎসিত বলে অস্বীকাৰ কৱো চলবে না। তাকে সাহিত্যে স্থান দিতে হবে। আমি পাপীৰ চিৰ এঁকেছি। হয়তো পাপ তাৰা কৰেছেন, তাই বলে খুনী আসামীৰ মত তাদেৰ ফুঁসী দিতে হবে নাকি? মানুষেৰ আত্মাৰ আমি অপমান কৰ্ত্তে কথনও পাৰিনা। কোন মানুষকেই নিছক কালো মনে কৰ্ত্তে আমাৰ ব্যথা লাগে। আমি ভাৰতে পাৰিন যে একটা মহুয় একেবাৰে মন্দ, তাৰ কোন redeeming feature নেই। ভাল মন্দ হইই সবাৰ মধ্যে আছে, তবে হয়তো মন্দটা কাৰো বধ্যে বেশী পৰিষ্কুট হয়েছে। কিন্তু তাই বলে স্থান তাকে কেন কৱো? অবিশ্ব আমি কথনও বলিনা যে পাপ ভালো। পাপেৰ প্ৰতি মানুষকে প্ৰলুক্ষ কৰ্ত্তে আমি চাঁটিনা। আমি বলি তাঁদেৰ মধ্যেও তো ভগবানেৰ দেওয়া মহুয়েৰ আত্মা রয়েছে। তাকে অপমান কৱিবাৰ আমাদেৰ কোন অধিকাৰ নাই।

আমি এমন জিনিষ অনেক সময় তাদেৰ মধ্যে দেখেছি, যা বড় সমাজেৰ মধ্যে নেই। মহস্ত জিনিষটা কোথায়ও ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে থাকে না। তাকে সন্ধান কৰে খুঁজে নিতে হয়। মহুয় যখন মহস্তেৰ সন্ধান কৰ্ত্তে ভুলে যাবে তখন সে নিজেকে ছোট কৰে আনবে। আমি অনেক সময় তাদেৰ মধ্যে যা ভালো, দেখাতে চেয়েছি; কাৰণ তাকে discard কৰিবাৰ আমাদেৰ right নেই। যেখানে বড় জিনিষ আছে তাকে সম্মান কৰ্ত্তে হবে। জ্ঞান যদি প্ৰয়োজনীয় হয় খাৰাপ জিনিষেৰ মধ্যেও তাকে খুঁজতে হবে—ক্ষতিৰ ভয় থাকলেও খুঁজতে হবে। তা ছাড়া জানতে গেলেই যে আকৃষ্ট হতে হবে গাৰ কি মানে আছে?

আমি মনে কৱি মানুষকে একথা বোৰানো দৱকাৰ যে খাৰাপেৰ মধ্যেও মহস্তকে মনে recognize কৰ্ত্তে হবে। পাপীৰ প্ৰতি স্থান—এই যে একটা convention আছে; তা হয়তো আমি মানি না। এইজন্ত লোকে ভাবে, আমি এমন কল্পানা যাতে যাৰা তক্ষণ, তাদেৰ মন এমন খাৰাপ হয়ে যাবে যে সমাজ ভেঙ্গে পড়বে। কিন্তু আমি কেবল দেখাতে

চেয়েছি যে পাপীর প্রতি ঘৃণা মেনে নিলেও, তাদের মধ্যে যেটুকু ভালো সেটুকুর প্রতি যেন অঙ্গ না কবে। তাছাড়া যে কথাটি বার বার বলেছি—তাজ যেটা নীতি, ভালমন্দের যে মাপকাটি দিয়ে তাকে বিচার করা হচ্ছে, কাল যে মে বদলে যাবে না তাইবা কে জানে? লেখাই যাদের পেশা, তাঁরাও যদি—কেবল সমাজে যা দেখছি, যা হচ্ছে কেবল তাই নিয়ে নাড়াচাড়া করেন তবে সেটা ভাল মনে হয় না।

দেখুন, একসময়ে বিধবা-বিবাহের কথা তুললে বড় খারাপ জিনিয় মনে হত। হাঁরা বলতেন বা সাহিত্যে লিখতেন সমাজ তাঁদের উপর খড়গাহস্ত হয়ে উঠতো। আমার “পল্লীসমাজ” বলে একটা বই তাছে। সে বিষয়ে অনেকেই জিজ্ঞাসা করে থাকেন “ওর নায়ক নায়িকার তো কিছুই কল্পনা না, ও কি রকম হল? আবার কেউ বলেন আমার এই বইয়ের জন্য গ্রামে খারাপ ভাব বেড়ে যাবে ও সমস্তের মন্দ ফল হবে। আমি তাব মধ্যে এই বলতে চেয়েছিলাম—“এই পাড়াগাঁয়ের সমাজ। যাকে সহব থেকে মনে কর্তি—সেখানে পদ্ম ফুটছে, মাঝুম ভাইয়ে ভাইয়ে প্রেমে গলাগলি কর্চে, জ্যোৎস্না ছড়িয়ে যাচ্ছে এই সব, সেখানেও পুরুরে শালুক ফুটছে, বিলাতী কচুরীতে সব ছেঁয়ে গেছে; দলাদলিরতো অন্তই নাই।

পল্লীসমাজের বিধবা নায়িকা—রমা। তার বিবাহের ছমাস পরে তার স্বামী মারা যায় সে তার বাল্যবন্ধুকে আগে থাক্কতেই ভালবাস্ত। শেষে নায়ক জেল থেকে ফিরে এল। নায়িকা জর হয়ে কাশীটাশী চলে গেল। সমস্ত গল্পটাই ছৱচাড়া হয়ে গেল। তাই অনেকে বলেন—কিছু constructive কল্পনা না, কোনো সমস্যার পূরণ করলেন না; সব শেষে কিন্তু কিমাকার হয়ে গেল। আমি বলি ও আমার কাজ নয়। আমি দেখালুম—গ্রামে নায়িকের মত একটা মহৎ প্রাণ এলো, নায়িকার মত মহৎ নারী এলেন। সমাজ তাঁদের উৎপীড়ন করলে, সমাজের তাতে কি gain হলো? এই ছাঁট জীবনের যদি মিলন হতে পারতো, এ জিনিয়টা যদি সমাজ নিতে পাবতো; তবে তারা দশখানা গ্রামের আদর্শ হতো। আমরা তাদের repress করলাম; দুটো জীবন ব্যর্থ করে দিলাম, সেইজন্ত �conclusion ও ছত্রভঙ্গ হয়ে গেল।

Social reform বা Construction আমার কাজ নয়। আমার ব্যবসা লেখা, এট যে আগ বাড়িয়ে এবা দুজন দেখছে সেটা সত্য হলে সমাজ লাভবান হতো এই দেখাতে গিয়েছিলাম। হাঁরা একে অন্যায় ভাবেন, তাঁরা তো এর জন্য আমায় গালাগালি দিচ্ছেন; তাছাড়া আমার হাঁরা আঙ্গীষ তাঁরাও আমাকে বলেন—এ বিষয়ে অন্যায় করেছো। যে বিধবা হলো, সে নিজের স্বামীকে ধ্যান করবে, তা না সে আব একজনকে ভাল-বাসছে; এ তার উচিত হয়নি। এর উভয়ে আমি আব কি বলবো? সেই এক

কথা বলবার আছে, ভালো মন্দ, উচিত অমুচিতের standard যুগে যুগে বদলে যায়। আর একটা জিনিষ দেখতে হবে। দুর্বীতি প্রচার করছে বলে যার বিরুদ্ধে অভিযোগ আনছি, দেখতে হবে সে কোন নৃতন idea দিচ্ছে, মা সত্যের অঙ্গুহাতে কতকগুলো নোংরা জিনিষ চালাচ্ছে। মিছামিছি কুৎসিং কথা তো টিকবেনা। আমিও যদি সেরকম দিয়ে থাকি আমার সে সব লেখাও ঘরে পড়ে যাবে। মোট কথা, সমসাময়িক ভাবের সঙ্গে খাপ থাচ্ছেনা বলেই দুর্বীতিমূলক—একথা মনে করা ঠিক হবেনা। যদি লোকে দেখে লেখকের কথাটা ভাবা দরকার তা হলেই তাৰ কাজ হ'ল।

আজ যে এত কথা বলছি, কাৰণ, কেন জানিনা, এ জিনিষটা আজকাল বড় যুগিয়ে উঠেছে। সেদিন oriental seminaryতে ডেকে নিয়ে গিয়েছিল। সেখানে কয়েকজন এ বিষয়ে আমাকে খুব মন্দ বললেন। (এ রকম ডেকে নিয়ে গালাগালি দেওয়া—ব্যপারটা মন্দ নয়) তাৰা এক Library প্রতিষ্ঠা কৰেছেন। সেখানে নাকি কেবল দুর্বীতি মূলক নতুনের ছড়াচড়ি হচ্ছে, তাতে ছেন্দের চৰিত্র মঠ হচ্ছে; আৰ তাৰ জন্য আমিই নাকি দায়ী আমি ব'ললাম, তা' জিনিষটা বাস্তুবিকই খারাপ হয়েছে। তা' এককাজ কৰন—Library তুলে দিয়ে একটা সংকীর্তনের দল খুলে দিন। বেশ নীতি প্রচার হবে।

এ প্রসঙ্গের আৰ দৰকার নেই। এই জিনিষটাই আমার বলবার ছিল, যে আপনারা আজ আমাৰ বিষয় বলতে গিয়ে, অনেক অতুল্যতা কৰেছেন; কিন্তু যদি মনে কৰেন সাহিত্যকে সাহিত্যিকের দিক দিয়ে সাহিত্যিকের প্রাণ নিয়ে—যে জিনিষ কল্পনা দিয়ে সাহিত্যিক দেখতে পাচ্ছেন—সে রকম আমি দেখবাৰ চেষ্টা কৰেছি, তবে তাৰ চেয়ে আমন্দেৰ বিষয় আমাৰ আৰ নেই। আপনাৱাই দেশেৰ আশাস্থল। সমাজে আপনাৱা অনেকেই ভবিষ্যতে গণ্যমান্য হবেন, আপনাদেৱ প্ৰশংসাই আমাৰ গোৱবেৰ বিষয়।

আমি আজ ঠিক স্মৃত নই—তবে এইখানেই আলোচনাটা শেষ কৰি।*

* শ্রীমুশীলচন্দ্ৰ চট্টোপাধ্যায় কৰ্তৃক অনুলিখিত।



1923

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE year 1923 is drawing to a close—the long year of three hundred and sixtyfive days, and yet but a drop in the ocean of Time. It is customary to have on the close of each year a short pause in the ceaseless march of life, to take a stock of the past and a survey of the Future. Yet ordinarily no January, 1 differs in essence from the preceding December, 31. Then what is this marking by 'years'?—nothing, indeed, but a vain attempt of finite man to measure the Infinite. But custom is custom, and let us have a lingering look into the past and see (some will add) what progress we have made. But to us 'Progress', 'Improvement' with their contradictions seem to be empty words. For after all, human history illustrates not the theory of Evolution but of Revolution. Every age believes itself to be progressing, though what the absolute goal of life is no body has yet been able clearly to define. In truth, we seem to be moving round an unknown end, and our judgments of Past and Future are determined by our arbitrary standards of the Present. Who knows to-day, for example, what posterity will say about

1923 ? It may cast our brilliant luminaries into the shade and throw a halo of light over many a star that today is shrouded in gloom. Probably posterity will laugh at the too generous courtesy which we have extended to books like "If Winter Comes"—we can only say 'probably'—and indeed that is the teaching of Modernism. So many dogmas have been exploded, so many confident beliefs have been shown to be erroneous that to-day 'sure,' 'certain' and such other terms seem to smack of anachronism, looking like relics of a trend of thought which humanity has long outgrown.

But this miraculous popularity of 'If Winter Comes' is not without its significance as a reflection of modern tendencies. In modern times Omarkhayyam alone had a similar popularity and vogue. Indeed, the popularity of Omarkhayyam and the popularity of books like 'If Winter Comes' are intimately connected. In Omarkhayyam, was reflected the sceptical and rationalistic man of today, from whom science had taken away all mental and moral props and yet could not in itself supply one. Science is stimulating as a pursuit but ultimately it renders man sceptical and mechanical. In Omarkhayyam, the Modern Age found its vacant spirit rendered into exquisite poetry. But Omar only deepened its Cynicism, and man at last has come to this unfortunate conclusion that life is a mere child's play in which he that is serious must also be sad. Hence the growth of dilettantism and frivolity and a rejection of all that is not light and beguiling. Hutchinson has pandered to this mood of 1923. His 'If Winter Comes' has this great merit that it has no merit worth serious consideration. It has created a storm only because there was a vacuum in the atmosphere. The twentieth century was ushered by the death of John Ruskin, the most profound hater of dilettantism and the dismal sciences and the twentythree years that we have passed since then have proved that his death in the year 1900 has had a symbolic significance.

The mention of Ruskin reminds us of the last of the great Victorians, who passed away a few months ago. Lord Morley was born in the year 1838, when Tennyson and Carlyle in literature and Gladstone and Disraeli in politics were beginning to shine in all their effulgence and he died when those brilliant luminaries had all faded out of vision and Kipling and Baldwin were having their little day. Morley's life was as rich in achievements as it was full of years. His political life may for the time being be left out of consideration and political work is not, after all, of a kind that endures, for a statesman is but an impersonal agent of that anonymous force which we call Public Opinion. Hence as soon as a politician leaves the field of his activity, the veil of oblivion is drawn over him, new puppets are brought in and with them the nameless mass proceeds on its journey towards its indiscernible goal. But an artist, though a product of his own age and century, has yet something intrinsically his own, and this lives on when all accidental aroma of time and place has worn away. Townshend and Grenville—how great they were in their own day but do they not live today only in the brilliant speeches of that ungainly orator Edmund Burke. What, again, of that 'greatest citizen of the world', William Ewart Gladstone? Will it be blasphemy to assert today that he is already beginning to live only in the luminous pages of Morley? Now to return to the great man who has just left the world. It has been said of Carlyle that he rendered a signal service by his interpretations of German poets and philosophers. If Carlyle revealed the greatness of German masters, how many authors has Morley interpreted—Burke, Rousseau, Mill, Wordsworth and others too many to name?

But besides these studies which are not merely interpretative but also creative, he leaves behind him another rich legacy and that is style—its quietness and sanity. He lacked, indeed, the wizard charm that 'startles and waylays' but he had the great homely virtue of sanity which never forced a point nor

left any out of consideration. Then above everything else was his character. During his lifetime, he was called 'Honest John.' Honesty, indeed, was the strangest note in Morley—both in the author and the man. In the modern world of shams and jobberies this strong, simple virtue seemed to be an anachronism, and that is probably why he withdrew himself from the enormous moral jugglery which is being enacted in the world since August, 4, 1914.

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Aswini Kumar Dutt is no more, and Bengal has lost one of her greatest men, his whole life being but a round of services rendered to the mother country. To us, however, he appeals mainly as an educator of youth and that indeed, is the best service that he has been able to render to the people of Bengal. It is doubtful if Aswini Kumar's name will be found in a History of Bengal, and even if it is found, it will not appear in the history of Education. History is an unsure index to truth. It chronicles facts that dazzle—facts whose influence has been too apparent, and which "loudly protest their right to be heard." Aswini Kumar's services are not certainly of this nature. But the nation is a product of many intangible forces and of these he is one of the most potent. It is not possible for futurity to measure such forces. The more reason, therefore, that we should today bow down our heads as a mark of respect for the memory of a man who devoted his life to the work of educating the people of his country.

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The Nobel prize for literature has this year been awarded to Mr. W. B. Yeats. A worthier recipient one cannot well think of. Mr. Yeats is the leader of what is called the neo-celtic movement in English literature. There are critics who do not admit the existence of such a movement and regards it as only a survival of Romanticism. But this does not detract from the charm of Mr. Yeats's poetry—its Mystic idealism, its haunting music as of *A wind among the reeds*. In word-music and mystic

charm, he is akin to the poet of *Gitanjali*, though he is a bit too elfin and lacks Tagore's iridescent humanity. In his introduction to the *Gitanjali*, Mr. Yeats has said that in Rabindranath Indian Civilisation unfolds itself. We may similarly say that Yeats's poetry is a reflexion of the old Celtic spirit—its rich fancy and melancholy mysticism.

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1923 has been a year of crisis in Indian politics. The future is yet so misty and the issues are yet so uncertain that it would be premature to pass any judgment now. But we have confidence in the unconscious instinct of events and hope that whatever turns out will be all for our best.

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In Europe the old higgle and haggle about reparations, national self-determination and other problems is still going on. To-day France snarles at Germany, tomorrow Greece advances towards Turkey and the day after Italy looks grim at Greece. Then there are commissions and conferences which confer upon many things, infer little and effect less. An English literateur of considerable reputation once suggested the abolition of smoke as a most urgent municipal reform. But the measure would work better in the political world. Indeed, if the various nations of Europe had been plainer and had done away with their jugglery of words, they could have gone much futher towards the solution of these thorny problems.

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Now a bit about ourselves. Since we appeared last, there have been two changes in the staff. Mr. Wordsworth has returned, the fresher and more genial for his long absence from here. Mr. Barrow has left for Chittagong. He carries with him the best wishes of us all.

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Mr. Dustoor also has left the College and Mr. B. B. Roy is back amongst us. We extend a hearty welcome to Mr. Roy and part with Mr. Dustoor with a pang equally sincere. We hope

that it will soon be possible for the authorities to re-enlist his services, for he was an asset to the College and leaves a gap which he alone can fill.

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There is one happy thing to note. The Biological Society which had been in a moribund condition for the last few years has recently been revived and is doing very good work too. Our heartiest thanks are due to the organisers of the society and to Prof. S. C. Mohalanobis who, inspite of indifferent health, is taking a keen interest in its activities.

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Our Alma mater the university is going through a very important change. Vernacular had hitherto been a sort of 'third language', in which it was more creditable to fail than pass. Attempts are now being made to make it the first language, so that to pass in it one has seriously to read it too. The time is not far distant, again, when it will replace English as the general medium of instruction, and no change is more desirable than this. It is a good thing to read such a rich literature as English, but a hundred and fifty years of English Education has proved what a pitiful waste of energy it is to use English as a medium of instruction and expression, for style is not only personal, it is also national, and one's mother's milk is never out of one's mouth. Indians may write elegant English and scholarly English, but they can never write English *with ease*. And whatever England-returned men may think, there is scarcely an Indian who writes and speaks English better than he writes and speaks his vernacular. The fact is that our standard of correct English is not determined by what we instinctively feel to be so, but by what Englishmen have laid down by their usage. Apishness can never produce style which is but an expression of personality.

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As we remarked last time, one of the greatest problems awaiting solution from the New Council is that of the university.

The aim of the resolutions that are to be discussed there, is, so far as can be gathered from the general trend of the Councillors' speeches, to end one-man-rule. But would red-tapeism be a better substitute? Matters may to some extent be put right by extension of franchise from Registered Graduates to graduates of some years' (say seven) standing. It may be that it would not end despotism either. If so, the autocracy ought to go on. We must not be led by catchwords. Despotism is democracy, if it represents *Vox Populi*.

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A Congress of Universities is to be held at Simla and our university is sending as many as seven delegates. Is it not too many? Sir Ashutosh alone can represent the university in all its various interests and activities, and one may well be in doubt as to what material help the other six delegates will be able to render him. An exception may, of course, be made in favour of Mr. Hornell, specially in view of the acute differences of opinion which the Ex-Vicechancellor and the Senate have had with the Government of late.

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Let us close with a word about ourselves. Encomiums are pouring in upon Dr. Ghoshala and Prof. P. Mukherjea, and we publish the following with real pleasure and pride. "Prof. Mukherji's book, *The Co-operative Movement in India*, has already become a "classic" and its third edition will be welcomed by co-operators in Europe as well as in India. It would hardly be untrue to say that as the co-operative Movement in India expands and ramifies, so Professor Mukherji's book expands and embraces a larger field with each successive edition"

"Readers of the *Irish Economist* will remember that Professor Mukherji is not a chronicler; he is a writer who, while giving to foreign readers the necessary facts from which they can grasp the spirit and progress of Indian co-operation, gives to the Indian reader a synopsis of the progress and development of co-operation in other lands which can serve as a stimulus and

guide to Indians. His information about co-operation in Europe is also valuable to us Europeans, who find in a handy form much useful material gathered together. * * * We heartily recommend the third edition of Professor Mukherji's book to our readers.*

As for complimentary notices on Dr. Ghoshal's "excellent piece of work" (to quote New Statesman), they have already appeared in The Calcutta Review and need not be repeated here as too much of sweetness spoils a feast.

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A happy New year for all our readers!

SOME NOTES ON THE IMPERIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE.

WHEN on leave, I was instructed to attend the conference as a delegate from Bengal, and was associated with Mr. West, Principal of the Dacca Training College, in this capacity. Delegates were present from most of the other provinces of India, and from most parts of the Empire, Newzealand, strangely, was unrepresented.

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There had been one similar conference before the war, Some of those present had been members of that conference, and the experience then gained was readily put at our disposal. This facilitated business, necessarily a difficult matter when

* From a review of Prof. P. Mukherjea's book on 'The Cooperative Movement in India,' published in the October issue of the *Irish Economist*, the leading Irish Cooperative Journal issued from the Co-operative Reference Library, Dublin.

many men of different experiences and outlook gather from many parts of the earth,

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I have written men. I should not overlook the one lady, present as a delegate from Palestine, where she is in charge of girls' education.

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Such an opportunity of meeting to discuss and compare a variety of experiences and aspirations is valuable for many reasons, however small, amid such variety, the prospect of arriving at common formulae. But it is probable that those present from India valued most the opportunity of resuming touch, for however short a time, with what is being done in education in England, and with the men who are doing and directing it. For England is likely long to remain the land to which India looks for guidance, inspiration, and experience in education, and the land with the amplest opportunities for educational experiment.

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This opportunity, of resuming touch with education in England, was freely, offered to us. Not only were several leading members of the English Scotch, and Welsh Departments of Education members of the conference, but other members of those Departments attended to read papers, to contribute their special knowledge to the discussions, and to chat with us at lunch—always an important part of big conferences. One of the most distinguished of public school head masters attended to speak about the place of examinations in school work. One of the most distinguished of Home Office officials attended to tell us about the work of Reformatory Schools in England, in the development of which he has played a great part. The most distinguished Public Health Official of the time attended to speak about the efforts that England is making to improve the health and physique of its children. Further, generous opportunities of refreshing and extending our professional knowledge were

offered in other ways. Public schools invited us to visit them. The Board of Education and the Teachers' Training Colleges combined to arrange an exhibition of work done in schools and colleges. The London County Council, one of the greatest educational authorities in the world, also arranged an exhibition of the work done in its own schools and other institutions. Not only were the results in profusion before our eyes, but day after day an elaborate programme was arranged for the enlightenment of visitors—a class in this room at drill, a school choir singing in that, in another a class from a slum school acting Shakespeare, and dozens of other items. As an instance of the thoroughness that marked this exhibition, and of the comprehensiveness of the council's work, it may be mentioned that the refreshments served up to visitors in the tea room were prepared by pupils of the council's cookery schools and served by pupils of the council's schools for waiters.

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In addition to the daily work of the conference, there were arranged for us four evening lectures, by authorities on their subjects. One, by the Lady Principal of a very special kind of Teachers' Training College, dealt with baby schools i.e. schools for children too young for the ordinary infant schools, one of the newest developments in England. A distinguished authority dealt with intelligence tests. Sir Robert Baden Powell lectured on the Boy Scout movement, so honourably connected with his name, and invited us to tea and to inspect the head quarters of the movement in Epping Forest, and lastly Sir C. P. Lucas of Colonial Office fame, lectured about the Empire and its meaning. These lectures, like all other papers of the conference, were followed by discussions open to all present, not only to the conference delegates : thus an opportunity was given of hearing men of mark in public life, and once more, when we write of men, we should not forget the woman. The first lecture, on baby schools, was presided over by Mrs. Wintringham, the second woman to be elected to Parliament ; her charm of

manner and of speech, and her ability in the chair, were sufficient to convince and convert the most rigid anti-feminist present.

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In the discussion after this paper Mr. West delighted an appreciative audience with an account of some of the difficulties that surround primary education in Bengal, and achieved a reputation by explaining in answer to a question that primary education in Bengal was "neither compulsory nor voluntary, but very voluntary."

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One afternoon we spent at a cinema entertainment. Not an ordinary entertainment, made up of French "Comics" and American "Sentimentalities"; the programme was specially arranged by the leading men of the cinema industry, that we might have the material for forming opinions about the place of the cinema in education. To the consequent discussion in the conference I may refer in a later note: here I shall only mention the earnestness with which more than one delegate urged that the conference should at least decide the pronunciation of the word "cinema", and so make its impress on the growth of the English tongue. It is perhaps superfluous to note that many of the films put before us were of wonderful beauty. But it will interest some readers to be told that among the 'literature films' were plays of Shakespeare. "Shakespeare without notes", has long been urged by many thoughtful teachers: "Shakespeare without words," is, so far as I am aware, quite an up-to-date novelty.

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By English traditions, work on conferences is bound up with lavish hospitality, and certainly we received no lack of attention in this regard. A dinner given by the English Government, with the President of the Board of Education in the chief chair, was perhaps an expected compliment, but even a Londoner may find pleasure in remembering that he has tasted (the proper

word) the hospitality of the Mansion House, and looke upon a Lord Mayor engaged in that function which in our thoughtless moments we regard as par excellence his main duty—the swallowing turtle soup. More definitely connecting hospitality with education was a lecture on the newly revived folk and country dances, by the man who above all men has worked for this, followed by an exposition of its grace and charm, in which the performers were a band of young assistants whom he himself had trained. In India dancing has little to do with education ; grace of movement is learned in other ways. But in Europe it has long been an important part of physical education, and physical education is an integral part of education as a whole. It was told to me that the young men in this band of dancers were University students, on vacation, doing the work in an honorary capacity for their own pleasure. I do not know whether this was the case : the mere possibility will be sufficient surprise for Indian students. It is not necessary to emphasise what a precious part of English culture was once to be found in village songs and sports and dances, in the days when England was justly called "Merry," or to insist on the wisdom of preserving and reviving these fragments of our past. For they are national in the truest sense, and a strong defense against the invasion of the vulgar and unhealthy. What ancestors did well must always have great value in education.

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There is much else of which I could write : and may write for a later number of this Magazine. But what has perhaps left the pleasantest memory was an invitation to visit the fleet, and inspect the famous Naval Training College at Dartmouth, as guests of the admiralty. Students of history will know that what the Navy does it does well, whether fighting battles or playing Rugby football or entertaining guests : nor was it a small thing to be a guest on H. M. S. Hood, the most wonderful battle ship afloat, and to be shewn other types of fighting vessels even to the most delicate parts of their insides, Dartmouth is far-

famed as the training school of the Naval officer, and as the most efficient 'vocational' school ever known. But my note has been long enough: what Dartmouth had to shew may be written at some other time.

W. C. W.

A PLEA FOR FINER PROSE.

Mr. B. B. Roy, M. A.

I.

THE art of writing is, as every one of us has felt in his uninspired moments, a difficult one; and even the homelier Muse of prose might turn a deaf ear to the hardest of wooers. The atmosphere for even passable creative work may not exist for us, at every hour of day or night; the very materials of writing may rebel; and one may not feel sure whether one should write or merely talk. For the prose that informs is a *comparably* easy affair and is perhaps better spoken than written, even if it were for no briefer a period than forty years; but the prose that creates is harder than poetry, complexer than music, being less spontaneous and incomparatively less yielding. Which modern can write like Llyl or Bacon or Huxley: or Cobbett or Emerson or like Macaulay or Landor or Stevenson or any other master that took prose seriously? And, which of us, after we have laid down the pen, tired and wondering, haven't felt that Marlowe's words about there being a mystery that no pen can distil are truer far of prose than of poetry or drama?

Yet it would perhaps be ungrateful to many an aspiring writer to say that the desire for turning out high-class prose exists no longer or that such prose is not present in many a volume of

contemporary writing as a blunt and unmistakable fact. Of shy reviewers not a few have shot pretty near the mark ; and mere explorers have received posthumous credit for such achievement at the hands of anthologists. There is a wider and livelier appreciation of the older masters ; and literary weeklies correct, as best as they could, the hurry and journalese of the daily sheet. The very politicians, on the eve of an electioneering campaign turn half a dozen delicate phrases or have graduate secretaries that do the work better ; and at no time perhaps was the gulf between prose-poetry and prose better realised. Nevertheless the vast mass of popular writing proves that we do not yet betray an equal understanding of or even liking for the prose. that without losing its character approximates to poetry.

The fact is, in our protest against fine writing, we have gone farther than a sense of literary propriety should have allowed us. Fine writing, we are told, is a goal that fascinates and baffles the foreigner that cannot think in idioms ; a species of snobbery or else a form of pardonable vanity in a man to whom the static in language appeals more than the dynamic. Swinburne puffs his cheeks, in spouting superlatives ; and even that literary prodigy who wields his strength with grace and economy, Joseph Conrad and that lord of language, Tagore, do not write "English English" in the sheer straining after precision and rhythm. Shade of Pater !

II

To a detached observer who looks upon English, with a loving anxiety and expectation, all this latter day craze for "English English" which obsesses not merely British teachers in foreign universities but also native English doctors of style, seems a hopelessly one-sided tendency. For one thing they confuse pedagogy with art and the idiomatic root of language with the consummate flower in rhythm and diction. The foreigner has no doubt to be warned, time and again, of the obstinate habit

of translating from the vernacular, of mixture of metaphor, of conventional verbiage ; but it is too often forgotten that there are certain strata in every language to which a foreigner has almost as swift and easy an access as a native. The foreigner no doubt thinks more in forc^{ful} or vivid words than in rude, homely idioms ; and the more so if he is a raw student ; but even this perfectly natural tendency comes in more for exaggeration and caricature than a sympathetic statement. For in many a foreigner with a ridiculous inaccurate pronunciation and even a comically truant grammar one notices an intuitive understanding of the genius of language, a generally admirable if not meticulously correct feeling for rhythm, a sense of the relative beauty, dignity and sonorousness of words which, in all but confirmed cynics, inspire wonder and respect. For even though the spoken rhythm of language is difficult to master, the sense of a rhythm in the written word or sentence comes in calculably from an appreciation of the substance.

Paradoxical as it may sound, a knowledge of idioms while it is essential to a student and while it promotes a correct sense of the individuality of a language, does not promote an æsthetically faultless style. That side of language which has most to do with the mental eye or ear of the reader, be he never so crude a foreigner has hardly anything to do with correct grammar and idiom, although in every serious user of a language, these must be more or less taken for granted. The æsthetic and the logical sides of a language have not much in common ; and the muddle-headedness of many an educationist is responsible for that undervaluation of the æsthetic side which has resulted in the slovenly journalese against which the present essay is an humble protest.

A husky, unmusical, cacophonous prose, however rich in idioms is not an asset to a language, but a positive menace, for through sheer obstinacy it loses its breadth and forfeits progress. A standard of style that does not insist on a musical selection of words and a lively articulation of the finer tones

of impressions, makes for the decay of form, and through it, of substance. How welcome, how soothing is the prose of Tagore and Conrad, after that of the best sellers of last winter !

The same lack of emphasis on the æsthetic side of language is betrayed in quarters least suspected—those unwearying teachers of “pure accent” to shy, youthful foreigners. Phonetics and elocution, precise articulation of vowels and the energetic sounding of consonants are processes and precepts that fight down the stiffness or laziness of the foreigner’s tongue, and, no doubt, those who have been through such a process, have been in the end, grateful to those teachers for the revelation of a new beauty in prose and a new music in verse. But it is often forgotten that quite apart from the scientific sense of rhythm, which is undeniably useful to every stylist and which has been present in every masterly user of language, there is an intuitive sense of rhythm even of a foreign tongue which makes silent reading a pleasure and gives roundedness to the style of many a novice.

One perhaps can never quite prove, in any absolute manner, this intuitive sense of the beauty of sound in a foreign language. But every man who has had, either as a teacher or as a learner, to do with language has felt that besides the physical ear which is sensitive to conventional and correct pronunciation, there is a mental ear which is attuned to an ideal beauty of sound which transcends the phonetic peculiarities of particular languages. It is this mental ear which is the final judge of a vital and musical style; and one sees its workings in the groping after words of fuller tonic value and the impatience of correct but wooden writing which one notices in many an imperfectly taught writer and listener. For, whereas a scientific training in abstract phonetics or better, the lively spoken rhythm of a language is a great aid to those who have a sensitive mental ear, it is often forgotten that in most normal men, such an ear works well unaided—a fact to which the teacher of composition and accent ought to give more attention than he usually does.

III.

The English language has gained immensely by its being written widely outside the limits of the British Isles. The catchpenny writer on philology tells of priceless words following in the wake of priceless merchandise from the Indies into England, of the splash of colour that passed over the whole English vocabulary, the countless expressive slangs that were born, never to die, in many a heated barrack-room on the Indian Frontier, of whole aspects of Eastern life, captured and made immortal in a phrase.

But there has been a greater gain which has not received the serious notice that it deserves. The world-wide use of English, by the much-abused "Babu" and the much-envied "Educated Indian," the Japanese salesman or the Chinese carpenter has revealed to the student of philology the unsuspected possibilities of this justly admired language. "Babu English" which has happily now a pathological interest only, was a frantic attempt at reconciling English grammar to Bengali idioms, just as the "Babu" pronunciation of English, now more and more on the wane, on account of rigid schooling, was a rapid effort at rendering English sounds into their nearest vernacular equivalents. "Pidgin" English, as one can see from reports of travellers, was as near an approach to stenographic methods in the use of spoken English as can be imagined. But the final passing away of these transitional phases and the pretty general writing of good, idiomatic English all over the world by peoples widely different from one another in temperament, taste and tradition, has given the native English writer, an increased confidence in the soundness, the essentially cosmopolitan character and the marvellous elasticity of his language. The foreign master of English has not seldom made the native writer pause and ask if he might not profit by the example set before him. The English of Tagore, whatever its idiomatic lapses, has visibly influenced many a British

writer of prose and verse ; and the English of Gandhi by its unwavering sincerity has found not a few admirers and admiration has led unconsciously to imitation. There has been quite a number of Irish writers, the greatest of them Oscar Wilde, who never quite mastering English idioms have yet written English prose and verse of the highest order ; while the American writers send annually across the Atlantic not merely a sheaf of slangs but new modes of thought. The English language has thus become from an insular into an imperial language ; and the native English scholar cannot well play the part of a jealous sentry wideawake against the invasions of the alien. For assuredly the more reasonable way of promoting the interests of his mother tongue is to be receptive and to watch, in the uncouth exercises of the foreigner, bright gleams of suggestions which might be of immense use of him.

IV.

No greater mistake was made in literature than when Wordsworth, in violence of reaction, asked for poetry, at least, as his defenders remind us, some poetry, being written in the language of conversation. Coleridge put it right, and his brief but brilliant criticism has disinfected all subsequent poetry from the effects of this crude doctrine. The same mistake possesses many a modern mind, in the matter of prose. Much of modern fiction is written avowedly in the language of polite conversation ; and their wide popularity shows a pretty general sympathy with this ideal of facility and ease. And it is quite true that such writers have high moments of insight and passion, no less than those others who have had a higher aim. At their worst they have perpetrated mere journalese and flippancy or nothing worse than fun.

But even the ideal of facility and ease, to which so great a thinker on style as Pater had to concede, may be overworked. It is welcome because it is healthy as a corrective ; just as the easy, effortless, rapid pronunciation of a master or of quite

an ordinary man pleases an ear irritated by the slow and precise articulation of a clergyman who hasn't yet acquired the art that conceals art. But then, it is the ease of a Scott or a H. G. Wells that pleases us, not the crude spontaneity of an undisciplined mind. When, therefore, the language of conversation, even of polite conversation is held up as an ideal for prose, prose as a medium of art becomes coarsened and relegated to a ridiculously inferior position. For, Tolstoi and Wordsworth notwithstanding, a good deal of true art is aristocratic in origin and intention, being essentially selective in matter and form ; and a civilisation which becomes complex from day to day, cannot but rise, steadily and decisively above the elementary forms and instruments of thought. Can a democratic diction convey the beauty and subtlety of the ideas of a Tagore, or a Maeterlinck, an Amiel or even a Pater? Can it, in the description of a discovery or a disaster or an emotional crisis, give anything beyond a vague, vast suggestion ? For full artistic or literary re-creation, "ordinary" prose is too rude an instrument ; for full re-creation, we say advisedly, for such creative energy must seek as complete and vivid an embodiment for ideas, as inspiration and effort, working hand in hand, can allow. The art of a mordern age must not be content with the subordinate, if often effective, art of suggestion. Here it is that the foreign master's English, cautious and slow, but rounded and rhythmic and artistically complete, the English of Conrad and Tagore might be of use to the native practitioner or pedagogue.

The merely and rascily "idiomatic" and vernacular style reflecting as faithfully as possible the language of ordinary conversation is good for drama and fiction, and even so, only of parts of them. The ordinary, even sometimes the deepest emotions of life, need merely a dramatic expression ; fullness of artistic re-creation is not demanded by them and is, in fact, antagonistic to their enjoyment. But for that other and wider range of emotions and feelings—a range that is widened, from

day to day, by civilisation as it alters the composition of the human mind and the modes of its workings—demand specialised diction, demand a conscious choice of the elements of style, rejecting no approach to the reader as too humble if it subserves art. The “modes of impassioned prose,” such as De Quincey preached and practised, the even finer prose of Ruskin and Pater are an increasing necessity for the modern man. The native English student of English language must be grateful to W. B. Yeats and George Moore and Walter Dela Mare for preserving, each in his own way, this, for English, an ancient and a noble anxiety for dignified and artistic expression; for they stimulate a high quality of thought in those that read their books and keep alive that detached mood of high enjoyment which it is the endeavour of modern culture and ancient classic to create.

V.

More even than poetry has prose a large destiny before it, in this modern age. Or, to put it more correctly, the increasing tendency in modern literature, is for prose and poetry to converge and meet in a “neutral region,” in a quite different sense than the early English romantic critics had imagined. The rapid substitution in Poetics of the distinction between Poetry and Science for that between Poetry and Prose, the attempt of the school of Pater to write a prose that approximated to poetry without losing its character and that of contemporary vers-librists to write a poetry that should have the rough, uncalculated charm of prose, the constant discussion in literary periodicals on rhyme and metre and the orthodox forms of poetry, the scientific investigations into the rhythm of prose and verse, are conclusive evidence if any were needed at all. No wonder, if many an irreverent modern youth thinks that poetry as a formal species is doomed to a more or less steady decadence if not to an undesirable death.

But even if this be regarded as too extreme a statement, the

fact remains that prose, during its comparatively briefer existence, has been annexing domain after domain of thought and life, making it increasingly difficult for verse to keep pace with it. It has been the younger and consequently the more adventurous child of literature. The very professional poets, poets, whose natural voice was poetry, have drifted more and more towards prose. Which poet from Milton to Swinburne has not practised his left hand, with an increasing amazement at its skill and force ? And of those who have obstinately, through lack of self-criticism used the right hand, like Wordsworth, how many have been, as critics have rightly and unmercifully pointed out, born left-handers !

The fiction-writer, the journalist, the scholar and the politician have conspired to make prose the ruling if not the exclusive instrument of literature ; and it is for the guardians of language to preserve its purity and wholeness. A much-used instrument is soon out of gear ; the edge is turned ; the screws loosen ; and presently a crude mechanician tinkers at it. Or else, it is stowed away, in a museum as a thing of antiquity that needs rest from profane handling. But there is yet a third way to keep it whole and sound ; not by the heavy-fingered purism of the pedant ; nor by the fetters of a new grammar or rhetoric ; but by the setting afloat a sound body of precepts as to its right use and by constant and intelligent practice of it, in lax as well as tense moments, as a thing of art.



JOSEPH MAZZINI—AN APOSTLE OF DEMOCRACY.

DR. U. N. GHOSHAL.

THE key to Mazzini's outlook upon democracy must be discovered in his passionate faith in the ordering of a beneficent Providence and in the high destiny of mankind. The principal articles of his theological creed, if such it may be called, are beautifully summed up in the famous letter that he addressed to the Oecumenical council of the Catholic Church. There he wrote, "God, the Father and Educator—the law prefixed by Him to life—the capacity, inborn in all men, to fulfil it—free will, the condition of merit—progress upon the ascent leading to God, the result of right choice—these are the cardinal points of our faith." Simple words these, yet how sublime and universal ! How free from the slightest tinge of doctrinal orthodoxy or ritualistic pomp ! In truth religion was to Mazzini not a sum of dogmas or of rites but a perennial inspiration of the Divine Spirit urging the endeavour towards a higher life. With this noble creed was combined a belief in duty performed ceaselessly and unselfishly as the highest rule of human conduct. In the moving pages of his autobiography Mazzini tells us how in the supreme moral crisis of his life, when doubt and despair drove him to the verge of madness, he found solace in the gospel of selfless devotion to duty which he derived anew from his own religious convictions. "I came to my better self," he says, "alone and without aid from others, through the help of a religious conception which I verified by history. From the idea of God I descended to the conception of progress ; from the conception of progress to a true conception of life, to faith in a mission and its logical conclusion—duty, the supreme rule of life, and having reached that faith I swore to myself that nothing in this

world would again make me doubt or forsake it—I dug with my own hands the grave not of my affections but of all its desires, exigencies and ineffable comforts of affection, and I covered the earth over that grave so that none might ever know the Ego buried beneath."

Mazzini's attitude towards democracy was the direct outcome of these ideas. Religion and democracy were to him the central objects of interest, the two fixed poles towards which the magnet of his soul was always pointed. His famous watchword, as is well-known, ran, "for God and the People." In Mazzini's mind the two streams of sentiment mingled in one mighty torrent. His conception of democracy, indeed, was more spiritual than that of any of his contemporaries. "When all men," he declared in his usual elevated style, "shall commune together in reverence for the family and respect for property, through education and the exercise of a political function in the State,—the family and property, the fatherland and humanity, will become more holy than they are now. When the arms of Christ even yet stretched out on the Cross shall be loosened to clasp this whole human race in one embrace, when there shall be no more pariahs nor Brahmanas, nor servants nor masters but only men, we shall adore the great name of God with much more faith and love than we do now." Democracy, thus interpreted, is lifted from the sphere of material interests and passions to the spiritual plane. Well might Mazzini, viewing the contemporary movement towards democracy from the eyrie of his thought, acclaim it as a "page of the world's history written by the finger of God." To realize this lofty ideal, it was essential to base it, Mazzini characteristically argued, upon the conception of duty. A gospel of rights, as this great teacher was never weary of re-iterating, had at the best a negative value. It helped to destroy the fabric of tyranny but was absolutely insufficient to substitute a new and a better one in its place. Nay more if we were to press it to its logical conclusion, it would land us in the negation of government. Rights,

in short, are not the end but a means, and a democracy based thereon can be but an imperfect representation of the ideal. The true security of democracy and palladium of the rights of the citizens consist in rigid adherence to the rule of duty, for therein alone lies the guarantee of the fullest sacrifice of the individual for the collective good.

Such, in brief is the teaching of the most religious-minded preacher of democracy that modern Europe has seen. To the men of his own as of subsequent generations, trained in a sham Darwinism, much of his message remained as it still remains a sealed book. But a prophet cannot be blamed for being in advance of his age. It is at any rate safe to prophesy that so long as democracy endures on earth, the life and writings of Joseph Mazzini will serve as a beacon to aspiring and generous souls and kindle in them an unquenchable ardour for the cause he loved so well.

A FLOWER POET OF BENGAL.

SAMIRENDRA NATH MUKHERJEE—*Fifth Year Arts.*

SHELLEY'S much-quoted poignant phrase—a poet of unfulfilled renown—may truly be applied to the Bengali poet Satyendranath. Like Shelley, Byron, Keats and Chatterton our Satyendranath remains eternally a juvenile poet—a poet of love and enthusiasm a poet of sighs and dreams. Hence the glow of youthful imagination and the inspiration of youthful sensibility thrill us in every poem of Satyendranath. He sings of liberty and love, of the joys and sorrow that build the human heart like many another singer; but he has also a wondering and

attentive eye for the beauties of nature; well-versed in flower-lore as one of his early volumes "ফুলের ফসল" show.

This book—"The Harvest of Flowers"—is almost a tribute to floral Bengal. Flowers appeal to all hearts, no doubt—but the new-born beauty and aroma of a half-blown flower stir a young man's heart with *romantic feelings*. But, flowers generally appeal in two ways to the hearts of the poets. To the predominantly contemplative poets, like Wordsworth flowers are generally the bearers of Heaven's high message; to those pre-eminently emotional like Keats and Shelley they reveal nature's high romance of love and beauty. And Satyendranath as a flower poet is more sensuous and emotional than moralising or meditative. In this respect he is in the same class with Keats and Shelley.

To Satyendranath, the flowers were lovely maidens in the realm of Flora. They come to this world not merely to pain the senses but to beautify the gods and men alike. Not a single flower of our country escapes the notice of this poet of flowers. And every flower opens the casement of his heart to let the warm love in. And like Wordsworth even the meanest unknown flowerlet by the wayside delights him with its humble beauty, though it does not give him "thoughts that lie too deep for tears."

It gives him joy pure and simple, it gives him pleasure pure and simple and he faints and fails with the excess of joy. Thus in his poem "তৃণমঞ্জরী" or "grass flower" we find the little flowers saying

Honey-jar and Ear-ring and Blue-bee we are for ever in this world unknown and uncared for.

Only some mad, forlorn poet takes notice of us and we adorn the dust.'

I. জগতের মাঝে অজানা, অচেনা
চিরাদিন মোরা আছি !
মধুকুপী আর পরথুপী
আর কাণসোনা নীলমাছি ।

মোদের আদর হানিয়াছে শুধু,
পাগল প্রেমিক কবি ।
আমরা ধূলিরে করি পুলকিত
নত্র মধুর ছবি ।

This poem is taken up to illustrate the Wordsworthian sentiment in Satyendranath. Herein we find a mad lover of the humble flowers like 'Honey-jar' and 'Blue-bee' like the mad lover of the 'Lesser Celandine' and the Pansy. But unlike Wordsworth's, Satyendranath's flower poetry is free from moralisation. This poem shows that he is so much a lover of flowers that he creates new flowers with fantastic names and odours.

It is no wonder, therefore, that all the beautiful flowers o' Bengal with their aerial hues and poetic names should appeal to this poet. And it is curious to note that almost every flower appears before him like a high-born maiden and speaks of its native virtues. Thus, he dramatises them and makes them tell the stories of their own lives. They are alive with the fire of life. Satyendranath always feels a tender affection for the flowers. They are to him objects of love and pity.

He always remembers the legends of the flowers so the lotus is to him the eternal lady-love of the sun-god and the lily of the moon-god. And the poet says to the lotus—

Tell me O lotus! how do you feel in your heart
when the morning sun darts a glance at you?

And his lotus answers him in the poem "Lila Kamal"—

Though bound with the watery chains and
growing in the mud still in the dead of darknight
I start to meet my lover Light at the trysting place
of the morning.²

And his lily startles us with words like these,—

Lily am I. I have opened my stall of scents

1. যখন প্রথম গ্রভাত ববি

দৃষ্টিহানে তোমাব পবে,
বল দেথি কমল। তোমাব
প্রাণেব ভিতৰ কেমন কবে?

2. মাটিব সঙ্গে বাঁধা আছি আমি

আঁচিগো জলেব সাথে,
তবু আলোকেব অভিসাবে, কবি
যাত্রা তিমিব বাতে!

N. B.—The Bengali passages have been freely translated into English.

before the nightly breeze, I rise awakened by the kisses of the moon.¹

And, I salute the sun from far away and I love the moon to my heart's content for he has presented me with the nectar though thousands of miles away.²

Every flower that comes before us e.g. The 'Ketaki', the 'Shephali,' the 'Rose', the 'Parul,' the 'Aparajita' and even much-dreaded Poppy and the much-hated 'Akanda' is alive with the touch of the poet's magic wand.

The greatest artistic triumph that Satyendranath attains in the description of the flower is to be found in the narration of the innate peculiarities of flowers like 'Champa' and 'Ketaki.' These flowers are too sweet and too beautiful. They actually ache us with too much of sweetness—and they grow amidst the terrible. 'Champa,' we know is the lady of the summer garden as rose is of the winter. And when every thing is ablaze with the piercing rays of the summer sun 'Champa' comes out laughing at the piercing rays of the sun and says:—

I come when Spring sobs its last breath away, when the sad Earth is trodden by the fiery foot of Summer I come half in joy and half in fear but whole of heart.

Champa am I divinely beautiful like the bold celestial nymph and enter like her into the forest of deep meditation.³

(1) টাঁদের চুমায় জাগিয়া উঠেছি
বিথারি' অমল ছত্র,
আমি কুমুদিনী নৈশ-বাতাসে
খুলেছি সুরতি-সত্ত্ব !

(2) স্বর্ণেবে আমি দূব হতে নামি
ভালবাসি আমি ইন্দু,
লক্ষ ঘোজন দূবে থেকে মোরে
দেছে মে অমৃত বিন্দু।

(3) আমারে আসিতে হল বসন্তের অস্তিম নিশ্চাসে,
বিষন্ন যখন বিশ্ব নির্মল গ্রীষ্মের পদানত
রুদ্রতপস্যার বনে আধ ত্রাসে আধেক উল্লাসে
একাকী আসিতে হল সাহসিক। অপ্সরার মত।

The fierceness of summer has been beautifully described by this flower whose beauty is as dazzling as the rays of the sun. And in the poem 'Ketaki' the same thought has been continued viz.—how Beauty lives in the realm of the Fierce.

"Ketaki" says—

I blow in the thorny jungle full of serpents—and grow up amidst numberless drops of tears—around me I hear the hissings of the poisonous snakes—In terror do I dwell—thorny "Ketaki" am I!

Here is the feeling of a romantic poet in the description of the ferociously sweet one. Here is artistic triumph in Bengali poetry. Here is Wonder added to Beauty. This thought is repeated in his poem on "Poppy." Like Swinburne Poppy to Satyendranath also is a symbol of forgetfulness and welcome death and in this respect he walks apart from Burns to whom it was a type of evanescence.

The much-beloved rose has undergone a purely romantic treatment in the hands of Satyendranath. His rose says—

—In dreary desert had I been as a mate of Accocia; some wanderer fair came and loved me and I blew that night.—

And he says that a rose is famous not for its scent but for its beauty. Beauty is the only thing that he sought throughout his life.

And so the mean flowers that are ignored by all are loved by him and he gives very pathetic description of their sorrows.

(1) ফুটেছি কঁটার বনে সাপের শাসনে কবি বাস, (2) আমি ছিমু শোভাহীন নিঃস্মর দেশে
অজস্র অস্ত্রার মাঝে দিনে দিনে হয়েছি লালিত;

চৌদিকে শাসিয়া উঠে ভুজঙ্গের গরল নিশাস প্রেমিক পথিক এসে মোরে ভালবেদে

* * * *

সদা সশক্তি প্রাণ কটকো কেতকী আমি হায়।

আমি ছিমু বাবুলার সাথী

His "Karabi" says—

Thorny am I not like a rose, so rosy honey can
not be expected from me.³

And 'Aparajita' very proudly exclaims—

Lest one should ignore me for my darkness, my
father names me 'Invicta'—Unconquered of all.⁴

The emotional poet worships it for its beautiful name.

THE FASCIST MOVEMENT IN ITALY.

SANTOSH KUMAR CHATTERJEE,—3rd Year Arts Class.

ITALY has recently been in the lime-light. She has forced herself into the attention of all the nations of the world by her stern uncompromising attitude in her last dispute with Greece. A shadow of her glorious Self of the past, she was never famous for high-handed action. Whence then this new virility, a strange feeling of strength and determination in her political life? All students of Politics, who have followed the course of events in Italy, will unhesitatingly attribute this fact to a new patriotic movement that has taken her by storm. I mean Fascism, which, manned by patriotic Italians and marshalled by Mussolini, has swept through the length and breadth of Italy.

(3) গোলাপের মত কষ্টকী নই শুধু
তাই এ বুকে পাবেনা গোলাপী শুধু।

(4) কালো বলে পাছে হেলা করে কেউ
তাইতো আমাৰ পিতা
সকলৰ সেৱা দিলেন আমাৰে
নামটা,—‘অপৰাজিতা’

To study the origin and growth of this movement, we must carry our mind far back to the days of 1919 and 1920, when, fresh from war, the whole world lay prostrate and bleeding. Not only did the war demolish towns and villages: even the old-established political ideals were also levelled to the dust. In the general turmoil, every government *reeled* and *tittered*. Thus in Russia was overthrown the most centralised and despotic government in existence, making way for the Bolshevik regime, more tyrannical and equally rigid.

The dream of Plato and *Marx* came true at last.

For a time the whole world trembled at this new menace. Every government scented danger and suspected 'red' spies everywhere. In fact the heads of the Soviet Republic did not stint money in carrying out an extensive propaganda through all the countries of Europe. The Bolshevik leaders plainly declared that they would mainly rely upon propaganda as the means to the attainment of a universal socialist state.

Particularly in Italy was such propaganda carried out with tremendous effect. A long time before the war a socialist party had been organised there. This party did not look upon the existing government with any very loving eyes; still it did not consider that the complete destruction of the government was desirable for the well-being of Italy. "Mending" was its watchword, not "Ending." What it advocated was an increased control of the state over many affairs which were conducted privately. But the dramatic success of Bolshevism imparted a new stimulus to the mind of the socialist leaders. They discarded their moderate views to the winds, and began to clamour for the immediate overthrow of the government. Then again another factor is to be considered, a strictly economic one. The war had awfully forced up the cost of living and the wages of workers had not been increased proportionally. Naturally they were sullen, discontented and rebellious.

It was among such men that the insidious teachings of the emissaries of Lenin and Trotsky had the greatest effect. The

Bolshevik literature, freely and liberally distributed, brought in recruits in enormous numbers to the Socialist party. Then began a veritable 'reign of terror'. Through trades-union the socialists had the workers in their own hands, and they incited them to strike, thus paralysing all industry. In Milan and other manufacturing centres of the North, they took possession of many of the industrial concerns and raided those who offered the least resistance. Private citizens were molested. Secret murders were not infrequent. 'Viva Lenin' was scrawled on the walls of the buildings in hideous mockery of the existing government. This state of affairs compelled the ministry of Signor Nitti to resign and Victor Emmanuel, the king of Italy called upon Signor Giolitti to form the cabinet. But the new government too was powerless to protect the most elementary rights of citizens—rights of life, of private property and of freedom from coercion.

The gaunt spectre of Lenin strode like a Colossus on the breast of Italy crushing out her life.

But Italy rallied. Perilously near the brink of disaster, she drew back in time. She had formerly shown her worth in producing Mazzini and Garibaldi: She now gave birth to another great leader—S. E. Benito Mussolini. A man of magnetic personality and splendid organising powers, it was he under whose fostering care the Fascist movement grew and spread to the terror and confusion of the Socialists. The word *Fascisti* is taken from an Italian word meaning "a bandage." A very happy denomination indeed, for it is the primary object of Fascism to heal the political life and cement the national unity of Italy.

It must always be regarded as a curious fact that the deathblow to Socialism came from one who was originally one of its votaries. Mussolini was originally a Socialist. He was even expelled from Switzerland for his revolutionary activities. The condition of Russia under the Bolshevik tyranny opened his eyes. It certainly checked his idealism. It

compelled him to come down from his Soaring theories to broad central facts of life. The Socialist theory no doubt contains a certain element of truth. The charges that they bring against the present regime, namely, unequal distribution of wealth, exploitation of labour, speculation etc, are no doubt evils which every political institution must try its best to eradicate. But it is about the *method*, by which they propose to bring about a juster and more ideal regime, with which one is disposed to disagree.

With Mussolini as the nucleus, the first *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento* (Fascist fighting corps) were formed. The excesses of the Socialists had perfectly disgusted all classes, especially the middleclass people. They enrolled themselves in these Fascist corps in large numbers. Even students, vagabonds and paupers donned their black shirts and placed their services at the disposal of their leader. Fascism spread like wildfire, to the terror of the Socialists. The whole of Italy was divided into four zones for the purpose of the Fascisti: in each of these parts he installed an inspector-general with a large supply of forces at his command.

At last the clash came. The Fascists did not tamely wait for the Socialists to come upon them. They boldly took the offensive. A bitter civil war raged in every part of Italy. The Fascists met violence with violence, assault with assault and even murder with murder. The bloody chronicle of Sinn Fein itself pales before this horrid scene of anarchy, rancour and reprisal. Almost every night the Fascist hordes issued out in their 'punitive expeditions', and swooped down unexpectedly on the Socialist headquarters and either killed them or compelled them to surrender. Side by side, Mussolini was thundering in the columns of *Popolo d'Italia*, his own organ.

The Fascists triumphed at last. In fact they had won by sheer force. The Socialist ranks were disorganised: numbers came out of them to enlist themselves as Fascists. The crisis was past, and Italy saved.

Signor Gorgolini has aptly summarised the movement in one brilliant sentence. "It is a lawless movement for the restoration of Law." But the Fascist cult of Force has always distressed me. The movement, admirable in many respects, has this black spot in it. Mussolini himself is a firm believer in force. No doubt it was a desperate remedy, and highly efficacious too, for a desperate disease. Still one is inclined to think that brute force is, or at least ought to be, an anachronism, It is a relic of barbarous times. Mussolini defended his position by saying that he adopted violence only as a temporary measure. "As in all human manifestations, so violence has its proper share beyond which it damages those who exercise it rather than those against whom it is directed. You can never pass just limits with impunity. Violence is an exception, not a method or a system. It is not directed to personal vengeance but to national defence. When it has reached its end, it is a very grave error to urge it further. Violence must be that of the intelligent and not of brutes.....This is the true type of Fascist violence un'il the day in which it will be possible to discard its use because life will have resumed its peaceful rhythm."

Upto this time we have seen Fascism in its destructive policy. It had eradicated a malign outgrowth on Italian life. Now we shall see it carrying out constructive work. During this time Fascism rose high in popular estimation. Mussolini was acclaimed as the saviour of Italy. Never had people less confidence in the ministry in power, which had looked on as an apathetic spectator when the Fascists and the Socialists were fighting out a duel to death. "Now or Never," thought Mussolini. He executed a bold strategic move and the Giolittian ministry tumbled down like a pack of cards.

On October 24, 1921, he convened a Fascist congress wherein he issued a manifesto expounding the cause of the Fascists and denouncing the ministry in power as weak, vacillating and quite incapable of solving the most urgent

problems of internal and external policy. It must resign to make room for Fascism.

The threat and the manifesto had the desired effect. The cabinet resigned, humiliated. The king hastily called Mussolini and requested him to form a cabinet. Thus Fascism came in power.

Fascism has now entered from the dynamic to the static phase. The movement has now been transformed into a party. Mussolini, now premier of Italy has already published his programme of the Fascist party. He has definitely repudiated the Socialistic principle in it. He will uphold freedom of speech and the widest franchise. He does not aim at revolutionising the present system of labour and capital, at the instance of the Socialists, but he is for smoothing their mutual relations by the system of co-operation in production. The government will refrain from interfering with private enterprises. Italy had railways and telephones under state management; he proposes to restore them to private management as soon as practicable. His view is that state management in those cases leads to corruption, extravagance and inefficiency.

The Fascist party does not look favourably upon the League of Nations. In course of his speech to the first Fascist congress at Florence, he declared—"Fascism does not believe in the vitality or principle of the so-called League of Nations. In this League, the nations are not really on a footing of equality. It is a kind of Holy alliance between the plutocratic nations of the Anglo-Saxon group, to guarantee for themselves the exploitation of the greater part of the world." But it cannot be gainsaid that the League represents the best attempt ever made for the realisation of that ideal—'World peace'. It has its many imperfections, various limitations. In fact, what institution has not got them? But there can not be a more serious obstacle in the way of the League than the distrust of the nations in its potency. Recent events have shown that the Fascist party is keenly jealous of the Italian interests in the

Balkan. It must now broaden its horizon, and make some real contribution for the stabilisation of the world.

Fascism has been in many respects an admirable, even a unique movement ; but unless it can rise above the sordid spirit of landgrabbing, and hunger for power, it will have nothing to distinguish itself from British and French Imperialism.

THE PROBLEM OF PAUPERISM—WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PROFESSIONAL BEGGARY IN CALCUTTA.

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ONE of the most salient characteristics of the modern age is the almost confusing variegation in the complex web of human life. We are overwhelmed by its uniqueness as well as its absurdities by its grandeur and freshness as well as its staleness and squalor. We seem to stand amidst a dead heap of desolation and destruction. The seeds of rancour and hatred seem to have been scattered broad-cast like the Dragon's Teeth of old mythology. Humanity has waded through blood and has gone through fire and water for great ideals but has forgotten them in the same way as some men have forgotten themselves through shell-shock or Neurosis. Men have been brutalised as much as they are exhausted. The cry of suffering has gone forth from a turbulent world. Shrieks of gesticulating maniacs protesting against their wrongs, the maddening cries of food rioters, the crashing noise of smashed shop-windows, the hoarse voice of the communist preaching his apocalyptic gospel, the ghastly laughter of starving children

as they die thinking of a piece of bread hidden in a corner of their garrets to relieve them from the fear of starvation — all these mingled noises reach our ears and produce the same uncanny impression as one would feel in the midst of a Laughing Gallery. But in spite of what Spencer would call 'Rebarbarisation' nothing is more striking than man's growing reaffirmation of faith in the great ideals which would make the earth a happier place to live in. The cry of the Disinherited, the poor and the miserable has gone forth from the nether worlds of grovelling squalor and poverty. It finds a readier response now than ever before. Humanitarianism is as strong a force in the world as the passions of hatred, cupidity, and strife. Gleams of a new world are flitting across the face of an appalling darkness. And to those who are visualising it or trying to remedy the lot of submerged humanity ready to tear the whole fabric of civilisation to shreds nothing is more necessary than to study misery and as Comte says "to discover the real laws of our nature, individual or social, by the analysis of its suffering."

In the art of fiction, in the study of social sciences, and Politics, perhaps in every branch of knowledge in which man is viewed in his social aspect, the new humanism of our times is fast asserting its dominant sway. The new psychology, which has taken up the task of discovering the causes and conditions of character-building found in the external circumstances and surroundings of life and which has tried to prove how weak and helpless human will is against the unconscious, inexorable and indeterminable tendencies of man's nature, has been called into the aid of such studies. The result has been a broad justification of humanity, an almost scientific vindication of the pauper, the vagrant, the defective and such other moral and physical wrecks of humanity. The former unscientific and sentimental humanitarianism has been replaced by a sort of scientific ethics of modern times.

Hence the beggar-problem and the problem of the incurables, the defectives, the delinquents and the paupers have assumed a

new significance. It is no longer found sufficient and ultimate to find a remedy for them in the foundation of certain benevolent institutions or in the threat of the prison-cell. These may be mere palliatives. We must see whether the causes lie deeper or not whether the beggar or the pauper is a last stage in the evolution of a certain type of human nature or not. If these questions are satisfactorily answered, can it not be possible to find out a remedy which would lay the axe at the root of the evil?

In this paper I propose to attempt a study of the beggar problem in the broader perspective of scientific ethics before I deal with the specific problem of Calcutta beggars.

The beggar problem is closely linked to the all-comprehensive problem of the struggle for existence. Although we are apt to turn up our nose in disgust or burn with a righteous indignation when protagonists of the Darwinian Law propose to extend their experiments on plant life and lower animal life to defective human life and to stem the tide of degeneration by means of incubators, painless operations and the like, we should not deny the operation of the Law even among man. Human life might not be so easily amenable to such mechanical and sordid methods; it eludes the grasp of the practical realist by its multiplicity, its complexity and its vastness. But while this fact may make us sceptical of the success claimed by the practical biologist it shows at the same time how wide the range of operation of this Law might be in the domain of human life. The two primary ends towards which nature marches on are self-preservation and propagation and the two primeval instincts working towards these two ends are those of hunger and love. Nature yields to those who have the necessary fitness for a certain minimum amount of exertion. Into this exacting world of nature some are born whose mental, moral and physical inheritance is too poor to come up to the irreducible minimum of efficiency. Hence the hard necessities of the struggle require that they should be stamped out of this field. But so far as it is human life the struggle is bound to assume human characteristics,

befitting the crowning and the most glorious creation of nature, whatever might be the primary ends and instincts of primeval humanity. Hence the progressive faculties of mankind, instead of merely ministering to the animal wants created by the primitive motive-forces of hunger and love, have struggled to subdue nature herself. The issue of this age-long struggle is that man has come by his boundless creative intelligence and creative power as evidenced by the glorious fabric of civilisation itself. Hence so far as the highly evolved human life is concerned the irreducible minimum of efficiency has increased in both its standard and content. But as pointed out before there are some who enter this world of conflict without the power of adaptation at all. To them life becomes nothing but a process of vegetation, an unsentient existence swayed by the primitive instincts of hunger and love. Thus while the struggle for existence gives full play to the immense possibilities of man in some, it degrades others to abysmal depths more awful and tragic than death itself. This is one of the peculiar phases of the Law of struggle for existence which makes the problem of pauperism a problem of pathetic human interest. Another peculiar phase is the sufferings of those who insist on the right of justice in human warfare ; who plead for the equality of opportunity which would give them a sure foothold and a convenient vantage ground ; who proclaim that the original sin of the monopolisation and accumulation of the means of production is the cause of inequality of opportunities for great masses of men ; and who assert that they have been doomed to degradation and misery not on account of their poor physical and moral inheritances but on account of fraud and injustice, practised upon them in the distant past but having an appallingly cumulative effect in the present.

The first of these peculiar circumstances has brought to the fore the problem of correction, reformation and relief ; and the second has intensified the great struggle of the Disinherited which has shaken the foundations of society.

Another law which is clearly exemplified in the phenomena of pauperism is the Biological law of variation. The beggar is an inferior variant in this world of variety. As I have said before, the law of struggle for existence has been at the root of the multiform and ever-expanding faculties of human life. It is at the basis of the progress of the arts and the increase of human welfare. It has stimulated the process of change by quickening the Divine Discontent in man. Even the pauper and the dependent emerges out of this struggle with developed and specialised tendencies of nature no doubt, but they are ignoble, brutal, abnormal and anti-social. It is this law of variation, therefore, which accounts for the unsocial man like the habitual vagrant, the confirmed criminal, the feeble, the undeveloped, the perverted and the monstrous.

Let us now turn to the vexed question of heredity, environment, and the transmission of traits. I will consider this question so far as it affects the theoretic basis of the problem of Social Control of these wrecks of humanity and of measures of relief or correction. We have, on this question, to reckon with the two rival schools of Lamarckism and Neo-Darwinianism. Lamarckism is the theory that acquired traits are transmissible. It says that it is nothing short of cynical pessimism to assert that man's capacity for change and development is too inexorably limited for him. Nor is it scientific to say so. Lamarckism thus believes in education and correction of human nature so that the lower types of human species may improve and develop. It is thus a believer in the good Samaritan, in Christian ministration, in Detention Homes and Reformatories as institutions of national advancement. On the other hand, there is the Neo-Darwinianism at modern times which denies that acquired traits can be transmitted at all. It believes in natural selection, in the painful process of evolution through elimination and adaptation. The ancient animal instinct of selecting the best mates should be made to work, as it is the best means of preserving and improving the race.

Education and public relief, according to them, are mere palliatives administered to defective humanity, mere artificial stimulants to postpone the inevitable issue of the struggle for existence. Whatever might be the true scientific conclusion on this question there are two solid facts of modern times which, rightly or wrongly, have turned the tide against the hard matter-of-fact biologist. The first is the growth of modern humanitarianism. We simply refuse to believe that man, in so far as he is man, can be regarded merely as a deteriorated species of plant or animal life, however degraded he might be. We might not believe in the divine essence of any and every man or that he has such a thing as soul so gloriously depicted by poets and philosophers. But still we can not be content with penal legislation against the pauper and the hopeless vagrant or leave him to die in his dark garret. The second great fact is the titanic struggle of the Disinherited poor which has sent its volcanic tremors across the world. It has caused uneasiness and heart-searching throughout the globe and its bearing on the issue we are considering is almost decisive to everyone who has read aright the signs of the times. But we must not rule the scientist out of court altogether. It is important to remember that our humanitarian sympathy and our fanatical enthusiasm on the solution of this problem might do more unconscious harm than conscious good.

I have indicated above the main pre-suppositions which ought, in my opinion, to serve as a sort of rational perspective in our examination of the phenomena of pauperism and of the measures to be taken to tackle it. Next I would try to point out several less general causes of poverty which may be regarded as specific causes. They are however, sufficiently general to explain the phenomena wherever modern civilisation prevails.

I. Personal dependence and helplessness may arise from physical and mental conditions due to the weakness of (a) Age (b) Sex (c) Disease (d) Ignorance and (e) Lack of industrial training.

(a) Age—Both infants and decrepit old men need the support of others. So far as children are concerned, their helplessness ought to be regarded as a matter of sacred trust. It is derogatory to the stage of society at which we have arrived to leave the responsibility connected with this helplessness to the care of the primeval maternal instinct. The support of the old and the decrepit becomes a public charge to a great extent where the individualistic order of society prevails and the family does not always provide an insurance for old age and and its disabilities.

(b) Sex—The weakness of sex is also a prolific source of helplessness. This cause becomes very acute and widespread in its effects in societies such as ours in which the fate of the woman is linked up with that of man so rigidly that she is exposed to much suffering and neglect specially after the death of the bread-winner.

The rest of the causes viz disease, ignorance and lack of industrial training are again due to bad surroundings and inequality of opportunity on which I have already dwelt.

II. Personal helplessness may also be caused by unsocial habits such as :—

(1) Alcoholism and drug habits—The effects of these habits are disastrous and cumulative. Toxic substances that are in alcohol are transmitted from father to children. Moreover there is a weakening of the nervous system which leads to inefficiency. Again it might lead to epilepsy, insanity and Neurosis in children.

(2) Licentiousness—This is one of the most fruitful causes of economic dependence. It causes weakening of body and will and is the mother of various diseases disastrous both in the present and in the future.

(3) Shiftlessness and roving—It is one of the concomitants of a restless and feverish life in crowded cities. Men abandon their homes, develop the nomadic instinct of aimless wandering.

feel contempt for the obligation of marriage and in the end swell the members of the parasites of Society.

It is interesting to refer, in this connection, to Prof. Lindsay's Table relating to poverty in New York. Prof. Lindsay divided the several thousand paupers, whose cases he examined, into a number of categories according to the differences of the causes of helplessness. These are:—

- (1) Lack of employment (23·16 per cent); (2) Insufficient employment; (3) Poorly paid employment; (4) Unhealthy employment; (5) Drink; (6) Immorality; (7) Shiftlessness; (8) Crime and dishonesty; (9) Roving disposition (indicating misconduct); (10) Imprisonment; (11) Orphans and cast-outs; (12) Neglected; (13) No male support; (14) Ignorance of English; (15) Accident; (16) *Sickness or death in the family*; (17) Physical defects; (18) Insanity; (19) Old age; and (20) Large family.

I now pass on to the problem of beggars, defectives, delinquents and incurables of the streets of Calcutta, who are, on all hands, a menace to the health and sanitation of the city. To say the least, it is one of the worst signs of our feeble civic conscience and our lackadaisical patriotism that the streets of Calcutta should be infested with horrible wrecks of humanity—a swarm of deserving and helpless people—incurables and defectives—swelled by the able-bodied vagrants pestering people with their importunities and absurdities. It is really a harrowing sight to see a degenerate humanity suffering from loathesome and contagious diseases—the lepers, the insane, the idiotic, the feeble-minded—men of abnormal deformities of body and mind. We pass by quite heedless or toss off an occasional pice with an emotion which is as transitory as the mental images of the kaleidoscopic sights of the city.

I will, first of all, take up the question of the extent of professional beggary in our city. We are hampered for want of census information in many of our social studies. In the case of beggars also we have no reliable and up-to-date census

to depend upon. The census of 1911 puts the number of beggars at 5624. For the whole of India the number stood at 52 lakhs in 1901, as is evidenced by the census of that year. On the question whether professional beggary has been increasing or not there are conflicting tendencies which we must carefully consider. For want of statistics I will try to reach a conclusion by enquiring into causes which are likely to increase or decrease the number of beggars. It is quite a patent fact that private and well-directed charity which has always formed one of the most admirable features of our social system has now been at a great discount on account of the pressure of economic life. The private doles are smaller and the existence of able-bodied vagrants masquerading as mendicants has caused a reaction against this system of charity. The institutions for feeding the poor such as Dharmasalas and Atithisalas which used to be established by the benevolent rich some two decades ago have disappeared. As Raja Rishi Kesh Law, the Hony. Secy. British Indian Association pointed out in his letter to the government on this subject, it is also a patent fact that we do not find the same number of beggars on the occasions of alms-giving such as Shradhas as we used to find before. Again, on the other hand, it may be urged that beggars find it more profitable to beg in the crowded thoroughfares of the city than to go from house to house which means much exertion and small doles in kind and not in cash. Moreover the disruption of the joint-family system which provided insurance against accident and old age has been a cause which tends to increase the number of beggars cast adrift into a friendless world. From the census reports it appears that out of 5624 beggars enumerated in Calcutta and the suburbs, 1283, or less than a fourth, were born in Calcutta. This would mean that there is an inflow of beggars and paupers from centres affected by famine or failure of crops. This tendency is perhaps stronger at the present time than it was in the past. Again we must reckon with those immigrants who

come to Calcutta in search of employment and are absolutely unknown to any body here. There is ground for believing that many of them turn permanent or temporary beggars. All these solid facts lead us to conclude that on the whole professional beggary has been increasing in Calcutta and its suburbs.

Next I will attempt a classification of Calcutta beggars. Professional beggars in our city form a multifarious body and they range from those who are no better than stinking bundles of flesh to the well-fed, pestering rogue. Classification is necessary not only for purposes of remedy and relief but also for a right understanding of the problem.

Calcutta beggars may be broadly classified into -(1) Able-bodied and (2) Disabled. Among the able-bodied beggars the religious mendicants whose religious order or sect enjoins upon them the discipline of begging, form a class apart. As for the rest they fall under the various categories into which Prof. Lindsay has divided New York beggars. One of these categories, thus, will include the drunkards, the licentious, the shiftless vagrants, etc. Another category will include the orphans, the cast-outs, the neglected and the like who are the products of the disruption of the joint-family or the break-up of family-life as the case may be. Juvenile beggars generally come under this heading. A third category will include occasional beggars who beg during the period of their unemployment. Among the disabled those who are suffering from hopelessly incurable diseases such as leprosy, insanity, syphilitic ulcers and sores, fall under a distinct group. A fourth category will include the blind, the halt and the lame whose disability is an accident. The helpless and decrepit old beggars also fall under this category.

I shall now deal with the measures taken by the government to discourage professional beggary in Calcutta. Without being too vehement I can only say that the authorities have neglected a sacred trust which forms one of the primary functions of government in every land and have tinkered with this problem

with an antiquated legislation administered in a slip-show and spasmodic manner.

Up to the year 1910 the beggars of Calcutta and its suburbs came under the operation of Secs. 70 and 40 of the Calcutta and Suburban Police Acts. The sections provided that "It is an offence punishable, in Calcutta, with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, and in the suburbs, with a fine not exceeding Rs. 50, to beg for alms in any public street, thoroughfare or place, or to expose or exhibit any sores, wounds, bodily ailments or deformity, with the object of exciting charity or of obtaining alms, or to seek for or obtain alms by means of any false statement or pretences." Thus we had a piece of legislation which was the least calculated to prove either a deterrent or a corrective. It was really nonsensical and cruel to send an aged, an infirm or an incurably diseased person to the prison without making any provision for any sort of Relief or Infirmary. In 1910 the law was amended by adding Secs. 70A and 40A to the Calcutta and Suburban Police Acts. It was provided that "Any aged, infirm or incurably diseased person convicted and sentenced to imprisonment on account of such offence might be detained for the term of imprisonment in a Refuge instead of being sent to jail." The absurd rigours of the Secs. 70 and 40 have been mitigated to some extent because there are now the "Refuge," the Juvenile House of Detention and the Leper Asylums to accommodate this kind of beggars. But still no useful purpose is served by confining them for a certain period at the end of which they are free to resume their profession more warily. Again it is simply ludicrous to fine a beggar because the fine, which is usually not prohibitive, amounts to nothing more than a license fee. Moreover there is no sense in prescribing the imposition of fines on suburban beggars except if it be assumed that the suburban beggars are specially capable of paying fines.

These facts are clearly exemplified in the operation of the existing law to which I will now draw the attention of my

readers. During 1917 the Police arrested 2739 beggars of whom 2719 were sent up for trial to the courts where only three were acquitted. Of the remainder 1031 were merely warned and discharged, 1020 were detained till the rising of the court, 234 were fined and 155 only were awarded various terms of imprisonment. In addition, 145 beggars were sent to the Juvenile House of Detention, 5 to the Refuge and 26 to the Leper Asylum at Gobra. It will thus be seen that out of 2739 beggars sent up for trial 2151 escaped scot-free after a novel and rather amusing experience of a mock-trial which surely broke the dull monotony of a beggar's life. Of the remainder 565 (three of them being acquitted) beggars who were convicted, 300 were sent out for a change to the prison or the House of Detention. Of the remainder only 31 came under the "rather benevolent Secs. 70A and 40A of 1910; and these 31 disabled persons were taken care of not for the rest of their miserable existence but for an arbitrary and short period in Asylums too few and too small to maintain a large number of them. Thus it is clear that the laws as regards beggars have proved to be a dead letter and do not reflect credit upon either the government or upon the city of palaces which disdains, in its pharisaical pride, to relieve the lot of the host of Lazaruses roaming about the streets.

I will now take up the case of pauper lepers who are not only the most unsightly and sickening of Calcutta beggars but also constitute a grave menace to public health. Here also the government legislation is inadequate and unsatisfactory. Under the present Leper Act a leper means "Any person suffering from any variety of leprosy in whom the process of ulceration has commenced." A pauper leper has been defined as "A leper who has, in a public place solicited alms, exposed or exhibited sores, wounds, bodily ailment or deformity with the object of exciting charity or who is at large without any ostensible means of subsistence." The provision, therefore, is that only a pauper who has open sores can be arrested and

detained in the Leper Asylum and that he is discharged as soon as his sores have healed up no matter whether he has the disease or not. So that the result has been, as the Commissioner of Police estimates, that 80 p. c. of the admissions to the Leper Asylums are re-admissions. But it is a patent fact that under the provisions of the Act the pauper lepers are discharged in a dangerously infective condition. In fact the Leper Act, as the Health Officer of the Calcutta Corporation asserts, is "Based upon entirely erroneous conceptions of the epidemiology of leprosy."

Now what are the remedies for this intolerable state of things? Is this policy of drift to go on for ever? Are we to think of city beggars only when we toss off an occasional pice or turn away in disgust from a pestering rogue?

With regard to the solution of the beggar problem in Calcutta it is interesting to enquire what has already been done in Ceylon on this line. As early as 1907 Ceylon passed the Vagrancy Ordinance and has established the House of Detention and Home for Vagrants. Under the Act beggars are arrested and brought before the Magistrate. If the Magistrate declares them to be vagrants they are taken by the Police to the House of Detention which is under Police control. The vagrants are here sorted and medically examined. Those who are diseased and aged are passed on to the Home for Vagrants which is in charge of the Salvation Army. Those who are able-bodied are either sent to Tea-estates and other places of employment (persons refusing work being liable to imprisonment) or are made to sign an agreement to leave Ceylon and not return for 5 years and are expelled if they fail to do so. The cost of the upkeep of the Home for Vagrants is equally divided between the Colombo Municipal Council and the Ceylon Government. Other towns which send vagrants to the Home pay the cost of their vagrants. Mendicant beggars are exempted from the operation of the Ordinance.

I think that the London of the East should proceed on

somewhat the same lines as Ceylon has indicated. First of all we must provide for the disabled beggars. As pointed out before we must distinguish the beggars falling under this class. It is necessary, first of all to establish an Infirmary containing wards, each complete in itself, so that each of them will take care of a special class of the disabled poor. There should be a ward for the blind, the halt and the lame, a ward for beggars suffering from incurable or permanent disability, and so on. As for the lepers, the Leper Act should be amended and a provision for the segregation of lepers in an Asylum or a Colony should be promptly introduced.

The crux of the problem, however, consists in the existence of the able-bodied professional beggars recruited into the profession under various circumstances. First of all, the existing law should be so amended as to extend the maximum period of imprisonment to six months. Secondly, we should provide for stringent and deterrent punishment for parents who encourage their children to beg in the public. Thirdly, those able-bodied beggars who have set up a regular organisation and exploit the disabled beggars should be promptly apprehended and severely dealt with. Fourthly, we should provide that able-bodied juvenile beggars will be accommodated in the Juvenile Detention Home not for any fixed, arbitrary period but for a period during which they can be educated to earn their livelihood. Fifthly, we must have to provide for a Workhouse with an Industrial Settlement attached to it. The Salvation Army has been doing pioneer work in this line and so far they have been highly successful.

The peculiar position of religious mendicants has introduced an element of great complexity into the beggar problem in our country. Mixed up with the real mendicants are the shiftless rogues who exploit the traditional Hindu custom of alms-giving. The existing law has a provision that a beggar is punishable if he asks for alms "under false pretences." But so strong and sacred is the custom of alms-giving that no one likes to investi-

gate if there are bogus mendicants or not ; nor is it possible to detect them. At present the temptation to bogus mendicancy is very small except in the case of those who do not like begging in public, because street-begging is more paying than house to house begging. But if the penal measures against the able-bodied delinquent must have to be stringent, as I have advocated, an increase in the number of bogus mendicants all over the city must have to be faced.

Now I shall pass on to the financial aspect of the question. All government undertakings of this kind are apt to be too expensive, if not anything else ; whereas if they are managed as semi-government institutions or as private institutions receiving government aid the recurring expenses are lower because there is a field for honorary, voluntary and self-sacrificing labour of love. Mr. Biswas the self-sacrificing Secretary of the "Refuge" has calculated that it does not cost more than Rs. 4 a month per head for food if we run these institutions on the above lines. But whatever the cost, the government, the Corporation of Calcutta and the charitable rich of our city ought to be determined to bear it. Moreover, we should consider the recommendation of the Special Committee of the Bombay Corporation on this question. The Committee proposed that the cost of maintenance of foreign beggars should be borne by the district from which they hail. From the census report it appears that out of 5624 beggars enumerated in Calcutta and its suburbs 1283 or less than a fourth were born in Calcutta. Hence it is only just that Calcutta should not bear the entire burden.

But, after all, the success of every institution or measure depends upon the spirit and the manner in which it is administered. I think that the duty of dealing with the beggars arrested by the Police ought to be taken away from ordinary magistrates who usually deal with criminals. That duty should devolve upon private individuals who are believers in the redemption of the social, moral and religious wrecks of humanity. A number of respectable persons should be given

powers to arrest beggars with the aid of the Police. The Court should be like the New York City Institution where "The language of the Penal Code, the jargon of the jailer, the shadow of the Prison" shall not torment or terrify the arrested beggar. Those who will sit in judgment over him will "minister to him in mercy" and pray for his soul. The same spirit of sympathy and humanity must animate the workers of the different institutions.

On the corner-stones of the Refuge, the Infirmary, the Work-house and the Detention Home shall be inscribed :

"Let truth spring from the earth and justice and mercy look down from heaven."

THE GOAL OF EDUCATION.

BY MR. PANCHANAN MITRA, M.A., P.R.S

ONE is generally coming to recognise in these days the pre-ponderating influence of heredity. "One should exercise the greatest discrimination in the choice of one's parents"—such is the slogan of the American Eugenists. England is being ruled by the 'hereditary genius' of a few families of statesmen, judges and priests, pronounce Galton and his successors in the British Eugenist School. Traits are handed down whether as a direct heritage or in the Mendelian fashion—this is mainly the subject of investigation of human experimental evolutionists of the present day.

So then education and environment as prominent factors in evolution are gradually being shoved by some to the back ground. But there is also another school coming to have its

own now-a-days. It is based upon the latest methods of experimental psychology as the former is upon ethnic sociology or rather group-inheritance. The psychology of the unconscious lays bare before us more and more the dominance of the unconscious over our emotions and impulses. The ideas imbibed during infancy, childhood and adolescence have an iron grip over us. There is no escape from them. And thus Benjamin Kidd in his latest oft-praised book, the Secret of Power, shows that the whole outlook and potentiality of a nation can be changed in two generations. If the young ones in their immature days are brought up in a new set of ideas and environments, their motive-forces and impulses would be radically different from those of the preceding generation. Such a revolution in national potentiality has been actually brought about in Japan and Germany in recent times.

So here then, we find again education playing the leading role. Even the Eugenists do not rule it out altogether. It may bring out only the latent goodnesses and wickednesses of our long line of ancestors in the Galtonian way proceeding from immediate ancestors as $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{16} \dots \&c.$, or it may tend to develop the dominant and recessive traits of ancestors in groups amongst the descendants tending to develop either a good or a bad trait to a remarkable degree in course of time. Or it may be that the education by auto-suggestion and environmental associations is all too powerful. But it is always a great factor. Thus it is everywhere the latent potentialities are brought out into action by the force of education alone either direct or indirect. Hence it is of the supreme interest to find out what the goal of education should be.

Here again, the political thinker would go in for making ideal citizens—the sociologist would pine for bringing about an ideal state of social relationships—the medical man would like to see all immune from diseases—the industrialist for having a better set of traders—the scientist for having better brains all around and so forth. But all would agree in accepting the

proposition of the biologist that all these are necessary only to be conducive to the general march of humanity or rather the making of a truer and a better humanity. Prehistoric anthropology has brought forth before us one lesson that in this march of humanity, the role of nations and individual civilisations is but insignificant. Countless civilisations have been destroyed but humanity as a whole is marching forward. "That which is unadapted perishes, that which is adapted is preserved. Trample at Minoan culture, it shoots up again in thousandfold splendour in the glory of Greece; crush out Greece, the whole world is fertilized; give the Roman world up to the fury of barbarian hordes and the outcome is Modern Europe. We see one race stepping into another's place in the van of the march, but nothing of the continuous inheritance is lost. Every treading down of the seed results in a harvest richer than the last. Chaldaean, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, European bear the torch in turn; but the lampadophoria of human progress is continuous. In the progress of evolution races and individuals pass away but humanity proceeds onward. The issue is human advance as a whole, and as it moves we see the separate currents tending more and more to fuse into broader confluent streams. For progress is marked not by forward motion only but by an ever-increasing expansion, continually tending towards the inclusion of the entire race within the widening circles of an organized correlated growth, towards the creation not of brilliant civilisations but of a greater and higher humanity."

(Robert Briffault—The Making of Humanity 1920 P. 27-28.)

Thus it is the making of a perfect humanity that should be the goal of all education. "It is not for getting the highest marks in examination by any means whatsoever that we are to be educated but for the making of a better humanity. Let the guardian at home, the neighbours around, the teacher at school never cease to din into the boys' ears that knowledge, intelligence, and wealth are but the means, the end is the attainment, the making and the perfection of humanity. As the boy has to

prepare himself early for self-development, social service, intellectual growth and physical culture he has to enlist himself also from his earliest days for the making of humanity. For that is the supreme end. Bookish lore, intellectual display, physical improvement—these are but the means to that highly desirable end: The moral revolution and the sad decrepitude of the present day is mainly due to having lost sight of the end in view and enthroned one or other of the means as the supremely desirable object." (Manushyatva Lābha 1923 pp. 78-79.)

But the question may be asked how is this to be achieved ? Is it by following some time-worn hackneyed code of morality or shaping our own lives by the example of the sublime lives of eminent men ? The biologist and the synthetic anthropologist would here again take his stand on scientific ground and turn round and say. "The only ethics, the only goodness, the only true way is to realise what man is, to know his biological, psychological and historical evolution and to act in a way conducive to his perfection by a full knowledge of the laws of his evolution" (Ibid. p. 43).

AJATASATRU.

BY PRAMATHA NATH CHAKRAVARTY—*Third Year Arts Class.*

AN attempt to bring to light any portion of early Indian history is undoubtedly a daring and a severe task. The subject-matter chosen is the reign of Ajatasatru or Kunika, the sixth Saisunaga King. For the history of this period we have to depend upon the Puranas but there is another wholly neglected, yet more reliable source—the Mahavamsa. According to the Vishnupurana five kings of the house of Pradyota reigned or a hundred and thirty-eight years ; after them came the

Saisunagas. Mr. R. C. Dutt, in his *Ancient India*, says that the Saisunaga dynasty consisted of ten kings belonging to as many generations. The dynasty lasted for three hundred and sixty two years. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar remarks—"According to the Puranas Magadha was originally held by the Barhadratha family. Then, it seems, occurred the inroads of the Vajjis, who held Magadha. In the early years of Buddha, Bimbisara thus appears to have seized Magadha after expelling the Vajjis beyond the Ganges and to have established himself at Rajagriha, the capital of the kingdom."

Among the many wives of king Bimbisara¹ we hear of three only—Kosala Debi, Chellana and Ambapali. There is ample evidence to show that king Bimbisara had many sons, the most important being Ajatasatru, Abhaya, Silabhat and Vimala Kondanna. History is concerned only with Ajatasatru and if tradition is to be believed the other princes became Buddhist monks through fear of death. These stories cast a stain upon the character of the great king ; that is why they have been frequently challenged.

Some historians have considered the name Ajatasatru to be significant. To them the name means 'one who is the enemy of his father even before the very birth.' In support of this interpretation a story runs according to which even in his mother's womb he drank his father's blood. Besides this, it is said that at the instigation of his cousin Devadatta Ajatasatru committed parricide even when the reins of government were handed over to him. The truth of this story has been rightly doubted by many authors.

The marriage of the Magadha king with a Videha lady was the result of a peace concluded between the Lichchavis and Bimbisara. Bimbisara is said to have gained supremacy over Magadha only by dint of help of the Lichchavis. But his son Ajatasatru forgot this totally and tried to destroy the indepen-

1. Carmichael Lectures, Ch. II. P. 73.

2. According to the Vayupurana this spelling is correct.

dence of the Lichchavis. Vesali was the head of the powerful Vajjian confederacy which was defeated but not broken up by Ajatasatru. He found the people of Vesali luxurious and degraded ; besides, seeds of dissension were sown among them by his Brahmin minister Vassakara. Ajatasatru utilised his opportunity for destroying Vesali completely. Mr. T. W. Rhys Davids in his "Buddhist India" remarks, "But the real reasons which induced Vidudabha to attack and conquer his relatives, the Sakyas, were, most likely, the same sort of political motives which later on induced his cousin, Ajatasatru of Magadha to attack and conquer his relatives, the Lichchavis of Vesali." Now after the unnatural and inhuman death of Bimbisara, as certain authors say, Kosala Debi died of grief and Kasi, which was given to Bimbisara as a dowry by the king of Mahakosala and so long served as his pinmoney, was confiscated by Pasenadi, the queen's brother. War began between Kosala and Magadha. The victory lay at first with Ajatasatru. A certain hint from a Buddhist monk changed the whole situation and Pasenadi came out victorious. Thus in the fourth campaign Ajatasatru was imprisoned and was forced to give up his claim on Kasi. Now Pasenadi married his daughter Vajira to Ajatasatru. The plan of the Kosala king was to attack Magadha and to expel Ajatasatru but this plan was frustrated and he himself being helpless at last entered into a friendly relation with Ajatasatru.

In the time of the Saisunagas Northern India was divided into many small states—Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Cheti, Vamsa, Kuru, Panchala, Machcha, Surasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhara, and Kamboja. Of these the most prominent were Magadha, Kosala, Vamsa and Avanti—Magadha with Rajagriha as its capital under the Saisunagas ; Kosala with Savatthi as its capital under the Ikshvakus—Pasenadi and his son Vidudabha ; Vamsas or Vastsas with Kausambi for their capital under Udena and his son Parantapa ; Avanti with its capital town the famous Ujjaini under Pajjota.

The river Ganges served as a boundary between Magadha and the Lichchavis during this age and Pataligrama had some importance ; because it connected the two states. This place became celebrated because it was on the way from Vesali to Rajagriha. Besides the advantage of this geographical situation, there were other favourable circumstances which helped the growth of Pataliputra, the most famous of ancient India's cities. Another reason for selecting the junction of the Ganges and the Hiranyabahu (son) for the establishment of a fort was the need of defence against Pajjota the king of Ujjaini. But Ujjaini came under the rule of Magadha in the 4th century B. C. The Nepalese Buddhist work named 'Asoka vadana' by Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra says that Asoka, the turbulent prince who was born of a Brahmin Queen named Subhadrangi was sent as a viceroy to Ujjaini in his early years. Buddha during his visit to Pataliputra in the last part of his life found the two ministers Sunidha and Vassakara engaged in building the fortress. About this time Buddha and Mahavira preached their respective doctrines. Ajatasatru at first hated Buddhism but afterwards became a convert to it. Some say that the new doctrine brought some changes in him. He truly liked the new religion and tried much to propagate it. People liked and revered him very much. The last years of this king are plunged in darkness.

In Ajatasatru we have the type of the hero-warrior. In regard to his subjects he adopted the policy of conciliation. The stories of his parricide may well be doubted. As a warrior he stands very prominent. This is clearly illustrated by the facts of his reign. He seldom came out unsuccessful in fair fighting. The selection of the site of Pataliputra shows his far-sightedness. The city with magnificent palaces stood prominent and gorgeous among India's ancient cities. Thus Ajatasatru was conspicuous as a builder. He was, above all, one of the typical war-lords of ancient India.

THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE NOVEL.

SUDHENDU KUMAR CHOUDHURY—*Third Year Arts.*

“Well read, indeed, these books (good novels) have serious use being nothing less than treatises on moral anatomy and chemistry ; studies of human nature in the elements of it.”

—Ruskin.

IN these days of cheap-printing, when, for a few pence one may have access into the wisdom and folly of ages, when ‘the cords of thought await our call’ in the dark and damp corners of old book-stalls, when penny-dreadfuls are advertised in the most glaring colour, when abridged editions of best authors are produced in thousands, and to crown all, when every unsuccessful man turns out to be an author if only he can satisfy his publisher, the proper value of a book and specially of a novel, doomed to be studied in sofas and easy-chairs, is apt to be underrated by superficial thinkers and exaggerated by idle lovers of stories.

It is a matter of deep regret but one which cannot be passed over in silence, that the literary market of to-day is groaning under rotten goods with a glittering polish on them. These are the so-called blood and thunder stories where you have miracles in every line and thrilling adventures in every page, in each case the hero being miraculously delivered by a sudden turn of fortune. What are the stories of Arabian Nights before these offsprings of the twentieth-century-brain ? They all deal with passionate love, hasty marriages and other affairs of a lower order. Apart from their thrilling character, they are found on examination to be wretched diaries of unfortunate men—each in a wrong place. Speeches on ‘eternal happiness,’

'unspeakable grief' and the like are scattered most mercilessly all over the pages much to the impatience of the patient readers. But let us not be deluded by such fine names. For when we proceed to examine the application of these expressions we are struck by the ingenuity displayed by the writer in using 'eternal happiness' with reference to a five minutes' talk with a great Earl and 'unspeakable grief' to indicate the spoiling of a morning's dinner. If they be at all interesting, 'the more's the pity.' For, as Ruskin has shown long ago—"it is not the badness of a novel that we should dread as its *overwrought* interest.' Well, these serpents in grass, these finely-bound books with gilt-edges (guilty edges ?) emit a most fatal poison of moral death, which makes vice charming by painting its allurements in an 'artistic' manner and virtue feeble by making it the butt of every fun. The virtuous in these stories put on a funeral appearance, talk very little when required, and preach lengthy sermons to a dying sinner. Especially if the writer be of the 'Art for art' school he will not scruple to clear the moral drains before the public gaze and ask us most seriously to dive beneath in search of lost pearls.

On the same class as this filthy trash, there is another type of story-books which are more detestable as they ridicule virtue under the guise of championing its cause. The vicious in these novels fail in every sphere of life, are robbed at night while the virtuous win in the Derby, get seats in Parliament and are pushed on to the top of the ladder, merely by the 'Hand of Providence' as the writers put it.

As a standing rebuke to these two hopeless attempts at novel-writing, there exists a superior class of fictions, towering high their heads above these catch-pennies, and reaching the highest range of literature. Thrilling they are not, except in the sense of inspiring towards better efforts. Neither do they attempt, to describe the affairs of the world as thrilling, for, in reality they are not so in a strict sense of the term. But their sole mission is to lift us, one and all, to a higher world of thought

and existence,—the world, where doubts are unknown, divisions unheard of, and death unborn. While giving a true and faithful account of the world as it is, they vividly bring before the mind's eye the world as it ought to be by holding some ideal, lost sight of, in the feverish hurry of daily life. Such novels are better teachers of mankind than many moral textbooks. For, they infuse a warm, human interest into the cold, abstract principles of morality and thus their influence in moulding human character is bound to be tremendous. To Biographies also, they are superior in their edifying influence and the reason is not far to seek. In every biography, all that we are concerned with, is the life-history of a single man—, his merits and demerits. But in every true novel, we have a variety of characters, each different from the rest, but all possessing in common, some noble trait, which may help us in some way or other, in after life. Again in a biography, only a section, usually a very small section of the world, is brought to us, in so far as it sheds light on a single character and no more. But in a novel, the whole world with all its laughter and tears passes before us, making us conscious of our own place and function in the entire world-system, enlarging the range of our intellectual vision, and expanding our hearts. So sympathy may prefer biography but imagination can be satisfied by novels and nothing else.

We are now in a position to determine the salient features of a true novel and judge its power and influence over human life.

But before proceeding any further, two things must be definitely understood by us.

First, truth is always stranger than empty fiction as Emerson tells us, but it is very difficult to distinguish one from the other in actual life. The task of judging the merit of a novel then is not so easy as it seems to be. One book is laid aside as 'interesting', another as 'original,' and a third as 'well-written.' But these are all idle epithets, meaning very little to us. The

interest which a book may have for the readers is merely comparative and depends on the reader's taste and the leisure he has at his disposal. The boy who is fed on detective-stories from his cradle will find every book interesting which he may pick up whereas a busy merchant will find the most interesting books to be dull and insipid.

Secondly, chance plays a very large part in every day life and uncommon things happen once or twice in the commonest life. But the task of a novelist will be to apply this element with the greatest possible discretion for, if the whole plot hinges on chance, the story is evidently a failure.

Having settled these points let us turn to the features which should distinguish a true novel. Briefly speaking, these are :—(1) Unity of Plot (2) A central character and a central plot (3) Grasp of life (4) Humour (5) Continuity of Plot and (6) Proportion. We will consider these features, one by one.

(1) Unity of Plot :—

This is by far the most essential characteristic of a true novel and lends much towards its success. It is hardly necessary to dwell on it at length, since all great novelists have tried their best to keep this unity as unviolated as possible. The charge that has been brought against Dickens that the unity of his plots is broken by the introduction of apparently irrelevant matters is not founded on a sound basis. As for what is regarded as irrelevant by overscrupulous critics, it is enough to say that human life is not a barren mathematical unity, nor can it be so when reflected in the mirror of fictions. Between man and man there is an invisible link of "silent sympathy" (as Wordsworth calls it) so that the influence of the so-called superfluous facts though not direct and perceptible is no whit weaker in being indirect. In 'Great Expectations' e.g. the story of the old clerk to Mr. Pip's lawyer living a life of mutual love with his aged father is a necessary part of the whole story as it went a long way towards softening our hero's

character, thus preparing us for more developments and surprises.

(2) *A central character and a central plot* :—

From the consideration of unity it follows as a corollary, that, there should be one central character conspicuous among all the characters, who should claim the greatest sympathy, for being 'the universal 'J', the 'hero' in life's battle, as also a central plot in which this 'J' will play its part so that all other plots are merely subsidiary to this central plot and are to be tolerated so long as they are of any service to the main plot. In the 'Tale of Two Cities' e.g. the story of Dr. Manette and his daughter is the central plot and the other subsidiary plots such as the pursuits of Mr. Cruncher, the honest merchant or the brutalities of Marquis de Euremonde are all necessary as these characters will determine the fates of Dr. Manette and his daughter. Even in the 'Pickwick Papers' which is merely a collection of humorous sketches, the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and his colleagues absorb all our interests and the other stories narrated there e.g. of the convict's return are quickly forgotten.

(3) The next feature necessary for making a true novel is its *grasp of every-day life*. It need not convey us to a land of romance or chivalry, to the romantic past or Utopian future. It is enough that it should give us the real living present with its dark as well as rosy side. It should not merely give us a dry formal account of the world, or bring history within our grasp or show in detail the ugly side of Nature but its function is to discover beauty and romance in places hidden from public gaze, and to depict them in proportion as they are wanted for the purpose of the story. Evil is to be permitted in so far as it can heighten the effect of good by contrast. To insist absolutely on the painting of evil, or the negative aspect of Art is ridiculous, to overlook it altogether is unjust and untruthful. In 'Mansfield Park' e.g. Miss. Fanny Price, a mere dependant on her uncle Bertram, who has neither accomplishments to

please the wise nor physical charms to captivate the foolish is the most dazzling character in the whole story, and outshines other ladies merely by dint of her superior understanding, catholic heart and amazing simplicity. In 'Cranford' by Mrs. Gaskell, the tender unspoken gallantry of Mr. Holbrook returned by the tender unspeakable grief of Miss. Metty for him is just the most eloquent thing possible. Dickens, too, with his overflowing sympathy for chimney-boys, errand-boys, waiters, coach-men and maid servants gives us a comprehensive knowledge of that section of society which is daily seen but never observed.

To take a single incident out of many, the shy, courteous approaches of Mr. Barkis, the coach-man, to Miss Pegotty, the faithful house-maid and their subsequent happy married life are more respectable than hosts of marriages of blue-stockings where you may have more poetry but less heart (David Copperfield).

(4) *Humour* :—

It would not be out of place here to give a definition of real humour for many take it for mere mirth and jollity. The true definition as given by Mr. Meredith—"humour is the genius of thoughtful laughter" shows that the essence of humour which places it above mere mirth is its appropriateness or thoughtfulness. In this branch of thoughtful and sober laughter, Mrs. Gaskell stands high. Her "Cranford" is rich in the sunniest glimpses of such subdued joy. The gallantry of old Mr. Holbrook while exciting laughter brings also a sense of sorrow, hard to resist. In Jane Austen's books too this humourous aspect is highly developed. Hers is not the humour of Dickens, the irresistible waves of a roaring ocean where we lose ourselves, completely oblivious of anything else, but like the soft murmur of a gentle river, deep yet soothing. Emma's match-makings e.g. while arousing laughter bring also a sense of melancholy for the disastrous consequences that followed. As for Dickens, his *Pickwick Papers* is a perpetual fountain of such innocent

humour. His other books too possess it in a less degree. But mere humour cannot make a great novel unless there be some seriousness behind it. It is wrong therefore to speak of a novelist like Dickens as a mere humorist.

(5) *Continuity of the Plot* :—

It is essential for the interest of the story as well as for its immediate success that the flow must never stagnate but remain even throughout. The spirit with which the writer first took his pen must never flag till he lays it down. Any break, lapse or digression at once indicates the weakness of the author's hold on life. For every true novel like an organism must be one sound whole. The characters must be developed by gradations and not by leaps and bounds. In George Eliot's novels, the different stages of the development of a feeling are shown by a subtle psychological analysis. In 'Felix Holt' for instance the heroine Miss. Lyons gradually changes from narrow selfishness to noble self-sacrifice. The miraculous change wrought in Silas Marner, mad after the loss of his wealth, by the appearance of Eppie is still more striking. A novel too must not be a mere mechanical summing up of several acts and incidents but must be animated by a life from beginning to end.

(6) A delicate *sense of proportion* can also be expected from great novelists. Some of them however, are so sadly lacking in this gift, that, they describe in useless details where touches would heighten the effect and leave only bare out-lines where the characters should be more fully developed. Another defect is that they do not attach proportionate importance to all the principal characters. In Thackeray's 'Vanity Fair', for example, the writer has exhausted all his resources in depicting one wicked character Becky Sharp, who is too finished a character to be met with in a real life, with the result, that, really good characters like Amelia Carter are merely doll-like creatures without any personality about them. Mr. Mair's remark that Thackeray cannot draw a good woman is, justified at least in this case.

All the characteristics spoken of before give only a rough outline of the general features of great novels but their permanent value must be judged by the degree in which they appeal to all, are applicable to all, and are appreciable by all.

Let us now see what universal stamp some great novels bear that gives them a direct entrance into the sacred portal of the Temple of Literature.

Do you wish to tear away the veil of worldliness and peep into 'the heaven which lies about us in infancy'? There is Dickens with his inimitable pictures of children to satisfy your longing. There you will find Smike following Nicholas in the face of bitter persecutions (*Nicholas Nickleby*), Little Nell wading through the weary roads as the ministering angel of her grand-father (*Old curiosity shop*), Florence Dombey sitting up late at night preparing the lessons of her brother Paul (*Dombey and son*), Pip taking a pie to the hungry convict in pain of being severely flogged (*Great Expectations*), and Little Dorrit knitting patiently for the maintenance of her ungrateful brother and sister.

Are you under the illusion that 'most friendship is feigning' and 'most loving mere folly'? Just look at Philip Wakem and Jane Eyre to clear your sight. Jane Eyre spurns all temptations, rushes out into the unfeeling world, penniless and forlorn, and ultimately returns to marry Rochester when he is blinded, fondly nurses him like a dutiful wife and becomes, so to say, a second eye to him.

Philip Wakem (*Mill on the Floss*) buries all the follies and errors of Maggie in oblivion and fondly broods over her life even when she is no more. When the rough wind sings a doleful knell over the mossy grave of Maggie, Philip lingers in the Red Deepes animated by her presence remembering that 'in death they were not parted.'

Eppie, who clings to her foster father rejecting all tempting offers of her red father teaches us the lesson that love cannot be bought nor gratitude sold. But the supreme truth oft-neglected

in selfish human life, that sacrifice is the highest step of human love, and that, this sacrifice is possible, not only for the highest minds, but even for men from the lowest ranks of life, is exemplified by Sidney Carton (A Tale of Two Cities) who stands conspicuous among all the creations of novels, a hero every inch of him, nay a martyr, who sacrificed 'the pleasing, anxious being' on the altar of pure, unselfish love and embraced the cold guillotine with a benign smile on his lips.

In the preceding lines it has been shown that the main features of a true novel are:—(1) Unity of Plot, (2) A central character and a central plot, (3) Grasp of life, (4) Humour, (5) Continuity of the plot, (6) Sense of proportion and in order to be 'a book for parlour—window' as Montaigne expressed, it should supply us with an inexhaustible flow of inspiration necessary for buoying us up in this turbulent sea of life, and withal give some glimpses, however vague and inadequate, of a life beyond life.

Is it then too much to expect, that those who pose as novelists should, before publishing any rubbish, devote themselves heart and soul to the study of life, freely mix among all classes of people—as Dickens did,—try to catch the fundamental and eternal traits in particular individuals and classes, and then publish novels as the result of long experience and mature deliberations. It should be the aim of every novelist to make the lives of his fellowmen happier and more exalted.

If however, the writing of novels be entrusted to the care of Grubb Street, we will be obliged to cut off all connections with modern novels and betake ourselves to the immortal few of the past.

REPORTS.

Presidency College Union.

The College 'Saradotshab.'

The autumn social of the College Union came off on Tuesday, the 4th October last, just before the Puja holidays. The preliminary arrangements were seen to by Messrs Hemen Gupta, Moni Adhikary and the Secretary. The ex-students of the College took a keen interest in the function and to the success of the festival they contributed most. The thanks of the Secretary must go to Messrs Ajit Mullick B.A. (Cantab), K. B. Basu and Haren Ghose.

The proceedings began at 5-30 p.m. with the Principal, Mr. J. R. Barrow in the chair. Dr. Abanindra N. Tagore was kind enough to grace the social with his presence. There was a number of items, grave and gay, in which our friends and ex-students were kind enough to take part. Of the programme arranged, the comic skits of Mr. Ajit Mullick and the songs of Mr. S. B. Dey were greatly appreciated. The mandoline solo by Mr. H. S. Gupta and the 'Bikat Biraha' of Mr. Nalini Sarkar, Editor of the *Bijali*, also charmed the audience. The last item was a small farce 'Aleek Babu' produced by our students helped by Mr. Sachin Bannerjea, an ex-student of ours. The cast was :

Aleek Babu—Mr. Sachin Bannerjea.

Hemangini—Mr. Biren Ganguly.

Satya Sindu—Mr. Satyen Roy.

Jagadish—Mr. M. Chatterjea.

Gadadhar—Mr. Monish Ghatak.

Prashanna—Mr. Abhed Sarkar.

House agent—Mr. Khagen Sen.

Bailiff—Mr. Ajita Mukerjea.

Mr. Sachin Bannerjea with his previous experience in the same part was the most finished performer. The others also

did well, and without making any invidious distinction it, may be said that Biren Ganguly was a charming Hemangini and Abhed Sarker a very worldly Prashanna.

The audience throughout was very responsive and there was some noise and uproar as the Library Hall was not big enough to accommodate all our students. It may be said here in passing 'that such a College—undoubtedly the premier College of Bengal—has not a fitting hall of its own.' The Physics Theatre or the Arts Library Hall is not big enough to accommodate all the members of the College. However let us hope that next time or the time after next we shall have a bigger hall to accommodate our members. We earnestly hope that the Principal will think over the matter.

Thanks—Our sincere thanks are due to those distinguished gentlemen who graced the social with their presence, to those ex-students who helped us in organising the social and to all our members who have helped us to make the function a success.

Morley Condolence Meeting.

The first general meeting of the College Union was held on Tuesday, the 25th February, at 3 p. m. in order to express sorrow at the death of Lord Morley—Ex-Secretary of State for India. Prof. Panchanandas Mukerjea was in the chair.

The President opened the meeting with a short speech in course of which he drew the attention of the students to the qualities of the great deceased. He particularly dwelt on the Ex-Secretary's services towards the constitutional development of India. Continuing the president referred to Morley's wide scholarship in various branches of literature and specially in political literatures.

After the speech was over the following resolutions were proposed and carried, all standing in solemn silence.

'Resolved that this meeting of the Presidency College Union expresses its heartfelt sorrow at the demise of Lord Morley who was held in high estimation in India for his sincerity of convic-

tion, services towards India, and his liberal literary qualities, and that this meeting conveys its deep and sincere condolence to the bereaved family.'

"Resolved that a copy of the resolution be sent to the press"
D. K. G.

Dr. Willoughby in Our College Union.

At the invitation of our president Mr. W. C. Wordsworth, Dr. Willoughby, the great writer of political sciences, came to our College to deliver a lecture on 'Party Government in America.' Dr. Willoughby was advertised to arrive at 12 O'clock, but long before his arrival the Physics Theatre was packed to its fullest capacity. Almost all the professors of the College were present to hear the learned professor from America. Just at 12 Dr. Willoughby came to the lecture hall, led by Mr. W. C. Wordsworth. The president introduced Mr. Willoughby to the members of the Union and welcome him on their behalf. Then was the lecture delivered.

After the lecture the great professor was asked by the Secretary of the Union to have some Indian sweets. This request was acceded to by Willoughby with great pleasure.

The Sports Committee.—1923—

In a meeting of the College Union held on the 4th Dec., 1923, the following gentlemen were asked to form the Sports Committee for the year 1923—1924.

President—Principal W. C. Wordsworth, M. A. (Oxon.)

Vice-President—Mr. B. K. Sen, M. A.

Members :—

- (I) Mr. Dharendra Kumar Ghose (Secretary College Union)
- (II) Mr. H. A. Kabir (Assistant Secy. College Union)
- (III) Mr. M. K. Adhicary (Secretary F. C.)
- (IV) Mr. H. N. Gupta (Secretary H. C.)
- (V) Mr. P. De (Secretary T. C.)
- (VI) Mr. B. K. Roy (Secretary C. C.)

DHIRENDRA KUMAR GHOSE

Social Gathering.

Under the auspices of the College Union, a social gathering was arranged on Monday, the 6th August, 1923 at 4 p.m. in the Physics Theatre. There was a large gathering of students and professors.

The proceedings commenced with a song sung by Mr. Dilipkumar Roy. Then Principal J. R. Barrow delivered a short address welcoming the new-comers to the College. Mr. Sudhir Kumar Chakravarty, a student of the 5th year class entertained us by a comic sketch and ventriloquism. There were recitations by Mr. Manujendra Bhanja (4th year arts), by Mr. Abul Haque Biswas (2nd year arts), by Mr. H. A. Z. Kabir (2nd year arts).

Dilip Babu was requested to entertain us again with his melodious voice. His song on 'Nandalal' was highly appreciated by all. Rabin Mitra, a student of the 3rd year class also moved the house with his charming voice. Then Mr. Jitendra nath Bagchi extended a cordial welcome to the new members of the College and gave a short history of the Union. Light refreshments were served to the students and professors. Many thanks are due to Sj. Bibhuti Bhusan Banerji who managed this department so very satisfactorily.

The proceedings terminated at 5-30 p.m.

JITENDRA NATH BAGCHI.

Total expenditure is Rs, 409—12 as—6 p.

Rs. 3—12—6.—Spent on the occasion of the autumn gathering.

Rs. 3—3—6.—Spent on the occasion of Dr. Macdonald's lecture.

Rs. 1—13—6.—Spent on the occasion of Dr. Garnar's lecture.

Rs. 317—7—0 —Spent on the occasion of Founders day Reunion.

Rs. 76—8—0.—Spent on the occasion of social gathering.

Rs. 7—0—0.—Paid to the Bengal Literary Society on the occa n of Sarat Babu's Lecture,

The meeting terminated with the election of office-bearers for the session--1923—24.

JITENDRA NATH BAGCHI.
Secretary, College Union.

The Bengali Literary Society.

(1)

The first general annual meeting of the Bengali Literary Society came off on the 31st August, 1923 at the Physics Theatre. Principal Barrow presided.

After the adoption of last year's report, the meeting proceeded to elect office-bearers for the Executive Committee of the session 1923-24. The results of the election are as follow :—

President :—Prof. Sivaprasad Bhattacharja, M. A.

Vice-Presidents :—Prof. Khagendra Nath Mitra, M. A.

„ Benoy Kumar Sen, M. A.

„ Charu Chandra Bhattacharya, M. A.

„ Harihar Vidyabhusan, M. A.

Secretary :—Sj. Ashoke Nath Bhattacharyya.

Asst. Secy. „ Humayun A. Z. Kavir.

Class Representatives :—

Sj. Susil Kumar Chatterjea (4th year Arts.)

„ Dukkhaharan Chakravarty (4th year
Science.)

„ Abdul Gaffoor (3rd year Arts.)

„ Akshay Kumar Sarcar, (3rd year
Science.)

„ Hiranmay Banerjee, (2nd year Arts.)

„ Brati Sankar Roy, (2nd year Science.)

„ Kripasaran Halder, (1st year Science.)

It is extremely regrettable that the 1st year Arts Class and the Post-Graduate Classes have not yet sent in the names of their representatives. With the usual vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

(2)

The second general meeting of the Society came off on the 28th of September under the Presidency of Prof. Harihar Vidyabhusan, M. A.. Sj. Ashoke Nath Bhattacharyya read a lengthy paper on "The Picture of Parvati as depicted by Kálidásá." The writer tried to show how the character of Parvati is gradually developed by the great poet of India, how she ranks supreme among the Indian women of the past and the present and how the different traits of her character exactly tally with the Hindu ideal of womanhood. Mr. Baidyanath Bhattacharyya spoke a few words in appreciation of the paper and then the President brought the matter to a close by giving us a brief but clear opinion, summing up all the details taken up by the writer.

(3)

The 3rd general meeting of the above society came off on the 30th of November with Prof. Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya in the chair. Sj. Baidyanath Bhattacharyya in his lengthy learned paper "Bharat Chandra as a poet" reviewed all the works of the medieval Bengali Poet—giving us a clear idea of how this great poet once exercised a genial influence over the hearts of all our forefathers and how quickly he is losing in our favour for want of proper appreciation. He also tried to refute the charge of indelicacy brought against the poet and the paper was criticised by Messrs. Tara Kumar Mukherjea, Pramatha Nath Mukherjea and Humayun Kavir.

The President in passing remarked that it was not possible to review all the works of the poet within such a short period of time, nor was it very safe for any young writer to take up such a lengthy theme and put it into a nutshell. Then he gave a brief account of the poetry of Bharat Chandra—its merits and demerits refuting some of the false charges brought against it.

ASHOKE NATH BHATTACHARYYA,
Secretary.

Report of the Magazine Committee.

The following resolutions were carried unanimously and passed at the Second Meeting of the Executive Committee of the College Magazine held under the presidency of Principal W. C. Wordsworth, M. A. on Monday, the 10th of December, 1923.

I. Resolved that Bengali contributions be henceforth admitted into the College Magazine. [Moved by Sj. Akshay Kumar Sircar, and seconded by Sj. Atikar Rahaman.]

II. Resolved that a silver medal to the value of Rupees Twenty only be awarded annually for the best article written by a student in the Magazine. [Moved by Sj. Khagendra Nath Sen, and seconded by Sj. Bejoy Lal Lahiri.]

III. Resolved that the Portrait of the Late Prof. J. C. Nag be published in the next issue of the Magazine. [Moved by Sj. Amiya Kumar Bose, and seconded by Sj. Akshay Kumar Sircar.]*

IV. Resolved that Prof. P. Mukherjea, M. A. be elected the Representative of the Arts department, in place of Prof. P. E. Dustoor, M. A. and that Prof. Charu Chandra Bhattacharya, M. A. be elected the Representative of the Science department. [Moved by Sj. Akshay Kumar Sircar, and seconded by Sj. Amiya Kumar Bose.]

BIMALA PROSAD MUKHERJEA,

General Secretary, P. C. Magazine.

* As the block has not reached us yet, the portrait cannot be published earlier than in March—Ed.

Presidency College Magazine.

Statement of Accounts for the session 1922-23.

Receipts				Expenditure			
	Rs.	A.	P.		Rs.	A.	P.
Subscriptions	1347	0	0	Printing Sept. issue (Sri Gauranga Press)	682	2	0
Surplus of the preceding years	711	6	0	Printing Dec. issue (Art Press)	747	0	0
				Printing March issue (Art Press)	545	12	0
				Printing 250 copies of letter papers (Art Press)	6	8	0
				Block of the portrait of Principal Tawney (Indian Art School)	33	4	0
				Stamps for posting copies of the Magazine and letters	34	12	0
				Allowance to bearers and duftri	9	0	0
Total	2,058	6	0	Total	2,058	6	0

AKSHAY KUMAR SIRCAR,
General Secretary (1922-23).

Annual Reports of the Tennis Club 1922-23.

The annual report is necessarily dull for the Club is suffering from two chronic wants: of good players and of good cash. The hope of relief is as far off as ever. While the needs of expansion are imperative our deficits are superlative. With the

axe hanging over every head of expenditure the fate of the government grant is uncertain and the Athletic Club is faced with an untimely check to its activities if it goes on at its present rate.

The election of the office-bearers was held in August, the delay being due to the fifth year men coming in late. The election results were :

Captain—Satyendra Nath Ray.

Secretary—Jitendra B. Ray.

Asst. Secy.—Prandhan De.

Thorough returfing of the lawns was not possible owing to shortage of funds. The grounds are however much better than they might have been owing to an unexpected prolongation of the rains. It is impossible to keep these in good order unless we can get enough money to make proper arrangements for a water hydrant. The method at present in use (i. e. by Bhistees) is about a century behind the present requirements. The lawns were opened in the middle of November with a match between Mr. Barrow's VI. and Mr. Zachariah's VI. The principal's team won. Subsequently we played matches with the Medical College and the St. Paul's College. We lost both, the former rather badly. The College was represented by S. Ghatak and Satyen Ray in the inter-collegiate Doubles for the Duke Cup. Our team lost to the holders (Medical College pair) after a tough fight in the semi-finals.

In the inter-collegiate Singles for the Barrow's Memorial Cup Prandhan De lost to the holder in the semi-final. Satyen Ray reached the final but lost to R. De, an old member of our club.

Jiten Ray reached the final of the Mohun Bagan Singles tournament but lost to a more experienced player.

In the College tournament (singles) Niren Sircar defeated Saroj Ghatak, last year's holder in the semi-finals. P. Barma also lost to Satyen Ray. In the final N. Sircar lost to S. Roy after a close fight.

In the Doubles (Handicap) tournament, the semi-finalists were Jiten Ray and Prandhan De, Ashu Ghosh and P. Barma, A. Sircar, Abani De, Saroj Ghatak and Satyen Ray. In the finals S. Roy and Ghatak defeated De and J. Ray by 2 sets to 1.

For the three handsome winners' cups we are indebted to the generosity of our principal Mr. Barrow. We have to thank Prof. Zachariah for the Doubles Runners-up-prizes he has kindly presented. We desire to thank all who took a kind interest in the club. Special mention must be made of Principal Barrow and Prof. Zachariah.

As we understand that Prof. Zachariah intends to be away on leave for sometime we must place on record our appreciation of his kindness in serving as treasurer year after year. We know very well that the task has not been a recreation and we are glad to find that his successor Prof. Sterling is taking an equally keen interest in all athletic matters.

PRANDHAN DE.

Presidency College Athletic Club.

The Cricket Season of 1922-23.

Our cricket season during the year 1922-23 was fairly busy and prosperous. Our college team played altogether 19 matches out of which 3 resulted in wins, 10 in draws and 6 in losses. The result might have been better if one of our bowlers had not been suspended, by order of the Principal, and the other had not been busy with his studies. Steady batting was not much in evidence, and proper practice was wanting among the players. Mr. P. R. y, N. Banerji and P. Dutt batted with unfailing pluck. Mr. P. Ghosh, the captain, often rose to the occasion with his excellent hitting. Among the bowlers N. Panerji and P. Dutt are the best with varying paces and breaks from both sides of the wicket. Our hearty congratulations are certainly due to Mr. Dustoor, the professor of English, for the trouble he took in

assisting our team on some occasions, and he did very well in both batting and bowling.

In a meeting presided over by Prof. Sterling, the following office-bearers have been elected for this session.

Mr. B. K. Roy Choudhury, (Hony. Secretary.)
Mr. P. K. Roy, (Captain).

Prize-winners 1922-23.

Football :

Colours : Suhrid Sen (Captain) IV. year Sc.
Anil Das. V. year. Sc.

Cricket.

Colours. Pratul Ghosh (Captain) VI. Arts.

Tennis.

Colours. Satyen Ray (Capt. & old blue) IV. Sc.
Saroj Ghatak IV. Sc.

Singles Winner	Satyen Ray (IV. Yr. Sc.)
Runner-up	Niren Sircar (IV Yr. Sc.)
Doubles Winners	S. Ghatak and S. Ray IV. Sc.
„ Runners-up	J. Roy and P. De. III. Arts.

Baker Hostel Notes.

Of the varied activities of the hostel, all organised under the newly-born Baker Hostel Union, the following deserve special mention :—

1. *The Economic Society.*

Originally established in 1920, it has had a very prosperous career. The society holds its sittings on Sundays only when essays on the burning economic questions of the day are read and debated upon. Mr. Abdur Rouf. B. A. was elected secretary for the session 1922-1923. Among the essays read the one on "The Permanent Settlement in Bengal" was the most interesting. Mr. Abul Khair read an essay on the subject.

The sense of the members present was then taken, and it was found that most of them were against the Permanent Settlement.

2. *The Scientific Society.*

Tracing its origin at a late period, the society has even outstripped the former in point of activity. It had several sittings all well-attended and interesting. The Society invited Dr. Panchanan Neogi, M. A. Ph.D. to deliver a lecture on "Iron in Ancient India". The lecture illustrated by lantern slides was a very instructive and illuminating one.

3. *The Nursing Society.*

The members—one for each floor—of this Society attend on the boarders who fall ill. During the Dengue Epidemic, this Society rendered excellent service.

4. *The Athletic Society.*

We have here, arrangements for football, lawn tennis, badminton and gymnastics. The students take a keen interest in the games but their grievance is the want of a suitable playing-ground. Theirs is a legitimate grievance. Will the authorities concerned, please, attend to their wants?

5. *The Debating Society.*

We are sorry to place on record that this society could do no useful work practically. The students must endeavour to utilise this Society for the development of debating faculty.

6. *The Magazine Committee.*

We have here three periodical manuscript papers called "Aurora" one in English, one in Bengali and one in Urdu. The editors of the papers are elected annually by the boarders. They complain that they are not getting as much support from the students as they expect from them. Will the periodical wails of the editors for contributions go in vain?

7. *The Baker Hostel Common Room.*

It is a nice little room on the first floor where all the leading monthlies and dailies are kept. The boarders utilise them

to the fullest advantage. But the library attached to it contains very few books. Attempts should be made to remedy this defect as early as possible.

The results of the students in the University Examinations are quite satisfactory. Last year a member of our hostel Mr. Syed Gholam Murshed, B. A. was nominated for the Indian Civil Service. Our best wishes are always with him. In the last B. A. Examination, two of the boarders fared well. One stood 1st class fourth in Economics and another first class 7th in English, other students also did not fare bad.

As usual, we had a combined feast on the occasion of the Bakr-Id. festival. It is an interesting function and all the messes combined together in the ceremonial. Among the guests invited last year were Mr. J. M. Bottomley and Mr. E. F. Oaten.

ABUL KHAIR

The Economics Seminar.

The Economics Seminar has resumed its activities for the current session with a large agenda before it. We have taken up for discussion the burning topic of the day—The Indian Fiscal Policy. For the sake of convenience, the subject has been divided into nine minor parts.

Mr. Sudhir Kumar Sanyal opened the discussion on the subject with a learned paper which he read before the seminar on the 20th August and in which he dealt with "the theories of protection" (in general). Mr. J. C. Coyajee, I. E. S. was in the chair. We give here the summary of Mr. Sanyal's essay in a nutshell:—

National Economy is the predominant economic influence to which world economy and private economy must subordinate themselves. The doctrine of *Laissez Faire* is no more. International relations are not guided by the principle of universal brotherhood of men. Protectionism is a policy adopted by a

nation to attain a state of self-sufficiency in industry by giving help to the factors of production.

Protective measures are of two kinds—positive and negative. Of these measures the protection afforded by a tariff duty is the easiest and most accepted one. The common arguments for protective duties—the creation of home market, the making of employment and hence bringing together of unemployed labour and capital, raising wages and keeping them high and the prevention of overcrowding in sweated industries—when weighed in balance are found wanting.

International trade is dependent on two factors—natural and absolute command over some factors and comparative effectiveness of labour. Science, the handmade of industry, has removed many of the causes of national superiority of countries and promises to obliterate them altogether in future. And the law of comparative costs is not static, as the free traders argue, but dynamic.

Thus the case for protection becomes stronger in case of infant industries, (in young and rising countries, as Mill says) and of old industries when they are in a state of atrophy. The price of protected articles may rise and the consumers may lose, but as List says “the power of producing wealth is infinitely more important than wealth itself.”

Protection is a weapon in the armoury of nations in cases like dumping, political injustice to a country. Again protective duties are better than a custom plus countervailing excise duty, since the rate of interchange becomes favourable to the duty imposing country and some part of gain goes to the pocket of the producers in the country.

Mr. Sanyal concluded with Grunzel—“In an economic sense the truth also holds good that he who benefits his people, benefits the world most.

Prof. Coyajee congratulated the writer on his excellent performance and invited discussion from other members of the seminar.

A lively debate ensued in which Messrs. Birendra Nath Roy, Monoranjan Bhattacharya, Shashanka Shekhar Majumdar and Binoybhushan Dasgupta took part.

The second meeting of the Economics Seminar was held on the 24th September with Prof. P. D. Mukerjee, M. A. as president, when Mr. Binoybhushan Dasgupta read a well-thought paper on "Protection and India." We give here a bare out-line of his essay.

India stands in urgent need of protection for the development of her industries. She has all the requisite resources for industrialisation—raw-materials, labour and capital. "Such a development would be very much to the advantage of the country as a whole, creating new sources of wealth, encouraging the accumulation of capital, enlarging the public revenues, providing more profitable employment for labour; reducing the excessive dependence of the country on the unstable profits of agriculture and finally stimulating the national life and developing national character."

Free traders while opposing a policy of protection in India, generally commit two blunders. They assume that comparative costs are rigidly constant and they confuse natural resources with technical resources. If Infant Industry argument is true there is no country which needs protection so badly as India. Protection may bring high prices to consumers, but what the consumers lose, the Government gains. Besides, like investing capital, some sacrifices must be made before a gain can be secured. We need not fear political corruption in India, while the fear of trusts and inefficiency can be warded off, by the establishment of a tariff board. The statement that Indian capital is very shy is often exaggerated. Besides, we may also rely on foreign loans, for, foreign capital does not necessarily mean foreign entrepreneurs. The contention that industries can be developed without protection is not quite sound—development in other directions can never give the same marked impetus. The free import of capital and skill is not

desirable. The argument that a very high duty will mean a collapse and a loss of capital and will transfer labour from more profitable firms to the less, does not always hold good. Lastly, the tariff board should identify itself with the higher interests of the country.

Mr. Bishadendu Biswas took the opposite side and his advocacy was equally strong. The following is a brief summary of his essay.

Free trade is now established to be the ultimate policy of every state. The protectionist argument that India has peculiar conditions, when duly considered does not make the case for protection stronger. She may possess ample raw-materials, but the mere presence of raw-materials is not sine quanon for manufacture. Right situation for right industries depends on complex factors viz., convenience of assembling raw-materials, localisation of connected industries, cost of power, the expenses of marketing etc. Protectonists argue that their policy would give employment to surplus population. But the relief, if granted is likely to be limited by the demand of industries for a permanently industrialised labour. Through a rise of prices, protection would reduce the consuming power of the agricultural population and thereby reduce the Public revenue. To reap the benefit of protection conditions must be favourable for large scale production which India lacks. Over production is generally apprehended under a protective regime. Protection would mean increased cost of production for industries other than protected ones and specially for agriculture. The market for India's agricultural output would be considerably narrowed. The burden on consumers will be excessively heavy, as we may well recollect from the lessons of the war.

The President having commended both the papers the meeting came to a close.

The Third or Extraordinary Meeting.

An extraordinary meeting of the seminar was held on the

4th of December, when Mr. Pilcher of "the Statesman," in kind response to an invitation delivered a lecture on "Profection to steel". Prof. J. C. Coyajee, I.E.S. took the chair. Among those present, were Principal Wordsworth, and a few other members of the staff.

Mr. Pilcher emphasised the urgent need of the study of the practical economic problems of the country along with their study of economic theories by the students of to-day who will be the citizens of to-morrow.

As regards the protective tariff on steel, he said that he, like every body else, earnestly desired to see a rapid industrialisation of India. But he saw serious objections to protection to steel. While on the one hand it would mean untold sufferings to the proverbially poor consumers of India, it would, on the other hand stultify the very growth of industries which was the main motive behind the policy, because, steel industry being a basic one, any protective tariff on it would tend to raise the prices of machineries, railway materials, coal etc. which are the essential requisites of industry. Finally he said that he scarcely saw any analogy between the conditions in India and those in America, where a high tariff wall has served to build up a huge steel industry.

The President and Principal Wordsworth then addressed the audience after which the meeting dispersed with a vote of thanks to the speakers by the secretary of the seminar.

MANORANJAN BHATTACHARYYA

Secretary.

The Report of the Politics Seminar.

The seminar displayed great activity throughout the session. Members took lively interest in it and vied with one another in reading papers. No paper was read but elicited instructive

discussions from a large number of students. This led to difficulty. One hour proved too short for the work, and at the same time no second hour was to be found. Under these circumstances the President appointed a committee of 4 students to find a solution. The Committee put a limit to the size of the essay and also to the length of time one can take in speaking. The appointment of the committee, which is a novel incident, shows clearly the interest the students took in the seminar classes and the care with which the President guided them.

As the session advanced the students went on reading their essays. Each subject was taken up by no less than four students. The work of the seminar opened with the subject of 'Second Chambers'. Then followed the subjects of 'Separation of Powers', 'Popular Sovereignty' and 'Citizenship'. Other students were ready with their essays but the President had to stop the seminar classes as the session was nearing its end. It is needless to go into details as to the systematic proceedings of the several meetings.

BINAYBHUSHAN DASGUPTA.

Geological Institute.

A meeting of the above Institute was held on Saturday, the 18th August last, to meet Messrs. Sisir Kumar Chatterjee, Sudhansu Kumar Bose and Manmatha Lal Dutta, ex-students of this College, on the eve of their departure for England for further studies in Geology and Mining.

Messrs. Chatterjee and Bose have obtained State Scholarships.

The meeting began with a song by Mr. P. K. Roy which was followed by a short speech by Mr. S. K. Sen, the Assistant Secretary.

Among other speakers and gentlemen present were

Prof. S. K. Biswas, M. Sc. Prof. B. N. Maitra, M.Sc. Messrs T. P. Dasgupta and J. C. Gupta.

The president, Prof. H. C. Dasgupta, M. A. F. G. S. gave a speech which was appreciated very much.

The meeting closed with a song by Mr. P. K. Roy, and the guests were entertained with light refreshments.

SUDHANSHU KUMAR SEN,

Asst. Secretary.

Report of the Biological Society.

The first meeting of the society was held on the 9th August last in the physiological lecture-theatre under the presidency of Prof. N. C. Bhattacharjee, M. A. B. Sc.

Prof. N. M. Bose, M. Sc. also attended the meeting.

The president in a little speech explained the object of the meeting and stated very briefly the history of this society. He then impressed upon the students the utility of such associations in present days. In conclusion he requested all physiology students to work together for the improvement of such an institution.

After the presidential address the standing rules and regulations of the society were adopted with slight alterations. The following office-bearers were then elected for the current session :

President—Prof. S. C. Mahalanabis, B. Sc. F. R. S. E.

Vice-Presidents—
 { Prof. N. C. Bhattacharjee, M. A. B. Sc.
 Prof. N. M. Bose, M. Sc.

Treasurer—J. N. Mukherjee, Esq., M. Sc.

Secretary—Sudhir Kumar Sen Chawdhury, (4th year class)

Assist. Secretaries—Ajitaranjan Mukherji, (3rd year class)

Uditendu Prokash Mallik, (2nd year class)

Class Representatives : —

1. Sudhir Kumar Sen Chawdhury.	} 4th year Science class
2. Phanindra Mohan Dutta.	
3. Sarashiranjan Chatterjee	} 3rd year Science class
4. Ajitaranjan Mukherjee	
5. Sumantra Kumar Mahalanabis	} 2nd year class
6. Uditendu Prokash Mallik	
7. Kripasaran Haldar	} 1st year class
8. Dharendra Nath Roy	

With a vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

S. SEN CHAWDHURY,
Secretary.

The second meeting of the society was held on the 15th September last under the presidency of Prof. N. C. Bhattacharjee.

Mr. Amiya Kumar Roy of the 4th year class read an interesting paper on "Growth of Endocrine Organs." The writer in his short essay stated how these organs were discovered by different physiologists at different times and showed endocrinology has become an important subject to-day.

Mr. Sudhir Kumar Sen Chawdhury then in a little speech said what the "endo-crine organs" are, the respective positions in our body and the important functions they perform. Some questions were then put by the second year students which were answered by the 4th year students.

The President in his address spoke on the subject from various popular aspects, as for example, the influence of these organs upon the character of human beings.

With a vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

S. SEN CHAWDHURY,

The third meeting of the society was held on the 1st December under the presidency of Prof. N. C. Bhattacharjee, M. A. B. Sc.

Mr. Sachindra Nath Mukherjee of the 4th year class read out an interesting paper on "Tobacco and its physiological effects."

Mr. Mukherjee opened his essay with a brief history how tobacco—"the harmful weed"—entered into India from the foreign countries. Then he stated the chemical composition of tobacco-leaf and the various forms in which it is used in our countries. Of all the forms the essayist disliked the "Cigar" most. Next he explained how nicotine the chief tobacco acted upon our system in each of these forms.

He then narrated how this habit of smoking was looked down upon by the ancient men of different countries and incidentally he mentioned how the smokers of different countries were punished severely in those times. From beginning to end the writer cruelly attacked smokers.

Mr. Mukherjee then concluded his essay with a beautiful quotation from king James II.

After some discussion among the students Prof. N. M. Bose in a nice little speech explained the uses and abuses of smoking.

The president in his address said among other important things "Tobacco should not be smoked by the students, because it has a direct action upon the nervous system. In the youth the strain upon the nervous system is very great for various reasons. So by that habit it becomes over-strained and lead to severe consequences."

With a vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

SUDHIR KUMAR SEN CHAWDHURY,
Secretary, Biological Society.

Reports of the Historical Society.

The Third Meeting.

The third meeting of the society came off on the 2nd. March, 1923 with Prof. B. K. Sen, M.A. on the chair. Among others, Dr. Ghosal was present. *Sj. Amar Prosad Das Gupta of the Fifth year class* read a paper on "The First Empire of Magadha."

In the first part of his essay, the writer traced in detail the rise and development of the Magadhan power. A series of able rulers like Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, and Sisunaga successfully brought under the Magadhan sway, many important states, viz. Anga, Kosala, Batsa, and Avanti. But the honour of being an Ekarāt or Universal Lord was reserved for Mahapadma, who held Kalinga as well as the Gangetic Delta. Chandragupta Maurya conquered the Punjab and compelled Seleukos to cede to him Paropanisadai, Aria, Arachosia and Gedrosia. The task of conquest was completed by the subjection of the south, as recorded in Tamil literature. Magadha stopped in her career of expansion by the adoption of Asoka of the policy of Dharmavijaya. The Far south alone was thus left out. "Asoka gave up war after victory, a noble picture—unique in the history of the world."

The essayist then discussed some of the features of the Empire. It was Magadha which first made an attempt at unification, and happily for India, the attempt proved successful. The first Empire of Magadha—still the largest Indian Empire—reached unique scientific boundaries. Its administration was surprisingly modern, and one of the most efficient India has ever had. The ideal of the Empire under Asoka was not merely law and order but also the general happiness and well-being of all living creatures within its territory, men as well as beasts. "Such a conception of government," said the writer, "is the pride of India, which every other country in the world has failed to achieve." At this glorious period of the Empire, India was able to make her influence felt among all the nations

of the civilised world. She presented to the world one of the greatest religions—the religion of Lord Buddha. Far from glorifying herself in splendid isolation, she kept up a brisk intercourse with China, Syria, Egypt and Macedonia. This Empire also saw the first development of Indian art. The writer concluded by saying, "India's political subjection and intellectual eminence may alike be traced to the influence of this Empire, manifest among other things in the rapid progress of Buddhism, with its degenerating effects on the political character of the people."

Sj. Sourendra Mohan Banerjea raised a question as to how the local self-government was at all possible in the teeth of the espionage system and thorough bureaucratic centralisation.

Dr. Ghosal supplemented Sj. Amar Prosad by saying that one of the causes of the success of Magadha was its geographical position. The Punjab felt the brunt of foreign attacks, and Kosala was also near the frontier, but Magadha was secure, and hid, as it were, with Bengal by her side. Speaking in connection with the marvellous administration of the Mauryas, he came to the question of Hindu Imperialism. Roman Imperialism set its own stamp and followed the policy of 'divide and rule.' This did not happen with the Hindus but the Maurya Empire made the nearest approach to such policy. He considered Sj. Sourendra's argument and said that where the organisation was so thorough, it could not but be that genuine local self-government suffered; but it was not crushed and when the grinding grip of the bureaucracy became lax, it reappeared in its full vigour. The learned professor continued that the true sacrifice of Asoka can be estimated by considering the fact that with all his advantages, he could have established a world-empire but he deliberately forsook it for real conquest. "Whether the consequences of giving up a political career was disastrous for India," concluded the Doctor, "it is hard to say. The vast dominions of Alexander have disappeared, the world-wide Empire of the Romans has gone for ever. Napoleon's

military conquests have glided smoothly away, but Asoka's Dharma-vijaya still endures."

The President observed among other things, that the marriage of Chandragupta with Seleukos' daughter proved that the Caste System had not yet reached its stage of extreme rigidity. He finished by paying a glowing tribute to the palmy days of ancient India.

The meeting then terminated.

The Fourth Meeting.

The Fourth Meeting came off on the 27th July, 1923 under the presidency of Prof. Nilmoni Chakraverty. Doctor Ghosal delivered a very interesting lecture on "The success of Hinduism."

He first showed the extreme disadvantages against which Hinduism had to fight. Not only did the political power pass away from the Hindus but it was arrayed against them. The Khilzi rule, the Tughluk reign, the Bahmani supremacy, and the period of Aurangzeb have impressed upon the page of Indian history some of the blackest persecutions of the Moslem sway. What the Hindus could have done if they were allowed to keep their heads erect was shown by the foundation of the kingdom of Vijaynagar and the extraordinary revival of Hinduism under the guidance of Sayanacharyya and Madhavacharyya. The Muslims realised this, and successfully crushed that state, the base of Hindu operations. The net result of the Muslim activities was that only one-third of the whole population became converted to the faith of Mohammed, by far the large majority remaining Hindus.

The success of Hinduism was due to a number of causes. First, the Brahminical hold upon the masses was exceptionally strong. Secondly, there was a growing toleration among the enlightened rulers of Islam. Thus even in the reign of Aurangzeb, persecution was not so bitter as in the so-called Pathan period. Thirdly, dynastic and fratricidal wars among the rulers themselves led them to treat the Hindus in a more considerate

manner. But there were more fundamental causes, the most important of which was described by the Doctor as the 'genius of Hindu civilisation.' What the Hindu mentality prefers is the spirit of heroism in resignation. 'Rather we should suffer than sacrifice our Dharma,'— this innate resolve of Hindu mind is largely responsible for the survival of Aryan culture. There was a second cause, namely the peculiar Hindu institution, chiefly the joint family, the social groups, and the village communities, that worked for the conservation of the Hindu civilisation. When the Moslems were scattered in the towns, Hinduism fled as it were to the affectionate arms of the village. A third cause was what may be called 'Hindu polity'. According to the Shastras, the king's function is to maintain dharma as well as secular interests. At the same time, it is expressly enjoined that village communities should have their independence. The function of the state was irreducible minimum. In such a system of polity, the loss of the sovereign power did not mean the annihilation of the Indian nation. It meant, on the other hand, the access of more power on the part of the Society, which in the worst days of tyranny and misrule, successfully resisted the intrusions of the central government. A fourth cause was the expansiveness of Hinduism. Notwithstanding the rigidity of Hindu society, many liberal movements like those of Chaitanya, Ramananda, Nanak, Tukaram and Ramdas acquired for Hinduism a new solidarity. "What has saved Hinduism," said the Doctor, "is its elasticity, its expanding soul. Hinduism is not a single dogma, not simply the religion of the Brahmins, but an all-embracing synthesis of ideas." Science and democracy of Europe have thrown a challenge to Hinduism, and the speaker firmly believed that Hinduism would accept it and coming out triumphant vindicate to the world its name of "Eternal Religion."

Sjs. Jotish Chandra Dutt, Susil Chandra Chatterjee, Surendra Mohan Banerjee, and Gour Gopal Mukherjee then spoke their views on the subject.

The President, in winding up the proceedings, remarked that India was never thoroughly conquered by the moslems and this explained the success of Hinduism.

The meeting came to a close.

The Fifth Meeting.

The fifth meeting of the society was held on the 3rd August, 1923 with Dr. Ghosal on the chair. Prof. Majumdar also attended. Sj. Bijoy Krishna Dutta of the Fourth Year Class read a paper on "The Influence of Caste System upon Indian history in the Past." The paper was lucid and full of details. The writer dealt with four aspects of the question, namely political, social, economic, and religious.

A keen discussion on the subject took place. Sjs. Susil Chandra Chatterjee, Sourendra Mohan Banerjee, Gour Gopal Mukherjee, Prithwis Chakraverty, and Sukumar Bhattacharyya championed the cause of Caste System, while Sjs. Subodh Chandra Sen Gupta and Jyotish Chandra Datta ranged themselves on the offensive side.

The meeting was adjourned.

The Sixth Meeting.

The adjourned meeting took place on the 18th August, 1923, with Dr. Ghosal as President. Professors Sen and Majumdar also encouraged the attendance by their presence.

At the request of the President, Professor Sen arose to explain his views on the subject. According to him, the key to the success of the Hindus in absorbing the aborigines lay in their superior organisation and all-embracing civilisation. But there came through the north-western passes a race of invaders who if not equally gifted were more thoroughly organised. One of the most potent causes of their success was that a large number of discontented masses looked up with a sigh of relief at the democracy of Islam. For those who had accepted Caste System as an effective social organisation found that it meant a despotism, a tyranny, an age-long

insult to humanity. In the face of the grave crisis, the Hindus lost their power of digestion, the power that enabled them to assimilate not only the natives of the soil but also the Huns, the Sakas, and many other advanced races. Instead of broadening their outlook, they narrowed their scope of vision. Instead of relaxing the rules that they might absorb them silently, they made them more stringent. But really speaking, Caste System as a means of self-defence was no necessity. For in the first place, the number of Mahomedans was so small that even intermarriages would not have abolished Hindu identity. In the second place, the Moors who successfully swayed their sceptre from Cordova for more than three centuries could not convert Spain to the Islamic faith. "This raises a question" said the speaker, "if the uncultured Spaniards retained their identity even after three centuries, why did the Hindus with their far superior culture fear absorption at all?" Then again, Caste System did not prove successful in preserving Hinduism for if it proved efficient at all, there could have hardly occurred a need for the rise of the casteless Vaishnava preachers. The speaker finished his remarks by saying that the modern Hindu-Moslem problem might be said to be largely the gift of Caste System.

As the time was up, the President for the second time adjourned the meeting.

The Seventh Meeting.

The seventh meeting of the Society came off on the 7th September, 1923 with Doctor Ghosal on the chair. The subject was the adjourned debate on 'the Influence of Caste System upon Indian history in the Past'.

No more discussion forthcoming, Dr. Ghosal enlightened the audience by his impartial views on the subject. He began by saying that without caste system, Hinduism would certainly have survived the shocks of Islam but could not have maintained its purity. On the other hand, to give up caste would have meant giving up Varnasram Dharma, to ignore many

religious and social ideals. The evolution of individual genius was indeed retarded to some extent, but the collective unit was always held by the Hindus as superior to the individual unit. The study of the Vedas was shut out from the lower classes, but thanks to the orthodox Brahmins, the way for the intellectual emancipation of the masses was prepared by the composition of the Itihasas and the Puranas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata—works that contained the essence of Hinduism. Be it said to their credit, even the Hindu peasant was more cultured than many literary men of other countries.

The speaker said that it was very easy to form the notion that the Brahmins derided the lower classes and denied them some of the human rights. If this was true, it was certainly a specimen of Caste System at its worst. The whole life of a Brahmin was a drill to attain self-enlightenment and preserve social discipline. The doctrine of brotherhood was not unknown to him as the expression “Sama-darshita” shows : but it was reserved for “the champions of the popular party” or the preachers to give full vent to it.

Three things should be borne in mind : first, Caste System though one of the principal features of Hinduism was not the whole of it, for Hinduism was not simply the orthodox religion of the Brahmins but an all-embracing synthesis of ideas ; second, the masses assuaged their religious thirst in the great popular movements ; third, these movements were not rebellious but reformatory movements, and their preachers were the expounders of Hinduism from different stand points.

The Great Buddha—who, by the way, claimed himself to be not the ‘founder of a new city’ but merely its ‘reconstructor’ and who has come to be regarded by the Hindus as an Avatara—ignored all the disabilities of caste. He counted among his disciples many belonging to the low or the disreputable classes : e.g. Upali (a barber), Suniti (a chandala), Ardhakashi and Ambapali of Vaisali. The Buddha painted the essence of caste when he said that the four castes arose from

distinctness of qualities and not from the bodily parts of Brahma.

In Maharashtra, Jnanadeva—the son of an outcast Brahmin—was not allowed to wear the sacred thread by the orthodox Brahmins, but he became a popular idol. After him came a series of saints belonging to the depressed classes, namely Chokamala, Ruhidas, Narahar, and Namdev etc.

In Orissa, Shamananda, a Sadgopa, converted many to Vaishnavism. His disciples became the Gurus of the Rajahs of Mayurbhanj—an interesting fact.

In Bengal, there arose the Sahajiya sect, to which belonged the famous Chandidas. Then came the Great Chaitanya movement. Narottama, a Kayastha, was regarded as the second Chaitanya. The Vaishnava movement fills a large place in the history of Bengal.

It is interesting to note that many Brahmins were the originators of the movements and not a small number of Brahmins were counted among the followers. The above facts showed clearly how unjust and one-sided it was to brand caste as the parent of all evils. Evils were there no doubt, but they did not assume such huge dimensions as we now think. The reason is, that caste did not acquire solid hold over all the people, the popular movements flourishing from time immemorial.

The Doctor concluded by saying that evils lay not in the system itself but in ourselves, because it was we who failed to achieve its high ideals and adjust it according to the varying needs of time.

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

SUSIL CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY.

An Extraordinari Meeting.

Under the auspices of the Historical Society, an extraordinary meeting was held in the Physics Theatre on Friday, the 21st December, 1923. Babu Rakaldas Banerjea, the well known historian, delivered an interesting lecture on "the Forgotten

capital of Sind" The lecture was highly appreciated, as it was illustrated by lantern slides. The President, Principal Wordsworth closed the meeting with an offer of thanks to the distinguished guest. (We hope to publish in a future issue the full text of the lecture),

Susil Chandra Chatterji,
Secretary.

TRIPS TO THE INDIAN MUSEUM.

Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Ghosal, we had two trips to the Museum in March, 1923. We were shown many of the relics of ancient India—architectural and sculptural, and these were kindly explained to us by the learned professor. Those who attended praised their good luck and came back with the knowledge of some solid gain. We have so many things to learn besides mere text-book abstractions !

S. C. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To

The Editor,

The Presidency College Magazine.

Dear sir,

One is really surprised to see some pious wishes in the editorial columns so miserably baffled ! There we find the names of Profs. Zachariah and H. C. Das Gupta, trying to introduce Geography into our College Course. But in vain do we look over the pages of the Magazine for a ray of hope, thrown out by the authorities !

One thing more. We stand in need of a small historical Museum in this Primary Institution of Bengal. Money, as usual, will be the difficulty. If, however, old students could help us, we shall not need to spend much to inaugurate a museum of modest dimensions. We might get people to give us coins or little archaeological pieces of sculpture or carving or casts or models or replicas or perhaps photos. The contents might be given us, the show cases we should have to

get ourselves. But nothing real can be done without the help of the authorities.

Will they come forward and look to our needs ?

Yours Faithfully,
SUSIL CHANDRA CHATTERJEA,
Secretary, Historical Society.

To

The Editor
Presidency College Magazine.

Dear Sir,

You with your readers will be glad to know that Sj. Probhat Chandra Sarbadhikary B. A., nephew of Sir Deva Prosad Sarbadhikary and the late Lt. Col. S. P. Sarbadhikary, who has been studying Botany for the last three years in the London College of Science has obtained the Ph. D. degree of the London University. The record of his work as a student has been so satisfactory that he was awarded a £100 Scholarship before obtaining his degree. He has now been offered £115 Scholarship to carry on further researches for a year. Mr. Sarbadhikary is a distinguished graduate of our College and he was also a regular contributor to the College Magazine (Vide P. C. Magazine Vol V. No 1—"Auto-biography of a pair of shoes").

Sj. K. P. Chatterjee about whom reference was made in the correspondence section of the last issue of your Magazine has recently obtained M. Sc degree of the same university.

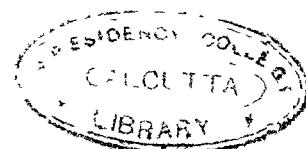
Another "old boy" Sj. Suresh Chandra Bose, B. Sc. of the Bihar and Orissa Executive service is soon returning to India after having undergone special training in glass-manufacture in Germany.

Sj. Nalini Kanta Bose, M.Sc. son of Babu Hara Kanta Bose, Head master, Hare School, who went to Germany in October last, with a view to carry on researches in Acrodynamics, under such eminent mathematicians, as Profs. Prandl, Runge and Frank, has passed in less than one year's time the tests he was subjected to there and his thesis for the Doctor's degree of the Gottingen University has been approved. His work in the German University has been very highly spoken of by all the Professors.

We rejoice in the good fortune of these "old boys" of our Alma Mater and wish their better luck in future.

Common Room
Dated the 15th Sept. 1923

Yours etc.
A. K. SIRCAR.



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জেম্সেন্দপুরে একমাস ।

রাত্রি ৮টাৰ সময় Bombay Mail যখন আমাদেৱ টাটানগৱে নামাইয়া দিল তখন ষ্টেসনে একটা ব্যহৃতাৰ সাড়া পড়িয়া গিয়াছে। ষ্টেসন হইতে আমাদেৱ বাসা প্ৰায় ৬ মাইল পথ। ঘোড়াৰ গাড়ী এতদূৰ যাইতে চাহে না; Bus এবং বন্দোবস্ত আছে। Over-bridge পাৰ হইবাৰ সময়ই Bus এৰ ভো ভো শব্দ শুনিতে পাওয়া গেল। যাত্ৰিগণ একে একে জুটিবাৰ পৱ Bus ছাড়িল। রাস্তাটি উচু; নীচে হৃপাশে উন্মুক্ত মাঠ নিবিড় অন্ধকাৰে আৰুত। মাৰে মাৰে কাৰখনাৰ আলোৱ ক্ষীণ রশ্মি দেখা যাইতে ছিল। অবিৱাম শব্দে চাৰিদিক কাপাইয়া বিৱাট দেছ Bus মেই অন্ধকাৰ পথে ছুটিতে লাগিল। কখনও কলৰবমুখৰ বাজাৰেৰ মধ্য দিয়া, কখনও আলোকোজল গৃহ শ্ৰেণীৰ পাশ' দিয়া, কখনও উপৱে উঠিয়া, কখনও বা নীচে নামিয়া পৱিশ্বাস্ত Bus যখন আমাদেৱ গন্তব্য স্থানে—সাকৃতি বাজাৰে—আসিয়া থামিল, তখন আৱোহিগণেৰ সক-ই প্ৰায় নামিয়া গিয়াছেন। কলিকাতাৰ কৰ্ম কোলাহলেৰ পৱে এখানকাৰ বিজনতাৰ মধ্যে পড়িয়া কি রুকম ফাঁকা ফাঁকা বোধ হইতে লাগিল।

পৱদিন সকালে বাহিৰ হইয়া দেখিলাম সহৱটি খুব বড়, কিন্তু এক টানা নহে। স্থানে স্থানে ছই তিন শ্ৰেণী এক প্যাটার্নেৰ বাড়ী, তাৰপৱ খানিক খোলামাঠ, তাৰপৱ আৰাৰ তেমনি গৃহ শ্ৰেণী। ইহাতে সহৱেৰ শোভা আৱও বাড়িয়াছে; দূৰ হইতে বাড়ীগুলি সুন্দৰ ছবিৰ মত দেখায়। প্ৰস্তৱময় রাস্তাগুলি কোথাও উঠিয়াছে, কোথাও নামিয়াছে; মাৰে মাৰে ছোট ছোট সঁকো। আমৰা যেখানে ছিলাম সে যায়গাটোৱ নাম 'L' Town। তাৰ একদিকটাকে বলে Old 'L' Town, অন্য দিকটাকে বলে New 'L' Town. 'L' Town নাম শুনিয়া আমাদেৱ স্বভাৱতঃ মনে হইল বিভিন্ন পাড়াৰ নাম বুঝি ইংৰাজি বৰ্গমূলাৰ সহিত 'Town' শব্দটি যোগ কৰিয়া রাখা হইয়াছে। ছথেৰ বিষয় আমাদেৱ বিশ্বাস্ত শীঘ্ৰই ভুল প্ৰমাণিত হইল। শুনিতে পাওয়া গেল এখানে 'L' Town, 'N' Town আছে; 'A' Town বা 'B' Town নাই। 'A' 'B' কে বাদ দিয়া 'L' 'N' এৰ 'ত সম্মান কেন হইল বুঝিয়া উঠিতে পাৱিলাম না। যাহা হউক স্থানটি পল্লীবিশেষ, নিৰ্জন

ও মনোরম। দূরে সহজ পাহাড়ের শ্রেণী ঘুরিয়া ঘুরিয়া চারিদিক বেষ্টন করিয়া আছে। জনতার কোলাহল নাই, অশ্বের হ্রেষ্ণব নাই, ট্রামের ধূঁটি ধূনি নাই, মালগাড়ীর বাশীর শব্দ সময়ে সময়ে বিরাট নিষ্ঠুরতা ভঙ্গ করে।

বিকালে স্বৰ্গ রেখারদিকে বেড়াইতে যাওয়া হইল। এই রাস্তাতেই Criminal Court। জেম্সেন্ডপুরে পূর্বে কোন Court ছিল না। মোকদ্দমার জন্য চাইবাসা বাইতে হইত। এই Criminal Court সম্পত্তি প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছে। গৃহটী খোলা যায়গায় নির্মিত হইয়াছে। একদিকে New 'L' Town, অন্যদিকে পুকুরগী। Court এর পর লাল বাঁধন রাস্তা ক্রমশঃ অনেক নীচে নামিয়া আবার অনেক উপরে উঠিয়া স্বৰ্গ রেখায় গিয়া পড়িয়াছে। এই স্থানে কৃত্রিম ও নৈমগ্ধিক সৌন্দর্যের মধুর সমাকেশ। একধারে টাটার ছেট রেল লাইন, অপর ধারে হরিধানের ক্ষেত। নিকটে নদী স্বৰ্গরেখা, পরপারে পরিচিত গাহাড়শ্রেণী আকাশগাত্রে বিলীয়মান। স্বৰ্গরেখার তীরে শিলাখণ্ডের উপর আসিয়া যখন বসিলাম তখন প্রায় সূর্য্যাস্ত। ক্ষণে ক্ষণে আকাশের রঙ পরিবর্তিত হইতেছে। সঙ্গে সঙ্গে নদীর চেট গুলি ও বিচ্চি রঙে রঞ্জিত হইয়া যাইতেছে। চারিদিকে নিষ্কৃত ও শাস্তিময়। অতিদূরে তরুরাজি অস্পষ্ট, একে অন্যের সহিত মিশিয়া নৌল বেখায় পর্যবসিত। কি একটা কথা লইয়া আমাদের দলে মহাতর্ক বাধিয়া গেল। আমি একটু সরিয়া বসিয়া সেই দৃশ্য সন্তোগ করিতে লাগিলাম। এরূপ দৃশ্য দেখিয়া কত কবিই না মুঁক হইয়াছেন, কত কবিতাই না রচিত হইয়াছে।

I gazed and gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought!

ক্রমে সুবর্ণরেখার জলে সূর্য ডুবিয়া গেল—সন্ধ্যার ধূসর ছায়া নদীর প্রতিমিত বক্ষে নামিয়া আসিল—অঙ্ককার চারিদিক ব্যস্ত করিয়া ফেলিল—আকাশে একটি একটি করিয়া তারা ফুটিতে লাগিল। আমরা উঠিয়া Pump House ও Water-refining House এর দিকে গেলাম। এখানে দেখিবাৰ বিশেষ কিছু নাই—pumping এৰ বাবু বাবু শব্দ আৰ কুলিদেৱ গোলমাল। একটা কথা বলা দৱকার যে সুবর্ণরেখা হইতে টাটার সমস্ত বাড়ীৰ জল সরবরাহ হইয়া থাকে।

তারপর দিনকয়েক আমরা সহরের দিকে যাইতাম না। বহুদিন কলিকাতার ধূলা ও ধোঁয়ার মধ্যে থাকায় স্লিপ পল্লীদৃশ্য আমাদের চোখে তৃপ্তিকর বোধ হইত। মাঠের মুক্ত হাতুয়ায়, খালের ধারে বেড়াইতে বড় ভাল লাগিত। দিনের আলো নিভিয়া গেলে গরু ও ভেড়ার দল অলস চরণে ঘৰে ফিরিত, রাখাল বালক মনের আনন্দে গান ধরিত, কুকুকায় ছবিশঘরিয়া রমণীরা হাট করিয়া বাড়ী যাইত, আমরা দাঢ়াইয়া দেখিতাম।

দেখিতে দেখিতে পূজা আসিয়া পড়িল। বাঙ্গলার মত এখানে আগমনীর করণ রাগিণী ঝঙ্কত হইল না, আনন্দের শ্রোতও বহিল না, শুধু একটা উৎসবের সূচনামাত্র দেখা গেল। মনে পড়িল সেই শৈশবের কথা—যখন আমা প্রকৃতির শামল অঞ্চলে বসিয়া একটি একটি করিয়া পূজার দিন গুণিতাম! পূজার ক'দিন বিদেশে নেহাঁ নিরসভাবে কাটাইতে হইবে ভাবিয়া আমাদের মনটা একটু খারাপ হইল। কিন্তু সৌভাগ্যক্রমে ষষ্ঠীর যাত্রে পাশের বাড়ীতে তুই তিন জন কলেজের ছাত্র কলিকাতা হইতে আসিয়া জুটিলেন। তাহাদের সঙ্গে আলাপে আমদের দলটি পুরু হইল, আড়তাও খুব জমিল। গল্ল, তাস, গানবাজনায় পূজার দিনগুলি বেশ আমোদে কাটিয়া গেল।

‘N’ Town দেখিবার জন্য কোজাগরের সন্ধান আমরা সকলে মিলিয়া বাহির হইয়া পড়িলাম। তখন কারখানায় ছুটি হইয়াছে। রাস্তা জুড়িয়া অসংখ্য নরনারী মলিনবেশে কোলাহল করিতে করিতে চলিয়াছে। দলের পর দল, বুর্বুরা শেষ নাই। যখন আমরা ‘N, Town’ এ পৌছিলাম তখন সন্ধ্যা উর্দ্বুর্গ হইয়া গিয়াছে। একে পূর্ণিমা তাহাতে আবার কোজাগর। শুভ জোৎস্ব চারিদিকে ঝরিয়া পড়িতেছে। ‘N’ Town বেশ পরিষ্কার পরিচ্ছন্ন—অনেকটা বালিগঞ্জের মত। রাস্তার ধারে বৈচ্যতিক আলো। বাড়ীগুলি এক ফ্যাসানের, সম্মুখে খোলা ঘারগায় ফুলের বাগান। Piano ও Harmoneum এর আওয়াজ মাঝে মাঝে শুনা যাইতেছিল। একঘারগায় একটা সাহেবী হোটেল আমাদের চোখে পড়িল। ইহার সাজ সরাজম ও আসবাব পত্র, বিশেষতঃ মোটরের ভিড়, দেখিয়া হঠাৎ কলিকাতার কোন হোটেল বলিয়া ভূম হয়। তারপর যাওয়া গেল Tata Institute এ।

সেখানে সাহেব মেমেরই বেশী ভিড়। একঘরে Billiards আৰ একঘরে হাসি। গল্ল, চলিতেছে। Reading room এ অনেকে খবৰের কাগজ বা মসিকে মগ্ন। কৰ্ম্মান্তে Club এ আসিয়া সকলেই আমোদ উপভোগ কৱেন। Club এৰ কিছু দূৰেই Tata Hospital। হাসপাতালটি নৃতন হইয়াছে। কিছুদিন পূৰ্বে Englishman এ ইহাৰ ছবি দেখিয়াছিলাম, এখন বাস্তবভাবে দেখিলাম। হাসপাতালেৰ ডাক্তাৰ বাবু আমাদেৱ সঙ্গে কৱিয়া Sick room, operation room, Dispensary প্ৰভৃতি দেখাইলেন। হাসপাতালেৰ বন্দোবস্ত খুব ভাল; অন্ধ চিকিৎসাৰ বহুমূল্য যন্ত্ৰপাতি রাখা হইয়াছে। রাত্ৰি ১০টা পৰ্যন্ত ঘুৱিয়া আমৱা ক্লান্ত হইয়া পড়িলাম। একখানি 'টোঙ্গা' ভাড়া কৱিয়া বাড়ী ফিরিতে হইল। সে রাত্ৰে কি ক্ষু ক্ষুই হইয়াছিল!

এতদিন আমাদেৱ 'Iron and steel Works' দেখা হয় নাই। বেশী দিন থাকিবাৰ আশা ছিল বলিয়া আৰ কি। যখন ছুটি শেষ হয়ে এল তখন একদিন কাৰখনা দেখিতে গেলাম। সে এক বিৱৰটি ব্যাপার। আমৱা Birmingham বা United States Steel Corporation দেখি নাই, কাজেই আমাদেৱ নিকট ইহা এক অভাৱনীয় জিনিষ মনে হইল। কাৰখনা বহুদূৰ বিস্তৃত; সমস্ত জিনিষ দেখিতে গেলে অনেক সময়েৰ প্ৰয়োজন। সমস্ত স্থানটা কয়লাৰ ধোঁয়ায় আছে, পাইপ দিয়া গৱম জল পড়িতেছে, Sulphuric acid এৰ তীব্ৰ গন্ধ নাকে ঢুকিতেছে, Blast Furnace এৰ শব্দে শ্ৰবণশক্তি লোপ পাইবাৰ উপক্ৰম হইতেছে। বাহিৱেৰ লোকেৰ পক্ষে সেখানে অধিকক্ষণ থাকা দুঃকুল। চারিদিকে রেল লাইন, পাশ দিয়া Engine চলিয়া যাইতেছে মাগাৰ উপৰ দিয়া বড় বড় Crane আসা যাওয়া কৱিতেছে। খুব সাবধানে চলাফেৱা কৱিতে হয়। Iron mine ও Coal mine হইতে iron ore ও coal আসে। এখানে Coke তৈৰী হয়, ore গলাইয়া pig-iron তৈৰী হয়, তাৰপৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয় লোহা ও ষ্টিলেৰ জিনিষ তৈয়াৰী হয়। মোটামুটি ভাবে এখানে Vertical Combination এৰ লক্ষণ দেখা যায়। রাত্ৰে যখন লোহা গলান হয়, তখন সমস্ত আকাশ রঙীন হইয়া উঠে। কাৰখনায় দিনৰাত কাজ চলিতেছে। তিনটি Shift আছে, স্তৰী পুৰুষ ৮ ঘণ্টা কাজ কৱে। Tata Iron and Steel Work's এৰ কথা সকলেই জানেন। খবৱেৰ কাগজে ও মাসিকে অনেকবাৰ ইহাৰ ইতিহাস বাহিৰ হইয়াছে।

এ সম্বন্ধে বেশী কিছু বলা পুনরুক্তি মাত্র ; তবে কারখানার কথা না বলিলে জেম্সেন্ডপুরের বৃত্তান্ত নিতান্ত অঙ্গইন হইয়া পড়িবে ; এইজন্য ছই চারি কথা বলিলাম ।

'L' Town হইতে ৩ মাইল দূরে Tinplate Company। এটা একটা Subsidiary Industry' মাত্র। সবই যথন দেখা হইল, তখন এইটিই বা বাকী থাকে কেন? কলিক্ষাতা ফিরিবার পূর্বদিন বেলা ৪টার সময় শান্ত ছজ্জিশঘরিয়া পল্লীর ভিতর দিয়া Tinplate এর দিকে অগ্রসর হওয়া গেল। পূজার পরই সেখানে শৈত পড়িতে আরস্ত করিয়াছিল। সে জন্ম রোডে আমাদের কিছু মাত্র কষ্ট বোধ হইল না। দেখিতে দেখিতে আমরা Agriculture office এর সম্মুখে আসিয়া পড়িলাম। একটু দূরে গোলমৌরি বাজার দেখা যাইতেছিল। Agriculture office দেখিয়া আমরা গোলমৌরি বাজারে চুকিলাম। এস্থানটিক ছোট সহর বলিলে অত্যুক্তি হয় না। লতায় ঘেরা বাড়ীগুলি যেন চারিদিকে ছড়ান। অনেক নৃতন বাড়ীও নির্মিত হইতেছে। এখানে একটি Branch Post office আছে। বাজারের পিছনেই কারখানা। এক দোকানে চা পান করিয়া আমরা কারখানায় চলিলাম। টাটার কারখানার সঙ্গে ইহার তুলনা হয় না। এখানে কেবল টিনের প্লেট তেয়ারী হয়। মালগাড়ী করিয়া টাটা হইতে লোহার প্লেট আসে। সেই এক এক ধানি ছোট Square plate কে আগুণে পোড়াইয়া ও পিটাইয়া আয় সেই size এর ১৬খানি পাতলা plate প্রস্তুত করা হয়। পরে বালি জল ও acid দিয়া তাহাদের পরিষ্কার ঝক্ক ঝকে করা হয়। সমস্ত কাজই কলে হইয়া থাকে; plate গুলিকে স্থানান্তরিত করা ছাড়া হাত দিয়া আর কিছুই করা হয় না। মলিন plate গুলি বালি জল ও acid এ উজ্জ্বল ও মস্ত হইয়া যথন দলে দলে machine হইতে বাহির হইয়া আসে, তান দেখিতে বড়ই সুন্দর লাগে। জেম্সেন্স্পুরে এই আমাদের শেষ দিন। কাল জেম্সেন্স্পুরের নিকট বিদায় লইতে হইবে। ফিরিবার সময় এরূপ কথাবার্তা চলিতেছিল এমন সময় আমাদের মধ্যে একজন গান ধরিল—

নিশ্চিত নয়নে তেবে রাখি মনে

ଓ গো অন্তর যামি !

ନୀରବ, ନିର୍ବୁମ ପଲ୍ଲୀପଥେର ସେ ଗାନେର ସ୍ଵର ଏଥନେ ଆମାର କାଣେ ବାଜିତେଛେ ।
ଶ୍ରୀନିର୍�ଜଳକାନ୍ତି ମଜୁମଦାର ।

পুনরাগমন।

সে একদিন ছিল, যে দিন ধর্ষে মহান् ভারত বিজ্ঞানের ক্ষেত্রে ও জগৎ-সভায় শ্রেষ্ঠ আসনলাভ করিয়াছিল। সে দিন পদার্থ-বিদ্যায়, জ্যোতিষাস্ত্রে, ও রাসায়নিক চর্চায় জগতের কোন জাতি তাহার সমকক্ষতা লাভ করিতে পারে নাই।

কালস্মোতে—সে যুগের অবসান হইল—ভারতে বিজ্ঞান চর্চা লোপ পাইল।

একটা কথা চলিত আছে যে মানব সভ্যতা বরাবর পশ্চিম দিকে ছুটিতেছে। পৃথিবীত একদল লোক আছে যাহারা মনে করে মানব সভ্যতা ও বিজ্ঞান একসঙ্গে চলে। তাহাদের মতে বিজ্ঞান ও বরাবর পশ্চিমে চলিতেছে।

বিজ্ঞান জন্মগ্রহণ করিল ভারতবর্ষে, কিন্তু উহাকে পশ্চিমে লইয়া গেল আরবের। মিশর, স্পেন প্রভৃতি যে সকল স্থান অধিকার করিয়া তাহারা সাম্রাজ্য স্থাপন করিল সেইখানেই বিজ্ঞান প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইল। যে দিন যুরোপের অনেক রাজা নাম সহি করিতে জানিত না এবং রোগীর একমাত্র ভরসা ছিল জনপড়া, সেদিন এই আরব অধিকৃত যুরোপে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় স্থাপিত হইয়াছিল এবং চিকিৎসকের চিকিৎসা শাস্ত্রে বৃংপত্তি ছিল। কালক্রমে এই আরবীয় বিজ্ঞান লোপ পাইল, তাহার পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান দাঢ়াইল। ভৌতিক বিদ্যায় তাহার রসায়ন আলোচনা দাঢ়াইল কি করিয়া তামাকে মোগা করিতে হয়। কিছু দিন চুপ চাপের পর যুরোপ বিজ্ঞানের আলোচনা স্থুর করিল এবং শীঘ্রই এরূপ পারদর্শিতা দেখাইল যে তাহার নাগাল আঁর কেহ ধরিতে পারিল না। বিজ্ঞান কিন্তু শুধু যুরোপে আবদ্ধ হয় নাই। বিজ্ঞান চলিতেছে পশ্চিমে, আমেরিকায় উপস্থিত হইয়াছে, চলার বিরাট জাপানেও দেখা দিয়াছে। কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষ তো জাপানের ও পশ্চিমে! বিজ্ঞানের পশ্চিমে চলা সিদ্ধান্ত যদি সত্য হয় তো বিজ্ঞান পৃথিবী অমণ করিয়া আবার কি তাহার মাতৃক্ষেত্রে উপস্থিত হইবে না? এই প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজে

জগদীশ চন্দ্র ও প্রফুল্লচন্দ্র তাহার পুনরাগমন বার্তা ধ্বনিত করিল। কিন্তু নব বসন্তের আগমন কি মাত্র ছাইটী কোকলের দ্বারা সূচিত হইবে? তাহা নয়; আরও দ্রু'একটি দেখা দিতে আরম্ভ করিয়াছে। আজ একজনের পরিচয় দিব। ইনি এই প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজেরই একজন তৃতপূর্ব ছাত্র শ্রামান্ব মেঘনাদ সাহা।

আপোক্ষিক তত্ত্বের আবিক্ষারক স্বনামধন্য বৈজ্ঞানিক আইন্স্টাইন (Einstein) বলেন যে ডাঃ মেঘনাদ সাহা তাহার মৌলিক গবেষণা দ্বারা সমস্ত বৈজ্ঞানিক জগতে এক বরণীয় স্থান অর্জন করিয়াছেন। বর্তমান সময়ের পৃথিবীর সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ম্যনমন্দির মাউন্ট উইলসন (mount wilson), মানমন্দিরের অধ্যক্ষ ডাঃ জি, ই, হেল (G. E. Hale) বলেন সূর্য ও নক্ষত্রসমূহ যে কি কি ধাতু দিয়া গঠিত তৎসমূহে এতদিন বেশ একটু খটকা ছিল, কিন্তু কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধ্যাপক ডাঃ মেঘনাদ সাহা সমস্ত সমস্তার সমাধান করিয়াছেন। জার্মানির বিখ্যাত অধ্যাপক আর এমডেন (R. Emden) বলেন যে এই বিষয়টা আমাদের শিখিতে হইবে, এই নবীন ভারতবাসীরও গবেষণা হইতে।

এক তরুণ বাঙালী যুবকের যে আবিক্ষিয়া ইংলণ্ড, ফ্রান্স, জার্মানি, আমেরিকা প্রভৃতি প্রদেশে শত শত বৈজ্ঞানিক পত্রিকায় আলোচিত হইতেছে এবং যাহা জগতের বিজ্ঞান সভায় ভারতবর্ষকে এক ধাপ তুলিয়া দিল সেই গবেষণার সামান্য একটু আভাষ এখানে দেওয়া হইল।

সূর্য ও নক্ষত্রসমূহে কি কি ধাতু আছে, তাহা বৈজ্ঞানিকগণ ঠিক করিলেন উহাদের বর্ণন্ত নিরীক্ষণ করিয়া সর্বশুল্ক ৯২ টা ধাতুর মধ্যে সূর্যে মাত্র ৪৫ টা ধাতুর সক্ষান মিলে। যে সকল ধাতু পাওয়া যায় না তন্মধ্যে রুবিডিয়ম (Rubidium) ও সিসিয়ম (Caesium) এর নাম বিশেষ ভাবে করা যাইত পারে। সূর্যে রুবিডিয়ম সিসিয়ম কেন নাই? নাই তো নাই, না এই না থাকার কারণ কিছু আছে? ইহার কোন মীমাংসা হয় নাই। মেঘনাদ বজিলেন সূর্যে যে রুবিডিয়ম সিসিয়ম পাওয়া যায় না তাহা দৈবক্রমে নয়, তাহার মূলগত কারণ আছে।

পদার্থের শেষ অবস্থা যে এটম (atem) সেই এটমের ভিতরকার অনেক খবর এখন বৈজ্ঞানিকগণ টের পাইয়াছেন। কেন্দ্রস্থিত খানিকটা সংযোগ

তত্ত্বিতের চতুর্দিকে বিয়োগ তত্ত্ব যুক্ত কতকগুলি ইলেকট্রন (electron) ভীমবেগে ঘূরিতেছে ; ইলেক্ট্রনের সংখ্যা ও ঘূরিবার পথ তিনি এটম এ ভিন্ন। নানান উপায়ে একটি এটম এর ইলেক্ট্রন তাড়াইয়া দেওয়া যাইতে পারে। ইলেক্ট্রন শুন্ত এটম এ পূর্ণ এটম এর বর্ণছত্র পাওয়া যায় না। এটম হইতে ইলেক্ট্রন তাড়াইবার যতগুলি উপায় জানা আছে, তাপ তাহার মধ্যে একটী। কোন এটম এর ইলেকট্রন তাড়াইতে কত তাপের প্রয়োজন মেঘনাদ তাহা অঙ্ক কসিয়া বাঁধির করিলেন। তিনি দেখাইলেন সূর্যের যে উত্পন্নতা তাহাতে রূবিডিয়ম্ সিসিয়ম্ এটম এর অথগু অবস্থায় থাকা সম্ভব নয়। তাই সূর্যের বর্ণছত্রে রূবিডিয়ম্ সিসিয়ম্ এর রেখা লোপ পাইয়াছে। অন্তর্ভুক্ত নক্ষত্রে কি কি রেখা লোপ পাইয়াছে দেখিয়া তিনি তাহার হিসাব দিয়া এসকল নক্ষত্রের উত্পন্নতা নিরূপণ করিলেন। এইভাবে বিভিন্ন নক্ষত্রসমূহকে তাহাদের উত্পন্নতা অনুসারে ছয়টি বিভিন্ন দলে ভাগ করিলেন। পূর্ব জ্যোতিষীরা নক্ষত্রসমূহকে তাহাদের উজ্জল্য অনুসারে যে ছয়টি দলে ভাগ করিয়াছিলেন সে বিভাগ ও মেঘনাদের বিভাগ হঠাৎ মিলিয়া গেল। আর একটা কথা সূর্য অপেক্ষা সূর্য কলঙ্কের উত্পন্নতা কম। মেঘনাদ দেখাইলেন সূর্য কলঙ্কের কম উত্পন্নতায় রূবিডিয়ম্ সিসিয়মের ইলেকট্রন গুলি পলাইতে পারে না, অতএব সূর্য কলঙ্কে রূবিডিয়ম্ সিসিয়ম্ এর বর্ণরেখা পাওয়া যাইবে। সম্পূর্ণ মেঘনাদের এই সিদ্ধান্তের যাচাই হইয়াছে। মাউন্ট উইলসম্ মানমন্দিরের প্রসিদ্ধ জ্যোতির্বিদ ডাঃ রসেল তাহার—১৫০ ফুট লম্বা দূরবীক্ষণ দিয়া মেঘনাদ কথিত রূবিডিয়ম্ এর রেখা দেখিতে পাইয়াছেন। রূবিডিয়ম্ সিসিয়ম্ ছাড়া বিভিন্ন নক্ষত্রে বিভিন্ন ধাতুর আবির্ভাব ও তিরোভাবের অনেক খবর মেঘনাদ দিয়াছেন। অধ্যাপক রসেল বলেন পূর্ব ভারতবর্ষের এই অধ্যাপক জ্যোতিষ শাস্ত্রের একটী নৃতন দিক খুলিয়া দিয়াছেন—তাহার প্রদর্শিত পথে চলিয়া সূর্য ও নক্ষত্রের অভ্যন্তর বস্তর অনেক খবর আমরা জানিতে পারিব।

ভারত উন্মুখ হইয়া রহিল—অচিরেই সে তাহার আর্যভট্ট ও বরাহ মিহিরের যুগ ফিরিয়া পাইবে।

শ্রীচারক চন্দ্র ভট্টাচার্য

আচ্ছান ।

(গান)

পাগল আমাৰ হৃদয় আজি,
মুক্ত উদাৰ হ'য়ে গেল,
কোন্ সাগৱেৰ অনন্ত গান
হৃদয়দাবো সাড়া দিল !

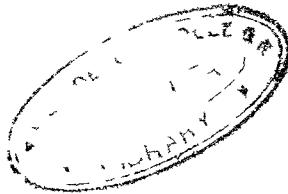
ঐ নীল—আকাশেৰ তলে কেৱে,
ডাকে মোৱে কোন্ স্মৃতিৰে !

আমায় যেতে হবে প্ৰেমেৰ ডাকে,
একলা প্ৰাণে নীল-পাথাৱে ।

নদীৰ শ্ৰোতে ভেসে যাবো,
পড়্বো এসে সাগৱ নীৱে,
অসীম প্ৰেমে হারিয়ে ফেলে,
গাইবো রে গান উদাৰ-স্মৃতিৰে ।

সিন্ধু গীতে আণ মেতেছে,
তিমিৰ তুয়াৰ মুক্ত হ'ল,
আজকে আমাৰ জাগ্ৰত প্ৰাণ
অসীম-মাৰবো ভেসে গেল' ।

ক্ৰীবৈদনাথ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ।
(ততীয়বৰ্ষ, কলাবিভাগ ।)



ପଦ୍ମା

ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ନିମେଷେର ତରେ ଫୁଲ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରାରାତେ
ବହୁଦିନ ପବେ ଆଜି ଦେଖା ତବ ସାଥେ
ହେ ନଦୀ ଆମାବ ! ବର୍ଷାଯ ଛକ୍କିଲ ଛେଯେ
ଦିବାନିଶି ଆପନାର ମନେ ଗାନ ଗେଯେ
ଆଭାରା, ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣଶ୍ରୋତେ ଚଳିଯାଇ ଥେଯେ
ତଟରେ କରଣସୁରେ ମୁଖରି ଆସାତେ ।

ଦାରୁଳ ପୀଡ଼ନେ ମୁଚ୍ଛି ଭାଙ୍ଗି ପଡ଼େ ବେଳା,—
ତୁ ମି ଆପନାର ମନେ ମରଣେବ ଖେଳା
ଖେଳେ ସାଓ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ,—କୋମୋଦିକେ ନାହି ଚାହି ।
ମନେ ପଡ଼େ ?—କତ କାଳ ଗେ'ଛେ ଅତିବାହି
ଯେ ଦିନ ପ୍ରଥମ ତୁ ମି ହର୍ଷେ ଛାସେ ଗାହି
ପାଯାଗ ପ୍ରାଚୀର ଭେଦି ଆସିଲେ ଏକେଲା ?

ମେ କି ଆଜ ? ମେଦିନ ତରୁଳ ଛିଲ ଆଲୋ ?
ବିମୁଖ ଆଖିର ଆଗେ ଲେଗେ ଛିଲ ଭାଲୋ ?
ମେ ଆଲୋର ଆବାହନଗାନ, ପଦ୍ମା ତୋରେ,
ବାହିରେ ଆନିଲ ଟାନି ବିଯାକୁଳ କରେ ?
କାରାଗାର ପାରିଲ ନା ରାଖିବାରେ ଧରେ—?
ବାହିରେ ଆସିଯା ତଣ୍ଡ ପରାଗ ଜୁଡ଼ାଲୋ ?

ତାରପରେ ସୁଖଦଃଖେ ଆସିଯାଇ ଏକା ।
—କେବଳ ବହିଯା ସାଓଯା, ତୁବ ତଟରେଥା
ଦିଲୀନ ହଇଯା ସାଓଯା ଦୂରେ,—ଶୁଦ୍ଧଗାନ ।
କଥନୋ ଏସେ'ଛେ ନାମି ଶ୍ରାବଣେର ବାନ,
ଶାରଦ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରମା କଳ୍ପ କରିଯାଇଁ ଦାନ
ଅପୂର୍ବ ସୁଷମା ;—ବସନ୍ତ ଦିଯେଛେ ଦେଖା !

যাহার আহ্বানে চির পরিচিত ঘর
ছাড়িয়া আসিবি ছু' ।
—বাঁশরীর গী তুমি অক্ষ ম' প্রাণ—
তাহার দর্শন তুই পেয়েছিস্ হার ।
কতদিন, কতসন্ধ্যা আসে, চলে যায়,
কত চন্দ্ররাতি নামে শ্বামধর' পর !—

তবু তুই চলেছিস্—চলেছিস্ বহি'
সদা ক্ষুঁক অন্তরে সান্ত্বনা বাণী কহি' ।
তবু চিন্ত মেতে ওঠে, না মানে বাঁধন
গগনে ঘনায়ে আসে বহির কাঁদন
অন্তরে জাগিয়া ওঠে মরণ সাধন
বিপুল পীড়নে তঠ মুর্ছে রহি' রহি' ।

রোষে গজ্জি উঠি' ক্ষুঁক উর্ণি কণা তুলি'
নিষ্ঠু'র আকাশপানে উঠিছ আকুলি'
নিষ্ফল আক্রোশে ! আকাশ কেবল হাসে
নিরাপদে বসি দূরে ক্রুর পরিহাসে
দিগন্তে ঢালিয়া দিয়া শুভ জোৎস্বারাশে—
প্রভাতে বাছিয়া দিয়া ধরণীব ধূলি !

আপন আহতচিন্ত কেঁদে ফিরে তব
আপনার মাঝে ।—পথের সন্ধানে নব
ছুটে যায় মন্ত্র প্রায়;—নিষ্ফল আক্রোশে
আবিল সলিল ধারা, তবু ব্যর্থ বোঝে
তটেবে প্রচারে সদা প্রভাতে প্রদোষে;—
ভেঙ্গে পড়ে তট ভূমি করি আর্দ্রব ।

কে তোরে বাঁধিবে নদী ? তোব মন্ত্রধারা
সিদ্ধুব অন্তৰ মাঝে হয়ে'ছে কি হারা ?

সেখা তোর ব্যর্থ আশা সিন্ধুর মহান
 বক্ষ তোলে নাই আলোড়িয়া ? দীর্ঘ প্রাণ
 তোলেনি সমুদ্র ধৰনি' হতাশার গান ?
 শান্ত কি হয়ে'ছে তোর ব্যর্থ আশা, তারা ?

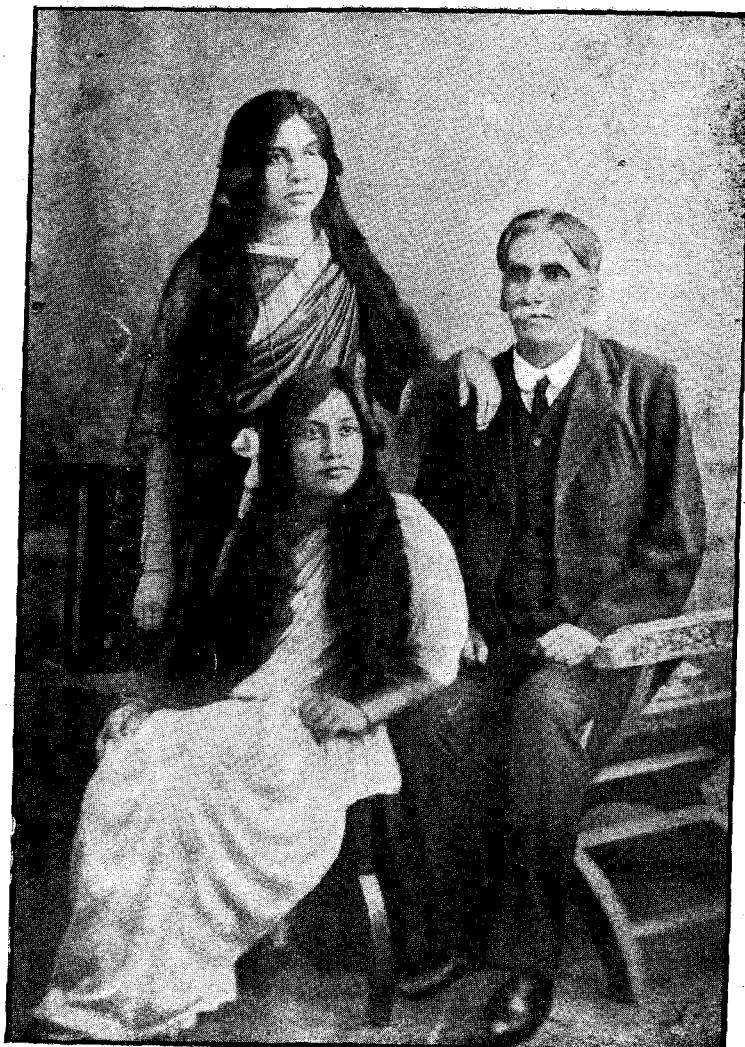
তবু হাস এমন টাদিনী রাতে ? বুকে
 অশ্ফুট গুঞ্জন রবে কাদে চিন্ত দুখে
 মুখে বিকশিয়া দিলে চন্দমার হাসি !
 —এ তব বেদনা হাসি বড় ভালবাসি ।
 মনে লয় মোর গিরি শিরে হিমরাশি
 সে বুঝি জমান অঞ্চ,—তবু স্বর্ণসুখে

হেসে ওটে রবিকরে । মানুষের হাসি
 বেদনার সিন্ধু মন্তি ওটে পরকাশি ।
 বেদনায় হাসি যদি না থাকিত ভবে,
 না ফুটি কুসুম ঝরিয়া পাড়িত তবে;
 তবে শুধু সন্ধ্যা আসি ঝান শ্রান্তববে
 চলে যেত দিগন্তের অন্তর উদাসি !

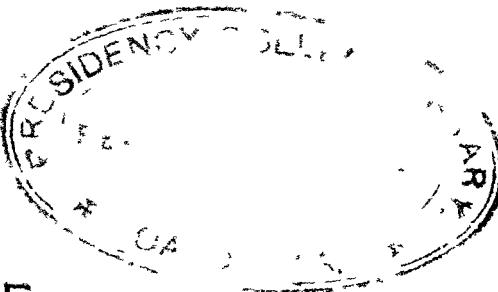
তোমার অন্তর মাঝে জেগেছ উচ্ছুস
 দূর হ'তে ভেসে' আসে ককণ আভায
 তা'র । তৌর শ্রোতে নিমেষে হারা'য়ে যাক
 সকল বেদনা । অন্তর ক্রন্দন লোপ পাক
 চলার ধৰনিতে । প্রাণ মাঝে শুধু থাক
 চলে যাওয়া—বেদনার সকলণ হাস ।

ভাদ্র ১৩৩০

হ্যায়ন কবির



Late Prof. M. Ghose



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EDITORIAL NOTES.

PROF. Monmohan Ghosh is lost to us for ever, and a severer loss there cannot be. His soul was like a star that dwelt apart. He was of no race and seemed, indeed, to be a fairy strayed into the earth. About his poetry, it is not the time to speak at length, for much of it still remains unpublished, but the few pieces that have appeared fully bear out Oscar Wilde's ecstasies over them. Then he was not only a poet, but he looked the poet, and his voice also had the lilt of the lyre. His whole life was, indeed, a poem in itself. As to his teaching, since his lectures have not been published, and since Apollo's voice is hushed for ever, it is not possible for the present generation of students to catch the thrill with which their luckier predecessors were inspired. It is a pity we do not and shall not look upon his like again ! We hope that his unpublished epics and lyrics will see the light, so that death might bring him the glory which he so shunned in life.

Readers will find, from the several articles contributed to this issue of the magazine by pupils of the late Professor, what a magnetic personality he possessed, and how deep was the spell that he cast upon those who were privileged to sit at his feet as learners.

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Prof. Hridaychandra Banerjee is also no more. In him the College loses one of its most distinguished Professors, the students one of their heartiest well-wishers, and Eden Hindu Hostel one of its best Superintendents. We offer our sincere condolence to the bereaved family.

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We have also to mourn the loss of Dr. Dunn, who had a sad death by drowning. In the words of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, "Mr. Dunn was a scholar and gentleman every inch of him.....there had been very few who had devoted themselves to the cause of education as he did, with the aspiration to serve the people of the country he had chosen as his own for the best part of his life."

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Another melancholy incident is the death of Ex-President Wilson. He was a great scholar, a great Professor, and a greater statesman. He was not one of those politicians who strut and fret their hour upon the stage, and are heard of no more. There are many who hold that it was President Wilson and America who really won the War. We are afraid this claim is rather too extravagant. General Ludendorf laughed at this idea, and than him there is certainly no greater authority in the matter. American soldiers took no effective part in the fateful battle of July 18, 1918. Really he helped not to win the last War, but to end War once for all. His name is associated with the League of Nations, which may be a brilliant failure, but is nevertheless the first organised effort to wipe out the most shameful blot on our civilisation.

Lenin too has died *at last*. He has been the anathema of many, and a Messiah to not a few. That he was a remarkable man nobody can question. He cried a halt in the ceaseless march of civilisation, and knocked a new window into the soul of the world. That is a matter of no small credit for any one man and that will endure, cry him up or cry him down as you may. He is of the tribe of Luther and Rousseau. They are blind to more things than they see, and it is always dangerous to trust the destinies of men into their own hands. But one great truth they bring home to humanity, and this is that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

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From the dead let us now come to the living, and what is more living than Politics? The most remarkable event here in recent days has been the formation of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's ministry. Our old friend Mr. Jack Cade's silken-coated people will now remember him, and say, "Can the devil speak true?" Most probably this curious mosaic will be very short-lived. The unionists are still too strong and the Welsh Wizard is always a danger, though witch-craft is not in favour nowadays. Indeed, in what may be called his maiden statement as Premier, Mr. Macdonald had to explain the circumstances in which he would *resign*. But whatever may be the fate of the new ministry, its inauguration is a land-mark in the history of politics. Hitherto there has been government of the people and for the people. Hence begins government by the people.

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Indian politics is passing through a crisis. Important changes seem to be ahead. There are really two parties now: the Government and the anti-government, or to put it in another way, the Swarajists and the anti-swarajists. The methods of the two parties are widely different, and if matters continue in this state, the councils will come to a deadlock. Can't each give up some points and strike the happy mean?

The Tariff Board has finished its labours, and we are eagerly expecting its 'recommendations'. We hope that means will be found for protecting the infant Tata-industry.

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The Lee Commission is busy gathering evidence ; it is yet too early to make an idea of its recommendations. But the Civil Justice Enquiry Committee encourages the hope that there may soon be an end of 'law's delay'.

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On January, 21 last the college entered on its hundred and tenth year. This old sweet dreaming spire ! The founder's day bids us sit still and join the old mother in her reverie. What a history will she not unfold ! A hundred generations she has moulded and sent out to the world, and hundreds of professors she has nourished in her bosom ! Ask her and she will tell you how Sutcliffe talked, how Percival explained, how Cullis in his old days had to climb a chair to work out a sum, and how the Bengal Tiger, so untameable abroad, was reared up in the discipline of the nursery. She remembers all—the bigger people no less than the lesser fry. She is the bridge whose one end is at the beginning of English Education in India, while the other reaches to generations yet unborn. She has many things to reveal. Of course Philistinism has robbed us of many a cherished relic of the past. We have not, for example, the hall where Macaulay spoke his famous sentence on D. L. R.'s reading of Shakespeare. Yet every stone is steeped in sentiment. Listen and she will tell you of things that were and are no more and of things that will be and are not yet.

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Dr. Adityanath Mukherjee has been transferred from here as Principal of Sanskrit College. We congratulate the students of Sanskrit College on their rare good luck, but our feeling on this occasion is not one of unmixed happiness. For more than a decade, Dr Adityanath was an adornment to the College as a scholar, as a Professor and above all as a man. Hence

though we are happy at his elevation, we cannot but feel a pang that he is to be ours no longer.

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Dr. Prabhu Dutt Sastri is going out to Naples as President of the branch of Philosophy of Religion in the International Philosophical Conference.

The honour is unique, but it is well deserved and Presidency College feels the more proud on that account.

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Sir J. C. Bose F. R. S. is gaining fresh laurels in Europe. This time he received encomiums from Messrs. Ramsay Mac-Donald and Bernard Shaw! It is a matter of no small pride to us that Presidency College was the cradle of this world-renowned scientist.

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The University cannot pay our Professors for their teaching in the Post-graduate department. The government will now either allow them to work without any pecuniary return, or it will utilise them wholly in the under-graduate department, which will also help it in reducing the staff. What will it decide for?—the higher interests of education or the considerations of the dismal science?

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Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee has placed Rupees forty thousand at the disposal of the University with a view to establish a lectureship on an Indian subject. A princely gift worthy of the illustrious donor.

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Prof. C. V. Raman has been elected a fellow of the Royal Society. All honour to the Alma Mater.

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The University has been informed that there will be no State Scholarship this year— not a very encouraging index to the workings of the 'Axe'!

In America there have been two very interesting things. Poor Joan of Arc ! She has had another harrowing—and this time from Bernard Shaw. The book has not crossed the Atlantic yet, but we are told that the tone is midway between reverence and scorn. The age of Voltaire was one of pure cynicism and he found in her a moon-struck maiden, pure and simple. But now cynicism is learned with reverence, because this is a 'sceptical age terrified at its scepticism'.

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Science began with conquering Nature but has now besieged the region of God. A number of American scientists are attempting experiments which are expected to increase the span of life by twenty years within the next half century. Elizabeth Millbank Anderson has left a big purse to enable them to carry on these researches. Now the question is ; will this increase the happiness of man and then if the Americans can increase longevity at this rate, they must also try to discover new Americas !

MONMOHAN GHOSE.

MR. PHANIBHUSHAN CHAKRABORTY, M.A —(*Ex Student*).

AT School, when hardly fifteen, my evenings would often be given to stories, lovingly told, of a wildish young man who had once come as a professor to Dacca, and brought with him a rich, ringing voice, dreamy eyes and a fine face set in an aurora of flaming hair. My narrator was a teacher, albeit of Mathematics, who, however, remembered little of the actual work of his hero. But somehow, the strange spell with which the romantic young man had touched him abided, and a

light would awake in his eyes as he spoke of the blossom of the youth's form, and a seductive hint about him of passion and perfume. He had burst upon youth-stirred lads as a living form of what they, in their secret yearnings, themselvs desired to be. His ways, quaint as the ways of others who have loved the Muses, stood out refreshingly amidst duller moods of life. He dressed in colour, wore in his button-hole a flower of violet hue, and on windy days could be seen in lonely spots, standing alone with head thrown backward, smiling faintly as the breeze blew all his hair before it, away from his forehead. For all his simplicity of life, he appeared always to be squandering, but what he squandered was only his graces. The great Harinath De called him Apollo, but his name was Monmohan Ghose.

Often, as I listened to such delighted worship of what was remembered of him, I eagerly prayed that it might be given to me to see sometime that marvellous youth, even if as grown to age, and hear, if possible, his voice. His must be a rare, joyous existence, far different from any I had known, or its magic could not have lived down the years ~~is~~ a mathematical soul. Somewhere he was certainly squandering his graces even then, to make lovely for other boys the arid life of a student, and I hungered to know the name of the place. I learnt later that he was teaching at Presidency College where I would be proceeding. And if today, I record the truth that from that time, at intervals of work, my fancy would engage, again and again, in dandling the phrases used of him and seeking into them as if to call out a figure my eyes longed to salute, I hope none would be so heartless as to suspect that this is a mere pignant detail, invented and thrown in for its obvious decorative value.

I have a vivid ~~re~~collection of the shock I received when I saw him at last. Across the field that lies between the College and the School, walked over so ceaselessly that scratches upon it can never be covered up by grass, a frail, pale man was coming, his long shadow aslant before him under a westering sun. This, ~~someone~~ murmured, was Monmohan Ghose. I widened my

eyes to see if that broken man who bore the countenance of one tragically fated, could really be he whose beauty and brilliancy had once made his pupils drunken. Yet he it was. A distinction of form and look, far greater than any mere comeliness could give, still lingered about his person, but over all lay the shadow of some vast blight that had apparently brought him low. The hair had lost its sun-gold and was of an ashen silver, with black in the clefts of it; the cheeks shrunken and lined with wrinkles, not like cheeks that burn under ardours; the lips sadly closed, with a suggestion of words pressing from behind that would never be uttered. Only the eyes, strangely incongruous in a tired face, fresh as the sky of dawn and as soft, looked out in a tender purity, and quivered, as if unable to fix on what to settle. The dress was no longer of any pleasant colour, but sombre, and even so faded. His head, however, he carried high, in the cooling air, it would seem, of some upper world of dream and shadow, while to hands and feet and raiment clung only rueful signs of things perished. "A wreck" I muttered involuntarily, 'but one that carries about it its fallen day.'

During the two years that followed, I could only catch glimpses of him occasionally; sometimes disappearing round a corner towards his class-room; sometimes, still for a while under the portico, regarding the long flight of the stairs with something like dread; sometimes again in the mellow light of an afternoon, near the gate, errant among a crowd of students who were hiving out. I could not come nearer. He did not take us, and when at times, passing along a corridor, I saw boys of some higher class taking him in with eyes and ears, I remember I envied them bitterly. But they would make gifts now and then out of their plenty. Some winged word that had flown down from him they would bring to us and gradually, it would career across the lips of all, and remain long with them to flutter in their memory. Some pretty incident would be given to us also, such as his dropping to silence in class on murmurous days

of rain, or a sudden rise to animation over lyric delights, and moods and phases and phrases that troubled us like rumours of a vision uncommonly lovely. For more and more of such, I often got into conversation with his students and induced them to talk of him. A collection of his youthful poems, gracefully named 'Primavera,' mingled with the work of some comrades, I read many times over. Then, somehow, the wonder that had awakened in the heart of my schoolmaster, awoke in me, for these softly sensuous lines were laden with a sweetness that went to one's head. A frost indeed lay then upon his heart and its soil was cold and barren ; but once, I fancied, the feet of the Muses had been upon it and quickened it to a fruitful warmth. But I had to indulge in fancies from a distance. He came to college and went, walking in loneliness, noticing none, the same always in look and figure, the black dress only changed at times for one of an earthen tint.

All this had gone on during the two years that passed before the morning when he first entered our class-room and thrilled us by his utterance of the simple phrase 'Number One ?' This will appear to many as extravagant beyond standing, but those who ever heard Monmohan Ghose speak will recollect the marvel of his voice. To us it seemed a revelation that such tremulous music could be struck out of the tones of a man. It went on quivering over the numbers in the register in short lyric cries, while all sat breathless in a luxury of expectation. I could see his figure more intimately now. He sat among his own ruins, though with a resigned will to smile. From the blanched face down to the shoes, negligently laced, a livid sickliness covered him, as if he had passed through fire unshielded. But it also seemed that power resided in him exhaustless, and if some of us felt a touch of pathos and sorrow, sorrow was swallowed up in admiration so completely that none would dare to pity him. He raised his wondering eyes which did not flash but glowed with a vivid glimmer against the deadness and darkness of his whole form. When,

however, he opened his lips again, this time to hymn the praise of Keats, we felt at once that things were really not what they seemed. None of his lights were out.

The study of Keats began ; first, an introduction, very short, in sentences of perfect rhythm and then that sheer, indescribable delight, the reading aloud of a verse or stanza in dulcet tones. The guttural tongue had perhaps never been sweetened before to such liquid melody. It was the Nightingale ode, and all the passion with which the nature-sick Keats had ached, for a way out into the land of his heart's desire, began to throb and tingle in his voice. And not the passion of the poet only, but the wood-land world of bliss where the bird was singing, itself was there, lovely beyond words in the dim luxuriance of a summer night, as if it had moved down under the stress of his voice, and all the time he read the lines or spoke on them, there remained on us a sense of its nearness. The flowers in the fifth stanza moved him to peculiar pleasure, white hawthorn, pastoral eglantine, and fast-fading violets covered up in leaves ; and when to give us some others of their kind, he took us to the flowers that grow in the garden of Perdita, daffodils that come before the swallow dares, we heard with astonishment a sudden tumult of wings in his voice, as if a flock was really coming to take the winds of March with beauty.* His eyes glowed, while a glow now illumined his face also, and on our ears were showered the music of verses recited, and another music, hardly less entralling, that of his own monosyllables. For he chose the shortest, softest words, with an ear for their sound, and set them up in sentences of such natural melody, that it seemed as if none had arranged them at all, but they, themselves, just

* daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty.

occurred. Diffused music seemed to be now in the very breath of the room ; over it a new sky hung. Under that sky, each one of the sixty minutes as it came, was decked with some fresh jewellery of phrase or tune. We sat as before a miracle, witnessing and listening ; and when at last the harsh bell rang out the end of the hour, each one of us had walked in the land they call the land of dreams and been touched by its spirit.

Not that day alone, but every other day after that that he took us, on Thursdays of my Third year and Fridays of my Fourth, and on other days of the Fifth and the Sixth, the exquisite joy of listening to a silvery voice giving to the shortest syllable the lilt of the lyric, would be ours. I do not remember any one day specially greater than others. All of them make music in my memory. Lines of poetry were read in a voice so deftly controlled that once a harmony, softer than harmonies on lute or lyre, seemed to hum in them ; while the same voice again would assume a grave, meditative movement to tell of sober joys or brooding passion. Often it would transcend the mould of metre in a fine excess of eager strains, softly dying or lingering in echoes and we would feel as if quantity was trying to come to a language of stresses. The ringing clarity of his utterance and its softly intoned music would give to even very common words a peculiar beauty. I remember how on many days, while making a fair copy of notes taken of his lecture, I was confronted by expressions that in writing seemed very ordinary. I wondered why I had written them down at all, but when the memory would revive in me of how they had sounded or rather chimed in my ears or rung, the puzzle would explain itself and smiling for very pleasure, I would try to reproduce the music myself. I would naturally fail, as anybody else would, but for sometime lovely tones and tunes, even surprising accents, would keep crowding into my mind. They are crowding again to-day, as I write of that chant-filled period; and if these pages be read by any one

who sat at the feet of Monmohon Ghose, I think he too will lift his face from them for a while, and with a vacant look cast forward, sit turning in his mind memories of some unforgettable strains he heard.

I dread to risk an account of his teaching, lest with my coarse, inadequate touch I should mishandle so consummate an experience. Others, I hope, will undertake the task, some who will be able to do it better. I shall keep to only acknowledging my own enjoyment. The gift of a matchless voice that Monmohan Ghose possessed, I have already noticed. Allied to it though not akin, was his other gift, that of an exquisite felicity in phrase which found for his intensely poetic mind luminous and fascinating expression. His indeed were revealing words which reached down to the strange, inner soul of things and brought it out, not naked but with a brightness thrown around it like a lucent garb. They were little words, often not known, oftener neglected. He would use them lovingly, always with a tender caress of his voice, singly or in groups, with marvellous results. With them he marked for us the magic of the earth and the witchery of the seasons, as also the months coming in a pageant – ‘forsaken’ December, ‘quick, March and April ‘which is not merely flowery but which is also showery’. Shelley he would call the Ariel of English poetry and Keats its Caliban, because of his earth-contact. He spoke too of ‘moon-mad’ poets and ‘man-mad’ moons of poetry, of the ‘up-look’ of the soul and the ‘back-look’ of the mind, or coming to nature, of ‘many dear sounds, the earth resting, great and peaceful’, of ‘voiceful winds’, of ‘a seething and moaning of seas, cruel to hear’, and of ‘an immense, heavy sound of the heavens’. I have only put down those that came first to my mind, without seeking to choose. They were numberless. As I turn over the pages of my notes, to be preserved affectionately as long as I live, I meet in every line phrases of sweetness and light that would live for all time, if the world came to know them, but must now remain in our memory as dead immortals and that only for the period of our years,

With the twin gifts of voice and phrase, and behind a mind of imagination all compact, he touched nothing that he did not touch to gold. The sentences themselves had their own grace of rhythm and while uttering them he moved his head slightly. They *came in an unbroken flow*, but for a minute or two after the commencement of a lesson he would appear to be labouring a little during which time he kept his eyes fixed on the book. When, however he raised them, we knew that his inspiration had come, for the look in the eyes was inward and full of a strange, exquisite light as if some happiness or hope had touched his spirit. This infected us too who would perceive a falling away of many thick draperies off our minds. But for him we no longer existed, He had already found his way to where Greeks and Romans of Landor sat in reminiscent converse, or to Prospero's isle full of noises, or had soared with Swinburne to some rare height borne on the ample wings of that poet's rhymes. He sat before us obviously seeing the persons written of in the book, or the landscapes ; hearing voices we could not hear, regarding scenes no longer imaginary to him with keen enjoyment ; and giving us his private thoughts on them, spoken aloud, as if unconsciously. But he was not sitting as a mere spectator. In his soul he had felt the creative ecstasy out of which the poem or drama had sprung, and out of his soul he was building up the whole thing over again, he himself, with delight surging up through look and voice. We beheld before us an overpassing of the borders between the critic and the artist, and witnessed, as it were, a re-birth of the art-work we had to understand, under our very eyes. He did not need us now for his lecture. A rapture had been roused in him and he went eagerly on, save when some radiant memory of the soul stilled him and rose in his eyes like a rain-bow. But we who listened to him, would be passing through a transformation. Somehow the whole atmosphere of the place was changed. The short words he used, though used of the matter immediately under study possessed an almost burdensome fulness of meaning which would let in upon us overflowing sweetness.

Hints of lovely and far away things would come winnowing through them ; they made real not merely the beauty men look at, but also the beauty men listen to ; and under showers of them even the broad light of day lying upon many a dull page of prose, dimmed and mellowed to a softer hue,

Greater far, thus than any mere meanings of words, was the attitude we got from him towards art. To build it, joy would run out from his mind as it would run out from ours. He would hardly ever state any theory directly, save to strike it dead with gentle humour, and yet, before we knew it, he would bring our soul into harmony with all right and lovely things. This would be done by calling up the beauty sense by shock after shock of beauty itself, beauty rushing in upon us as scent and sight and song, through beautiful words, its capturing charm awakening in us a desire for it, and a sense whereby to know its pure, real self. We were not talked to about splendours of things invisible but were led to key-holes and invited to behold marvellous things ourselves.

That peculiar power which he was never tired of pointing out in others, which Arnold called 'natural magic'—one which enables a poet to put into words a sense of the concrete self of things and their secret life—he himself possessed in an abounding measure. He described to us the sea and the sea sense, the sea smell, the sea air would be upon us ; or spoke of the light of a tired moon of the last hours of night, and we would feel as if moonlight had fallen upon our own bodies or called up dark cool forests when we felt as if we were getting a close intimate sense of the trees—that grew there—in silence. At such times we developed a sensitiveness that oppressed us. I recollect with a thrill, how in supreme moments we felt an almost physical disturbance, as if all things were melting and fusing within us, to reform into new and more radiant shapes, just as possibly trees feel within them when they ache with the urge of new leaves and a coming out-break of flowers. It was a shiver of awakening. But it was not a transient gladness merely ; it stilled and

lasted. Yet this was not the only gift we received from him, though this was the chief, but there were other gifts also, specially that of information; beautiful things, tellingly said, of the riotous and earthly heat of old Paganism and the nature-feeling of the new; of the perfect balance of thought and expression found by the Greeks and not again; of deities of myth and legend who have their own home beyond our sky and air; of Hellenic sunlight and Celtic twilight; and of all numerous details, intimate and luminous, of the ways in which the greatening mind of man has expressed itself through the ages in art. He spoke in his own voice of what he himself knew and had felt. He would hardly quote any critic, unless on rare occasions Arnold and Pater, and among foreigners, G'oethe; but the Greeks he would quote with evident pleasure, both critics and artists, delighting in the sound of their names, Sophocles and AEschylus and Euripides, and Homer and Plato, and very many others, less well-known. The main criticism or interpretation however, he would always give himself; and it would be of such fresh and original charm, that he would wonder if the critic was not greater than the artist he was honouring with his notice. If he was, it was so much the greater a gain for us. Could there be a higher privilege than to be allowed to see things through his eyes, and for a barren apprehension of surface-meanings which would be all of which we ourselves would be capable, to have the coloured reading of his imagination? This was really a training in appreciation of art, for there can be no finality about the meaning of an art-work. When it is done and the world comes to look at it, it no longer remains a handiwork of its creator alone, but others bestow upon it beauty from their own hearts which gives it a new being and a new character. And he among them who can bestow upon it the most radiant glory is the one through whose vision the world thenceforward sees it, and his place is with the creator himself as his mind has given it half of what it has come to be. Monmohon Ghose was a creative critic of this type. He gave his own

secrets no less than the secrets of the others whose work he discussed. We listened therefore with delighted wonder and today in the mental images we have of Keats or Landor or any other literary artist we did with him, there is, I fancy, very little of the artists themselves, and less of anything that we ourselves have given, while almost every form or feature is one that was born of his imagination. It was an unforgettable experience to see him transmuting things with a sudden touch of his magic ; make small, shy shapes of beauty rise up to his stature ; lead his subject rather than follow it ; or if the theme or passage was one really great, fly with the fancy of his author, wing to wing.

Of his life, to this day I know nothing. I never enquired. I saw him and heard his voice, and that was enough for me. I never felt eager to know more. Vague mentions of a great unhappiness that has blasted his life were at times made, but none would seek to pry into the past of a man who was the parent of so many things in us. He walked in mystery and we would willingly let its soft halo linger about him, to keep him in that detachment, out of which came much of his power. But a deep love was felt for this silent man ; and I remember that the great cheer that once burst forth from the class when after long absence he was one day unexpectedly seen in a corridor, did not express the merely selfish hope of hearing him again, but pleasure also that we had seen his face. He did not know it, and any desire to express it to him in any way would shrink in shame. But it was there, it flowed full within us and, broad, though kept to the last from flowing over forward and lapping his feet.

Yet he was strangely near to us. I never exchanged a single word with him, and he would not have known me if anywhere we met ; but he is present in my soul, with the same strong presence to-day that he had for me in 1916 and the same clear features of a loved and living man. The further I would gratefully allow that if there is a bit of ground in my

heart where Poetry has a small garden and a humble altar, it is because the dust of his feet as he walked across, gathered there through four short years, and formed its soil. There are tares in it, I know, and weeds and plants of evil of which the flowers are poisonous ; but those I myself have planted. Mingled with them and nodding to chance winds from the south are one or two plants that stand always in bloom, and each time fragrance is wafted to me from them, I murmur to myself : "This happens because he came and scattered seeds and scattered them on ground he himself had prepared." Not I alone, but I think some others also, when they read some poetry and feel that possibly they understand it, or when in hours of happiness or sorrow, on days of sunlight or days of wind and rain, they tune their mind to some persistent line humming in them—feel on such days and in such hours, their debt to Monmohan Ghose and think deeply and tenderly of him.

He is gone, and boys that will come hereafter will not have him as one from whom to take their fire. "The chaos of chance events" as he named life, almost with a personal insistence is over for him. But I wonder who will show the future generations the "wine-coloured" sea that Achilles saw, or bring to their ears the boom of the Aegean ; or lead them to the "thousand-fruited, sunless, windless thicket" where the blind Oedipas was brought to rest ; or tell them of the "green-wood nature" of Shakespeare's pastoral plays ; or reveal to them the beauty of grass which in Inferno is of 'a hopeless enamel' but elsewhere of a deep, soft green,—loved by the Greeks for its usefulness and by the medievals for its beauty and colour ! Who again will make the soul of a lyric poem vocal, showering fine phrases almost wastefully, or on days of a certain atmosphere when dishevelled thoughts are tossed by dishevelled winds, sit silent for a while, adding perhaps, his share to the frolic of feelings and vagrant breezes ! The old poems and dramas will continue to go their round of successive years and successive sets of boys. The light of other eyes will

fall on them, and the advances of other minds. But the souls of the artists enshrined in them will wistfully murmur: "One has gone from the earth who felt through our language in another way, and greeted us with a welcome that only his wealth could arrange. For him we pine".

But not many among those who were his contemporaries will pine for him, as he did not seek the suffrage of the world, even with his poetry and remained unknown. That which is called the immortality of a name will also not be his, although what little I have seen of his published work would itself be recognised in any other country as a joy for ever. Here it remains in the obscurity of a college magazine and will ever. I wonder, however, if himself he would have liked it otherwise. Though from his manner one would have found out that his life lacked a sure base of happiness, he seemed to be resigned to his quiet existence, among his books in his lovely home with his solitary and pleasant labour upon them. The passage of others went on before him continuously, forward into regions where the light is strong, but he shunned the highway and was glad of a wayside security under which rooted in body he could flower in mind. It was a strange role to choose, for one so gifted by Nature and graced by God, but he had apparently been wounded by life and lost something, wherefore he had decided to expose himself no more.

In his isolation he blossomed indeed, but only like those fated plants which every night are covered up with countless flowers, and in the morning lose them all. Whatever he had or put forth, he was continually losing. We saw merely his loss, and not that abundance which, it was said, could be seen about him in his privacy, either in his practice of verse or his rich, thrilled life. About him hung an air of futility, pathetic as the futility of all great things. But the marks of greatness were there, if touched somewhat by a grave and pensive beauty, and we often wondered what nameless misfortune was that, which had shut him out from a world in which

he seemed meant for walking as a king. That was his secret. He appeared resigned, as if no longer striving to retrieve the irretrievable, folding up his life rather than opening it, waiting to offer himself up even as he was, and waiting when it would be that his aspiring soul would be put into freedom, at last.

But the pain of having had to furl his wings when they were aflutter with the desire for the sky, must have been eating into him. Night lay along his path, he saw, but he could not have been unaware of the treasure he carried. It must lie useless. This tragedy he bore in his heart all his life through in heroic silence, but almost at the last moment it broke out for once in a moving lyric cry. It was uttered not long before his passing away. Joy after joy had fallen from him till he was left dry and bare ; and when the evening was deepening round him and the hour had come for himself to fall, he tired to believe he would be falling where the joys had, down the waters of Death which are sweet to the lonely bed below where treasures lost in life are stored. Once at last he cried out in pain, in agonised remembrance of the hopes and dreams that had left him, hopes and dreams that were his only wealth -and tried to console himself into feeling that through Death he was perhaps going to be restored to them, waiting for him far down in the depths—the pleasures of his soul and his unfulfilled future shed from him cruelly, long ago: —

In the bliss, they say, of the love that loves the sky,
and ocean and earth,

All things hasten to lose, they say, the grieving ripple
of birth.

Why then ah ! do I tremble and pale at the thought
of thee, O Death,

And shivering stand to take my plunge in that infinite
sea of breath ?

There* are the lost joys of my life far sunk beyond
rave and fret,
There are the souls of dreams unflowered and the
roses of regret ;
There is the sunken dreadful gold of the Once that
might have been,
Shipwrecked memory anchors there, and my dead leaves
there are green !

It is the cry of one who has been defeated, but who
while bereaving, has been yet storing up. In it is the iron
pathos of a man to whom hope has lied in life, strug-
gling yet to hope for some happiness after death. Has
hope again proved untrue ? All who loved him, hope with
infinite emotion, that it has not, that after the anguish of
this life, he is released today and has found his leaves
and roses.

THE TWO MAIDENS.†

SAMIRENDRA NATH MOOKERJEE—*Fifth Year Arts.*

LEAVING the beds of the Fathomless Deep,
Rose two maidens,
From the churning of the sea, when creation began.
One, the lovely Urbasi,
Queen of the Realm of Desire,
A nymph of Heaven is she.

* Though an admirer of Matthew Arnold, he would not have followed that poet-critic into the adoption of italics on poetry. They are unnecessary; I have used them to point to the meaning more prominently.

† Translation of a poem in Rabindranath's "Balaka."

The blessed Lakshmi, the other,
 The whole universe's mother,
 A goddess of Heaven Fair.
 One steals the heart and mind,
 And breaks the embattled meditation ;
 Fills the wine-cup of youth,
 With fire and wild-sensation ;
 And scatters the floral ravings of spring with her hands,
 —Scarlet poppies and crimson roses,
 —The sleepless songs of youthful dreams.
 The other lulls desires,
 Cooling them with the dewy drops of tears,
 Brings back to the peace of bounteous
 Autumn's golden growth,
 Brings back to the blessings of the Eternal,
 —Sweet with the ambrosial smiles
 of ever-lasting loveliness—
 To the deathless confluence of Death and Life,
 To the temple of Eternity where ceaseth all strife.

MONMOHAN GHOSE

REMINISCENCES OF A PUPIL.

AMIDST the drudgeries incidental to an average student's average life in Calcutta, it seldom falls to his lot to be able to appreciate his own labours apart from the University's appreciation of them as expressed in the portentous lists annually published on the outer walls of our Senate Hall. To head such a list, or a section thereof, would ordinarily be regarded as a triumph fit to be celebrated in the Roman fashion. Fortunately,

however, we have always had amongst us a few unbelievers in the cultural value of a University degree won by a surrender of that essentially human faculty, which strives to arrive at truth by the most direct route, namely, first-hand study. The number of such unbelievers is happily growing apace, thanks to the tremendous fall in the market-value of our degrees. But their progress has been hampered by the timidity of believing teachers whose confidence in the efficacy of their own "notes" remains unshaken. A brilliant exception has passed away in the person of Monmohan Ghose, professor and poet, who easily earned from the students' legislature a majority-vote of no-confidence, but did not feel tempted to resign his ministry to the cause of education, of culture, of humanity.

He was able to do this, because he possessed a soul throbbing with devotion to an ideal of culture, of which he had a vivid vision in those flights of fancy peculiar to poets. He had passed the most impressionable period of his life in an atmosphere surcharged with ideas, amenable only to the pure passion of poetry without stint. Contact with men of taste and imagination had developed in him a keen aesthetic sensibility that revelled at its own internal joys and rebelled from the formalism of external analysis. The determination to derive joy from within thus became the keynote of his policy in life.

I have used the word policy deliberately. His policy was in no way akin to the policy of a typical politician : it corresponded to a course of conduct, conditioned by a cosmopolitan viewpoint possible only to a poet. Song was his policy, and the meaning of his music will never be mistaken.

What matters it that he chose as the medium of his expression a tongue unfamiliar at the moment to most of his countrymen ? He will be heard by those that hear Shakespeare and Shelley, Keats and Swinburne. He will at any rate command a wider audience than those equally great minds, that have sought expression in the language of his native land.

Ghose's choice of the English language as the vehicle of his ideas was determined as much by the training he had received, as by his own recognition of the masculine vigour of that tongue. He remarked on the absence of this quality in Bengali when praising the English *Gitanjali* of Rabindranath—the Bengali poet who has won his laurels as an English prose-man, the single swallow (as Ghose put it) that could not make a summer. Finally, Ghose believed in English, because he believed in the British Empire. It was his faith in Britannia that produced what a discerning critic characterized as the finest lyric called forth by the Great War.

It must not be thought, however, that his outlook was wholly western. Like a true artist, he appreciated art, wherever found. He could talk on jubilantly for hours on the merits of a couple of Japanese paintings, analysing every detail, and bringing out the full significance, with superb skill and evident delight.

In literary criticism, he was very much averse to the now common method of tracing the artist's ideas and expressions to the influence of environments. He was more concerned to look to the beauties of the ideas themselves and enjoy the art. The conviction had been borne in upon him that a genius could never be the product of circumstances.*

From his high plane of thought he would sometimes descend to a level that permitted laughter. I had occasion once to rail, in his presence, at the custom of accepting dowries from the bride, and pointed out the possibility of the wife afterwards taunting the husband, over the transaction. My professor said: "Say something about her good looks, and all will be well."

He looked upon travel in a free country as essential to the training of his countrymen. "Take your plunge," he

* He admired Arnold, hated Hugo, tolerated Tennyson and worshipped Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats.

would often say, "go to a free country, be it England or Japan or even Rumania, and you will be free within yourself." In these and other exhortations one could detect a smouldering fire of discontent with the conditions under which he felt himself obliged to work. The association of his brothers with the anarchical movement in Bengal had shaken his nerves ; and he would often imagine himself the victim of political espionage. What fed his suspicion was the Government's lack of initiative in lifting him from the mire of Provincial Service to which he felt he was condemned by the colour of his skin. I am not aware if his psychology underwent change after his elevation to the Imperial grade. That elevation was at any rate a tardy recognition of his merit, comparable to the bestowal of a knighthood on Rabindranath. Kings have been advised to be philosophers. But who will place the crown on the head of an artist ?

Perhaps we should not be sorry. The vein of tragedy that ran through his life will draw the instinctive sympathy of posterity, and future generations will contemplate the tragic drama of his life with a heart purified by pity.

MONMOHAN GHOSE.

A brief life-sketch

(MISS LATIKA GHOSE, B.A.)

MY father was the second son of the late Dr. K. D. Ghose and Sarnalata Devi, eldest daughter of the late Raj Narayan Basu. He was born on the 19th. January, 1869. At the age of six or thereabouts, he went as a boarder

to the Loreto Boy's School, Darjeeling. Two years later my grandfather went to England, and left his three eldest sons, my two uncles, Benoy Behari and Aurobinda Ghose, and my father there, in the care of a friend of his, the Reverend Mr. Druelte. The family lived at Manchester, and my father attended the Manchester Grammar School. After that he went to St. Paul's School, London, where he met the poet Lawrence Binyon, who was then a boy a year or two older than himself. A great friendship was formed between them, arising from similiar tastes, and a kinship of spirit, which lasted during my father's life. At London too my father formed a friendship with Stephen Phillips. A poem entitled, "To Stephen and May", and written after my father had come back to India, shows how much he valued these friendships, and what an exile's longing he had to return to England.

Something remembering I sigh,
Beneath this glorious Indian sky,
He grieves me tender, large and bright,
Hesperus in the western night,
And with sweet half-forgotten things,
Zephyrus loads his western wings.
What airs of spring-time's very home
What laughing freshness as of foam
Make languid all the eastern day
I start ! I think of Stephen and May.
Stephen and May ! two names that run
To daffodils and April sun
Musical sounds that fancy weaves
With the magic of the winds and leaves
Sounds like the wash of western seas
Full of the foam, full of the breeze,
I cry out suddenly and through
This odorous darkness look for you

Enchanting friends, that fill my soul
 A million waters 'twixet us roll
 O ! sunset on my heart shall weigh
 Till I revisit Stephen and May.

During his stay in London he fell seriously ill once, but in spite of it, he passed with distinction, and went to Oxford as a scholarship-holder. Lawrence Binyon had preceded him there, and the three poets, in combination with Arthur Cripps, published a book of verses, called *Prima Vera*. This book was very favourably reviewed by Oscar Wilde, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who praised my father very highly. Lionel Johnson, W. B. Yeats, Robert Bridges and other literary men of the times, too, admired my father's poetry.

At Oxford my father took his degree in classics. All his life he was a great classical scholar. Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Virgil, and Dante were his personal companions.

He never went for a walk in his own gardens, or outside, without one of these in his hands. Often when we went to his room, we heard his musical resonant voice reciting the melodious poetry of Greece and Italy.

After returning here, he entered Government service, and worked for the greater part of his service as Professor of English Literature in the Presidency College. He was well known as one of the best professors of English in Bengal. I have heard many of his students say that their appreciation of English poetry dated from the time they began to attend my father's classes.

My father came to this country, like a stranger to his own land. Bengalees, who had not been to England, looked doubtfully at this man, who had only his birth by which he could claim kinship with them. England-returned men looked askance at the man who had lived all his life in England, and yet had acquired none of the airs, tastes, and habits, which they had acquired by a few years' residence in a

foreign land. He had not a single interest in common with them. In this state of affairs he married a Bengali girl who had not even a smattering of English education, but whose frankness, childlike simplicity, and joyousness,—the genuine sun-shine of whose nature, melted the shyness and reserve which was natural to my father. My father loved my mother with a depth and intensity, few could fathom. But a great tragedy always accompanies a great love. So it was in my father's case. After a few years of married life my mother became a chronic invalid, now worse, now better, completely well for only five years. There is a sort of idea generally current that my mother was insane. It was not insanity, but paralysis due to an injuring of the spine resulting from a fall, that was my mother's chief ailment. For some months she lost the power of speech. For years she could not move. Through it all my father nursed her untiringly with a loving care which is seldom seen. At one time she lay almost inanimate, with power neither to speak or move, for three months so that the best doctors in Calcutta gave up all hope, saying that her brain was paralysed. At the time we were little children of four and six years, and there was not a friend to whisper a word of comfort. Yet my father never lost heart, but went on trying, till providence seemed to reward his patience and courage by sending to his aid Kaviraja Bejoy Ratna Sen, not only a great physician but one of the kindest and most beautiful souls living, who cured my mother completely. When the same illness returned after an interval of five years, Kaviraj Bejoy Ratna was dead but his son treated my mother till she was almost cured. At this time the Influenza epidemic came and carried her away beyond reach of those loving arms which had sheltered her so long from the storms which beset her life. Here is a poem written immediately after my mother's death, which seems to me to be very expressive, not only of my father's great sorrow, but of their whole married history. It is entitled the Rider on the White Horse and appeared in the Calcutta Review some time back,

I

How did I lose you sweet,
 I hardly know,
 Roughly the storm did beat,
 Wild winds did blow.
 I with my loving arm
 Folded you safe from harm
 Cloaked from the weather.
 How could your dear feet drag ?
 Or did my courage sag ?
 Heavy our way did lag
 Pacing together.

II

I looked in your eyes afraid
 Pale, pale my dear !
 The stone hurt you ! I said
 To hide my fear
 You smiled at my face,
 You smothered every trace,
 Of pain and langour.
 Fondly my hand you took,
 But all your frail form shook,
 And the wild storm it struck
 At us in anger.

III

The wild beast woke anew,
 Closely you clung to me,
 Whiter and whiter grew
 Your check, and hung to me.
 Drooping and faint you laid,
 Upon my breast your head,
 Footsore and laggard,

"Look up dear love" I cried
But my heart almost died,
As you looked up and sighed
Dead weary staggard.

IV

There came a rider by,
Gentle his look,
I shuddered for his eye
I could not brook.
Muffled and cloaked he rode
And a white horse bestrode
With noiseless gallop.
His hat was mystery
His cloak was history
Pluto's consistory
Or Charon's shallop.

V

Could not the dusky hue
Of his robe match
His face was hard to view
His tone to catch.
She is sick, tired. "Your load
A few miles of the road
Give me to weather"
He took as 'twere a corse
Her fainting form perforce,
In the rain rider, horse
Vanished together.

VI

"Come back dear love, come back"
Hoarsely I cried.

After that rider black
I peered and sighed.
After that phantom steed
I strain with anxious heed
Heartsick and lonely
Into the storm I peer
Through wet woods moaning drear
Only the wind I hear
The rain see only.

The shock of my mother's death completely broke down his health. Illness after illness came, blindness attacked him, but the burst of inspiration which followed my mother's death continued till the last illness laid him low.

Before ending I would like to say something about my father as a man. Very few people knew my father as he really was. His students admired and respected him, but dared not break the barrier of reserve with which he surrounded himself. His colleagues were struck by the depth of his scholarship. His acquaintances saw in him a man of exquisite courtesy and refinement, and felt the charm of his conversation so full of varied interest. But few could guess at the great soul within, the courage, nobility and strength which up-held that delicate form. In latter days when people saw my father's figure bent and his steps unsure owing to failing eyesight, they pitied him. Had they known what cares and calamities had bent those noble shoulders and lined that handsome face, attachment to what great cause had dimmed those lustrous eyes, they would have stood respectfully by when he passed.

I have already shown with what Superhuman courage, patience and loving care he nursed my mother. But even when the task was not congenial to him—nay when it hampered him in the joy of creation he never flinched. With an honesty and tenacity of purpose he cheerfully per-

formed whatever duty fell to his lot. Ill or well, every evening he sat down to prepare notes for the next day's lecture, and it was not till that was finished that he sat down to compose. His care and consideration for his students was extreme, though he never encouraged personal intimacies. Just before he went on furlough, during the summer vacation, although he was so ill and his eyesight so rapidly failing, that he could not join the next session. Be carefully wrote out all the notes on Dante's *Vita Nuova*. If we remonstrated, he explained that as it was a translation, and there were no annotated editions, his students would be in great difficulty. At the time his sight was so bad, that he could not even read. So he made us read the passages aloud to him once, after which he annotated it from memory.

The Calcutta Review remarks that my father was often misjudged for his cold, austere, and reserved exterior. How false this outward appearance was, only those who knew my father at closer quarters can say. He was really extremely sociable. There were days and days, when we spent hours in talking and laughing, and I am sure those who had an opportunity of coming in more intimate contact with him will bear me out in this. Specially young people will remember with gratitude one of my father's most charming qualities, that of talking to them, not as one infinitely superior to them, but as their equal. Besides a more tender and loving heart than my father's could scarcely be imagined. Latterly when he could neither read nor write, although he composed for hours, he never asked us to write as he composed. He would compose and then memorise the whole passage, so that he could dictate it at one stretch. All this in order not to hamper our movements, or give us any trouble on his behalf.

He could not bear to see any one suffer. Even when I had a slight head-ache, he would sit by my side and cheer me up. In latter days, when he could not see he brought

tears to my eyes by saying he wished he could read to me when I was ill. The loss of his eye-sight was such a tremendous loss to him, but I never heard him complain, about it. Once when a friend defrauded him of a fair sum of money, he would not bring a case against him, for fear of bringing disgrace and ruin on his innocent wife and children.

His patience and resignation was marvellous. Although my father's life was tragic in its suffering and in its disappointments, he never lost faith in God or Man. His poetry ever sounds the note of hope and faith unconquerable.

Last but not least was my father's wonderful strength of mind. In 1916 there was an utter break-down in his health. But he did not take a day's leave, till my mother's death in 1918. His health however never improved, but went from bad to worse, muscular and nervous debility supervened, and then blindness came slowly but surely, till in 1921, he was quite incapable of further lecture-work. Yet though illness after illness came, and even the operation of his eye proved unsuccessful, when-ever he was not actually confined to bed, he went on composing. For hours he sat wrapt in thought. Outside the bright sun slowly sank towards the west. The sun set, deepened into darker shades twilight crept on apace, but my father sat still in the darkening room, looking straight before him, sometimes repeating a few lines aloud, unconscious of all that was going on around him. Always there was the same intense look in his eyes and the same radiance lit his face. As I looked, it seemed to me that I was gazing at the face of some ancient yogi on the eve of gaining the fruits of his yoga. And indeed though much of my father's work is incomplete, I think he has gained his yoga for he has shown the power of poesy in strengthening and uplifting humanity and has succeeded in justifying the way of God to men. He has studied the shadows as well as the light of the beautiful

picture of life and yet has been able to sing with confidence.

“Holy, holy, holy,
He is Lord of might
All his acts encroll ye
All he does is Right.”

Prof. M. GHOSE.

(*An impression*).

MR. NIRENDRA NATH RAY, M. A.—(*Ex-Student*).

FOUR hours after midnight. Not the least sound anywhere. On a bed shaded off from the glass of electric lights lay an old blind man, apparently sleeping, only now and then rolling his head from side to side, as one may do in a dream. But, in a corner, a huge oxygen cylinder stood like a grim refutation of the peacefulness of the scene. Its presence cast a sinister shadow on the young faces eagerly watching the least movements of the bed-ridden invalid. He was weak, emaciated, reduced literally to skin and bone condition: his breathing was difficult and irregular: the extremities of his body were getting cold and stiff: and then in a fit of cough, had vomitted blood. Everyone, in that quiet little room, held his breath in anxious suspense, but still hopefully waited for the arrival of the doctor. Two young ladies sat there, immovable as carved marble, insensible to everything else: their whole being was concentrated in their eyes, and their eyes were fixed upon their father. They were not weeping, but a vast ocean of tears could be felt

swelling in them, ready to break all bounds and overflow the world. A young man was feeling the pulse; another was engaged in adjusting the oxygen tube to the different positions of the lead. On the faces of these two friends clouds seemed to have gathered and settled. They felt the end was near. All on a sudden, simultaneously, they raised their heads and looked at each other. They suspected all was over. But unwilling to shock the daughters, they remained as they were, one holding the hand, and the other the tube. Minutes seemed to linger in that room with exasperating persistence—as if old Father Time, tired of his ceaseless race, had dropt down exhausted in the middle of his career. The doctor at last came, only to confirm the terrible truth—M. Ghose, professor and poet, was no more.

Such was the quiet and unobtrusive end of one of the most remarkable but least noticed of the sons of India. When the cultural history of Modern India comes to be written his name will undoubtedly occupy an honoured place in it. He was not a man to start great movements and stamp them with his personality. Engaged though he was throughout his life in the service of education, he did not make great reforms and improvements to be gratefully and lovingly remembered by his countrymen. He had not produced poems which many of his countrymen would be able to understand, appreciate and enjoy. But he set an example of undivided devotion to the Muses which Young India can ill afford to ignore or forget. In that near future when the individual political problem of India will be solved, and she will take upon herself her age-old task of spiritual regeneration of humanity, the holy life of this lonely hermit, hidden in the light of thought, and adoring Beauty with the intensity of a first love and the constancy of a maturer affection, will shine with the glory of the morning sun out of the darkness of night.

There are two ways in which the present discord between the great sections of humanity can be replaced by a harmony.

One way is to open the rich treasure-house of Eastern wisdom before the wondering gaze of the West : this is the mission of Rabindra Nath Tagore. The other is to bring the West to the East,—not the west of economic exploitation and diplomatical dodges with which we are only too familiar—but the true west, represented by Sophocles and Shakespeare, Pheidias and Michael Angelo, Raphael and Velasquez, Beethoven and Mozart. It was in the atmosphere of this Europe that professor Ghose lived, moved and had his being. Wherever he went, he carried the literary life of Oxford along with him. When he came to India, a regular correspondence began between him and his most intimate friend, Lawrence Binyon, the famous poet and art-critic. This correspondence, if ever published, will reveal the interesting fact that to these two friends politics were a thing non-existent. In their letters, they wrote of nothing but new ventures in literature, new experiments in metre and verse, Italian frescos and Chinese landscapes, art-collections and dramatic representations—in short, poetry and painting of different lands and ages.

This vast and varied world of European culture lay spread out before his mental vision, when Professor Ghose discoursed on poetry to his students in Calcutta. That is why they got something in his lectures which was not to be found elsewhere. English poetry he knew, not through the laborious process of memorising annotations. A poet and classical scholar at the same time, he had direct access to the heart of things ; so, in his classes, poetry did not remain a mere academic affair ; it became a living reality. None could recite more beautifully than he, and he revealed to his students the music of the English tongue. Even ordinary words such as *star*, *flower*, *rose* became redolent with association and vibrating with life, in the lingering, almost caressing, way in which he uttered them. He could make a practical demonstration of rich qualities of English language. His extempore dissertations were as enjoyable, from the stand-

point of style, as any page of Walter Pater or Oscar Wilde. But his eyes, even more than his voice, impressed his students—those dark intricate eyes, orb within orb, which were the external symbols of the depth of his soul. When in course of chiselling and refining his phrases he halted in his speech, his students did not feel it, for his eyes

filled with light
the interval of sound

and held them bound by a charm as it were.

That matchless voice will sound no more. Those wonderful eyes are shut for ever. The chance of artistic Europe ever coming so near India recedes into dim distance. For is it not almost an impossibility to hope that an Indian boy of the mental calibre of Professor Ghose will have the best of European culture, and coming back will devote his life to the cause of education in India and thus transplant the culture of Europe to the heart of India?

In another sphere of activity, the life-long labour of Prof. Ghose has resulted in a unique service to his motherland. An Indian, he has written, in English, lyrical poems and Epic and dramatic fragments. It is an irreparable loss to England as well as to India, that he did not live to complete his works. However, what he has left behind is enough to secure for him a place among the immortals of English verses. His writings, it can be confidently prophesied, will not be received in England as a sort of curio. Any English poet might have felt proud to have been the author of poems like his. Of course, he will never become a popular poet. His muse was much too aristocratic for that. Like Spenser he will ever remain a "poet's poet". Mark Patteson's remark on Milton's poetry can well be applied to his—appreciation of his poetry is the last result of consummate scholarship. His lyrical pieces will surely gain their way into the world, but adequate recognition can never be won

by his more ambitious attempts, because of their fragmentary character. Indians will specially lament the incompleteness of his drama, *Nala and Damayan'i*, — probably his only work on an Indian theme—in which there are some scenes written in blank verse of admirable grace and ease of movement. If it were completed, this book might have been, like *Gitanjali* and *Cygne* (French translation of Rabindranath's *Balaka*) another golden arch bridging the intellectual gulf between the East and the West.

His life was like what he loved most, a Greek tragedy,—this is the impression left upon one who knew him. He had to suffer strange anomalies in life, for what Destiny gave him with one hand, she took away with the other. Born in Bengal, he was separated from his parents and brought up from his boyhood in an English family. Educated in London and Oxford, he had to leave England for good when he was only twenty-six, and thereafter lived an almost isolated life in India. He married a lady of singular beauty and largeness of heart. But ere long she became a confirmed invalid, and the young poet had to throw down his pen to nurse his wife with womanly care. When she left him behind and passed away, he himself became an invalid with only two daughters of tender age to look after him. He had an extremely sensitive constitution, but it had to undergo the bitterest sufferings that an ailing physique could inflict. The supreme delight of his life was to read, to compose, to enjoy the master pieces of art and the beauties of Nature—and his eye-sight left him. He began works he could not finish, he conceived subjects he failed to fashion. When at last he made all necessary arrangements to settle in England once more and pursue his literary activities in the familiar surroundings of his youth, death intervened.

Can anything be more tragic? Was there ever fate more arbitrary and whimsical? Yet his poems are a continuous

paen of praise to the glory of the Lord. And this faith it was, that haloed his face with such an angelic light even when the spark of life had fled and the lifeless body was waiting to return once more to the elements from which it came.

MONMOHAN GHOSE.

(Impressions gathered during a year's acquaintance)

MR. JITENDRANATH CHAKERVERTY, M.A.—(Ex-Student)

THE object of this article is neither to dwell on the excellences of the late Monmohan Ghose as a poet nor to bring into prominence all the qualities he possessed as a teacher, but mainly to lay bare before the readers some traits of his character revealed only to those who had the singular good fortune of coming in intimate touch with him. Poetic excellence or academic qualifications he had in abundance; the charms he exercised over his pupils are also too well known. But the inner man was revealed to a few only.

I remember the day when I first met Prof. Ghose in the class-room of the Presidency College. He was lecturing on Shelley's *Adonais*. I remember the thrill that passed through my frame as I listened to his musical voice scattering sweetness all around. I think the causes of his attraction were mainly two:—his wonderful culture, and his genuine appreciation of poetry. Himself a poet of a very high order, his discourses on poetry were never lifeless. He had the rare power of making poetry alive. It was a poet's appreciation of poetry,—free from that second-hand, half-intelligible criticism which crushes the soul of poetry or rudely dissects

it only to leave a dead foul mass to be dreaded and loathed rather than admired. His lectures were never monotonous ; but in his hands the Muse revealed everyday her protean charm as spontaneously as Nature herself reveal her infinite variety at different parts of the day.

We had heard also of his lofty detachment, his poetic temperament, his strong idealism, and the infinite sorrows of his life. That he was the brother of the great Aurobindo was itself an additional charm. All these drew us irresistibly towards him ; to be in intimate touch with this man was the dream of many, but we knew such a dream was not to be realised. It was like the desire of the moth for the star.

Yet the strangest things often happen in actual life ; and the dream of being in intimate touch with my dear Professor was realised in my case in the strangest way. It was only in February, 1923,—seven years after I had left the Presidency College—that I happened to render an insignificant service to him. His younger daughter was going up for the Honours Examination in English and I was asked by a friend to help her in Philology. This I did with pleasure ; yet small as this service was it was never forgotten by my professor. He began to love me with a fatherly love, and coming to know accidentally one day of my love of poetry, invited me to go to his house on Sundays to read some poems to him. I went as early as I could, and I shall never forget the hours I spent with him—those most precious hours of my life. Time flew—we know not how. Sometimes I read the verses to him, but more often he recited his poems in his clear, resonant voice—that familiar old musical voice that had held us spell-bound in our student days. Before this, I had read some of his poems published in the *Presidency College Magazine* and in the *Calcutta Review*. But it was only now that I had a glimpse of a vast world of inimitable poetry, undreamt

of before, a noble galaxy of star-like gems with a music sweet and elevating as the Music of the Spheres. A whole museum of ennobling ideas bursting with beauty and richness, were lying concealed in the manuscripts,—perhaps never to be given out to the world, because they were too dear to the artist himself, written, as they were, with his precious life-blood. Like a fond mother pressing her children closer to the heart in moments of sorrow, Monimohon Ghose caressed his poems, and hugged them closer and closer quite loath to part with them. To him the true artist the mere joy of creation was enough—the creation of beauty, of excellence and richness, moving with grace and harmony. The world's applause he heeded not; and it was only with great difficulty, that he could be persuaded to give out to the world this rich store of artistic excellence. It was decided that he should go to England to publish the fruits of his life's labour.

Yet this was by no means an easy task. The manuscripts themselves were in a state of wild chaos. Only the poet could create some order out of this. But unfortunately Prof. Ghose was almost blind at this time. One of his eyes had been operated on a few months ago, but in vain; with the other he could see but dimly, and then there was the fear of his losing this as well, if he strained his sight too much. The restoration of order to this vast bulk of poetry could, in the circumstances, be accomplished only if somebody read the verses to Prof. Ghose and took down notes as to the correct readings, or arrangements of the stanzas. The two daughters of Mr. Ghose were in fact his two eyes. They it was, who were reading the poems and restoring order to them. But the younger was now too busy with her varsity examination, and the task of deciphering the verses had fallen upon the elder in addition to the domestic duties she had to perform. I resolved to render any help I could, and began to copy some poems

in a fair book, My pupil joined us as soon as her examination was over, and the work began to progress well.

But now, came the news of the failure of the Alliance Bank of Simla, which rudely shattered the hopes of my professor. In the Bank were his life's savings. Its failure was a severe blow to him. Starvation stared him in the face now ; and yet he bore all this with heroic courage. His faith in the goodness of Providence was not a whit shaken by this shock. He bore his loss in a spirit of wonderful resignation. "Shall we receive Good at the hand of God and Evil not receive ?"

I shall never forget the day when I went to see my Professor after the Alliance Bank crash. He looked the picture of patience and a wonderful mystic light was playing on his face and forehead—the very light which we saw on his forehead during the period of his last illness, and which lingered there till his lifeless body became a heap of ashes in the burning ghat of Keora-tala.

One incident of this day though trifling in itself, is worth recording here. As we were talking of the Bank affairs a beautiful butterfly suddenly entered the room and rested on the shoulders of Prof. Ghose. This was pointed out to him and at once his face glowed. Then he told us he had that very day received a Spiritual communication from his wife. She had come and asked him to cheer up. He took the butterfly as the symbol of a message of hope sent by his wife to buoy him up in this severe calamity, and he told me how when he lost his wife five years ago a whole host of butterflies came into his room.

It is necessary to state here that the late Prof. Ghose had an unshaken faith in the immortality of the human soul, and in the life everlasting. This was confirmed by the occasional messages he received from his dead wife in moments of need. I remember one night he was relating to me startling stories about this spirit-communication how

his wife often came to him from the World of Light to deliver messages he required. These messages written in characters of light were held before his eyes, and he could read them distinctly. After he had mentioned some other details I was suddenly startled when he asked me to give my opinion of it. Of course I had not formed any opinion ; I was neither a believer nor a disbeliever, and the words of Hamlet began to ring in my ears—"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your Philosophy." But even if I were a disbeliever, I doubt if I could tell as much openly to a man who had nursed his dear invalid wife for more than fifteen years, nursed her with motherly care and tenderness, with a devotion which affords no parallel in history. Interpret the story as you will, the fact remains that Prof. Ghose dearly loved his wife and passionately longed to be by her side. Another striking fact is that lyric inspiration came to him more overwhelmingly than ever after the death of his wife as is revealed in poems like the *Star-Angel*,—all dealing with his lost treasure but all ending with a message of hope, the hope of re-union and a better life after death.

Soon after the Bank failure Prof. Ghose went to Darjeeling to recoup his health that was failing. Once at Darjeeling he took to composing. The promise of a 50% return of the deposit money by the Imperial Bank took away the last cloud of despair from his mind and he became as cheerful as ever. His daughters began to devote all their time to the task of deciphering and copying out his poems. All was well again and once more he made up his mind to settle in England and publish his poems there.

With this end in view he returned to Calcutta on the 30th. of October last. The passport was secured, the passage booked ; it was decided that he should leave India with his daughters early in March, spend a month or two in Italy, and then settle in London. But hopes in his case

were not to be fulfilled. He fell ill soon after his return to Calcutta and never recovered. When I went to see him after the last Puja vacation, I found him laid up with high fever. A week after, his illness was pronounced to be serious, when one evening as he coughed a clot of blood came out.

From that night till his death on the 5th. January last I never left his bed side at night. So did a friend of mine ; So did also a relative of Prof. Ghose, not to speak of the two daughters who were always near him. But inspite of our nursing, inspite of the best medical attendance available in Calcutta, inspite of the fond devotion of his daughters which surpasses the historic devotion of any daughter, his life could not be saved. The cruel hand of death was upon him, and Monmohan Ghose passed away calmly and quietly on the morning of 5th January, 1924.

Prof. Ghose's scholarship was proverbial. He was well versed in the Classics and several modern languages Among others, Shakespeare, Scott and Cervantes seemed to be his favourite authors. Even in his death bed he did not forget them. The whole of Shakespeare he could almost quote from memory, and the novels of Scott gave him special delight. From morning till midnight, from sunrise till he fell asleep, these books were read out to him by turns without any break. Almost all the dramas of Shakespeare and novels of Scott, and *Don Quixote* of Cervantes were finished within a month or so. Even on the day of his passing away, even when his life was being kept up by the inhalation of Oxygen gas, he wanted us to continue reading as usual. On that day his daughters read to him *Lear* and *Macbeth*. But that was not enough for him. He asked me to begin Scott's *Quentin Durward*. When some thirty pages were done, I handed over the book to the daughters, and went to take a little rest. When I came again to his bed-side at 3 A. M. in the morning I found his elder daughter still reading to him. Soon after

Prof. Ghose asked us to stop. The end was near, but we did not know it, yet it was clear that he wanted rest. He wanted to drink some water which was given, still he felt a bit uncomfortable and breathed heavily. His daughter asked him how he was feeling. "Do not disturb me, my child ; I want to rest in peace. I long for the Beautiful." These were his last words. A little muffled coughing, a clot of blood, rapid sinking of the pulse and all was over. Prof. M. Ghose was resting in everlasting peace for which his spirit yearned:—

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound ;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round."

Thus passed away a great soul ; thus became for ever silent that musical voice which thrilled the hearts of young learners in the class room of Presidency College. Thus was enacted the tragedy of a genius, of one who has gone to fill in the ranks of the inheritors of unfulfilled renown. Yet he never breathed a murmur or complaint against the good order of the universe. He knew before hand that the end was coming and he seemed to be prepared for it. A spirit of resignation sat upon him during the last week of his illness when we were hoping against hope. With a sweet smile did he leap into the unknown, strengthened, perhaps by the hope of being united with his beloved wife. The long period of suffering, of hope and disappointment, was now over, and all was peace within.

* * *

Prof. M. Ghose was a man of wonderful culture. There was very seldom a subject in which he did not take an interest. His discourses on art were highly instructive, and did great credit to his scholarship. Sober in his views on politics he never shrank from a free discussion of the subject with young minds who might hold extreme views.

He never hurt the feelings of others. I remember how in course of the discussion of current topics we used to get heated and often expressed ourselves passionately ; but he never felt bored, listened to us patiently, and sometimes threw humorous remarks at us which made us all burst into roaring fits of laughter !

Thoroughly idealistic in temperament he dreaded the growth of machine power, and liked the development of cottage industries. Though nursing up lofty ideals he never neglected the ordinary duties of life. The profusions of kindness that his friends received from him were simply overwhelming. He never spoke an unkind word to anybody.

That he was a loving husband is proved by the more than motherly care with which he nursed his wife, an invalid in the prime of her life. What a great sacrifice he had to make for her sake ! He gave up writing poetry, gave up all social intercourse and never moved from her side. In addition to this he had to look after his two daughters who were yet unable to take care of themselves ; after his wife's death he became an affectionate mother to them. Besides, he was their friend, philosopher and guide. His death has created a void in their hearts never to be filled up.

Though a man of means he was never known to live in luxury. To the last moment he believed renunciation to be the best thing in the world. Though artistic in temperament he was never particular about his dress ; but he never condemned the tasteful decoration of the human body.

A loving soul, a man of frank open manners of lofty idealism, of plain living and high thinking, of high culture and erudite scholarship, of staunch uprightness and integrity of character,—this was Prof. M. Ghose. He believed in the inherent goodness of mankind. "Man is a fallen God remembering the skies," said he to me one day. Is not his own life the best illustration of this truth ?

Monmohon Ghose passed away leaving behind him a vast collection of poems which reveal how versatile his poetic genius was. He has left behind him not only lyrics of pure, unrivalled excellence, but an epic of superhuman grandeur which is worthy to be placed by the side of a *Paradise Lost* or a *Divine Comedy*. There is again an unfinished drama of which the theme is Indian—the romantic story of Nala and Damayanti, full of tender pathos and written in inimitable blank verse. To give these poems a definite shape by deciphering and re-arranging is a task that has fallen on his daughters and friends like Lawrence Binyon, poet and art-critic. May they fulfil this task and give out to the world these poems of beauty, hope and comfort which the modern world needs so much. When they are published, let the world judge : till then—Monmohon Ghose's place in poetry is among the inheritors of unfulfilled renown.

MONMOHON GHOSE.

An appreciation.

BY MR B. B. RAY, M. A.

I

THE present issue of the magazine has been thoughtfully designed to be something like an M. Ghose memorial number ; and even a hurried and crudely worded tribute has its rightful place beside those more happily phrased. Praise becomes richer and more lasting in the repetitions, just as blame loses its edge and makes for truer appreciation ; and nothing could be more fitting than the spontaneous unanimity of regret at the passing away of a great scholar, critic, poet and creative

teacher in the premature and tragic death of Monmohon Ghosh. Such a man comes once in a century, lives in the uncomplaining obscurity of the truly great, with perhaps a half-cynical expectation of posthumous recognition, and passes away just when he is about to come into his own. Of tangible contribution, made so much of in recent times, he makes little or none,—a poem, an essay or perhaps the fragment of a vast idea ; but he leaves behind him human results of no mean value, in fashioning many an adolescent mind and imparting intellectual resiliency to many a sluggish, youthful learner.

The tragedy of the teacher is that he deals in such evanescent things as spoken words ; and the best of those that M. Ghosh spoke have perished already, except for a phrase here and an exclamation there, and even these have no more or no less vitality than as mere memories. The words of one so fortunate as Lafcadio Hearn have been disinterred from scrap-books ; but the life has passed out of them, in this extreme act of hero-worship at once sacred and profane. Not much of M. Ghosh has been recaptured and one might perhaps be pardoned for thinking that they should not be dragged out of a setting that has vanished beyond recall. He lives better in the aspiring lives of those for whom he worked ; and would not benefit by any attempt at conferring a doubtful immortality upon things meant for no longer and no more varied a world than the class-room.

II

Of his life, literary aspirations, and actual achievement in poetry right words have been said by right men which cannot be bettered and are best taken together to make a picture. He certainly was not a phenomenon such as Toru Dutt was ; but he had in him something very much akin to genius which showed itself even more in the largeness and brilliancy of his intellect than in the remarkable mastery of a foreign language and prosody. He was not troubled with that feverish versatility which is the trait, more often harmful in its results than not, of many a great

Bengalee ; but he seemed best to work within limits. He had like most men of genius strong likes and dislikes, with, never-the less, an unfailing attempt at geniality and concession and a disposition more to listen than to talk. He did not seem constantly to revise and reshuffle his ideas as so many men of genius do ; but he had them at his control and impressed upon them a finality and even an immobility with a grace all his own. His studies also ran, apparently, along well-marked grooves, the poetry of Greece and Rome, of Renascence Italy and Elizabethan England, and particularly 19th. century prose and verse, which he knew well, with the thoroughness, the independence and the brilliant dogmatism of a master. He took an interest deep but discriminating, in the work of his contemporaries and spoke, over and over again, in praise of Lawrence Binyon and Stephen Phillips and even of a philosopher who has subtly theorised about poetry, the Italian Croce ; but he consigned not a few present-day productions, more in resignation than in anger, to the final and piquant verdict of posterity. All this must be borne in mind if we are to picture him as he was, a great mind working within limits imposed upon itself by education and the circumstances of life but more by its native tendency to intellectual discipline and restraint, rather than a truant genius striking into difficult and barren paths and lamenting the apathy of a misguided public.

Nor must we forget that having been what he was, Monmohan Ghosh couldn't help being a lyric poet, seeking a finished and final form for fugitive ideas of love and death and avoiding action in life and art. He remained necessarily much of an alien in his own native land, looking down, questioningly and helplessly, upon the beating waves of national consciousness : yet he did try to enter into the soul of India along the stream of Tagorean and old Bengali poetry and Buddhistic mysticism. He felt keenly undoubtedly, sensitive soul that he was, that strangeness of environment which could not by any means be coaxed into even a passable degree of intimacy ; but in the quietness and

depth of his heart as well as in the caressing simplicity of his life he remained an Indian all through the quarter of a century of his career in Bengal, so full of tragedy and achievement.

The writer of these lines would much rather cherish the late Mr. M. Ghosh as a creative teacher than even as a poet or scholar. In the days not so very long ago that he remembers in varying degrees of vividness Mr. Ghosh had withdrawn more and more into a solitary and self absorbed life. One felt it in the tones of his voice, musical and tremulous but with a strange aloofness in them, in his quick nervous movements, even in the apparently business-like fashion in which he proceeded to lecture after a steady and uncompromising roll-call. The class remained an abstraction to him, a gallery of faces, which he hardly ever looked at; he seemed while teaching to address an ideal spectator, never coming down to a level of undue intimacy nor seeking by barren or coarse loquacity an empty and superficial popularity. At first the lecture seemed, its music notwithstanding, too mellow and monotonous to capture youthful hearts accustomed to liveliness and wit but anon there broke forth through this repulsive austerity, words rich with soul, passionately and vibrantly intoned, that created a hush of admiration and awe in a commonplace-class-room which by its nearness to the public thoroughfare, was more disturbed by noise than any other in the whole college. From day to day the impression deepened till all the members of the class were found vying with one another to capture in stenographic English as much of his lecture as could be retained from a delivery that was slow but animated, falling into regular cadences, while his diction assumed a final and felicitous form in phrases of intense beauty and delicacy never descending into mere conventional verbiage nor a picturesque but infertile colloquialism.

His teaching was an act of re-creation; hundreds of his students have felt it to have been such, though some stressed

his grasp of an author as a whole, mind and art taken together and others took delight in his lucid exposition of a single work of art—a poem, a song or a dialogue. He seemed to go, through effortless intuition, behind the mind of Shakespeare and Keats, shunning a display of mere booklore. In teaching Shakespeare he followed the middle course between the merely pedantic citation of different readings, parallel passages and critical dicta innumerable and the other extreme of the colourless explanation of archaic words and phrases ; he went along the line of interpretation without any attempt at theory, although in matters concerning the fundamental principles, he had courage enough to try an occasional fall with no less a critic than the late Professor Raleigh. The nearest approach he ever made towards a theory was when he formulated the elements of universal appeal, even in poems with a strong local or racial flavour. He taught Landor and everyone felt the supreme propriety of his valuating a mind which in its isolation of culture was very much like his own. He taught Swinburne and grappled most successfully with obscurities of language and thought, never airily dismissing them as such, arriving independently at interpretations, particularly of passages in *Atalanta* which one is delighted to find confirmed in later books of specialised criticism, fruits of minute and laborious study. Obscurity, whether in Shelley or Browning or Swinburne was to him merely the result of a necessarily imperfect expression of valuable ideas and he believed in the discipline of a mind constantly at grips with them ; but he did not seem to appreciate the more modern and the more mechanical attempts at explaining difficulties in an author by a hypothetical philosophy rashly deduced by means of a mere chronological study. Even in a philosophic poet like Browning he denied any consistent philosophy, emphasising with unwearying iteration, the divine volatility of the poet's mind. He had often to give the correct if cut-and-dried distinctions between poet and poet beloved of textbook writers but he enriched them with the

freshness of discovery ; while his superb reading, correct and clear and passionate, made the professional work of paraphrase and explanation un-necessary.

One felt at the end of a session that the man was greater than his work, free from aggressiveness and vanity and even from that that minimum of pluck which makes life enjoyable for so many men. At first sight, he, with his handsome, delicate but sombre face, seemed even to lack personality, through the unvarying sweetness of his manners and the systematic suppression of the signs of his struggles. The manner, the posture, the elocution remained the same from month to month and year to year ; but everytime they thrilled you with the charm of some old, familiar tune heard at dead of night or of the face of a dear one that familiarity rather enriches than stales. And to those who had eyes to see and ears to hear, there was behind every lecture, the background of strenuous life, with its pathos and longings, of hopes dashed to the ground and vision that looked through sorrow a life from which friendlessness and poverty and bereavement had taken all the sap away but which they never could altogether crush.

SAM, SMIGGIN AND THE SHE-MAN.

I

“**T**HAT Mithith Thmiggin?” timidly lisped the younger of the two men, jerking the thumb of his unencumbered hand towards the solitary picture on the wall.

Joseph Smiggin was engaged in meditatively sipping his beer. “Wot’s that yer said, laddie”, he absent-mindedly inquired

and looked mechanically in the direction of his companion's thumb.

"Er—yus, yo've 'it, it Nutter boy", he continued almost immediately, apparently grasping the situation; "Yus that's 'er. . But fancy yer poppin' it so polite like?"

He sighed and gazed intently at the almost handsome youthfull face that looked down upon his wistfull upturned eyes.

"Pretty ain't she?", he asked facing his companion once more. "Dora I used to call 'er, tho' 'er was baptised Mary."

A second sigh escaped him at this reflection, but he continued to confide in the young man across the table.

"Al'ays wanted to tell 'er, 'er was made to do 'onour to a dook, 'er with 'er dark roun' eyes and black 'air an' things, instead of 'angin roun' my likes and workin' 'erself to a shadder."

Joseph Smiggin stopped abruptly and visibly drew himself in. He took up his half emptied glass from the table to which he had relegated it momentarily and begin to drain it more meditatively than ever. There was a painful far-away look in his deep blue eyes as he stared between sips at and beyond the cheap bed-stead that occupied a tidy bit of his poky little room. A rising glow had perceptibly crept in upon his normally pallid features and succeeded in mellowing the harsh contrast between the habitual sobriety of his thin, clean-shaven pale face and the crimson jubilance of his head with its stock of devastating red hair.

Sam Nutter was decidedly at a loss. He did not know what to make of it all—those sighs, that empty gaze, that deepening colour of his host. Also, Smiggin's communicativeness on this occasion was extraordinary—simply marvellous. He had expected a frigid reception and he might well have deserved it. What right had he to break in upon a strangerlike Joseph Smiggin who appeared deliberately to shun the society of his mates? Was it not because of his unsociableness and

want of comaraderie that "Ginger Juggins", as they had facetiously christened the new mate at Dallas and Turner's, was so unpopular among his fellows? Yes, he had been afraid Smiggin would prove icily cold as a host. But he had been mistaken. Joe Smiggin was not a bad egg, though he rather liked to keep himself to himself. He had not shown himself hostile to the uncalled for, but nevertheless charitable, move on his, Sam Nutter's, part in looking in this evening upon the new mate. Sam had heard it rumoured that "Old Juggins was as lone as a rat" and "a single 'un and no wonder" and many other things to that effect, and he had determined, in the goodness of his heart, to break the loneliness of at least one Sunday evening in the stranger's life,—if he would allow it. And old Smiggin—he was not really but only comparatively old—had allowed it, was actually pleasant and warm towards him and liberal with his beer and hospitality. After a couple of glasses, Sam had ventured to peep inquisitively round the smug little room in which he found himself and inwardly commented that it was tolerably good. Timid as he was, he had even ventured to question his host directly about the picture on the wall. He couldn't understand what had made him do it. It had just sort of slipped off his tongue and no sooner had it escaped his lips then he knew that he ought to have known better then to do it. What put it into his head that it was Mrs. Smiggin or that there ever was a Mrs. Smiggin at all? He was simply surprised at his cheek. But he was still more surprised when Smiggin launched into those details of his domestic life. His first thought on hearing that confidential outburst of his companion was "So 'e's, been spliced all right", and his second, "Maybe its the beer wot makes 'im gush."

Still the melancholy and moodiness that seemed to have settled suddenly upon Smiggin continued to puzzle Sam. Back of it there must be something more than beer. He knew it, but he could not say what, however much he fumbled about

with his glass. Well, at any rate he would say something really comforting to the poor devil who must surely be expecting something from him in return for all that gush.

"O well, her lookth would take thome wearin', Mithter Thmiggin"—he always believed in "Misters" for newly-made acquaintances—"Yuth, fine woman. If you'll ekthcuthe my thayin' it, mindth me of young Ned Jethon, 'im with the big black eyeth and thoppy lookth." He turned to the picture as if to make sure of the likeness and concluded approvingly. "You mutht be proud o' 'avin' 'er about jer 'ome."

It was a husky voice that answered.

"I ain't—er—proud o' 'er no longer, if that's wot yer mean. Maybe," Smiggin continued after a slight pause, "it's some'un else now as can call her 'is own, if you understand."

Sam Nutter did not understand, but he shook his head as if he did and appeared sympathetic. The speaker without noticing him, went on.

"Per'aps I ain't no company for young uns, you see, laddie. I looks crool and 'ard but I a'n't, I tell yer I a'n't, a bad sort, tho' folks thinks I be."

Sam shifted uneasily in his seat. The other continued.

"An'—an' she left me sudd'nly—bunked orf. It was crool—dooced crool—an' Gawd knows, I meant to be kind."

Sam swallowed something in his throat before he put in: "I'm awfully thorry, Mithter Thmiggin, I really am."

The whole thing was becoming too thick for Sam. He fidgetted with his beer, looked round him aimlessly and was altogether at a loss as to how to turn the conversation into less melodramatic channels.

"Yuth Mithter Thmiggin—er—I mean—er—"

"Won't you have some more," interrupted the other as he helped himself to the beer. His voice had become normal, the crimson in his cheeks had paled down, and he appeared the hospitable, old host of the earlier part of the evening. Joseph

Smiggin had evidently been drilled by the stern sergeant life to carry his pack without murmur or complaint.

It was a thumping nice evening they had from that moment onwards. Never once did the talk hang after Sam had availed himself for a third time of Smiggin's open hospitality. All barriers between them seemed to have vanished before the magic of confidence and the cup of good-fellowship. They discussed their mates, their foremen, their heads, and Smiggin recounted some zippy anecdotes about life down Battersea way where he was last employed, from which it was blown in upon Sam that however reserved Joseph Smiggin was in his new surroundings he was not incapable of appreciating or enjoying "good" company. And accordingly before he left, Sam asked his companion to accompany him some evening to the little pub in Bethnal Green where the choicest of their common mates were wont to foregather and satisfactorily spend their leisures and their cash.

"Right-o then," he exclaimed when the other nodded assent to the proposal, "one o' thethe dayth. But I mutht be leggin' it now. Mithith N. ith the rompin' prickly thort." And he glanced at the small clock that stood on the mantelpiece, bade his host a hearty good-bye and vanished into the night.

II

As Sam Nutter, on the Tuesday after his charitable call on the unpopular Smiggin, entered the dingy, ill-lit backroom of "The Bung and Bumper", to which he had been summoned for a special palaver this evening, he was assailed with an unmusical chorus of gruff voices :

"Late, mate".

"Wotcher mean keepen' us on the 'ang like that?"

"The ole gal been grippin' on, 'as she?"

These and other less polite greetings proceeded from the few select spirits who, seated round the large, much-littered table, had been engaged in regaling themselves with what beer

or gin the place could offer them and what wit and wisdom they could muster from within themselves.

"Thorry, mateth", bleated out Sam, "but my clok'th with ole Nobby Laine, 'im wot tickleth 'em pietheth right. And" he added hazarding a placating facetiousness, "my ole gal'th that riled 'cos 'er can't no longer know if I trotth 'ome late".

"Chuck it, baby. 'Anged if we cares wot Nobby an' jer gal's up to; we got no call to interfere like, but if you come this blinkin' snail-stunt of yers o'er us again, we'll send yer 'oppin' orf".

Having thus delivered himself, the speaker with the air of an acknowledged leader returned his clay pipe to his lips and looked a proud note of interrogation at the rest of the company.

"'Ere, 'ere" heartily ratified the mates.

Bill Hartley adjusted his clay and after a couple of pulls at it resumed.

"Now, mates, we're all 'ere 'ceptin' Adams wot's not comin', and I arsk yer 'ow 'bout ole Juggins? . Wot yer think o' 'im? Will 'e do? . The cove ain't matey, leastways 'e don't seem so".

"'E's as glum as a bear", put in Ned Jepson, the leader's right-hand man.

"An' 'e sulks like a saint", added Alf Staines from his end of the room.

"An', mates", continued the chief, "if Sim Adams were 'ere, which 'e ain't 'cos his youngest kid's badly took with the pox, 'e'd jolly-sight plump out wot 'e thinks o' this 'ere Ginger, an' somethink rare peppery 't would be too. 'Cos, you see, 'im and Ginger had a little breeze this mornin' in the injine room".

"Wot 'bout?", inquired Charlie Buckle emerging from his tankard.

"Well, you see", continued Hartley, who was very much in love with his own voice, "Wot with the pox at 'ome and the other things wots al'ays troublin' 'im, as you know,

ole Adams was sort o' moonin' o'er 'is job, when up comes the foreman and asks him to look slippy and rubs him up for a decorated dud— an' mates, ain't old Nick fearful nippy wiv 'em nasty things? Well, arter Nick's done wiv 'im, Adams ups and calls Ole Juggins, wot's in 'is gang, all the ugly things 'e could name for splittin' 'bout 'im to the foreman, and 'course Juggins swears 'e didn't, See? Now, mates, I don't sez as Sim Adams wasn't jumpy o'er the 'ot stuff he'd 'eard, and I don't sez neither as Ginger Juggins played the dirty wiv a mate. Wot I sez is that 'e—ole Ginger—is a ratty ole cove wot thinks 'e's a strike 'bove the rest of 'is mates. 'E 'olds 'is 'ead as 'igh as 'igh an' 'e needs to be took down, See?"

"Right-o!" responded Ned Jepson banging the table with his fist.

"We'll dress 'im down, the cove", added Bob Carton, tankard in hand.

"Or send 'im toddlin' orf, the bloomin' nob", chirped in Harry Daw, with ill-disguised contempt.

"'E gets my goat 'e do, the 'oly ole granny", forcibly, commented the mate next Daw, speaking for the first time.

Sam Nutter, though a timid young fellow in many ways did not believe in the cult of the jumping cat. In fact, he had come to the Bethnal Green bar this evening knowing full well what he was up against and determined to give battle; and if he had listened unprotestingly all this time, it was only because it takes time for a poor devil to regain his nerve after being shaken, as Sam was shaken, by a soul-stirring spate of eloquence following on the heels of a right thumping welcome. Having unwittingly fallen under a cloud from the very begining, it took Sam time to screw himself up for the great encounter, but screw himself up he did and issued forth into the lists.

"But, mateth", he began, leaning forward and instantly becoming the cynosure of seven severe pairs of eyes, "You thee—er—I—I'm thort o' 'cquainted wi' Joe Thmiggin an' 'e don't give me the pip, anyway."

"Don't 'e ?" sniggered Buckle who sat opposite him.

"No 'e don't," emphasised Sam, hotting up. "An' 'e ain't a blackleg neither; that'th clear ath mud it ith. Only 'e ain't thook down to thith 'ere job an'yer didn't ought to 'ave a down on 'im jethet yet."

"Ring orf, ye stutterin' namby-pamby" growled Bob Carton, in whom the beer was rapidly taking effect.

"No, spit it out, wot yer got to say", barked the chief.

"Well", proceeded Sam "wot I sez is Ole Thmiggin ain't thuch a thnipe ath ye make 'in out to be. I looked in friendly like on him latht Thunday an' I foun' out all 'bout' 'im."

"Did ye ? Pooh !" was Carton's half audible sneer.

"A reg'lar down an' outer, that'th old Thmiggin", went on the undismayed Sam, "ye thee, I thees a picture on' is wall that 'mindth me o' Ned Jepthon 'ere—the thame eyeth and all—and I popth it to the ole bird if it wath Mithith Thmiggin."

"Was wot ?" inquired Ned Jepson, naturally very interested.

"Mithith Thmiggin, 'courthe, who elthe ?" beamed Sam. "An' then'e blubbered out 'ow 'im and the mithith couldn't click and 'ow thee nipped orf at latht."

"Serve 'im right", rasped out a surly mate to his left.

"Well, I doubts, 'er woth too young for 'em to 'it orf dethent-like," philosophised Sam. "Anyways, 'im'th got nobody to look arter 'im, and 'im now rather far gone too."

"But 'cos 'is ole gal's shook 'im orf", argued Harry Daw " 'e got no call to seem as 'oly as oil and give 'is mates the go-by. Ain't it mates ?"

"Yon've 'it it on the 'ead, Daw," exclaimed Ned Jepson. "Ere's Jim Stubbs wot's a widder-man this last eight months or there'bouts" added Ned pointing to the mate in question, a robust middle-aged fellow with a perpetual grim about his face. "Look at 'im. 'E's a bloomin' ole croaker, ain't 'e ? And wot makes it rummier for pore Jim is there's four little mouths as is lookin' up to 'im to be fed an' all. Wot yer say to that ? 'As yer ole boy kids like Jim 'as ?"

"No, but—" commenced Sam.

"Drop it, ole son ; yer a reg'lar dab at buts an' ifs an' that sort of watery bilge, but you don't get us on that lay. That's flat." And Ned Jepson looked triumphant.

"That's a wash-out," applauded Carton, articulating with difficulty.

Sam Nutter couldn't stand it any longer. He jumped to his feet. "Well, mateth, if you're tho cock-thure a th ye won't 'ear me, I'd better 'op 'one ; ethpethially" he added as an after thought, "ath Mithith N'th to be counted with." At the door he turned round. "E wath to come 'ere wi' me one evenin' an' you'd—"

"Who the buttercups wants 'im 'ere" came the interruption and Sam flung out of the room.

"Dashed simple bloke, ole Sam,—soppy and gushy but rather roomy in the gorret," summed up Jim Stubbs to his neighbour as Sam made his exit.

"An' blowed if I get 'alf wot 'e's stutterin' out. Keeps you guessin' 'e do, the blessed baby" replied Harry Daw.

"Mates, wot d'yer say to a rag !" suddenly shouted Bill Hartley with all the exultation of one, who, conscious of the more than angelical rarity of brain-waves, happens to entertain one unawares. "Wot d'yer say to a rag ! It all comes o' me puttin' my thinkin'-cap on this while and sayin' to meself : If ole Ginger's the sort o' feller Sam Nutter lets on 'e be, a rag's It to sort o' break 'im in and get 'im shook down. If he ain't matey-like, the rag'll show 'im up for the 'dirty little tyke us makes 'im out to be. See ?"

"A brainy idear any'ow, guv'nor," complimented Ned Jepson. "We don't go slobberin' over 'im, like Sam done, to draw 'im out. We just guy 'im an' out comes the cove naked-like. Ain't it top-'ole, mates ?"

"But 'ow ?", queried Charlie Buckle into his tankard.

"'Ow ? Ther's the catch, mates," agreed the chief. "That's wot my bally 'eadpiece don't tell me. Ask yerselves mates."

A brief silence followed during which the company attempted to draw inspiration from their pipes and tankards. At last, Alf Staines was seized with an idea.

“ ‘Ow ‘bout lettin’ on it’s fire, when the ole cove’s a-bed ?” he asked, proudly stroking his moustache.

“Rot.” Ned Jepson turned it down and bounced up almost instantaneously. “I got a ‘uge idea mates. You know wot Sam Nutter said ‘bout that Juggins’ gal bein’ like me. Ole Ginger’s seein’ is a bit orf you know, so why not freeze on to that ?”

He looked round the table and went on. “I’m the missus, don’t yer see, wot’s nipped orf, him bein’ feerful crool. I looks in accidental like just when yer all ‘avin’ a rippin’ bust wiv the muff. It’ll go like a play, it will, — the Juggins took so sudd’n like and me, Missus Ginger, ‘oldin’ forth on ‘is sins like a bloomin’ Quaker, an’ —”

“That’s a corker, mate,” butted in Bill Hartley with great enthusiasm.

“It’s dev’lish crool tho’ ” snorted the insulted Staines; “ ‘sides which, ‘ow the blazes are yer goin’ to do it ?”

“No ballyraggin’ ain’t a parson’s job, mate; ‘em’s all somethink crool,” sophisticated the other, too ignorant or unwilling to recognise degrees of cruelty. “An’ as for seein’ it thro’, you jest leave it to the guv’nor and yours truly. All yer got to do, mates, is not blow the gaff and come when yer arst to see the play.”

III

On the Sunday following, a little after sunset, the little backroom of “The Bung and Bumper” began to fill with its customary patrons, who entered it in their best Sunday suits and smiles. It was, indeed, not unusual for smiles to blossom on the faces of men like Jim Stubbs and Charlie Buckle when they sought sanctuary from the crees of life under the twice-blessed roof of Mark Pringle’s snug little bar at Bethnal Green.

But smiles overtly spread over the visages of men of the Bob Carton and Alf Staines stamp were an unusual sight calculated to arouse deep curiosity as to the cause.

But the occasion was an unusual one and demanded those smiles. The anticipation of a pleasure is itself very pleasant, and Bob Carton no less than Jim Stubbs was looking forward to that crowning moment when Mrs. Smiggin, *alias* Ned Jepson, would dash into that crowded little room and the melodrama commence. They had been asked to the play and—well, they had come to enjoy it.

The time and place had been decided upon by Jepson, and Hartley, who always had a "Right-o Neddy boy, "up his sleeve for every idea of his young protégé, had agreed. It had been, moreover, planned by the younger man that while the chief was to give the necessary notice and instructions to all the members, excepting only Sam, of the select circle that met at "The Bung and Bumper," Sam was to be reserved to be "done" by Ned Jepson himself. Accordingly, Jepson had contrived one afternoon to barge into the unsuspecting Sam at the works.

"Yer a wonder, mate" he had said suddenly after formalities had been exchanged. "Wot's up? Why, us got to yer way o' thinkin' arter you toddled orf th' other evenin'. The guv'nor upped for yer and yer man an' got us all round"

Looking admiringly at Sam, he had added as an after thought, "An', mate, wotcher say to biffin' roun' to the ole 'ole wiv Ginger on Sunday evenin', usual time? 'Twould oil things a bit, won't it, yer stumpin' in accidental-like, both o' yer?"

"O. K", Sam had responded. "Forget? Not me wot thort o' pulled it thro'."

"Where's the guv'nor any'ow" ? asked Charlie Buckle of Alf Staines who sat beside him, after most of the company had dropped in and seated themselves.

"Camelflagin' Ned, may be," replied the other.

"Talk o' the devil—'Ullo guv'nor!" suddenly exclaimed Jim

Stubbs who sat facing the door, and directed the attention of his mates towards it.

There was a look of triumph on Bill Hartley's face as he bounced into the room and surveyed the company.

"All 'ands in, I 'opes, 'course 'ceptin' o' Neddy Jepson", he said. "Now, mates, 'em'll be 'ere in two ticks, Sam an' 'is blinkin' pal wot thinks us is goin' to slobber o'er 'im this evenin'. I 'angs 'bout till I sees 'em loungin' out o' Ginger's rat-'ole, very pally like, an' the ole slop as pleased as a peacock wiv 'issel".

He had scarcely finished when the door opened to admit Sam, in his reddest of red ties and his tightest new boots, and the thin tall form of the middle-aged stranger with his mop of red hair beneath which his quiet face evinced the faintest tinge of colour.

"Nutter lad, it's rippin' o' you, bringin' the new mate along," opened Hartley by way of an extempore greeting. "'Appy, mate, you've come. You didn't ought to be so shy-like, we're a jolly crew. Ain't we, mates!"

The approval and welcome of the assembled mates were audible a long way off and had not ceased when the chief, after ordering supplies for the new-comers, proceeded to hasty informal introductions. A little later, Bill Hartley rose to propose the toast of the evening.

"Mates, 'eres to the new 'and, Joe Smiggin, wot 'as 'onoured us, unexpected-like, by droppin' in this hospishus evenin' to 'The Bung and Bumper'. I put it to yer, mates, ain't us goin' to 'ave a reg'lar blow-out o' an evenin' [Cries of "Aye, Aye"] An' I'll pound it as 'twill be all 'long o' 'is been a right jolly good feller. Look at 'im, mates, don't that epitaph, 'n a manner o' sayin', suit 'im all down to the ground? So, ere's to—"

The door opened suddenly and through it a round cheery figure, which was at once recognised as that of Mr. Mark Pringle, the proprietor of the bar, rushed plug in. Bill Hartley's

eyes flashed with the satisfaction that things were happening according to schedule, and he finished off inconsequently with, " 'Ullo Mr. Pringle, join in. Very glad to 'ave yer to be sure.'

The worthy addressed stared about him. "Sam Nutter here?" he inquired. "His missis is took bad of a sudden and a lad from his neighbour's has just put in to see if he was here."

Before the speaker had reached the full-stop, Sam, muttering " 'Ell an' 'orror", was half-way towards the door. When he had vanished, a respectfull silence momentarily fell on the party, only to be broken by Bill Hartley's unexpected "An' 'ous yer missus, Mr. Pringle?"

Once Hartley had opened his lips, he was loath to close them soon. Without waiting for a reply he went on. "Mates, let's drink to Mrs. Pringte. May she al'ays rule in 'ealth, wealth an' posterity—beggin' Mr. P's pardon—at "The Bung and Bumper".

Joseph Smiggin, who occupied the seat next the speaker's, began thinking that things were getting just the least little bit mixed. His health had been proposed and not yet drunk, and here was a second one going to be carried with evident enthusiasm. A certain uneasiness seized him and he barely tried to conceal the fact that Mark Pringle's entry and Sam's hurried exit and desertion of him were unpalatable to him. But the others were too much preoccupied with carrying out Bill Hartley's motion to notice the ill-concealed discomfort which Smiggin was feeling in their midst.

When the voices of the crowd touched normal once more, a strange hybrid voice—whose owner might quite justifiably, be placed in either sex—was heard above the hubbub of the place almost shouting "Pringle! Mark! Mark! where are you?" The voice on the other side of the door became louder and louder until its user appeared in the half-open doorway and looked in. The dim light of the chamber revealed a young female form, dowdily clad but possessed of rather striking black hair and eyes.

"O, Mark, I've been lookin' for you all o'er", the woman said, as her eyes fell on the object of her search who stood full within her view, "There's a 'orrid lookin' body waitin' out there as wants somethink o'er the counter wi' yer."

It was a none too pleasant or feminine voice that had spoken so far, but it became far less feminine and distinctly unpleasant at the very next words.

"'Ullo, who've we got there", she asked as Pringle moved out of her line of vision and bared the entire party to her view. She stepped into the room, with her big dark eyes fixed on the uneasy face of Smiggin.

Jim Stubbs took this opportunity of whispering into Harry Daw's ear, "Look at 'im, ain't 'e Beauty starin' at the Beast?"

The next instant the young woman seemed to become hysterical. "'Old me, Pringle, why it's Smiggin, Joe Smiggin, 'im wot I 'eard 'ad died an' gone to 'ell, the sulkin' ole 'og! An' me—why I'm a bigamist now or wot's-its-name!" She looked round appealingly and went on to explain. "Yus, this ere's my 'usband that was". She pointed to Smiggin. "But I don't care. Joe Smiggin, you didn't ought to live an'—I don't care. I left 'im an' I'm not goin', back, Mark. Jest look at the brute, Mark. So awful crool 'e was, I just swished orf, and 'ere—"

"'Ere, whoe'er yer be, you've got 'old o' the wrong pig", interrupted Smiggin coolly. "There's some bloomin' mistake; 'er's on the wrong track", he added, addressing his mates. "Me ain't got no missus an' she ne'er cut neither."

The mates goggled at him in mute scorn.

"That's a ruddy lie, it is," Ned Jepson broke out, forgetting his none-too-well acted part. But he seemed to perceive the blunder for he stammered, "I mean,—er—it ain't true. I'm Mrs. Smiggin that was, tho' I sez it as shouldn't, me now bein' Mrs. Pringle."

Cries of "Liar", "Coward" and the like burst from the company. Smiggin, without venturing to respond, resigned

himself to these outbursts and pensively mopped his face at short intervals. Ned Jepson, in the meantime, was occupied in mentally hurling bouquets at himself, and in alternately winking at his comrades from under his bonnet and provocatively sobbing, "Yus, 'tis me wot 'e treated so awful crool — me wot was once Mrs. Smiggin".

But, Ned was rudely pulled up in the midst of his third wink. Simultaneously, the oaths and insults froze on the lips of those at the table. For Joseph Smiggin had suddenly burst out into a roar of laughter.

Open-mouthed, his recent assailants looked at each other, as if to silently inquire if the man had not suddenly become mad ; he laughed so. Mark Pringle's astonished face became as blank as the back of a spade, and, as for Bill Hartley, one could have knocked down his fourteen stone of solid muscle with a bare feather,

"Ha, ha, ha," Joe Smiggin guffawed and soliloquised in turns. "Deary me, deary me, ain't it rich ? Ha, ha, who'd a thought o' it ? Ha, ha ! So Sam made a bloomer, did 'e ? Or rather me, blow 'is baby-prattle !" And Smiggin laughed more heartily than ever.

"'Ere, go it easy, Juggin", said the scandalised Hartley at last. "This don't seem no laughin' matter."

"Ain't it jest ?" the other replied. "Why, you ain't cle'er enough. Don't yer see, Mrs. Smiggin is dead, pore thing, these ten years, an' that slip o' a thing ain't 'er anyway, res'rected or 'live for all it's lettin' on to be." He scrutinised Ned Jepson for a second and finished, "No ; an' you an' Dora ain't much o'a muchness, neither."

"Sam Nutter, yer done for," Ned Jepson flew up, jerking off his bonnet and wig. "'E's let the whole blinkin' bunch o' us down, an' I'll get e'en wiv im yet." And he made for the door.

"You don't", shouted Smiggin, rushing in between him and the door. "'E ain't ter blame. I'll tell yer 'ow it all fell out, tho' you're a crowd of dirty little dawgs." He looked

defiantly at the crest-fallen Hartley and Jepson and proceeded. "Well, Sam he arks me 'bout a picture at 'ome, 'That Mithith Thmiggin'? I takes it that was his way o' sayin' 'Miss Smiggin', an' says "Yus" an' lets 'im into my story".

He switched off abruptly. The company vainly waited for him to resume. He only sipped his beer unconcernedly.

"'E al'ays was a stupid, stutterin'" mud-eaded, mucker, was Sam" exploded Ned once more, conscious that in his ridiculous attire he looked more sold than the others.

"An' 'ow 'bout you, wi' yer 'foozlin' idears' yer' blinkin' she-man?" returned the disgruntled Staines pointing to the ludicrous figure of Jepson.

Matters would undoubtedly have gone further if the real Mrs. Pringle had not, at that moment directed attention on herself by entering the room, evidently to recall her man to a sense of duty, running instead into the arms of Smiggin and beginning to sob.

"Dora, darlin'—at last" cried Smiggin with a catch in his voice.

"Oh, so wicked of me" she gasped. "And you—you here in these parts! You'll forgive your Dora, won't you, lonely, little Pa?"

IV

It was a couple of hours later that a laughing, chatting group of men tumbled out of "The Bung and Bumper" If it was rather a groggy exit most of the men made, that was simply because much beer had flowed under their palates in honour of "the jolly ole sport Smiggin", and his daughter—"Mithith Thmiggin", as Sam who had returned in due course from his fool's errand pointedly designated her—and "the stupid, stutterin' Sam", and "the blinkin' she-man, Ned", and "the boss o' the Bung and Bumper". And so it curiously fell out that, while with their heavy and unsteady gait they called to mind the jilted lover in the play, with their light-heartedness and loftiness of spirits, they actually came much

nearer to the lucky devil who treads on air, arms around the heroine and all that, just before the drop.

The dense fog of the East End soon swallowed the retreating forms of the roisterers.

"Mark, the room all right?" asked Dora. "Come along, Pa,—this way" she said as she took the guest for the night filially by the hand.

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THE DRAMA OF TO-DAY.

(NIRANJANMOHAN BARDJIAN--6th Year.)

MODERN drama shows a dangerous tendency to widen the much spoken of breach between literature and the stage. This breach is threatened by two things viz., a too much insistence on stagecraft and an over-absorption in problems which are momentary rather than permanent. It is a common literary truth that when a dramatist has his eyes too much upon the theatre in course of writing a play, he becomes more or less blind to that quality which alone can recommend his work to posterity, viz., a touch on some permanent chord of human life and thought—the very quality which has made an Othello or a Hamlet a permanent acquisition to literature. Most of the plays of Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw, and some of Ibsen too seem to imbibe much of their interest from matters of the moment, and it is quite likely though it is hard to imagine such a possibility at present, being as we are ourselves too much interested in these problems, it is quite likely that they may lose much of their interest when in some future time the problems they deal with will cease to be problems. To take up an instance, Bernard Shaw seems to have his whole energy devoted to the task of demolishing the edifice of present-day

morality which, he supposes, has grown into a conventional system. He is always giving unpleasant shocks to our ideas of virtue, love, consistency, duty &c, and shaking the very foundation of our moral system just to open our eyes to things which were so long considered too sacred for close scrutiny (e. g. *Candida* or *Mrs. Warren's profession*). Then there are such things as the housing problem of London, the English divorce system, the Ibsenite woman &c which loom large in many of his plays (e. g. *The Widower's House*, *The Philanderer*) and give a keen edge to his writings. Such problems certainly do not much contribute to the literary value of a play. At any rate, it is difficult at present to make a definite estimate to this type of modern plays because the stirring problems they raise make it impossible for a modern reader to stand in a position of detachment which is necessary for such a task. It would be safer to turn to those plays, chiefly tragedies, which do indeed stike some permanent chords of human life, something which give them a perennial interest independent of present-day society. This quality may be affirmed generally of the plays of Maeterlinck, and partially of many other modern dramatists such as Ibsen, Hauptman, Bjornson, Strindbarg, Yeats, and of Oscar Wilde too in his *Salome*.

The two dominant characteristics of this type of modern plays, which are a tense psychology and symbolism, have reached a high perfection in the writings of Maeterlinck. There is little action. The persons speak no more than a few sentences at a stretch, and they are mostly hints, and touches, and half-frozen whispers. The feelings and emotions that grow throughout, rise out of silence rather than of eloquence and are felt as active presences. The tension of mere situation is so great that the barking of a dog—like the knocking at the gate in the central scene of *Macbeth*—becomes more than the nerves can bear. The treatment stands on the principle that the highest tragic effect may result from mere passiveness. Maeterlinck, the Belgian Shakespeare as he is called, carried this

principle to the extent of a new dramatic method. Sometimes of course the symbolism is carried too far, as in *The Blue Bird* and *The Betrothal*, where the figures seem to be no more than articulate phantoms, hollow masks shaped into a sort of human likeness and seen like lights in a blur and mists. But in a play like "*Palleas and Melisande*", or "*Aglavaine and Selysette*", or *Mary Magdalene*", the symbolism is set back to its proper plane, and the whole thing is full of human beauty, perfectly preserving that extreme psychological tension which forms the keynote of Maeterlinck's works.

Oscar Wilde also in his thirst after intensity in art, has carried this potential quality of the drama to a high perfection in his *Salome*. The same intensely psychological atmosphere makes itself felt through half-articulate and broken sentences, And the intensity is enhanced by occasional touches symbolism to the general atmosphere. For instance, the moon which shines in the sky throughout the play, is translated into different moods according to the different tempers of each character. The page of Herodius sees in her the likeness of a dead woman coming from the tomb to look for dead men. The young soldier finds her like a little dancing princess with yellow veil and silver feet. Salome likens her to a cold chaste virgin ; and Herod finds her red and terrible.

Ibsen's '*Doll's House*' is another masterpiece in modern dramatic literature, which is at once symbolistic and psychological. In fact, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, and Oscar Wilde are probably the only three modern dramatists who have been able to strike a perfect balance between psychology and symbolism. There are others who have emphasised the one at the expense of the other. Yeats and Rabindranath for instance lean towards symbolism and perhaps rightly, because their lyrical temperament could not project itself into a keen psychological conflict with success. Yeats' "*Countess Cathleen*," and '*The Land of My Heart's Desire*,' and Rabindranath's '*Falgooni*' (ফালগুনী) are highly symbolical in character and of the nature of a lyrical drama,

Strindberg the Swedish dramatist has on the other hand carried psychological tension to an excess. He supposes that every human being is made up of several 'personalities,' some of which remain far ever potentialities and others grow into prominence. With this psychological principle as his basis, he imagines an abnormal development of one particular 'personality' at the expense of all others, and embodies it in a human figure. His *dramatis personae* therefore instead of being real human beings combining different qualities and tendencies in one character, represent one particular aspect of the human nature, developed into an abnormal personality. *Tekla* for instance in 'The creditors' embodies the 'pure culture' as a critic has termed it, of one such personality. This 'pure culture,' she owes not to any inherent faculty of her own, but to her first husband Gustav and partly also to her second husband Adolpho, and Strindberg evolves an acutely psychological situation out of a scene in which her two 'creditors' confront her and call her into account. Such a purely psychological play cannot obviously extend over any great length, and Strindberg's plays are generally reduced to a single scene with not more than two or three characters.

Of the rest of modern dramatists such as Hauptman, Bjornson, Pinero or Galsworthy, almost all of them seem to bear too much the impress of their own particular societies, and hence their universal quality suffers as much. They are not without psychological situations such as Pinero's "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," or Galsworthy's 'The Strife,' but their canvas seems to be too narrow to raise them much above the commonplace. Bjornson's plays have an emotional quality which gives them a poetical atmosphere, but their appeal, is diffuse rather than intense. Of all these latter plays, those of Hauptman seem to have the largest breadth of appeal, presenting life in its totality. They body forth passions and events which stand in no need of the label of any particular society, and a fundamental tenderness of broods over them. His 'Drayman Henscel' or 'The Rats' have

nothing of any special social problems, they produce the impression of having been dipped into the fulness of life in general.

One remarkable point with regard to modern tragedies remains to be noted, and that is their destiny element. This destiny element is most pronounced in Maeterlinck's plays and is present in a slightly modified form in some of Ibsen's. The keynote of Maeterlinck's plays from this point of view is a dread of the unknown that surrounds us and makes itself dimly felt in the primal movements of our life. His 'Blue Bird' and 'Betrothal' mainly rest upon the mystery of this unknown power. To use Maeterlinck's own language, it is the christian idea of God blent with that of ancient Fatality, lurking in nature's impenetrable twilight, where it eagerly watches, contests and saddens the projects, the feelings, the thoughts and the happiness of man. In 'The Betrothal' there is indeed a touch of ridicule attached to the common idea of Destiny, who is presented there as gradually shrinking into a small whining baby. But the essential idea is presented in a different shape, which may best be called 'heredity'. Tyltyl discovers that the moving spring that actuates him to action lies not in his individual will, but in the impulses that have come to him through a long line of ancestors. The significance probably is that individuality cannot exist in contradiction to heredity, or rather, it is heredity that constitutes one's individuality. The Great Ancestor tells Tyltyl—"But I and others are all you .. You are we, we are you ; and it is all the same thing". This destiny in the shape of heredity is however supposed by Maeterlinck to have an ultimate good in view, and not essentially cruel as Ibsen seems to think in his "Ghosts".

Oscar Wilde gives a beautiful exposition of this modern idea of heredity, the last of the Fates, as he calls it. "While in the sphere of practical and external life", says he, "it has robbed energy of its freedom and activity of its choice, in the subjective sphere, it comes to us with many gifts in its hands, gifts of strange temperaments and subtle susceptibilities and wild

ardours. And so it is not our own life that we live but the lives of the dead, and the soul that dwells in us is no single spiritual entity making us personal and individual". The bright side of this new kind of destiny has been brought out by him with equal power. "It can lead us away from surroundings whose beauty is dimmed to us by the mist of familiarity. It can help us to leave the age in which we are born and to pass into other ages. It can teach us how to escape from our experience, and to realise the experience of those who were greater than we are."

"THE EPITAPH OF GLORY FLED."

(An Account of the 17th. Anniversary of Ward II).

BY A MEMBER OF WARD I

"Up—to thy wonted work ! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled"

IN these words did Shelley in one of his inspired moments invoke Memory to write the praise of "the last day of many days." Even so do I venture in these words to open a memoir of some little incident in our hostel-life. But there is this difference: Shelley's invocation of Memory was tinged with a pessimism about the Present; for, says he,

"— now the Earth has changed its face
A frown is on the Heaven's brow."

With me, of course, the Earth is going as merrily on as ever; only, the Past with the incident which stands out so boldly and refreshingly in my memory, had a special significance of joy to me. Without beating about the bush, I may tell my gentle reader that I am all the while speaking about

the 17th. Anniversary of Ward II, which was celebrated with great *eclat* in the evening of the 15th. December, 1923.

At the outset I beg to warn the reader not to take me as an "interested party" in the strictest sense of the term—that is, as a member of Ward II. Why then, this profanity on my part to poke my nose into others, affairs? Well, I have long been wondering that no "authorized version" of the celebration has yet come out in black and white. Let this pardonable impatience of mine be my best apology for the sacrilege—if sacrilege it ever is, on my part. For, do not they say, "To err is human — —" &c?

The lively scenes of that evening here and now flash vividly upon that "inward eye" of mine, which, as the Poet says,
"is the bliss of solitude."

As I am sitting on the chair here in my room, looking out of the window into the darkness of the evening, all of a sudden comes back before my mind's eye the picture of that evening's function in all its radiant hue, and wipes out the very darkness itself. I fancy, I see before and around me the bright, laughing faces of the young men who graced the occasion,——of the young men, who were tripping about in troops, brimming over with joy. Oh, how fascinating, how sacred, is the vision!

But the old "sages" misrepresented by youths so often as old "fools", will detect in all that I say nothing but outpourings of sentimentality. "Why?" they will cry out with a superior smile, "young people are always busy in merry-making. It's not strange for them to trifle away their times in amusements." Next, they will very likely jump to the conclusion that it is ridiculous for one to raise one such instance of youthful frivolity to the dignity of a sacred memory.

Well, whatever they may say, for aught we know, they had also their palmy days of youth when such philosophy born of age was unknown to them, and when they would not have minded to have clung with fondness to

the memories of many a joyous day that they passed. The best one can hope is that they will not grudge us a little happiness that we may derive by lingering over the memory of the past. It is not too much to say that the memory of that happy function will ever remain alive in a warm corner of our hearts and will ever help to enliven the darkest and saddest moments of our life.

Gentle reader, I shall not enlarge upon the details of that evening's calebration, item by item. Suffice it to say that the members of Ward II to their great credit kept up to their high traditions of the previous years in arrangements as well as in the performances they gave. A nice fashionable tent fitted with eletric light was pitched on the open field before the hostel-premises Songs formed the most important part of the progrmme of the evening. We highly enjoyed the comic skits, the violin solo and the few recitations that were given besides the songs. A parody * of a well-known Bengali song—purporting to be the lamentations of a disappointed service-hunrer, was highly comical and apt, in view of the craze over services that has seized the brains of young Bengal. It was Mr. Sauchindra Banerjee, an ex-member of Ward II, who honour-ed us with this song.

By the way, not a few of the performers were ex-members of Ward II—prominent among them being the fore-named gentleman and Mr. A. Mullick, son of ex-professor D. N. Mullick, of mathematical fame. Mr. A. Mullick delighted the audience with his sweet voice as he sang the well-known song beginning with “বঙ্গ আমাৰ, জননী আমাৰ—”&c.

Of the visitors, not a few were ex-members of ward II. In fact, the Anniversary served as a linking bridge between the Past and the Present of our hostel-life. The history for many years past of the hostel is associated with their sacred memory. With beaming faces, they accosted their old, familiar, still-in-

* The parody runs thus: “কত আশা করে তোমাৰি দুয়াৰে চাকুৱীৰ তৱে এসেছি” &c.

office Dārwan, whose eyes sparkled with joy at the revival of happy memories of many little incidents that passed between him and them. It was our good fortune that evening to enjoy their company and through them, to have a glimpse into the past life of the hostel.

Our popular principal Mr. Wordsworth graced the occasion with his presence. There were a few distinguished visitors. To crown all, the chair was taken by Sir Asutosh. The surname by which he is known all over India, felicitous if not much dignified,—the surname of the “Royal Bengal Tiger” exactly suits him in public life, where his austere majesty shines forth, eclipsing all the minor luminaries of Bengal. But this tiger of tigers is docile as a fawn, when he is among his favourites, the students. For, if he is anything, he is a student and a child at heart. Naturally, that evening, he was quite at home among us. With a light spirit and in a cheerful manner all his own, he chatted away among us on the matter of our small joys and sorrows, with the usual smile always playing on his lips. At the end of the ceremony, when he was offered *sandeshes* (sweets), he would not be satisfied with the small quantity offered, and unceremoniously asked for more. Of course, he did not take the sweets then and there, as he had not yet said his evening prayers (“*Sandhya-Ahnik*” *), but took them away in his motor-car. In this way, Sir Asutosh made us feel that he was one of us, and in this way he gave us an occasion for a pleasant surprise.

An account of the 17th. Anniversary of Ward II would not be complete without a parting reference to the parting words of advice that Sir Asutosh gave us. His presidential address was anything but similar to the grave pronouncements of an ex-Justice of the High-Court or of an ex-Vice-Chancellor of the premier University of India, every word from whose lips in the Senate House is awaited with rapt attention by the learned

Senators. In his address, he chatted away with us in Bengali. And instead of the stereotyped and elegantly worded address with which one is familiar in formal ceremonies as the present, he gave us a plain bit of his own mind with regard to our little follies which caught his notice at the moment. Well, the invitation-cards for the ceremony had been issued in Bengali. But he came to our gathering to be surprised with a Programme written in English, and with a formal request to address us in English. Little did we suspect how mortified this life-long votary of the Mother-tongue would be at this glaring inconsistency on our part. He sharply took us to task for our apparent apathy to our own vernacular. With a pitiable glance in his eyes he said, as his voice grew animated, "Not one of the twelve boys now reading Vernacular for their M. A., would have done so without the offer of stipends made to them."

The second chord that Sir Asutosh struck in his address, touched us nearer home. He referred to the lack of unity we evinced in setting up a separate Anniversary for each separate Ward. "Well, well," he said with a parting smile, "if you can invite me to a ceremony of the whole hostel united together, I'll join your company and partake of your *Sandeshes* every year."

It now remains for the hostel-students to lay this advice to heart and to set up their minds on the matter before an occasion for the next Anniversary overtakes them all too soon.



Late Prof. J. C. Nag

ନାରୀମମ୍ୟା *

ଶ୍ରୀଖଗେନ୍ଦ୍ରନାଥ ସେନ, ବି, ଏ ।

ବଡ଼ଇ ଛଂଖେର ବିଷୟ ଯେ ଏତ ତର୍କ ବିତର୍କେର ପରାମର୍ଶ ନାରୀମମ୍ୟାଟା ସମସ୍ୟାଇ ରଯେ ଗେଲ, ତାର ଆର କୋନ୍ତା ସମାଧାନ ହୋଲୋନା ; ଅଥଚ, ନାରୀ ମାନୁଷେର ନିତାନ୍ତରେ ଘରେର ଲୋକ ତାକେ ବାଦ ଦିଲେ ମାନୁଷେର ଅନ୍ତିତ୍ତରେ ଥାକେ ନା । କତକଟା ଏହି କାରଣେଇ ନାରୀ ନିଜେର ସମ୍ୟା ନିଜେଇ ପୂରଣ କରେ ଏଗିଯେ ଏସେହେ, ଆର ତାରଇ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସ୍ଵାର୍ଥପର ମାନୁଷ ଦେଖିଲେ ଯେ ଜୀବନେର ଜମାଖରଚ ହିସାଯେ ନାରୀର ଅଙ୍ଗ ଆର ଶୂନ୍ୟ ରାଖିଲେ ଚଲବେ ନା । ଜଗଂଜୋଡ଼ା ଏଟି ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନେ ପୁରୁଷରାଓ ତାଇ ଯୋଗ ଦିଲେ, ଭାରତବର୍ଷେ ତାର ପ୍ରତିନିଧିତ୍ବ ଉଠିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମାଦେର ନେତୃବର୍ଗ ତାର ସମାଧାନ କରେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରେନ ଏମନ ଏକ ଦିକ ଦିଯେ ଯେ ଦିକେ ନାରୀର ନାରୀର ସବଚେଯେ କମ ଫୁଟେ ଓଠେ । ଆମାଦେର ନେତାରା ବଲେନ, ନାରୀକେ ରାଜନୀତିତେ ପୁରୁଷେର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଦାଓ । ସମାଜନୀତି ଇତିଗଜ୍ ହେଁ ରଇଲ ।

ହଦୟେ କବିତା ଫୁଟେ ଉଠିଲେ ଆମରା ବଲି ନାରୀ ଗୃହେର ଦୀପ୍ତି, ହଦୟେର ଚକ୍ରୀ ଆର କାନ୍ଦେର ସମୟେ ତାକେ ଦେଖି ଛୋଟ କରେ ! କେନ ତା' କରି, ଏହି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ମୋଜା ଜବାବ ଦିତେ କେଉ ସାହସ କଲେନ ନା, ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟତଃ ତାର କୋନ୍ତା ଜବାବ ନେଇ ବଲେ । ଆମରା ବଲି, ନାରୀ ଅବଳା—କିନ୍ତୁ କିସେ ଅବଳା, ଶରୀରେ ନା ମନେ ?

ନାରୀ ଅବଳା କାରଗ ତାର ଦେହେ ବଲ ନେଇ ସୁତରାଂ ପୁରୁଷେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ସମାଜେ ସେ ସମାନ ସ୍ଥାନ ପେତେ ପାରେ ନା ଏ ତର୍କ ଯାଇବା ଉଥାପିତ କରେନ ଆମାର ମନେ ହୟ ଆମାଦେର ସମାଜେ ଏକଥିବା ଅବଳା ତାଂଦେର ମଧ୍ୟେ ନିତାନ୍ତ ଅଳ୍ପ ନୟ, ବିଶେଷତଃ ଯଦି ତାରା ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୀ ହନ । ତର୍କେର ଖାତିରେ ଏହି ସବ ପୁରୁଷଦେରାଓ ଅନ୍ତଃପୁରେର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଆବନ୍ତ ଥାକ୍ତେ ହୟ ଏବଂ ତାଂଦେର ଅପେକ୍ଷା ବଲଶାଲିନୀ ଯେ ସମନ୍ତ ଗୁହିନୀ ଆଛେନ ତାଂଦେର ବାଇରେ କାଯେ ନିଯୁକ୍ତ କରେ ହୟ । ଉତ୍କଳ ପୁରୁଷରା ଯଦି ଏତେ ରାଜୀ ହନ ତା ହଲେ ତାଂଦେର ମତାମତ ଯାଇବା ସମର୍ଥନ କରେନ ତାରା ଅନେକଟା ବଲ ପାବେନ ।

ନାରୀର ଯେ ହଦୟେ ବଲ ନେଇ ଏ କଥା ଯିନି ବଲେନ ତାର ନିଜେର ହଦୟ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ

* ପ୍ରେସିଟେନ୍ମ୍ୟୁସନ କଲେଜ ବନ୍ଦମାହିତ୍ୟମିତିର ପଞ୍ଚମ, ଅଧିବେଶନେ ପାଠିତ ।

ছুর্বিল কারণ সত্যকে প্রতিষ্ঠিত কর্বার ঠাঁর সাহস নেই। জোয়ান্ট অফ আর্ক সংযুক্তা, ধাত্রী পান্না—এঁরা যে মহাজাতির শিরোমণি, সেই মহাজাতির হন্দয় ছুর্বিল নিতান্ত কুপমণ্ডুক ভিন্ন এ কথা আর কেউ স্বীকার কর্বেন না!

নারীর সামাজিক অধিকারের বিরুদ্ধে একটা গুরুতর আপত্তি আছে। রিজিয়া বা ধাত্রী পান্না ঘরে ঘরে পাওয়া যায় না, এবং বাঙালীর ঘরে ঘরে যদি জোয়ান্ট অফ আর্ক কিংবা রিজিয়া পাওয়া যেত তাহলে সেটা বাঙালীর গার্হস্থ্য জীবনের পক্ষে যে খুব স্বুখের হোতো কি না তা তর্কসাপেক্ষ। সাধারণতঃ যা ঘটে থাকে বা যা আমরা দেখতে পাই তার দ্বারাই আমরা সমস্যা পূরণ কর্বার চেষ্টা করি। সাধারণতঃ আমরা নারীকে পুরুষ অপেক্ষাও ছুর্বিল বলে মনে করি, তাই আমরা বলি যে নারী অবলা, তাই আমরা তাকে পুরুষের সমান অধিকার দিতে এত কুষ্টিত হই। কারণ আমাদের ধারণা যে বাইরেকার বড় জল নারী সহ্য কর্তে পারবে না। ছেশনের প্লাটফর্মে ছুটো গোরা দেখলে আমাদের বৃদ্ধা গৃহিণীরা কাঁপতে থাকেন, স্বতরাং এঁদের কি বাইরে ছাড়া চলে। এই অবরোধ প্রথার মধ্যে স্ত্রী পুরুষের একটা বড়ৱকমের অসাম্য মেনে নিই ওই সব গৃহিণীদেরই দোহাই দিয়ে।

এই যে যুক্তি এর সারবত্তায় একটু গলদ্ আছে। অতি অল্পতেই কম্পমান কলেবরা অমাদের এই গৃহিণীরা অর্থাৎ বর্তমান শতাব্দীর ঠাকু'মা ঠান্দিদিবঁ শতশত বৎসরের সামাজিক প্রথার ফলমাত্র। বর্তমান শতাব্দীর যুবতী কিশোরীরা ত গোরা দেখলে ততটা ভয় পান না! তার কারণ, পাশ্চাত্য সভ্যতার শিক্ষা। নৃতন ধর্মের প্রচলন। চক্ষের সন্দুখে যদি ক্রমাগত একটা উদাহরণ দেখতে পাওয়া যায়—জ্ঞানে হোক অজ্ঞানে হোক, আজ হোক কাল হোক, মানুষের স্বাভাবিক অভ্যাস, সেটাকে অল্পকরণ কর্তে প্রয়াসী হওয়া। ব্রাহ্মধর্মের দৃষ্টান্ত আমাদের অবরোধ প্রথাকে শিথিল করেছে, সমাজের রক্ষণশীল অংশকেও চিন্তাকুল করেছে।

কিন্ত এই খানেই ভয়, কারণ অবরোধ প্রথার এইরপ শৈথিল্য আর একটা সমস্যার উন্নাবনা করে। সেটা পাশ্চাত্য ধর্মের বা ব্রাহ্মধর্মের প্রাণহীন অল্পকরণ। তাদের মত আমরা সমাজের অন্যান্য দোষস্থলন কর্তে চেষ্টা করিন। অথচ বাইরেব এই আড়ম্বরগুলোকে নকল কর্তে চাই। কিশোরী বধুকে পাশ্চা-

সাড়ী পরিয়ে জরির নাগ্রা আঁটিয়ে ইডেনগার্ডেনে একটু হাওয়া খাওয়াতে নিয়ে যাও কোনও আপত্তি নেই, বন্ধুবান্ধবদের সঙ্গে স্বামীসাথে সে অবাধে আলাপ করুক গান গাক কোনও ক্ষতি নেই, কারণ সেটা ব্যক্তিগত ইচ্ছা বা অভিলাষ; কিন্তু সমস্ত প্রলোভন মহ কর্বার যে মনের দৃঢ়তা সেটা সামাজিক প্রয়োজন, তার উপকরণ তোমরা তাকে সংগ্রহ করে দাও। একটা উপকরণ, শিক্ষা।

মেয়েদের শিক্ষা দাও, বর্তমান শতাব্দীর এই একটা রব—তাতে রক্ষণশীল সমাজনেতাদের উত্তর, শিক্ষা না দিলে কি সতীসাধী হওয়া যায় না? যে সমস্ত হিন্দুরমণীরা মৃতস্বামীর দেহ বক্ষে কবে একই চিতাভস্মে জীবনব্রত উদ্যাপন কর্তেন তাদের কি সকলেই শিক্ষিত ছিলেন? যারা এইভাবে তর্ক করেন তারা ভুলে যান যে মনের দৃঢ়তা অর্থে শুধু সতীত রক্ষা কর্বার ক্ষমতা নয়, যদিও তা' নারীর পক্ষে প্রধান ধর্ম। ছিতীয়তঃ শিক্ষাতে যে মানুষের মন দৃঢ় হয় শিক্ষার বর্তমান ব্যবস্থা দেখলে কেউই তা বল্বে না।

কিন্তু শিক্ষার অর্থে এখানে বই-মুখ্য করা বিদ্যা নয়। এ বিদ্য অভিজ্ঞতা। আমরা স্কুলে বা কলেজে যা শিখি তা আমাদের প্রকৃত শিক্ষার কতটুকু অংশ? সংসারের দায়িত্বের ভাগ, তা, সে যতটুকুই হোক সেই অংশটুকু যখন আমরা প্রথম কাঁধে নিই সেই আমাদের প্রকৃত শিক্ষার আরম্ভ। নারী তার সমবয়স্ক পুরুষ অপেক্ষা যে গৃহস্থালীর কাজকর্ম ভাল কর্তে পারে তার কারণ গৃহস্থালীর দায়িত্ব সে ছোটবয়সেই পেয়েছে। সুতরাং সে বিষয়ে পুরুষের চেয়ে তার শিক্ষা বেশী। ঠান্ডিদি ঠাকুরারা বাইরে এলেই নিজেদের হারিয়ে ফেলেন তার কারণ সে শিক্ষার স্থূলে আমাদের ঠাকুর্দা, দাদাম'শায়েরা তাদের কথনই দেন নি। সেই যে আটবছর ন'বছর বয়সে সীথের সিঁচুর রোকন্দ্যমানা বধুটা হয়ে তাঁরা শশুর-গৃহে প্রবেশ কর্তেন, স্ত্রীলোকের লজাশীলতার বাঁধা আইনকানুন সেইথেকে তাদের কুষ্টিতচরণে সর্ববদাই জড়িয়ে থাক্ত। বাইরেকার সভ্যতার একটু-খানিও আলো তাদের চরণ অলঙ্কৃত চুম্বন করে যেতে পারে নি! মানুষ বলে যে অধিকার, সে তাঁরা হারিয়েছেন যুগ্মগান্তরের পুঞ্জীকৃত অনভিজ্ঞতার ফলে যার দরুণ দ্বিরুক্তি না করে তাঁরা পুরুষের দাস্যবৃত্তি স্বীকার করে গেছেন

সৃষ্টির প্রারম্ভে পুরুষ-নারী সমান ছিল। তবে, নারী যে পুরুষের অধীনতা স্বীকার কল্পে তার কারণ ?

তার কারণ, নারী স্নেহশীলা, নারী পুরুষকে ভালবাসে। পুরুষের প্রকৃতি দুর্দম, নারী হাসিমুখে তার বশতা স্বীকার কল্পে। একেবারে পুরুষের অন্তঃস্থলটীতে গিয়ে সে নিজের রাজ্য বিস্তার কল্পে। কিন্তু বহিঃপ্রকৃতি থেকে সে নির্বাসিত হোলো।

কিন্তু একাপ ব্যাখ্যাও তর্কসাপেক্ষ। অমি নিজে শুনেছি, এর উত্তরে এক-জন পুরুষ বলেছেন, তা হলে ব্রিটিশ যে আজ ভারতবর্ষ জয় করেছে—ভারতবর্ষ যে আজ ইংরাজের অধীন হয়েছে,—সেও ওই স্নেহের বশে ? আমার মনে হয় একাপ তুলনা নির্থক। ভারতবর্ষ কি ব্রিটিশের অন্তরের জিনিষ ? বেতনভোগী-দাসীকে দিয়ে লোকে যেমন আপনার স্বার্থসিদ্ধি করিয়ে নেয়, অতু এবং দাসীর প্রত্যে যেমন স্নেহের কোনও আদান-প্রদান থাকে না, এও তেমনি। ভারতবর্ষ ইংরাজের বুকের জিনিষ নয়, তার পায়ের জিনিষ—সুতরাং সে তুলনা খাটে না। নারী কিন্তু পুরুষের অন্তরের জিনিষ, সে পুরুষের জায়া, সে পুরুষের জননী।

এই স্নেহেরদাবী কিন্তু আজ অনেকটা শিথিল হয়ে এসেছে। আজ ঘরে ঘরে নারীর উপর অত্যাচারের উৎস ছুটেছে। আনন্দময়ীর বিচার হয়ত তারই একটা ক্ষুঁজ পরিচ্ছেদে ! নারীর স্নেহের আমরা প্রতিদান দিচ্ছি না, প্রতিশোধ দিচ্ছি ! যে সমাজের প্রথা নারীর এই হীনতা মেনে নেয় তার ধর্মস পাওয়াই হয় ত বিধাতার ইচ্ছা। নারী আজও পর্যন্ত সত্য সত্য হীন হয় নি, আজও পর্যন্ত নিজে সে লোকচক্ষের সামনে ছোট হয় নি। শরীরহীনতার কারণ আমরাই নিজে। আর আজ যে তাদের স্বপক্ষে এত বক্তৃতা কচ্ছি এয়ে তাদের উপর কত বড় অপমান আমাদের কতবড় লজ্জা, পুরুষ হয়েও আমরা তা বুঝছি। রাজলক্ষ্মী যখন শ্রীকান্তকে বলে, তোমরা ত আমাদের মত দাসীর জাত নয় যে কষ্ট সহ কর্ত্তে যাবে !—তখন শ্রীকান্ত রাজলক্ষ্মীকে উপহাস করে বলে, আপনাদের এত হীন মনে কর্ত্তে তোমার লজ্জা করে না !

রাজলক্ষ্মী অত্যন্ত সহজভাবে বলে, কিন্তু এর মধ্যে ত কোন হীনতা নেই।

শ্রীকান্ত বিজ্ঞপ করে উত্তর দিলে, তা বটে। আমরা অতু, তোমরা

দাসী, এই সংক্ষারটাই এদেশের মেয়েদের মনে এমনি বদ্ধমূল যে, এর হীনতাটাও আর তোমাদের চোখে পড়ে না। বোধ করি, এই পাপেই পৃথিবীর সকল দেশের মেয়ের চেয়ে তোমরাই আজ সত্যি সত্যি ছোট হয়ে গেছ।

রাজলক্ষ্মী তাতে যা জবাব দিয়েছিল সেই কথাটাই আমি বলতে চাই। ছইচক্ষ দীপ্তি করে কঠিন কঠে রাজলক্ষ্মী বলে, না সে জন্মে নয়। তোমাদের দেশের মেয়েরা নিজেদের ছোট মনে করে ছোট হয়ে যায় নি, তোমরাই তাদের ছোট মনে করে ছোট করে দিয়েছ, নিজেরাও ছোট হয়ে গিয়েছ। এই সত্যি কথা।

বাস্তবিক, এই সত্যি কথা। নারী যখন তার স্বাধীনতাটুকু বিশ্বাস করে আমাদের হাতে সমর্পণ কলে, সে বিশ্বাসের প্রতিদান দিলুম পরাধীনতার কঠিন নিগড়ে তাদের বিঁধে ! মুক্ত বিহঙ্গের মত আজ তারা একবার আকাশের নীল আভা, নির্বারিগীর মৃছগান শুন্তে চায়, আমরা তাতে চোখ রাঙাচ্ছি ! তর্ক কর্ত্তেও ভয় পাই।

অনেকের মুখেই একটা আপত্তি শুন্তে পাই, মেয়েরা তাদের সামাজিক জীবনে পরিবর্তন চায় না। এই প্রসঙ্গে একটা গল্প (সত্যঘটনা কি না জানি না) মনে পড়ল। বহুবৎসর কারারুদ্ধ থেকে একজন বন্দী মুক্তি পেলে,—তার অপরাধ মার্জনা করা হয়েছে। বাইরে এসে সে দেখলে, তাইত, সবই নৃতন কিছুই আর তার পরিচিত নেই। কারাগৃহের অন্দরে হ'তে বহিপ্রকৃতির আলোচ্ছটায় এসে তার চোখ টাটিয়ে উঠল, করযোড়ে সে কারাগৃহে ফিরে যেতে চাইলে। এ থেকে কি বুঝতে হবে বাইরেকার আলো তার পক্ষে অনিষ্টকর ? কিছুই না, শুধু অনভ্যাসের দোষ। বলুন শয্যাগত রোগী প্রথম হাঁটিতে শিখলে তার পাটল্লতে থাকে, তাই বলে কি সে হাঁটিতে চেষ্টা ছেড়ে দেবে ? নারীর অবস্থাও আজ তাই। তার দুর্বলতা স্বকীয় নয়, অনভ্যাসের দোষ। এ ছাড়া মেয়েরা যে সমাজিক পরিবর্তন চায় না একথা সত্য নয়।

তর্কের এই ধারা অবলম্বন করেই আর একদল উভর করেন ভারতবাসী রাজনৈতিক পরিবর্তন চায় না স্বতরাং তার কোনওরূপ রাজনৈতিক উন্নতি করা হবে না—এ কথার

কোনও অর্থ নেই। এই যে বহুশতাব্দী পুর্বে শ্রীষ্টধর্ম প্রচারের জন্য যখন দিকে দিকে মহাপ্রাণ মিশনারীরা পৃথিবীতে একটা নৃতন ভাব নৃতন আশা জাগিয়ে তুলেছিলেন তখন থর ও ওডেনের উপাসকগণ কি সেই নৃতনভাব চেয়েছিল ? শ্রীষ্টের ভক্তগণ বুঝেছিলেন শ্রীষ্টের বাণীই সত্যধর্ম তাই ওদের মধ্যে যে অসত্যকে তারা পূজা কর্ত সেই অসত্যটাকে দূর কর্বার জন্য তাঁরা প্রাণ পর্যন্ত দিতে কাতর হন নি। আমাদের রাজনীতি বা সমাজনীতির ক্ষেত্রেও তাই। দিনের শেষে মোটাচালের একমুঠো অন্ততেই সন্তুষ্ট হয়ে যারা বিদেশকে ঐশ্বর্য্যের কোলে তুলে দিচ্ছে, তাদের মুখে রেজ ছবেলা অন্ন দেবার জন্য, তাদের জননী জায়ার সম্যক্তাবে লজ্জা নিবারণ কর্বার জন্য রাজনৈতিক মিশনারী দরকার। সমাজনীতিতেও তাই। আজ বহুশতাব্দী-ধরে আমাদের মা বোনের উপর একটা দাঁড়ুণ অসাম্যগত অভ্যাচার চলে আসছে, যে ধর্ষণটাকে তাঁরা অভ্যাসগত সহিষ্ণুতার সঙ্গে সয়ে আসছেন আমাদের যে সেটা হীনতা ভিন্ন আর কিছুই নয়, জগৎকে সেটা বোঝান দরকার। শুধু তাই নয় আমাদের দেশের পরিবর্তনভয়াকুল নারীসমাজকেও সেটা বোঝান দরকার।

যাঁরা দোটানায় পড়েছেন এমন একদল লোক বলেন, ওটা ভুল ! নারীর পরাধীনতা অসাম্যগত নয়, ওটা শ্রমবিভাগ অর্থাৎ ডিভিশন অফ লেবরের ফল। এতে সমাজের স্বাস্থ্য ও সাচ্ছন্দ্য বিধান করে, কারণ দুর্বল লোক হৃটো ভিন্ন কায়ে সম্পূর্ণভাবে মন দিতে পারে স্ফুরাং হৃটো কায়ই সুচারুরূপে সম্পূর্ণ হয়। তর্কহিসাবে অর্থাৎ খিয়োরী হিসাবে এতে কোনও গলদ নেই, যদিও অনেক জায়গায় এই ডিভিশন অফ লেবরপ্রথাৰ ব্যতিক্রম দেখা গেছে। যাই হোক মাননূম যে নারীর পরাধীনতা এই শ্রমবিভাগেই ফল। কিন্তু এই ভাবে ভাব্বতে গিয়ে আমরা আর একটা দিক অগ্রাহ কচ্ছ। নারী যদি আজ উকিল হতে চায় আমরা তাতে বাধা দিই, কিন্তু পুরুষ যদি রক্ষনকার্য শেখে তাতেও আমরা বাধা দিই না ! পুরুষের কার্যে নারী হস্তক্ষেপ কর্বে না এ আইন বাধ্যতামূলক। কিন্তু নারীর কার্য (সন্তান জনন ভিন্ন) পুরুষেরা যে হস্তক্ষেপ করে না সেটা তাদের ইচ্ছাগত। পুরুষ এবং নারীর মধ্যে এই খানেই অসাম্য। আমরা এই অসাম্য দূর কর্তে চাই পুরুষের অধিকার কমিয়ে নয়, নারীর অধিকার বাড়িয়ে।—আপনার জীবনসূত্র বেছে

নিতে প্রত্যেক মাসুষেরই যে অধিকার আছে এইটে মেনে নিয়ে । নারী-পুরুষেরা সাম্যটাকে সর্বাঙ্গীন করে । নারীপুরুষের পরস্পর সহায়তাটাকে সর্বাঙ্গীন করে । নারীকে আমরা শুধু ঘরেই পেতে চাই না, বাইরেও পেতে চাই । প্রশ্ন এই, তাকে বাইরে পাওয়া যায় কি না ।

সামাজিক বিপদ যা কিছু সব এইখানেই । নারীকে বাইরে পেতে চেষ্টা করা কতদুর সঙ্গত তা চিন্তনীয় । এই সমস্যাটাই আলোচনা করে একখানি বই সমালোচনা জগতে অনেক নিন্দা ও প্রশংসার ভাগী হয়েছে । অন্ততঃ আমি বইখানির আলোচ্য বিষয়টাকে এইদিক থেকেই দেখতে চেষ্টা করেছি । বইখানি রবীন্দ্রনাথের ‘ঘরে বাইরে’ ।

আমার মনে হয় বাইরের সংঘর্ষের মধ্য দিয়ে নারীর যে মন আমরা পাই, সেই পাওয়াটাই স্থায়ী চিরস্তন । বাইরে পাবার ইচ্ছা হয় তখনই যখন আমরা তাকে ঘরে পাই না । বাইরের বড়জলের ভিতর থেকে যখন তাকে আমরা ঘরে ফিরিয়ে আনি, প্রলোভনের নিকষ পাথরে তার হৃদয়কে স্বর্ণিভ করে, সেই ঘরে বাইরে পাওয়াটাই চরম পাওয়া, তারই মধ্যে নারীর জীবনের সার্থকতা ।

কিন্তু ঘরে না পেলে বাইরে তাকে পেতে যাওয়াটা বাতুলতা নয় কি ? “ঘরে বাইরে”র এইখানেই গলদ ।

সন্দীপের দিক থেকে ওর কাষটা একবার দেখা যাক । বড় অঙ্গুত জানোয়ার ও । মেঘেদের দৌর্বল্য কোন খানটায় সেও ঠিক বুঝেছিল, তা হলেও ও শেষ রাখতে পাল্লে না । ‘মঙ্গিরাণী’র প্রেম ও চেয়েছিল এটা ঠিক । এর ছুটো পস্তা আছেঃ প্রথম, স্বামীকে হৃচরিত্র বলে প্রমাণ করা,— উদাহরণ, ইষ্টানীনের লেডি ইসবেলা ; দ্বিতীয়, তার রূপের প্রশংসা করা একটা স্মৃত্তি আবরণের ভিতর দিয়ে, যে পথটা সন্দীপ নিয়েছিল । প্রথম পথটা সন্দীপ নিতে পারে নি ছুটো কারণে ; প্রথম, নিখিলেশ এত ভাল-মানুষ (নির্বোধ নয়) যে কোনও ছিদ্র ছিল না যাতে করে ওকে হৃচরিত্র বলে প্রমাণ করা যেতো । দ্বিতীয়তঃ হৃচরিত্র বলে প্রমাণ কল্লেও মঙ্গিরাণী যে বিকৃত হবে তার কোনও স্থিরতা ছিল না, কারণ, আর যাই হোক ও হিন্দুঘরের বধু । তাই সন্দীপ দ্বিতীয় পস্তাটা নিলে । সন্দীপের সমস্ত বক্তৃতার মধ্যে ‘মঙ্গিরাণী’র রূপের প্রতি যে একটা কঠোর ইঙ্গিত থাকতো

‘মঙ্গিরাণী’ সেটা ঠিক বুঝেও বুঝতো না । কিন্তু সন্দীপ শেষে ভুলপথ নিলে । বড় শীঘ্র সে জানিয়ে দিলে ‘মঙ্গিরাণী’কে যে সে কে । মঙ্গিরাণী শিক্ষিতা মেয়ে, নিজের মনটাকে এক দৃঢ় কশ্চাঘাতে ঠিক করে, সমস্ত বাস্তবাতের পর, প্রশাস্তমনে তার স্বামীকে ফিরে গেল—নিখিলেশও তার স্ত্রীকে ঘরে বাইরে পেলে ।

‘মঙ্গির ণী’র কাছে মন্ত একটা প্রলোভন নিয়ে এসেছিল—সন্দীপ । ওরও মন একটু একটু করে ঝুঁকে পড়ছিল এই স্বদেশউন্নত পুরুষটার দিকে । নিখিলেশও সেটা বুঝতে পেরেছিল । আমি প্রশ্ন করি সন্দীপ যদি শেষটায় অত তাড়াতাড়ি না করে ফেলতো, ওর বিক্রীদিকটা যদি মঙ্গিরাণীর চোখের সামনে হঠাৎ অত জলজল করে জলে না উঠতো, তা হলে, কবি যদি গল্লের ঠিকমত শেষ কর্তেন, মঙ্গিরাণী নিশ্চয়ই তার স্বামীকে ছেড়ে চলে যেতো মাকড়সার জালে,—তখন নিখিলেশের যে নারীকে বাইরে পাওয়ার চেষ্টা তা কোথায় যেতো ? এবং রবীন্দ্রনাথেরও বইখানা লেখা বিফল হোতো ।

বাংলার পুরুষ তার নারীকে ঘরে পেয়েছে কিন্তু বাইরে পায় নি । তাই বহিসভ্যতা তাকে এত ছোট করে দেখেছে, বাইরেকার সমাজে সে আজ তাই এত ছোট হয়ে গিয়েছে ।*

নরনারীর ঐক্যে জগতের স্থিতি । নারী জগতের মাতা । এই মাতৃধর্মের উপরই আমাদের ভারতবর্ষ প্রতিষ্ঠিত । সর্বদমনের জন্মের দ্বারা তুষ্ণ্যন্ত-শুকুম্ভলার মিলন সম্পূর্ণ হয়েছিল । এ মিলন সেই মিলন যাকে ভিস্টের ছপে বলেছেন—*a man and a woman mingled into an angel !* স্থষ্টিকে সার্থক করে যে নারী, তাকে আজ শুধু পুরুষের ক্রীড়নক বলে ভাবলে চলবে না ।

* এই সম্পর্কে সেদিন (২৬শে ফেব্রুয়ারী) Y. M. C. A., Overtoun Hall এ শ্রেষ্ঠ শ্রীযুক্ত অশোক চট্টোপাধায় ম’শায় ‘সাহিত্যে কুকুচি’ বিষয়ে বক্তৃতা সম্পর্কে কয়েকটা কথা বলেন যা’ উল্লেখযোগ্য । তিনি বলেন যে অবরোধ প্রথার জন্ম বাঙালী তার নারীকে দেখেছে একটা অস্তুত জানোয়ার হিসাবে । বাঙ্গাকাল থেকেই সে একরকম নারী সংস্পর্শ বিবর্জিত । তাই বাইরে নারীকে দেখলেই তার মনে নানারকম অস্বাভাবিক ভাবের উদয় হয় । নারীর সংস্পর্শ যদি মাঝুমের বিবর্জনীর হোতো, তা হলে বিধাতা নিশ্চয়ই তাকে বায় বা সিংহ কিছু একটা আশ্চর্য রকমের জানোয়ার স্থষ্ট কর্তব্য, মানুষ দূর থেকেই তাকে দেখতো, কাছে এসে তাকে জানতে চেষ্টা কর্তৃত না । এই শিক্ষার ফল বাঙালীর বাস্তবজীবনেও দেখা দিয়েছে । বাংলাদেশ নারীকে তাব ঘরে পেয়েছে, বাইরে পায় নি । তাই বাংলাদেশে নারীর হৃদয় ঘরের চতুর্কোণের মধ্যেই আবদ্ধ ।

মানুষের জীবন যাতে ফুলে ফলে ভরে ওঁঠে নারীর হৃদয়কে সেইভাবে ফুটিয়ে তোলা উচিত। তাকে এমন শিক্ষা দেওয়া উচিত মানুষের যাতে সে সহধর্মিণী হতে পারে। আমরা আজ তার উপর এমন ব্যবহার কর্ছি যাতে তার সমস্ত সম্মত বিদ্যোহী হয়ে উঠেছে। আমাদের চেয়ে তারা কোনও অংশে কম নয় এইটে আমরা আজও মান্তে পাচ্ছি না। অথচ আজ কত দিন হোলো জন্ম ছুটার্ট মিল বলে গেছেন—

No one can safely pronounce that if women's nature were left to choose its direction as freely as men's, and if no artificial tint was attempted to be given to it except that required by the conditions of human society and given to both sexes alike there would not be any material differences or perhaps any difference at all in the character and capacities which would unfold themselves.

আমার মনে হয় আমাদের মধ্যে অনেকে আছেন যাঁরা নীতিহিসাবে স্ত্রী-পুরুষের সাম্য হয় ত মেনে নেন কিন্তু কার্য্যতঃ মেনে নিতে ভয় পান, পাশ্চাত্য-দেশের বিশেষতঃ আমেরিকার দৃষ্টান্ত দেখে। আমেরিকা স্ত্রীস্বাধীনতার চূড়ান্ত দৃষ্টান্ত জগৎকে দেখিয়েছে। হিসাব করে দেখা গেছে সভ্যতার ওই তাঙ্গৰ লীলাক্ষেত্রে প্রতি চার মিনিটে একটী করে ডাইভোস' অর্থাৎ স্ত্রী-পুরুষের পরিত্র সম্বন্ধ বিচ্ছিন্ন হচ্ছে। স্ত্রী-পুরুষের সাম্য অর্থে যদি সমাজের এই অবস্থা বোঝায় তা হলে এ কথা সকলেই স্বীকার কর্বেন যে গার্হস্থ্য শাস্তির এইরূপ সর্বনাশ সাধন করা অপেক্ষা স্ত্রী-পুরুষের অসাম্য শতগুণে শ্রেয়ঃ।

আসল নারীসমস্যাটা এইখানেই। নারীসমস্যা পুরুণ কর্বার ছলে আমরা কি পাশ্চাত্য অবাধস্বাধীনতার অনুকরণ কর্ব ? না, তাদের স্বাধীনতার চারপাশে কতকগুলো নিষেধের নিগড় বেঁধে দেব ? প্রথমটা মানতে গেলে মানুষের সামাজিক জীবন মরভুমিতুল্য হয়ে উঠবে, স্বতরাং তা' পরিত্যজ্য। যদি দ্বিতীয়টা মানতে যাই তবে জিজ্ঞাসা, এই নিষেধ কতদুর সঙ্গত বা অসঙ্গত, তার মাপকাটী কি ? অর্থাৎ, আপনারা আমাকে বলতে পারেন, যে, বাপুহে, অত বাগাড়স্বর না করে স্পষ্টভাবায় বল যে কি কর্তে চাও ! তোমাদের মেঘেদের কি রাঁধাবাড়া বাসনমাজা ছাড়িয়ে স্পেন্সার বা হক্সলি পড়াতে

চাও ? তা যদি কর্তে চাও, তা হলে আগে থাকতেই বলে রাখি তোমাদের শ্রীগীরই ইন্সল্ভেণ্ট হতে হবে কারণ স্পেসার হক্সলির সঙ্গে রান্নাবাড়ি বাসনমাজার বনিবনা নাও হতে পারে। আর স্পেসার হক্সলিই যদি না পড়াবে তবে এত জোরগলায় যে শ্রীপুরুষের সাম্য প্রচার কচ্ছ তার মূল্য রইল কোথায় ?

আমি বলেছি অবশ্য, যে, পৃথিবীতে প্রলোভন সহ কর্বার একটা উপকরণ শিক্ষা। কিন্তু এ কথাও বলেছি যে শিক্ষা অর্থে মিল বা স্পেসার বা হক্সলি মুখস্থ করা নয়। মহৎ জীবনের আদর্শ, বহিসংসারের অভিজ্ঞতা, এবং পারিপার্শ্বিক দৃষ্টান্ত—এইগুলিই মানুষকে প্রকৃত শিক্ষা দেয়। আমাদের গৃহের বালিকাকে যদি তার পিতামাতারা একটা মহৎ পারিপার্শ্বিকতা (environments) র মধ্যে লালিত পালিত কর্তে পারেন, হিন্দুধর্মের মহৎ আদর্শ যদি তার বুকের মধ্যে প্রতিষ্ঠিত কর্তে পারেন তা হলে প্রেমচান্দ রায়চান্দ বৃন্তি প্রাণ্তি হিন্দু-রমণীও ঠিক আমাদের নিরক্ষরা ঠাকুরা ঠান্দিদিদের-মতই সুচারুরাপে গৃহস্থ-ধর্ম পালন কর্তে শিখবেন, এই আমার বিশ্বাস।

বাস্তবিক, হিন্দু-ধর্মের উচ্চ আদর্শ তুল্লে ত চলবে না ! বেদ বা উপনিষদের মধ্যে এই আদর্শটাকে আবদ্ধ করে রাখলে চলবে না, নিজের জীবনে এই আদর্শকে প্রাণময় করে তোলা দরকার। পাঞ্চাত্য দেশে শ্রী-পুরুষের বিবাহ হয় শুধু একটা যুক্তিকে ভিত্তি করে, কিন্তু হিন্দু-ধর্মের বিবাহ দেবতা সাক্ষী করে, শুধু এ জীবনেই আবদ্ধ নয় পরজীবনেও তার বন্ধন অমোঘ। শ্রী-পুরুষের সম্বন্ধ যে কত আপনার, কত নিকট, কত পরিত্র, হিন্দু-ধর্মের আদর্শ আমাদের তাই বুঝিয়ে দেয়। কুসংস্কার বা অজ্ঞতার মধ্যে এই আদর্শ যে কর্তৃছোট হয়ে যেতে পারে হিন্দুধর্মের বর্তমান অবস্থা তার পরিচয় দেয়। না হলে Pharisee দের মত নীতি না বুঝে কতকগুলো বাহ্যিক মন্ত্র আওরে যাই কেন ! যে দেশে বিশ্বারা গার্গী মৈত্রৈয়ীর জন্ম, সে দেশের পুরুষেরাও যে আজ নৈতিক ক্ষেত্রে এত নির্জীব হয়ে পড়েছেন এ অদৃষ্টের উপহাস ভিন্ন আর কিছুই নর্ব !

সুতরাং মেঘেদের জীবনের ভিতর যেমন দিয়ে আমরা একটা বড়ুরকমের আদর্শ প্রতিষ্ঠিত কর্তে চাই সেই আদর্শটাকে সফল করে তুলতে গেলে আমাদের পুরুষের জীবনের আদর্শটাকে আরও বড় করে তোলা উচিত।

এইখানেই সমস্যার মীমাংসা । এই আদর্শটা ভুলে গেছি বলেই বিদেশী শিক্ষা আমাদের যেন মরণ আলিঙ্গনেই জড়িয়ে ধরেছে ! ভারতবর্ষের ধর্মের আপন আদর্শ যা' তা জাগিয়ে তুলতে হবে, এইটে মনে করে রাখতে হবে যে,—

The India that for three thousand years if not more, had been creating abundantly with an inexhaustible many-sidedness republics, kingdoms and empires, philosophies, sciences and religions ; communities, societies and religious orders, laws codes and rituals, has yet her contribution to make to the world's civilisation.—The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 28-7-22.

প্রত্যেক মানুষের এই কথাগুলি মনে করে রাখা উচিত । আর একটা কথা । যারা সর্বতোভাবে সর্বস্থানে হিন্দুনারীকে স্বাধীনতা দিতে চান তাদের একথা ভুলে চলবে না যে স্বাধীনতা যথেচ্ছাচারিতা নয় । স্বাধীনতার একটা আদর্শ আছে যার বাইরে গেলে স্বাধীনতা যথেচ্ছাচারিতায় দাঢ়ায় । আমাদের হিন্দুধর্মের আদর্শ, নারী সামাজিক প্রচেষ্টা বা Social effort-এর কেন্দ্র । সামাজিক চেষ্টার কোনও পরিভাষা নেই, কিন্তু চারিধারে চাইলেই আমরা এর অর্থ বুঝতে পারি । পাশ্চাত্যধর্মের আদর্শ, মানুষমাত্রেই সামাজিক প্রচেষ্টার কেন্দ্র । আমাদের আদর্শ নারীধর্মের উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত । আমাদের ধর্ম matriarchal, তাই, বিশ্বক্রি বলে আমরা যাকে পূজা করি তিনি নারী । পাতির্বত্যের উপর যে আমরা অত জোর দিই সেও ওই জন্য । 'মাতৃবৎ পরদারেষু' যে একটা বাক্য আছে সেও ওই নারীধর্মের আদর্শেরই একটা দিক । নারীর পাতির্বত্য, —নারীর মাতৃধর্ম—তাকে সামাজিক প্রচেষ্টার কেন্দ্র করেছে ।

এই মহৎ আদর্শের সম্পূর্ণ অর্থ ভুললে চলবে না । কারণ, নারীসমস্যার মীমাংসা এইদিক থেকেই কর্তৃ হবে । যুরোপ বা আমেরিকার ধর্মের আদর্শ অনুসরণ করে যারা তাদের স্ত্রী কন্যাকে স্বাধীনতা দিতে ইচ্ছুক তারা গার্হস্থ্য জীবনে হয় ত একটা 'ট্র্যাজেডি' অবতারণা কর্তৃ প্রস্তুত । আমাদের হিন্দু-সমাজে কিন্তু তাতে সমস্যার মীমাংসা হবে না, বরং আরও জটিল হয়ে দাঢ়াবে । কারণ, একদিকে যেমন বিদেশী লীলার অবাধতরঙ্গ ছুটবে, আর একদিকে তেমনি নারীদের উপর অত্যাচারটা দ্বিগুণ হয়ে দাঢ়াবে । হিন্দুসমাজের কল্যাণ যাদের সাধনা, তাদের কেউই সমাজের এই অবস্থা আকাঙ্ক্ষা করেন না ।

নারীর উপর অত্যাচারের কথা বলতে গিয়ে আপনাদের সময়ও ধৈর্যের উপর বেশী অত্যাচার করে একটা বক্তৃতাসমস্তার স্থষ্টি কর্ব না । আমি শুধু আর একটা কথা বলতে চাই । একদল লোক আছেন যারা বলেন নারী অগ্রিকণা, তাকে বাইরে ছাড়লে সমস্ত সমাজে আগুণ লেগে যাবে । এই ধারণার ভিত্তি বোধ হয় বিলাতীসভ্যতার তাঁগুর নর্তন । তাঁরা বলেন, নারীকে স্বাধীনতা দিলে গৃহে হাহাকার স্থষ্টি করা হয় । তাতে আমার উত্তর এই, যে, এতকথা বল্বার পরও যদি তাঁদের এই ধারণা না দূর হয়ে থাকে তা হলে আমি নাচার । তাঁদেরই উপমাটা যদি একটু পরিবর্তন করে বলতে পারি তা হলে বলবো, নারী অগ্রিকণা নয়—অগ্রিশিখা, সে শিখা জাললে হিন্দুসমাজ আজ যে অন্ধকারে ডুবে গেছে সে অন্ধকারের জড়িমা দূর হয়ে যাবে ।

অগ্রিশিখা এস এস আনো আনো আলো !

স্বর্থে ছথে ঘরে ঘরে গৃহদীপ জ্বালো ।

আনো শক্তি আনো দীপ্তি,

আনো শাস্তি আনো তৃষ্ণি,

আনো মিঞ্চ ভালোবাসা আনো নিত্য ভালো ।

এস শৃঙ্গপথে বেয়ে এস হে কল্যাণী !

শুভ সুপ্তি শুভ জাগরণ দেহ আনি ।

ছুঁথ রাত্রে মাতৃবেশে,

জেগে থাকো নির্ণিমেষে

আনন্দ উৎসবে তব শুভ হাসি ঢালো ।

(শ্রীরবীজ্ঞনাথ ঠাকুর)

অণু-বাদ ও সৃষ্টি-রহস্য ।

স্বধীপাঠকবর্গের অনেকেই বোধ হয় অবগত আছেন যে আজকাল বিজ্ঞানে পদার্থের মূল উন্নাদানটা কি এবং পদার্থ কি ভাবে গঠিত তাহা অনেক সময়েই বলা হইয়া থাকে। যদি কোন পদার্থকে—যৌগিকই হউক আর মৌলিকই হউক—লইয়া ভাগ এবং বিভাগ করিতে থাকা যায় তবে আমরা শেষে কিরূপ অবস্থায় উপনীত হই? প্রথম প্রথম এই পদার্থের বড় বড় খণ্ড থাকে; ক্রমে তাহা ছোট হইতে হইতে শেষে এমন এক ক্ষুদ্র অংশে পরিণত হয় যে সেই অংশকে যদি পুনরায় ভাগ করিতে যাওয়া যায় তবে যে নৃতন অংশ পাওয়া যায়, তাহাতে আর পরীক্ষার্থে গৃহীত পদার্থের গুণ বর্তমান থাকে না,—উহা ভাঙ্গিয়া নৃতন এক মৌলিক পদার্থে, অথবা কতিপয় মৌলিক পদার্থে, পরিণত হয়। কোন পদার্থ ঘনে এই অবস্থায় উপনীত হয়, তখন তাহার এই অংশকে আমরা অণু (molecule) বলি। এই অণুকে যে ভাগ করার কথা বলা হইল তাহা আর সাধারণ ভাবে করা চলে না, উহাকে ভাগ করিতে হইলে গৃহীত পদার্থকে রাসায়নিক প্রক্রিয়ার অধীন অথবা অন্য কোন বিশেষ অবস্থার অধীন করিতে হয়। এইরূপে কোন অণু বিভক্ত হইলে তাহা পরমাণুতে (atom) পরিণত হয়, পরমাণু একা থাকিতে পারে না :—গঠিত হওয়ামাত্র উহা অবস্থা অনুসারে হয় কোন নৃতন যৌগিক পদার্থের অণুর স্ফুটি করে, না হয় মৌলিক পদার্থের অণুর স্ফুটি অবশ্যস্তাবী। পরমাণু সর্বদাই কোন না কোন মৌলিক পদার্থের অণুরই অংশ। যৌগিক পদার্থের অণুতে পরমাণু থাকে বটে কিন্তু তাহা প্রকৃতপক্ষে অন্য কোন মৌলিক পদার্থের অণুর অংশ।

স্বতরাং দেখা যাইতেছে যে অণুগুলি, পরমাণুর, এবং পদার্থ, অণুর সমষ্টিতে গঠিত। এতদিন পর্যন্ত পদার্থের গঠন এইরূপ বলিয়াই লোকের ধারণা ছিল। কিন্তু খন্ডীয় উনবিংশ শতাব্দীর শেষে নানা প্রকার বৈজ্ঞানিক উদ্ধাবনা এবং গবেষণার ফলে দেখা গিয়াছে যে পরমাণুই পদার্থের শেষ অবস্থা নহে। প্রত্যেক পরমাণু আবার কতকগুলি অতিপরমাণু (Electron) সমষ্টিতে গঠিত। এই পরমাণুগুলি অতি অতি ক্ষুদ্র ক্ষুদ্র ঋণতড়িৎ

(Negative Electricity) যুক্ত কণা বই আৰ কিছুই নহে। কতকটা ধন, তড়িৎকে (Positive electricity) কেন্দ্ৰ কৰিয়া তাহার চাৰিপাৰ্শ্বে এই অতি পৰমাণুগুলি নিৰতিশয় বেগে চক্ৰকাৰে ভ্ৰমণ কৰিতেছে। এইৱেপে পৰমাণুকে সৌৱজগতেৰ সঙ্গে তুলনা কৰা যাইতে পাৰে। বিভিন্ন পদাৰ্থেৰ পৰমাণুতে বিভিন্ন সংখ্যক অতিপৰমাণু আছে। কিন্তু কোন এক নিৰ্দিষ্ট পদাৰ্থেৰ পৰমাণুতে এই অতিপৰমাণুৰ সংখ্যা সৰ্বদাই এক।

এইৱেপে দেখা যাইতেছে যে বৰ্তমান বিজ্ঞানানুসাৰে জগতেৰ সমস্ত জড় পদাৰ্থই তাৰাদেৱ গঠনেৰ জন্ম হৃষিটী জিনিষেৰ নিকট থগী। প্ৰথমতঃ খণ্ড-তড়িৎ-বিশিষ্ট অতিপৰমাণু ও দ্বিতীয়তঃ কেন্দ্ৰস্থিত ধনতড়িৎ। এখন পৰ্যান্ত এৱেপ দেখা যায় নাই যে কেবল একটীমাত্ৰ উপাদানেৰ উপৱই সমস্ত পদাৰ্থেৰ গঠন নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে। অনেক বৈজ্ঞানিকই আশা কৰিয়াছিলেন এবং বোধ হয় এখনও আশা কৱেন যে আমাদেৱ জগৎ এবং বিশ্বব্ৰহ্মাণ্ডেৰ অনন্তপদাৰ্থ—ক্ষুদ্ৰাদপি-ক্ষুদ্ৰ বালুকাকণা হইতে অতি স্বৰূহৎ নক্ষত্ৰমণ্ডলাদি—সমস্তই একমাত্ৰ আদিম মৌলিক পদাৰ্থ হইতে উৎপন্ন, কিন্তু এ পৰ্যন্ত যাহা বলা হইয়াছে তাৰাতে দেখা যাইতেছে যে আমাদেৱ বৰ্তমান জ্ঞানানুসাৰে স্থষ্টিৰ জন্ম অন্ততঃ পক্ষে হৃষিটী পদাৰ্থেৰ দৰকাৰ ; যথা, খণ্ডতড়িৎ-যুক্ত অতিপৰমাণু ও কেন্দ্ৰীভূত ধনতড়িৎ, এই যে দৈধভাৱ ইহাই স্থষ্টিৰ-মূল ইহা ব্যতীত স্থষ্টি সম্ভবপৰ নহে।

অনেকে আবাৰ বলেন যে এই তড়িৎ-দ্বয় এক-আকাশ (Ether) হইতেই অবস্থাৰিষেষে উৎপন্ন, এখনেও অবস্থাৰ বিশেষ আছে ; অন্ততঃপক্ষে অবস্থাৰ দৈধভাৱ আছে—হই প্ৰকাৰ অবস্থায় হই তড়িতেৰ উৎপত্তি। অতএব বলিতে পাৱা যায় যে এক আকাশই জগতেৰ মূল উপাদান। কিন্তু ইহা এ পৰ্যন্ত নিঃসংশয়িতৱেপে নিৰপিত হয় মাই। অধিকন্তু, যদিও এৱেপ হয় তবে কে এই বিশেষ অবস্থাৰ সংঘটন কৱায়—বা কেন এৱেপ অবস্থা হয় ? সম্ভবতঃ ইহা কোন শক্তিৰ কাৰ্য্য ; শক্তি কোথা হইতে আসিল ? বলা যাইতে পাৰে এই বিশ্বব্ৰহ্মাণ্ডই শক্তিৰ আধাৰ এবং জগতেৰ সমস্তই শক্তিৰ কাৰ্য্য। তাহা হইলে ব্যাপারটা এইৱেপ দাঁড়াইল যে, “জগতেৰ স্থষ্টি জড়ৱেপ আকাশ এবং শক্তিৰ জীলা ;—শক্তিই জড়কে আশ্রয় কৰিয়া জগতেৰ সমস্ত ব্যাপারৰ সংঘটন কৱিতেছে। তবেই স্থষ্টিতে হৃষিটী পদাৰ্থ আসিতেছে ;—জড় এবং শক্তি। আমৱা পূৰ্বেই বলিয়াছি দৈধভাৱ না হইলে স্থষ্টি হইতে পাৱে না। বস্তুতঃ

ଅତ୍ୟେକ କର୍ମେହି କର୍ତ୍ତା ଏବଂ କରିବାର ବନ୍ଦ ଚାହିଁ । ହିନ୍ଦୁଶାସ୍ତ୍ରେ ଆଛେ ଯେ ଭଗବାନ ମାୟାକେ ଆଶ୍ରୟ କରିଯାଇ ଜଗତ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଯାଛେନ ଅଥବା ଜଗତ ପ୍ରକୃତି ଓ ପୁରୁଷେର ସମ୍ମିଳନେର ଫଳ । ଶିବ ଓ ଶତି, କୃଷ୍ଣ ଓ ରାଧା, ବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ- ଓ ନାରାୟଣ ପ୍ରଭୃତି, ପ୍ରକୃତି ଏବଂ ପୁରୁଷେରଇ ନାମାନ୍ତର ମାତ୍ର । ହିନ୍ଦୁଶାସ୍ତ୍ରେର ଗ୍ରହାଦିତେ କୋନ କୋନ ସ୍ଥଳେ ପ୍ରକୃତିକେ (ସଥା, କାଲିକା ପୁରାଣ) ଏବଂ କୋନ କୋନ ସ୍ଥଳେ ପୁରୁଷକେ (ସଥା, ବିଷ୍ଣୁପୁରାଣ) ପ୍ରଧାନ ସ୍ଥାନ ଦେଓଯା ହିଁଯାଛେ ଏବଂ ବଲା ହିଁଯାଛେ ଯେ ପ୍ରକୃତି ବା ପୁରୁଷ ହିଁତେ ସମସ୍ତ ଜଗତେର ଉତ୍ସପନ୍ତି ହିଁଯାଛେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ଜନ୍ମ ଦୁଇଟି ଜିନିଷେର ଦରକାର । ଶୁତରାଃ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରକୃତି ବା ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପୁରୁଷ ହିଁଲେ ଚଲିବେ ନା, —ସଦିଓ ପ୍ରକୃତି ଏବଂ ପୁରୁଷକେ ଏକତ୍ର କରିଯା ଏକ ମହାପୁରୁଷ ବା ଏକ ମହାପ୍ରକୃତିର କଲ୍ପନା କରା ଯାଇତେ ପାରେ ସାହା ହିଁତେ ବା ସାହାର ଦୈତ୍ୟଭାବ ହିଁତେ ଜଗତେର ଉତ୍ସପନ୍ତି, ଏଥାମେଇ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଏବଂ ଦର୍ଶନଶାସ୍ତ୍ର ଏକ ହିଁଯା ଯାଯ ଏବଂ ଏଥାମେଇ ସୃଷ୍ଟିର ମୀମାଂସା ।

ଶ୍ରୀନିବୀଗୋପାଳ ମୁଖୋପାଧ୍ୟାୟ ।

୫ମେ ବାର୍ଷିକ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ।

(ଫଳିତ ଗଣିତ) ।

সপ্তসিঞ্চু ।

এক্ষণে প্রায় সর্বসমতিক্রমে স্থির হইয়া গিয়াছে যে, হিমাচল পর্বত-শ্রেণীর দক্ষিণে “সুবাস্তু”নামক প্রদেশেই ভারতে আর্যগণের প্রাচীনতম আবাসভূমি ছিল। খক্সংহিতায় দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়—“সুবাস্তু অধিতুগ্নি” (৮।২।০।৩।৭)। যাক্ষ “সুবাস্তু নামে নদী” বলিয়া এই খক্ষ ব্যাখ্যা করিয়াছেন। বোধ হয় এই নদীর তীরে বাস্তু বা বাসভূমি অতি সুন্দর ছিল, তাই উহার নাম সুবাস্তু। পাণিনির “সুবাস্তুদিভ্যোহণ” (৪।২।৭৭), এই সূত্র হইতে বুঝা যায় যে এই প্রদেশ পাণিনির ও বিশেষ বিজ্ঞাত ছিল। Cunningham সাহেব বলেন যে আধুনিক “স্বাত” বা “সুবাত” (Swat) নদীই বৈদিকযুগের সুবাস্তু। তবে এ সম্বন্ধে নিশ্চয় কিছুই নাই—এ একটা অনুমানমাত্র। আর এ বিষয়ে বিশেষ আলোচনারও আপাততঃ কোন প্রয়োজন নাই।

তাহার পর আর্য্যাবাস যখন বহুবিস্তৃত হইয়া উঠিল, তখন ইহা “ত্রিসপ্ত-নদীবেষ্টিত” বলিয়া খক্সংহিতায় বর্ণনা পাওয়া যায়। শাকলসংহিতার দশমমণ্ডলে নয়টি খক্ষ লইয়া একটি সূক্ত আছে তাহাকে সাধারণতঃ “নদীস্তুতি” নামে অভিহিত করা হইয়া থাকে। এই সূক্তটি হইতে তদানীন্তন আর্য্যাবর্তের প্রধান প্রধান নদীগুলির এককূপ বিবরণ পাওয়া যায়। উহার পঞ্চমখকটিই সমধিক প্রসিদ্ধ। নিম্নে তাহা উক্ত করা হইতেছে—

“ইমং মে গঙ্গে যমুনে সরস্বতি শুভুদ্রি স্ত্রোমং সচতা পৰুষ্য।
অসিঙ্গ্য মরুদ্ধে বিতস্তয়াজীকীয়ে শৃণুহা সুষোময়া ॥”

এই নদীগুলির মধ্যে প্রথমোল্লিখিতা গঙ্গা। আমাদের সকলেরই সুপরিচিত।—যমুনা তাহারই উপনদী—যমুনাকেও প্রায় সর্বসাধারণেই চিনেন। ইহাদের কিছু পশ্চিমে সরস্বতী এককালে প্রবাহিতা ছিল—এখন প্রায় লুপ্ত হইয়া গিয়াছে। আরও বহুপশ্চিমে অধুনাতন পঞ্জাবে শুভুদ্রী—এখন ইহাই শতদ্রু। ইহার কিছু পশ্চিমে পৰুষ্য। যাক্ষের সময় ইহারই নাম হয় ইরাবতী (নিরুক্ত ৯। ৩। ৫)—এখনও সেই ইরাবতীনামই প্রচলিত আছে।) “ইরাবতী” নামটি যদিও খক্সংহিতায় কয়েক স্থলে দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়,

তথাপি ভাষ্যকার সেই সমস্ত স্থলেই অন্তরূপ অর্থ করিয়াছেন দেখিয়া বোধ হয় যে সংহিতাকালে পরুষ্ণীর নাম ইরাবতী ছিল না। ঐতরেয় ব্রাহ্মণে—দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় “ঐরাবতীং নাবং পারকামাঃ সমারোহেযঃ” (৯।৪।৫)। এই সকল ব্যাপার দেখিয়া স্পষ্টই বোধ হয় যে ব্রাহ্মণযুগেরও পর হইতে ইহার নাম ইরাবতী হইয়াছে। [ইরাবতীরও পশ্চিমে অসিঙ্গু—আধুনিক চন্দ্রভাগা। আরও পশ্চিমে বিষ্ণু—এ বিতস্তা নাম আর পরিবর্তিত হয় নাই। এই ইরাবতী, চন্দ্রভাগা ও বিতস্তা কিছু দক্ষিণে আসিয়া একত্রে মিলিত হইয়াছে। এই তিনটির মিলনোৎপন্ন মহানদী মালবদ্বৈশীয় ক্ষেপ-পুরের পশ্চিম দিক দিয়া দক্ষিণাভিমুখে প্রবাহিত হইয়াছে দেখা যায়। সন্তুতঃ সে সময়ে ইহারই নাম ছিল মরুদ্ধুধা। শতক্র কথা পূর্বেই বলা হইয়াছে। এই শতক্র উত্তর দিকে প্রবাহিত হইয়া ক্রমশঃ পশ্চিমে আসিয়া যে নদীটি উহার সহিত মিশিয়াছে তাহারই নাম আর্জীকীয়া।] প্রাচীনতর কালে ইহাকেই উকঞ্জিরা বলিত। যাক্ষের সময় ইহা বিপাট় নামে প্রসিদ্ধিলিল। অমরকোষে পাওয়া যায় “বিপাশা তু বিপাট স্ত্রিয়াম্”। [সুতরাং এই আর্জী-কীয়াই আমাদের বিপাশা। তাহার বহু পশ্চিমে সুযোমা—তক্ষশিলা প্রদেশের দক্ষিণ দিক দিয়া প্রবাহিতা হইয়া ইহা সিঙ্গুর সহিত মিশিয়াছে। যাক্ষের মতে সুযোমাই সিঙ্গু।] কারণ, নিরুক্তমধ্যে “অভিপ্রস্তুবস্তি” পদটি হইতেই দেখা যায় যে অন্ত অনেকগুলি নদী আসিয়া ইহার সহিত মিলিয়াছে। কিন্তু একুপ মত নিতান্ত দুষ্ট বলিয়াট বোধ হয়। অন্তান্ত প্রত্নতাত্ত্বিকগণ ও কেহই এ মত গ্রহণ করেন নাই। বৃত্তিকারের মতে মরুদ্ধুধা কোন বিশেষ নদীর নাম নহে। অন্ত নদীগুলির পরিচায়ক বিশেষণ মাত্র। [কিন্তু তাহা হইলেও আমরা পাই নয়টি নদীর নাম। সুতরাং “সপ্তসিঙ্গু” কথাটির তাৎপর্য রক্ষিত হইল কৈ?] এছলে সায়ণের ভাষ্য অতি চমৎকার! তিনি মরুদ্ধুধাকে সংজ্ঞা বলিয়াই গ্রহণ করিয়া বলিতেছেন— “অত্ব প্রধানভূতাঃ সপ্ত নঃ, তদবয়বভূতা নয়স্তিস্ত্রস্ত্রযন্তে।” (এখন এই সাতটি প্রধানই বা কি কি?) তাহার উত্তরে ধরিয়াছেন—প্রধান নদীগুলিকেই সম্বোধন করা হইয়াছে আর অপ্রধানগুলি তৃতীয়ান্ত অবস্থায় আছে। পরুষ্ণ্য অবশ্য এছলে তৃতীয়ান্ত নহে। কারণ পদপাঠে “পরুষ্ণি। আ” এইকুপ বিভাগ করা আছে। (সুতরাং সায়ণমতে নদীগুলির নাম নিম্নে দেওয়া হইতেছে।

১। গঙ্গা । ২। যমুনা । ৩। সরস্বতী । ৪। শুতুর্দ্বী । ৫।
অসিক্রীযুক্তা পরুষ্ণী । ৬। বিতস্তাযুক্তা মরুদ্বী (চন্দ্রভাগা?) । ৭।
সুষোমা (সিঞ্চু?) যুক্তা আজীকীয়া । সায়ণ অবশ্য সুষোমাকেই সিঞ্চু
বলিয়া ধরিয়াছেন ।) তাহাতে দাঁড়াইয়াছে এই যে বিপাশাই যেন সাক্ষাৎ
ভাবে সিঞ্চুর সহিত মিশিয়াছে । আর এদিকে মানচিত্র হইতে ও প্রায়
অনেকটা এই জিনিষই দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় । প্রথমে যদি ধরা যায় যে
বিতস্তা চন্দ্রভাগাতে গিয়া পড়িয়াছে; তারপর বিতস্তাযুক্তা চন্দ্রভাগা ও
ইরাবতী একত্র মিলিতা হইয়া বিপাশায় গিয়া পড়িয়াছে । শতক্রও বিপাশায়
আসিয়া পড়িয়াছে । এবং পরিশেষে শুধু এক বিপাশাই সাক্ষাৎভাবে
সিঞ্চুতে গিয়া মিশিয়াছে । সুতরাং কোনটি কোনটিতে গিয়া পড়িল এ
সম্বন্ধে মতভেদ হইলেও সায়ণ যে বেশ চতুরতার সহিত ব্যাখ্যা শেষ
করিয়াছেন ইহা স্বীকার করিতেই হইবে ।

(পূজনীয় সত্যব্রত সামগ্রমী মহোদয় তাঁহার “ঐতরেয়ালোচন” নামক-
গ্রন্থে এই সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার মত উল্লেখ করিয়াছেন । তাঁহার মতানুসারে সাতটি
নদী যথাক্রমে ১। গঙ্গা । ২। যমুনা । ৩। সরস্বতী । ৪। শতক্র ।
৫। মরুদ্বী নামক অসিক্রী, পরুষ্ণী ও বিতস্তার মিলনে উৎপন্না নদী । ৬।
আজীকীয়া । ৭। সুষোমা ।) এপছোও মেহাত মন্দ নয় । ইহাতে সকল-
দিকই বজায় থাকে, তবে এ সম্বন্ধে কোনই স্থিরতা নাই ।

যাস্ক তাঁহার নিরুক্ত মধ্যে নদীগুলির বৃৎপত্তিগত অর্থ ও তৎসমৰ্দ্ধীয়
বৈদিক বা পৌরাণিক যাহাকিছু ইতিহাস আছে সে সমস্তেরই উল্লেখ
করিয়াছেন । তাঁহার বৃৎপত্তি প্রদর্শন ছই একস্থলে একটু অন্তু গোছের
হইলেও মোটের উপর বেশ উপভোগ্য বটে । তবে এপ্রবন্ধে সে সম্বন্ধে
বিশেষ আলোচনা করিবার আবশ্যক নাই । অল্পসন্ধিৎসুগণ অনায়াসেই
নিরুক্ত হইতে উহা সংগ্রহ করিতে পারেন ।

তারপর আমরা দেখিতে পাই যে Sir M. Aurel Stein Bhandarkar
Commemoration Volume এ “On some river names in the Rig-
veda” নামক প্রবন্ধে এ বিষয়টি উখাপিত করিয়াছেন । তাঁহার মত কিছু
কিছু নিম্নে উক্ত করা যাইতেছে—

“—Professor Roth, who was the first to discuss the passage

critically in his epochmaking treatise *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Weda* (1846) pp. 136 Sqq., was justified in looking for the three rivers Parusni, Marudvridhā and Āsikni, which figure in the list between them (the first four) and the Vitastā,..... Guided by this sure indication he succeeded in correctly identifying the Asikni with the Chenāb or Chandrabhāgā, whose classical name Akesines is undoubtedly derived from the Vedic by a kind of “popular etymology” attested in a gloss of Hesychios

No Such definite evidence is available regarding the Parusni, in which Roth following Yaska's Nirukta, ix, 26, was prepared to recognise the Irāwati.....

As regards Marudvridhā, which figures in the list between the Asikni : Akesines and the Vitasta : Hydaspes, and is nowhere else mentioned in the Vedic Literature, Roth had to content himself with the conjectural suggestion that by it may be meant the united course of the Akesines and the Hydaspes.” (B. C. Volume pp. 21-22).

যদি আমরা একটু বিশেষভাবে পাঞ্জাবের মানচিত্র পর্যালোচনা করি, এবং আক্রমধ্যেই নদীগুলির যে ক্রম দেওয়া আছে তাহাকেই যদি বাস্তবিক নদীগুলির ভৌগোলিক ক্রম বলিয়া স্বীকার করি, তবে স্পষ্টই দেখা যায় যে চৰ্জনভাগ ও বিতস্তার মধ্যবর্তী প্রদেশ এতই সঙ্কীর্ণ যে উহার মধ্যে মরুদ্ধানামক খুব বড় একটি নদীর স্থান সঞ্চুলান হওয়া অসম্ভব। স্তুতরাং মরুদ্ধাকে কোন বড় নদী না বলিয়া ছোট খাট একটি পাহাড়িয়া নদী বলা চলিতে পারে। Stein সাহেব তাহার প্রবন্ধে এই কথাই বলিয়াছেন—

“If we pay attention to the position occupied by the name Marudvridhā in the list, and bear in mind the fact that the narrow Doab between the Chenāb and Jehlam leaves no room for any stream to descend independently to the Indus, it is obvious that we have to look for Marudvridhā either among the western main tributaries of the Chenāb or else among those, which join the Jehlam from the last. Now, among all the affluents in question there is none comparable in importance

and volume to the glacierfed river which joins the right-bank of the Chenāb or Chandrābhagā, as it is still known in the mountains, in the alpine territory of Kishtwār, and which in the Survey of India maps is shown as the “Maroowardhan River.” (B. C. Volume pp. 22-23).

তার পর Stein সাহেব “মরুবর্দ্ধন” নাম হইতে মরুবর্দ্ধা নাম কিরণে উৎপন্ন হইতে পারে সে সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা অনেক করিয়াছেন। সে সব নৌস �Philology-র কথা এস্থলে নিতান্ত অশোভন ও বিরক্তিকর হইতে পারে বলিয়া উল্লেখিত হইল না।

তাহার পর সুষোমা। এসম্বন্ধে আমদের নিজস্ব ও যাক্ষের মত পূর্বেই উল্লেখিত হইয়াছে। সুষোমাকে সিঙ্গু বলিয়া মনে করা চলিতে পারে না—সুতরাং যাক্ষের মত কিছু দৃষ্ট বলিয়া বোধ হয়। Stein সাহেবের অভিমতও এইরূপ। তিনি আধুনিক রাওলপিণ্ডির নিম্নপ্রদেশে প্রবাহিতা সিঙ্গুসঙ্গতা “সোহান” নদীটিকেই সুষোমা বলিয়াছেন—

“The last of them is Susoma found likewise in a few other Rigveda passages, and for this Vivien de Saint Martin long ago indicated what appears to me correct identification. He took it to be the present Sohan River (also spelt Suwan), which flows from the outer Hazāra hills through the Rawalpindi District and reaches the Indus north of the Salt range” (B. C. Volume pp. 26).

এখন বাকী রহিল কেবল আর্জীকীয়া। সুষোমা বা সোহান প্রাচীন সপ্তনদ প্রদেশের স্বদূর পশ্চিমে প্রবাহিত ছিল। সুতরাং আর্জীকীয়ার পক্ষে সুষোমার পশ্চিমে যাওয়া সম্ভব হইতে পারে না। বিশেষতঃ একটু সূক্ষ্মভাবে সূক্ষ্মটি পর্যালোচনা করিলে বেশ স্পষ্টই প্রতীয়মান হয় যেন কোন বহুদর্শী পরিব্রাজক ক্রমশঃ পূর্ব হইতে পশ্চিমে চলিতে চলিতে নদীগুলির নাম লিপিবদ্ধ করিয়াছেন। অপর সকল নদীর বেলায় যখন এই ক্রম রক্ষিত হইল, তখন হঠাতে আর্জীকীয়ার বেলাতেই যে এ ক্রম নষ্ট হইবে, ইহা যেন কিরণ বিসদৃশ বোধ হয়। সুতরাং বিতস্তা ও সুষোমার মধ্যস্থলেই আর্জীকীয়ার অবস্থান একমাত্র সম্ভব হইতে পারে। কিন্তু বিতস্তা ও সোহানের মধ্যস্থলে উল্লেখযোগ্য কোন নদীই দৃষ্ট হয় না। সুতরাং বিতস্তার কোন উপনদীরই নাম আর্জীকীয়া হওয়া

সন্তুষ্ট। এখন দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় যে Jehlam নগরের উত্তরে পার্বত্য প্রদেশ হইতে বাহির হইবার পূর্বেই বিতস্তা বেশ ছাইটি বড় বড় উপনদীর সহিত মিলিত হইয়াছে। ইহাদের একটির নাম ‘কিষণগঙ্গা’ বা ‘কৃষ্ণা’ ও অপরটির নাম ‘কুনার’। ইহাদের কোনটিরই আর্জীকীয়া হওয়া সন্তুষ্ট। Stein সাহেব বলিতেছেন—

“—One is Kishangangā the Krisnā of the Rājtarangini which drains the high snowy ranges north of Kashmir and at the confluence, near Muzaffarābād, rivals the Vitastā in volume. The other is the Kunhār River, Alberuni's Kusnāri, which gathers the mountain streams of the big Kāghān Valley in the north and joins the Vitastā some five miles below Muzaffarābād. Both Kishangangā and Kunhār would be important enough to figure in our Vedic “Catalogue of Rivers”; but I am quite unable to trace in the case of either, any designation ancient or modern that might be connected with the name Arjikiyā (B. C. Volume (pp. 26-27).

এসমৰক্ষে আমাদের ছাইটি আপত্তি আছে। প্রথমতঃ কিষণগঙ্গাকে মোজাফ্ফরবাদের সম্মিলিতে বিতস্তার সহিত মিলিত হইতে দেখা যাইলেও উহার পাঁচ মাইল নিম্নে কুনার নামে কোন নদীকে মিশিতে দেখা যায় না। বরং কুনার নামে একটি নদী স্বাতন্ত্র্যের পশ্চিমে আধুনিক কাবুল নদীর সহিত মিলিত হইয়াছে দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়। দ্বিতীয়তঃ যদিই বা কোন নদী বিতস্তার সহিত ঐস্থানে মিলিত হইয়া থাকে তাহা হইলেও তাহাকে আর্জীকীয়া বলিতে পারা যায় না। কারণ ঐরূপস্থলে তেমন বড় বা মাঝারি কোনরূপ নদীর চিহ্নমাত্রও নাই। যদি কোন কৃত্তিকার্য পার্বত্যনদী আসিয়া মিশিয়া থাকে তাহা হইলে তাহাকে বৈদিকযুগের আর্জীকীয়া বলা কতদূরা সমীচীন হইতে পারে তাহা পাঠকেরাই বিচার করিবেন। তৃতীয়তঃ যদি বা Stein সাহেবের কথাই মানিয়া লই এবং বাস্তবিকই যদি তাহার কৃষ্ণা বা কুনারের কোনটিই প্রাচীন আর্জীকীয়া হয়, তবে আর একটি প্রসিদ্ধ নদীর কথা আমাদিগকে ভুলিয়া যাইতে হয়। এই নদীটি বিপাশা। ইহা অবশ্য বিতস্তা, চন্দ্রভাগা ও ইরাবতীর পূর্বে অবস্থিত ও শতক্র সহিত মিলিত। ইহাকে আর্জীকীয়া বলিয়া ধরিলে “পূর্ব হইতে পশ্চিম” এই ক্রম ভঙ্গ হয়।

তাহাও স্বীকার করি কিন্তু, কৃষ্ণা, কুনার বা এই অঞ্চলের অগ্রান্ত অবশিষ্ট নদীগুলির মধ্যে ইহাই বৃহত্তম ও উহাদের মধ্যে সর্বাপেক্ষা প্রসিদ্ধ। প্রাচীনত্বেও ইহার বড় অল্প নহে। অমরসিংহের যুগে এ নদী বেশ প্রসিদ্ধ ছিল বলিয়া প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায়। তাহার বহু পুর্বে যাক্ষও আর্জীকীয়াকে বিপাশা নামহই প্রদান করিয়াছেন। স্বতরাং এই tradition একেবারে উড়াইয়া দেওয়া চলে না। স্বতরাং প্লোকস্থ ক্রম রক্ষা করিতে গিয়া এরূপ যা তা' কষ্টকল্পনা করা উচিত নহে। Stein সাহেব যে “শ্রুতি”রক্ষা করিবার জন্যই এচেষ্টা করিয়াছেন তাহাতে কোনই সন্দেহ নাই কারণ তাহার নিম্নোক্ত উক্তি হইতে ইহা বেশ স্পষ্ট বুঝা যায়। তবে এ ক্রম ভঙ্গ করিলেই যে “শ্রুতি”বিরোধ হয় তাহারও কোন অর্থ নাই। কারণ শ্রুতিতে এমন কিছু বলা নাই যে এই নদীগুলির ক্রম খাকের ক্রম অনুসারেই স্থির করিতে হইবে। নদীস্তুতির রচয়িতা বা দ্রষ্টা যে সর্বত্রই এই ক্রম বজায় রাখিতে পারিয়াছেন তাহাতেও যথেষ্ট সন্দেহ আছে। অবশ্য অধিকাংশস্থলেই এক্রম বজায় থাকিলেও সর্বত্রই যে এই ক্রম বজায় থাকা উচিত এমনও কোন অর্থ নাই। নদীস্তুতিকার কিন্তু পাঞ্জাবের একখানি মানচিত্র সম্মুখে রাখিয়া ঝক্কযোজনা করেন নাই। তাহার উপর ছন্দের অনুরোধে ক্রমের ইতরবিশেষ ঘটা খুবই সন্তুষ্ট। Stein সাহেবও প্রকারান্তরে এই কথাই বলিয়াছেন। তিনি বলেন যে মানচিত্র সম্মুখে না থাকিলে ঝক্করচয়িতার যথেষ্ট ভূগোলজ্ঞানের পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। স্বতরাং বিশ্বত্বিক্রমে যে এই ইতরবিশেষ ঘটিয়াছে ইহা তিনি স্বীকার করিতে চান না। তবে শেষেক্ষণে প্রশ্নটির কোন উত্তর দিতে না পারিয়া তিনি বলিয়াছেন—

“It is safe to assume the same facility of obtaining exact information in ancient times, so that the only difficulty which the composer of the Hymn is likely to have experienced when recording the river names, was how to fit their sequence with his metre” (B. C. Volume. P. 28)

(ইহা ত হইল “সিন্ধুর” পূর্ব-পারস্থ সপ্তসিন্ধু প্রদেশের কথা। এইরূপ আর একটি সপ্তসিন্ধুপ্রদেশ “সিন্ধু”র পশ্চিমেও অবস্থিত ছিল। কারণ নদীস্তুতির ঘটকে আমরা দেখিতে পাই—

“ত্রষ্টাময়া প্রথমং যাতবে সজুঃ সুসর্বীঁ রসয়া শ্বেত্যাত্যা !

তঁ সিঙ্কো কুভয়া গোমতীঁ কুমুং মেহন্তুঁ সরথং যাত্বিরীয়সে ॥”

ইহাদের মধ্যে ১। তৃষ্ণামা, ২। সুসতু, ৩। রসা, ৪। শ্বেতী, ৫। কুভা, ৬। গোমতী, ৭। মেহত্ত্বযুক্তা কুমু এই সাতটি সিঙ্গুর পশ্চিমে পূর্বে দক্ষিণাভিমুখে প্রবাহিত। ইহাদের মধ্যে চিত্রলদেশের পূর্ববর্তাগে প্রবাহিতা পঞ্চকোর প্রদেশস্থা ত্র্যবয়বা নদীই “তৃষ্ণামা”। “সুসতু” স্বাস্ত্রর নামান্তর, ইহা আধুনিক “স্বাদ”। রসা স্বাস্ত্রের বহু উত্তরে প্রবাহিতা অতি প্রচণ্ডবেগে নদী। বস্তুতঃ স্বাস্ত্রপ্রদেশের উত্তর সীমা রসা দ্বারাই নির্ণীত হইত। অধুনাতন ডেরাইশ্বাইল থাঁ প্রদেশস্থা অর্জুনী নদীই “শ্বেতী” “কুভা” আধুনিক “কাবুল” নদী, এই নদীর কিয়দংশই আবার স্বাস্ত্রপ্রদেশের পশ্চিমসীমা স্থির করিত। “কুমু” আধুনিক “কুরম”—ইহার কিয়দংশ ছিল স্বাস্ত্র দক্ষিণ সীমা। “গোমতী” আজকাল “গোমল” নামে প্রসিঙ্গ। এই সাতটি নদীই সাঙ্গাং বা পরম্পরা ক্রমে সিঙ্গুর সহিত সম্প্রিলিত হইয়াছে।)

সুতরাং দেখা যাইতেছে যে চিত্রলপ্রদেশের পূর্বে, বেলুচিস্থানের কিছু উত্তরে এবং ভারতের উত্তরপশ্চিমে যে সুবিস্তীর্ণ পুরাতন আর্য্যাবর্তাংশ অবস্থিত ছিল তাহাকে পশ্চিমসপ্তসিঙ্গু প্রদেশ বলা যাইতে পারে। পূর্ব-সপ্তনদপ্রদেশের অন্তর্গত পাঞ্চাব এখন যেমন প্রসিঙ্গ, পশ্চিমসপ্তনদপ্রদেশের অন্তর্গত পঞ্চকোর প্রদেশও এখন তেমনই প্রসিঙ্গ। এখন ইহা “আফ্গান” রাজ্যাস্তুর্ত ও ভারতের সীমা বহিভূত হইলেও পূর্বে ইহা যে ভারতেরই অন্তর্গত ছিল তাহাতে কোনই সন্দেহ নাই। সুতরাং পশ্চিম সপ্তনদপ্রদেশের অন্তর্গত গাঙ্কারাদিদেশকে যে আর্য্যাবর্তের অন্তর্গত ধরা যায় তাহাতেও কোন সন্দেহ থাকিতে পারে না।

অতীব আশ্চর্যের বিষয় এই যে, পূর্ব ও পশ্চিম এই দুইটি বিভিন্ন সপ্তনদ প্রদেশের বর্ণনাতেও স্মৃতিশু সকল নদীর নাম শেষ হয় না। (সপ্তম ও অষ্টম সংখ্যক ঋক পড়িলে বেশ বুরা যায় যে সিঙ্গুর পূর্বে ও পশ্চিম পার্শ্ব নাতীত উত্তরেও আর একটি সপ্তসিঙ্গু প্রদেশ ছিল। কারণ সপ্তম ও অষ্টম ঋকের নদী-গুলি সবই উত্তরাংশে প্রবাহিত। তাহাদের মধ্যে “উর্ণাবতী” কৈলাশ-পর্বতের নিম্নে উর্ণা নামক ভূভাগে প্রবাহিত। “হিরণ্যধী” “বাজিমীবতী”, ও “সৌলগাবতী” এই তিনটি নদী অতি উত্তরে প্রবাহিত। “চিত্রা” নামক নদীটি চিত্রল প্রদেশ হইতে আসিয়া কুভার সহিত মিলিত হইয়াছে। “এন্নী”

নদী নিম্ন বেলুচিষ্ঠানে প্রবাহিতা । আর “ঝাজীতী” নদীও চিত্রার অতি নিকটেই প্রবাহিতা । এ নদীগুলি অপেক্ষাকৃত ক্ষুদ্রকায়া ও অপ্রসিদ্ধা ।

এই তিনটি বিভিন্ন সপ্তসিদ্ধি প্রদেশের মেরুদণ্ডস্বরূপে অবস্থান করিতেছেন “সিদ্ধুনন্দ ।” (“সুযোমার” “সিদ্ধু” না হওয়ার ইহাও অপর একটি কারণ বলিয়া ধরা যাইতে পারে ।) এই নদীগুলির সকলের অপেক্ষা বৃহত্তমও এই সিদ্ধুনন্দ । আর ত্রিনদীগুলি সকলেই সিদ্ধুসম্পিলিতা । পূর্ববর্ণিত সূক্তের প্রথম খকের পরার্দ্ধে বলা হইয়াছে যে—

“প্রসপ্ত-সপ্ত ত্রেধা হি চক্রমুঃ প্রস্তুরীণা-মতি সিদ্ধুরোজসা ।”

অর্থাৎ নদীগুলি সাতটি সাতটি করিয়া তিনটি দলে বিভক্ত হইয়া প্রবাহিত হইয়াছে । এই সকল নদীর মধ্যে বলাতিশায়ে সিদ্ধুই সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ।

আবার চতুর্থ খকে এই সিদ্ধুকে কখন ত্রিসপ্তসিদ্ধুর পুত্র, কখন বা তাহা-দিগের রাজা বলিয়া বর্ণনা করা হইয়াছে । সে ঋক্তি নিম্নে উক্ত করা হইয়াছে—

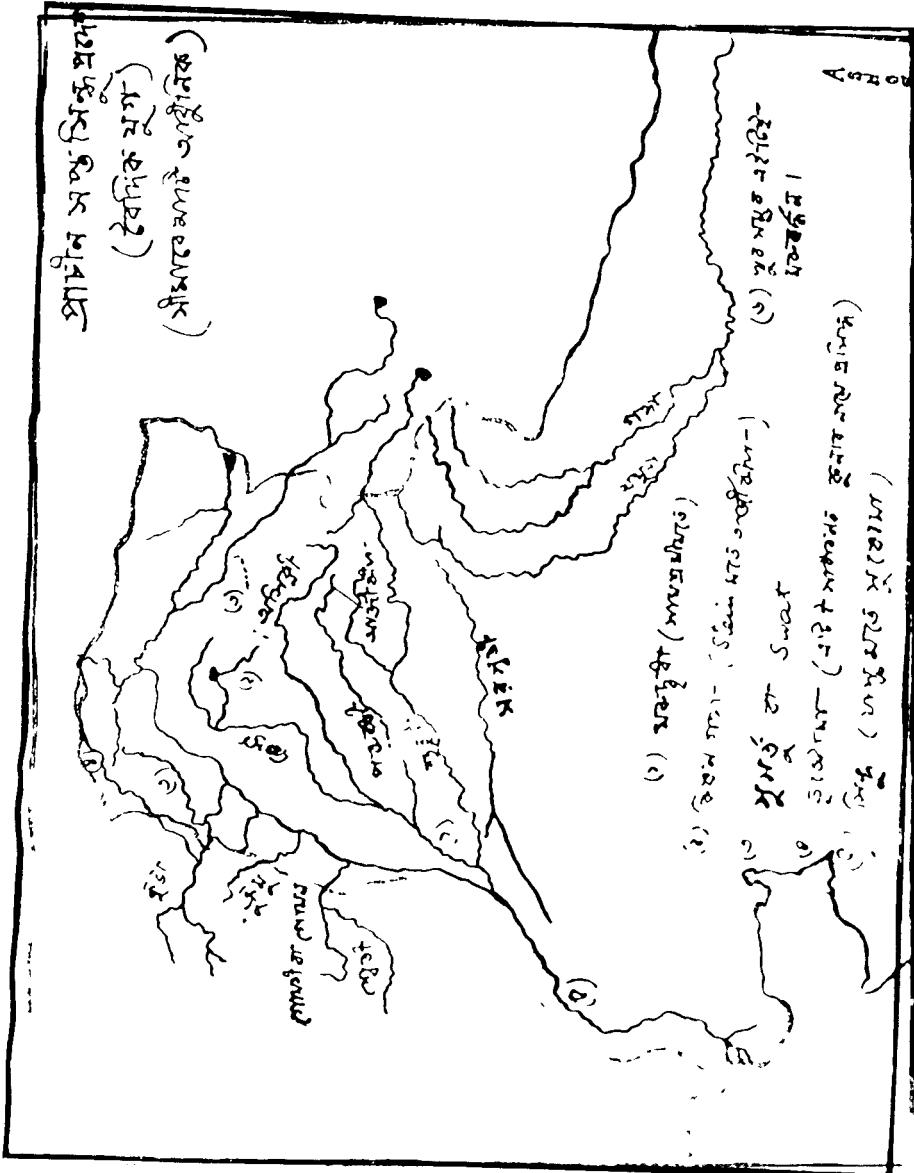
“অভি তা সিদ্ধো শিশুমির মাতরো
বাঞ্ছা অর্ঘন্তি পয়সেব ধেনবঃ ।
রাজেব যুধ্বা নয়সি ত্রমিং সিচৌ
যদাসামগ্রং প্রবত-মিনক্ষসি” ॥

অর্থাৎ মাতা যেমন শিশুকে (ছুঁপান করাইতে ইচ্ছুক হইয়া তদভিমুখে গমন করেন), অচিরপ্রস্তুতা স্বশব্দকারীগী ছুঁঁতী গাভী যেমন (বৎসকে ছুঁঁপান করাইতে ইচ্ছুক হইয়া তদভিমুখে গমন করে), তেমনই এই ত্রিসপ্তনদী (জলপান করাইতে ইচ্ছুক হইয়া) তোমার অভিমুখে গমন করে । তুমি যুদ্ধ-কারী রাজার মত এই নদীর দল ত্রইটিকে সেনানিবেশস্থানের মত, প্রেরণ কর, কারণ তুমি এই প্রবহমান নদীগণের অগ্রণীস্বরূপ ।

এই সমস্ত বৃত্তান্ত একটু বিশেষভাবে পর্যালোচনা করিলে দেখা যায় যে এই ত্রিসপ্তনদপ্রদেশই প্রাচীন বৈদিক যুগের খ্যাগণের আবাসস্থল ছিল । অতএব ইহাকেই বৈদিকযুগের অর্যাবাস নিঃসংক্ষেপে বলা যাইতে পারে ।

কিন্তু ইহা ছাড়াও আর একটি কথা আছে । সপ্তসিদ্ধি সম্বন্ধে বা সপ্তনদ-প্রদেশ সম্বন্ধে মূল বেদের সংহিতা অংশ হইতে যাহা কিছু এপর্যন্ত গবেষণা

ମହାଭାରତରେ କୌଣସି କରିବାର ପରିମାଣ



দ্বারা জানা গিয়াছে তৎসমস্তই সংক্ষেপে এককথ বলা হইয়াছে। 'সপ্তসিন্ধু' কথাটি বেদে "সাতটি নদী" এই—অর্থেই ব্যবহৃত হইয়াছে। "সপ্তসিন্ধু" কথাটির প্রয়োগেও বড় কমন্ত্রে নাই। একজায়গায় বলা হইয়াছে ইন্দ্র সপ্তসিন্ধুকে প্রবাহিত করাইয়াছেন—“অবামজঃ সর্তবে সপ্তসিন্ধুন्” (১।৩২।১২)। আবার বলা হইয়াছে যে সূর্যের কিরণ আটদিক্. তিনলোক ও সপ্তসিন্ধুকে আলোকিত করে—

“অষ্টৌ ব্যথ্যৎ কুত্তঃ পৃথিব্যা স্তী ধৰ্ম যোজনা সপ্তসিন্ধুন্ত।”
(১।৩৫।৮)

আবার অপরত্ব বলা হইয়াছে সপ্তমহাসিন্ধু সমুদ্রাভিমুখে ধাবিত হয়—

“সমুদ্রং ন শ্রবতঃ সপ্ত যহুৰীঃ”। (১।৭।৭)

এই সকল স্থলে সাধারণতঃ পাঞ্চাবের বিতস্তা, অসিরী, পরুষ্ণী, বিপাশা, শুভুজী, সিন্ধু ও সরস্বতী এই সাতটিকেই সপ্তসিন্ধু বলিয়া ধরা হয়। কোন কোন টীকাকার সরস্বতীর পরিবর্তে কুভাকে গ্রহণ করিয়া থাকেন। যদি কোনওরূপে গণনায় সাতটি মিলাইয়া দেওয়াই একমাত্র উদ্দেশ্য হয়, তবে এ মতবিভেদ লইয়া অনর্থক শুষ্কবিবাদে কোন ফল নাই। আমরা বরং গঙ্গা, যমুনা ও সিন্ধুর পাঁচটি উপনদী—এই সাতটিকে সপ্তসিন্ধু বলিতে রাজী আছি। তবে উপরিউক্ত শ্রান্তিগুলির মধ্যে (১।৩৫।৮) সংখাক ঝক্টি দেখিয়া মনে কেমন একটু সন্দেহের আবির্ভাব হয়। এই সমস্ত ব্যাপার আলোচনা করিয়া (পূজনীয় স্বর্গত বালগঙ্গাধরতিলক মহোদয় এই সপ্তসিন্ধুকে 'স্বর্গস্থ সপ্তনদী' বলিয়া পরিকল্পনা করিয়াছেন) এসবক্ষে তাঁহার মতাদি (Arctic Home. P 288ff.) এবং একটুব্য। (তাঁহার এ অনুমান কতদূর সত্য তহা বলা বড় কঠিন। Traditionকে বিশ্বাস করিতে হইলে অবশ্য তিলকের বাক্য বিশেষ অসঙ্গত বোধ হয় না। কিন্তু সপ্তসিন্ধু বলিতে যে কেবল স্বর্গস্থ সপ্তসিন্ধুকেই বুঝাইবে এমনও কোন অর্থ নাই। ঝাঁঝেদে এমন একটি ঝুক্ত আছে যাহা পড়িলে স্পষ্টই মনে হয় যে বাস্তবিক তাহা সাতটি নদীর কথা বলিতে চাহে না। পরস্ত সপ্তসিন্ধুনামে কোনও প্রদেশে যে প্রাচীন যুগে বর্তমান ছিল তাহা বেশ সহজেই অনুমিত হইয়া থাকে। সে ঝুক্টিব উল্লেখ করা যাইতেছে—

“য ঝক্ষাদংহসো মুচদ্দেয়া বার্যাঃ সপ্তসিন্ধুৰু।

বধর্দাসস্য তু বিন্ম নীনমঃ ॥” (৮।২৪।২৭)

অর্থাৎ সপ্তসিঙ্গুতে কে আমাদিগকে সর্বনাশকর পাপ বা আর্য হইতে মুক্ত করিবে ? হে বীরপুরুষ ! দাসের (ধম্ম বা) অন্ত নত করিয়া দাও ।

পুরাতত্ত্ববিগণন সাধারণতঃ পাঞ্জাব ও তন্ত্রিকটবর্তী ভূভাগকেই সপ্তসিঙ্গু বলিয়া বর্ণনা করিয়াছেন । কিন্তু ইহাতে কয়েকটি বাধা আছে । পাঞ্জাব কথাটি (পঞ্চ+অপ্'বা) পঞ্চনদীর দ্বারা ধৌত ভূভাগ বলিয়া প্রতীয়মান হয় । এখন এই পাঞ্জাব নামটি ঝগ্নেদের কোথাও পাওয়া যায় না । ইহার প্রথম উল্লেখ পাওয়া যায় বাজসনেয়ী সংহিতায়—

“পঞ্চনদ্যঃ সরস্বতীমপি যন্তি সম্রাত্মসঃ ।

সরস্বতী তু পঞ্চধা সো দেশেহভবৎ সরিঃ ॥” (৩৪।২)

ইহাই যদি পাঞ্জাব হয়, তবে এ বর্ণনার সহিত সপ্তসিঙ্গু বর্ণনার (খ. বে. ১০।৭৫।৫) মোটেই মিল নাই দেখা যায় । তাহার পর (খ. বে. ১।৭।১।৭) ঝকে বলা হইয়াছে যে সাতটি নদীই সমুদ্রে গিয়া পড়িয়াছে । কিন্তু নদীস্তুতি হইতে যেন তেন প্রকারেণ ভাবে সাতটি নদী বাছিয়া লইলেই সে উদ্দেশ্য সিদ্ধ হয় না । পাঞ্জাবের কোননদীই সাঙ্কাণ্ডাবে সমুদ্রে পড়ে নাই—সকলেই প্রায় সিদ্ধুর সহিত মিলিত হইয়াছে । কোন কোনটি বা পরম্পর মিলিত হইয়াছে । এই সমস্ত বাধা দেখিয়াই বোধ হয় মাননীয় তিলক মহোদয় স্বর্গ প্রবাহিনী নদীর অবতারণা করিয়াছিলেন । সুতরাং সকলদিক দেখিয়া শুনিয়া সপ্তসিঙ্গুকে পাঞ্জাব না বলিয়া অপর একটি বিভিন্ন প্রদেশ বলিলেই সকলদিক রঞ্জা হয় ।) কিন্তু সেকৃপ ব্যবস্থা করাও সমীচীন কিনা অগ্রে ভাবিয়া দেখা কর্তব্য । (অবেস্তায় হপ্তহিন্দু আর্যদের অতি প্রাচীন বাসস্থান বলিয়া বর্ণিত হইয়াছে । সুতরাং সপ্তসিঙ্গু প্রদেশ Zoroaster ধর্ম্মাবলম্বিগণের বিশেষ বিজ্ঞাত ছিল বলিয়া বোধ হয় । আর অতি প্রাচীন কালে Avesta-র সময় আর্য্যবিগের পাঞ্জাবস্থ বাসস্থান যে খুব পরিচিত ও খ্যাতিযুক্ত হইয়াছিল তাহাও বোধ হয় না ; কারণ Avesta-র “সপ্ত হিন্দুর” র মধ্যে পাঞ্জাবের কোন নদী বা নদীস্তুতির প্রসিদ্ধ কোন নদীর নামই দৃষ্ট হয় না । সুতরাং এই “হপ্তহিন্দু” মানবের আদি জন্মভূমি মধ্য এসিয়ার কোন অংশবিশেষ হওয়াই সন্তুর ।) এসম্বন্ধে N. G. Sardesai মহোদয়, ‘The land of Seven Rivers’ নামক প্রবন্ধে বলিতেছেন—

“—if the Rigveda—though not in its present form at least in its ideas and background is to be regarded as an Indo-Germanic product, would it be right to confine all the Vedic literary and religious activity to the Panjab and the country adjoining? Would it not be nearer the mark to look up for the land of the seven rivers somewhere in the Central Asian Plateau which, if not the cradle of the Aryan race, was at least, we might presume, a place of long sojourn in the course of the Aryan migrations from their Arctic home?”

(B. C. Volume. P. 94)

(অতীব আশ্চর্যের বিষয় এই যে কশীয় তুর্কিস্থানে Ala Tan Range এবং উত্তরে নিম্ন Illi নদীর পূর্বে ও Lepsa নদীর পশ্চিমে এমন একটি প্রদেশ এখনও বৃত্তমান আছে যে সে দেশের আদিম অধিবাসীরা তাহাকে “সাত নদীর দেশ” বলিয়া থাকে। কশীয় ভাষায় জায়গাটির নাম “Semiretchenski-Krai” ইংরাজীতে উহা তর্জমা করিলে দাঢ়ায় “The land of the seven streams.” বল্থাস্ত্রদ এই প্রদেশের উত্তর সীমায় অবস্থিত। আর Lepsa, Baskan, Aksu, Sarkan, Biyen, Kartal, ও Koksu এই সাতটি নদীই গিয়া বল্থাস্ত্রদে পড়িয়াছে। এখন বল্থাস্ত্রদকে যদি সমুদ্র বলিয়া স্বীকার করা যায় তবে (১। ৭। ৭) খকের বর্ণনা ইহার সহিত বেশ মিলিয়া যায়।) অনেক সময় এই নদীগুলি ঘূর্ণবাত্যা ও বালুকা বাত্যার প্রকাপে অন্তঃস্মলিল বাহিনী হইয়া পড়েন। (Sardesai সাহেব বলেন যে প্রাচীন হিন্দু সভ্যতার পরিচয় এখনও এখানে কিছু কিছু পাওয়া যায়। Galchas নামে তুর্কীস্থানের আদিম অধিবাসিগণ এখন এস্থানে বাস করেন।) অনবরতঃ ভূমিকম্পে এস্থান পূর্বাপেক্ষা অনেক পরিবর্তিত হইয়াছে, কিন্তু এখনও যদি Stein সাহেব, হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী বা রাখাল দাস বন্দোপাধ্যায়ের মত মণীষিগণ এ বিষয়ে কিঞ্চিৎ মনোযোগ প্রদান করেন এবং এই নদীগুলির এই প্রদেশের উচ্চারণগত Philology র আলোচনা করেন, তবে হয়ত অনেক নৃতন তথ্য আবিষ্কৃত হইতে পারে। এ বিষয়ে Sardesai সাহেবই প্রথম পথ প্রদর্শন করিয়াছেন, কিন্তু তিনি সম্পূর্ণ অনুমানের উপরেই নির্ভর করিয়াছেন, বিশেষ প্রমান কিছুই সংগ্রহ করিতে পারেন নাই। আর তাহার পর এ বিষয়ে বিশেষ কোন চেষ্টা ও আর হয় নাই।

(আমাদের মনে হয় যে এই তুকুস্থানের সপ্তনদ প্রদেশই প্রকৃত আদিম “সপ্তসিঙ্গু”। আর্দেরা যখন এই প্রদেশ ছাড়িয়া আসিয়া পাঞ্জাব ও তাহার নিকটবর্তী স্থানে বাস করিতে লাগিলেন তখন সেই আদিম সপ্তনদ প্রদেশের সহিত আধুনিক সপ্তনদ প্রদেশের নানা বিষয়ে অন্তুত ঐক্য দেখিয়া নবাধিকৃত প্রদেশকেও “সপ্তসিঙ্গু” বলিতে লাগিলেন ও তদনুসারে ‘নদীস্তুতি’ প্রভৃতি যোজিত হইল। সুতরাং পরের যুগে (ব্রাহ্মণ ও পৌরাণিক যুগে) সপ্তসিঙ্গু সম্বন্ধে যে সকল কথা বলা হইয়াছে তাহাতে পাঞ্জাবের নদী গুলিকেই সাধারণতঃ সাতনদী বলা হইয়াছে। এ সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করিলে অনেক অন্তুত পরিণতি দেখা যায়। ক্রমশঃ সেই আদিম সপ্তনদ প্রদেশের কথা লোকে যতই ভুলিয়া যাইতে লাগিল, -ততই “সপ্তসিঙ্গু”র নৃতন নৃতন ব্যাখ্যা বাহির হইতে লাগিল ।) ক্রমশঃ এই সপ্তসিঙ্গুর কথা নিত্য পূজাপদ্ধতির মধ্যে—

“গঙ্গে চ যমুনে চৈব গোদাবরি সরস্বতি !

নর্মদে সিঙ্গুকাবেরি জলেহস্তিন্সন্নিধিং কুরু ॥”

এই জনশুক্রির মন্ত্ররূপে অন্তুত আকারে স্থান পাইয়াছে। আরও পরে যখন “সিঙ্গু” কথার অর্থও পরিবর্ত্তিত হইয়। “সমুদ্র” হইয়া দাঁড়াইল, তখন আমরা “সপ্তসিঙ্গুরূপে পাই

“লবণেক্ষু সুরাসর্পি দধিহৃঞ্জ জলান্তকাঃ” এই “সাত সমুদ্র”। সুতরাং এ হিসাবে সপ্তসিঙ্গু বলিতে গেলে সমগ্র প্রথিবীকেই বুঝাইত !!

বেদে প্রায় সর্বত্রই “সিঙ্গু” কথাটি “নদী” এই অর্থে ব্যবহৃত হইয়াছে। সুতরাং “সপ্ত সমুদ্র” গোছের অন্তুত ব্যাখ্যা করা কোনমতেই উচিত নহে। অথবেদের প্রাচীনতম অংশে (১ম মণ্ডল প্রভৃতিতে) যে সমস্ত “সপ্তসিঙ্গু”র কথা পাওয়া যায় সে গুলিকে আমরা পূর্বোক্ত সিদ্ধান্ত অনুসারে মধ্যএসিয়ার সপ্তনদ প্রদেশ বলিতে কোন আপত্তি দেখি না। পরস্ত নদীস্তুতি প্রভৃতি নবীনতর মন্ত্রে ও ব্রাহ্মণ গুলিতে যে সপ্তসিঙ্গুর উল্লেখ দৃষ্টি হয় তাহাকে অবশ্য পাঞ্জাব ও তন্ত্রিকটবর্তী প্রদেশ বলিয়া ব্যাখ্যা করাই সঙ্গত ।

ত্রীঅশোক নাথ ভট্টাচার্য ।

তৃতীয় বার্ষিক শ্রেণী ।

কলাবিভাগ ।

পরলোকগত

অধ্যাপক মনোমোহন স্মৃতি-সভায়

সভাপতি শ্রীযুক্ত রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর মহোদয়ের অভিভাষণ। *

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“আমি হৃষিলতা ও ক্লাস্তিতে আক্রান্ত। একদিকে জরা ও অপরদিকে যৌবন-সুলভ কর্ম, এ দুইয়ে মিলে আমাকে ক্লাস্ত করে ফেলেছে। এ সভার উত্তোল্কারা যখন আমাকে সভাপতি করবার প্রস্তাব নিয়ে উপস্থিত হয়েছিলেন তখন তামি তাতে দ্বিধা বোধ করেছিলাম। কিন্তু কথেকটি বিশেষ কাবণে আজ আমি এখানে এসেছি প্রথমতঃ, কবি মনোমোহন ঘোষের মাতামহকে আমি আমার পরম আত্মীয় বলে জানতুম। শৈশব কালে তাঁর কাছ থেকেই প্রথম আমি ইংরাজী সাহিত্যের ব্যাখ্যান শুনেছিলাম। ইংরেজ কবিদের মধ্যে কে কোনু শ্রেণীতে আসন পান, তাহা তিনিই আমাকে প্রথম বুঝিয়েছিলেন। যদিও আমাদের বয়সের যথেষ্ট অনেক ছিল তথাপি তারপর অনেকদিন পর্যাপ্ত তজনীনের মধ্যে একটা সম্বন্ধ ছিল। এক এক সময়ে তাঁর অশৰ্য্য যৌবনের তেজ দেখে আমি বিশ্বিত হয়েছি।

মনোমোহন, ভবিন্দ ও ভাইদের সকলকে নিয়ে তাঁদের মা যখন ইংলণ্ডে পৌছলেন, তখন আমি মেখানে উপস্থিত ছিলুম। শিশুবয়সেই তাঁদের আমি দেখেছি। ইংলণ্ডে দুঃসহ পরিদ্রোহ সঙ্গে সংগ্রাম করে তাঁরা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে কৃতিত্ব লাভ করেছেন। সে কথা আপনারা সবাই জানেন। মনোমোহন যখন দেশে ফিরে এলেন তখন তাঁর সঙ্গে আমার পুরোপুরিয়ে হয়—সে পরিচয় আমার কাব্যসূত্রে। সেইদিন সেইক্ষণ আজ আমার মনে পড়ে। ঘোড়া-সাঁকোয় আমাদের বাড়ীর দক্ষিণের বারান্দায় “সোগার তরী” পড়চিলুম। মনোমোহন তখন মেই কাব্যের ছন্দ ও ভাব নিয়ে অতি শুন্দর আলোচনা করেছিলেন। বাংলা ভাষার সঙ্গে তাঁর পরিচয় না থাকা সহেও শুধু বোধশক্তি দ্বারা তিনি কাব্যের অস্ত্রনিহিত ভাবটুকু গ্রহণ করিতে পেরেছিলেন। আজকে তাঁর স্মৃতি-সভায় আমরা যারা সমবেত হয়েছি, তাদের মধ্যে অধিকাংশই তাঁর যথার্থ স্বরূপ যেখানে—তাঁর মধ্যে যা চিরকাল স্মরণযোগ্য—সে জ্ঞানগায় তাঁকে হ্যত দেখেননি। এ সভায় তাঁর অনেক ছাত্র উপস্থিত ভাবেন। তিনি সুনীর্ধকাল ঢাকা কলেজে, কলিকাতার প্রেসিডেন্সী কলেজে ইংরেজী সাহিত্যের তথ্যাপনা করেছেন। ছাত্র হিসাবে যে কেহ তাঁর সংস্পর্শে এসেছেন তাঁর মধ্যেই তিনি সাহিত্যের রস সঞ্চার করেছিলেন। অধ্যাপনাকে অনেকে শক্তত্বের আলোচনা বলে ভূম করেন—তাঁরা অধ্যাপনার অকৃত অধিকারী নন। মনোমোহন ঘোষ তাঁর অসাধারণ কবিত্ব ও কল্পনাশক্তির প্রভাবে সাহিত্যের নিগৃত মর্যাদা ও বসের ভাগুরে ছাত্রদের চিত্তকে আমন্ত্রণ করেছিলেন। যে শিক্ষা এক চিত্ত হ'তে আরেক চিত্তে জ্ঞানের প্রদীপ জ্বালিয়ে দেয়, ছাত্রদের চিত্তে আনন্দ সঞ্চার করে,

ତାହାଇ ସଥାର୍ଥ ଶିକ୍ଷା । ସାଧାରଣ ଶିକ୍ଷାର ଚେମେ ଏ ଚେର ବଡ଼ ଜିନିସ । ସେ ଶକ୍ତି ନିୟେ ତିନି ଜ୍ଞାନଗ୍ରହଣ କବେଛିଲେମ ସେ ଶକ୍ତି ଛିଲ ଗାନ ଗା'ବାର ଜଣେ । ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାର ମଧ୍ୟେ ସେ ତିନି ଆବନ୍ତ ହୁ଱େ ପଡ଼େଛିଲେମ ତାତେ ନିଃସନ୍ଦେହ ତା'ର ଗଭୀର କ୍ଷତି ହେଲିଛି । ଆମି ସଥିନ ଢାକାଯ କନଫାରେପେ ଗିଯେଛିଲୁମ ତଥିନ ତା'ର ନିଜେର ମୁଁଥେ ଏକଥା ଶୁଣେଛି । ଅଧ୍ୟାପନା ସଦି ସତ୍ୟ ସତ୍ୟଇ ଏମନ ହତ ସେ ଛାତ୍ରଦେର ଚିନ୍ତରେ ମଙ୍ଗେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକେର ଚିନ୍ତରେ ସଥାର୍ଥ ଆନନ୍ଦ ବିନିମୟ ହତେ ପାରେ ତବେ, ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାଯ କ୍ଳାସ୍ଟି ବୋଧ ହ'ତ ନା । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମାଦେର ଦେଶେ ସଥାର୍ଥ ଭାବେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାର ସ୍ଵଯୋଗ କେଟ ପାନ ନା । ସେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ମାହିତୋର ସଥାର୍ଥ ମର୍ମ ଉଦ୍ୟାଟନ ଓ ଛାତ୍ରଦେର ଚିନ୍ତବ୍ୟତିର ଉଦ୍ୟାନ କରତେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରେନ, ତେବେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଉତ୍ସାହ ପାନ ନା । ଛାତ୍ରେରାଇ ତା'ର ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାର ପ୍ରଗାଳୀର ବିରକ୍ତ ନାଲିଶ କରେ । ତାରା ବଲେ, “ଆମରା ପାଦ କରିବାର ଜଣେ ଏସେଛି । ନୀଲ ପେନ୍ଫଲ ଦିଯେ ଦାଗ ଦିଯେ ଆମାଦେର ଏମନତର ଧାରା ଦେଖିଯେ ଦିତେ ହବେ ଯାତେ ଆମରା ପାଦ କରିବାର ଗହବରେ ଗିଯେ ପଡ଼ତେ ପାବି” । ଏହି ଜନ୍ମଇ ଅଧ୍ୟାପନା କରତେ ଗିଯେ ଭାଲ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକେର ବ୍ୟାଥିତ ହନ । ଫଳେ ନିଷ୍ଠାର ଶିକ୍ଷା ଦିତେ ଗିଯେ ତାଦେର ମନ କଲେବ ମତ ହୁଁସେ ଯାଏ, ତାଦେର ରମ୍ଭ ଶୁକିଯେ ଯାଏ । ଆମାଦେର ଦେଶେ ପଡ଼ାନଟା ବଡ଼ ନୀରମ । ଏଜନ୍ତୁ ମନୋମୋହନ ବଡ଼ ପୀଡ଼ା ଅଛୁଭବ କରିଲେ । ଏହି ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାର କାଜେ ତା'କେ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ କ୍ଷତିବୀକାର କ'ରତେ ହେଲିଛି ।

“ଆନେକ ସ୍ଥଳେ ତ୍ୟାଗସ୍ଥୀକାରେର ଏକଟା ମହିମା ଆଛେ । ବଡ଼ର ଜଣେ ଛୋଟକେ ତ୍ୟାଗ କରା, ଭାବେର ଜନ୍ମ ଅର୍ଥ ତ୍ୟାଗ କରା, ଓ ଆୟାର ଜନ୍ମ ଦେହକେ ତ୍ୟାଗ କରାର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଏକଟା ଗୌରବ ଆଛେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଥାନେ ଯାର ଜଣେ ଅମରା ମୂଳ୍ୟ ଦିଇ ତା'ର ଚେମେ ମୂଲ୍ୟଟା ଅମେକ ବେଶୀ, ସେଥାନେ ତାଗ ହୁଅଯମ । ଏହି କବି—ବିଧାତା ସାର୍ଥକ ହାତେ ବୀଳୀ ଦିଯେ ପାଠିଯେଛିଲେମ—ତିନି ସଥିନ ଅଧ୍ୟାପନାର କାଜେ ଏହି ହିଲେମ ତଥିନ ତା' ତା'କେ କୋନ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରନି । ଅମି ତା'ର ମେହି ବେଦନା ଅଛୁଭବ କରେଛି । ଆଜକେର ଦିନେ ତା'ବ ସ୍ତ୍ରି-ସଭାଯ ଆମି ମେହି ବେଦନାର କଥା ନିୟେ ଏସେଛି । ସେ ପାଥୀକେ ବିଧାତା ବଲେ ପାଠିଯେଛିଲେମ ତାକେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସାଲୟେର ଖାଚାର ବନ୍ଦ କରା ହେଲିଛି, ବିଧାତାର ଅଭିପ୍ରାୟେର ବିରକ୍ତେ । ଆଜ ଆମାଦେର ମେହି ବେଦନାର ଅଛୁଶୋଚନା କରିବାର ଦିନ । ତା'ର କଣ୍ଠ ଲତିକା ଯା ବଲେନ ମେ କଥା ମତା । ତିନି ନିଷ୍ଠତେ କାବ୍ୟ ରଚନା କରେ ଗିଯେଛେନ, ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାର ଜଣେ କୋନ ଦିନ ବ୍ୟାଗତା ଅଛୁଭବ କବେନ ନି, ନିଜକେ ସର୍ବଦାଇ ପ୍ରଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ ରେଖେଛେନ । ଏକଦିକେ ଏଟା ଖୁବ ବଡ଼ କଥା । ଏହି ସେ ନିଜେର ଭିତରେ ନିଜେର ହୃଦୟରେ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଉପଲବ୍ଧିକିତେ ନିମିଶ ଥାକା, ନିଃସ୍ଵାର୍ଥଭାବେ ପ୍ରତିପତ୍ତିର ଆକାଜଙ୍ଗ ଦୂରେ ରାଥା, ହୃଦୟକେକେ ବିଶୁଦ୍ଧ ରାଥା—ଏ ଖୁବି ବଡ଼ କଥା । ତିନି କର୍ମକାଣ୍ଡେ ଭିତରେ ସୋଗ ଦେନନି । ସଂମାରେ ବର୍ଷଭୂମିତେ ତିନି ଦର୍ଶକ ଥାକୁବେନ, ତାତେ ଝାପିଯେ ପଡ଼ିବେନ ମା । ଏହି ଛିଲ ତା'ର ଆଦର୍ଶ । କେନାନା, ଦୂର ଥେକେଇ ସଥାର୍ଥ ବିଚାର କରା ଯାଏ ଓ ଭାଲ କରେ ବଲା ଯାଏ । କର୍ମେର ଜାଲେ ଜଡ଼ିତ ହ'ଲେ ତା'ର ସେ କାଜ—ବିଶ୍ୱରଭୂମିର ଅଭିନନ୍ଦ ଦେଖେ ଆନନ୍ଦେର ଗାନ ଗେଯେ ଯାଏଁ—ତାତେ ବ୍ୟାଧାତ ହ'ତ । ସେମନ କୋନ ପାଥୀ ନୀଡ଼ ତ୍ୟାଗ କରେ ବେତ ଉର୍କେ ଉଠେ ତତହି ତା'ର କର୍ତ୍ତ୍ଵ ଥେକେ ଶୁରେ ଧାରା ଉତ୍ସାରିତ ହ'ତେ ଥାକେ, ତେମନି କବି ସଂମାର ଥେକେ ସତ ଉର୍କେ ଯାନ ତତହି ବିଶୁଦ୍ଧ ରମ ଭୋଗ କରତେ ପାରେନ ଓ କାବ୍ୟେର ଭିତର ନିୟେ ତା' ପ୍ରକାଶ କରତେ ପାରେନ । ମନୋ-

ମୋହନ ଛିଲେନ ସେଇ ଶ୍ରେଣୀର କବି । ତିନି କର୍ମଜାଲ ଥେକେ ନିଜକେ ନିସ୍ରତ ରେଖେ ଆପନାର ଅନ୍ତରେ ଆନନ୍ଦାଲୋକେ ଏକଳା ଗାନ କରେଛିଲେନ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏକଥା ଆମି ଦଲବ ଯେ, ଯଦି ସାଧାରଣତଃ ସଂସାର ରଙ୍ଗଭୂମିର ସମ୍ମତ କୋଣାହଲେ ଆବଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇ କବିର ପକ୍ଷେ ଶ୍ରେଣୀର ନୟ, ତଥାପି କାବ୍ୟର ଭିତର ଦିଯେ ସକଳେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ମିଜେର ସଂଯୋଗ ହୋଇପାଇନ ନା ହଲେ ଏକଟା ଅଭାବ ଥେକେ ଯାଏ । ସମ୍ଭିଦ ଜନତାର ବାଣୀ ମହାକାଳ ସବ ସମୟେ ସମର୍ଥନ କରେନ ନା, ତାହଲେଓ ଥ୍ୟାତ୍ମି-ଅଥ୍ୟାତ୍ମିର ତରଙ୍ଗ-ଦୋଳାଯ ଦୋଲାଯମାନ ଜନସାଧାରଣେର ଚିତ୍ତମୁଦ୍ର ଯେ କବିର ବିହାରକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଏକଥା ଅସ୍ତ୍ରୀକାର କରା ଯାଏ ନା । ଏକାନ୍ତ ନିଭୃତ ଯେ କାବ୍ୟ ତାତେ ଏକଟା ସଙ୍ଗହିନତାର ବେଦନା ଆଛେ । ମନୋମୋହନ ଯେ ତାର କାବ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରତେ ବାଗ୍ର ହନନି ତାର କାରଣ ଏହି ଯେ, ତିନି ଯେ ଭାଷାଯ ତାର କାବ୍ୟ ରଚନା କରେଇଲେନ, ସେଇ ଇଂରେଜୀ ଭାଷାଯ ତାର ଏତ ସ୍ମର୍ମ ଅଧିକାର ଛିଲ ଯେ ଆମାଦେର ଦେଶେ ଆମରା, ଯାରା ଇଂରେଜୀ ଘନିଷ୍ଠିତାବେ ଜାନିନେ, ଇଂରେଜୀ ମାହିତୋର ସଙ୍ଗେ ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗ ପରିଚୟ ନେଇ, ଆମାଦେର ପକ୍ଷେ ତାର କାବ୍ୟର ସ୍ମର୍ମ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ ଉପଭୋଗ କରା ହୁଇଛ । ତିନି ଜାନତେମ ଯେ ଏଦେଶେ ତାର ସଙ୍ଗ ମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣଭାବେ ଜୁଟେ ପାରେ ନା ॥ ଯେ କୋନ ବିଦେଶୀ ଭାଷା ଖୁବ ଭାଲ ଜାନେ ନା ତାର ପକ୍ଷେ ସେଇ ଭାଷାର ମାହିତୋର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଏକଟା ଅନ୍ତରାଳ ଥେକେ ଯାଏ । ଯେମନ କଟିନ ଜେନାନୀ ଯାରା ରକ୍ଷା କରେନ ତୁମର ପକ୍ଷେ ଅନ୍ତଃପୁରିକାଦେର ନାଡ଼ୀ ଦେଖାନେ କଟିନ ହୟ, ପର୍ଦାର ଆଡ଼ାଳ ଥେକେ ଏକଜନ ନାଡ଼ୀ ଦେଖେ ଡାକ୍ତାରକେ ବଲେ ଦିତେ ହୟ, ଆମାଦେର ପକ୍ଷେ ଇଂରେଜୀ ମାହିତ୍ୟ ତାଇ । ଅନ୍ତଃପୁରବାସିନୀ ମାହିତ୍ୟଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଆମାଦେର କାହେ ମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଦେଖା ଦେନ ନା, ଆମରା ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ତାର କର୍ତ୍ତ୍ଵର ଶୁନତେ ପାଇ । ମୁଖେର ଭକ୍ତିମା—ସାତେ ଅର୍ଥ ସ୍ମୃପ୍ତି ବୋକା ଯାଏ ମେଣ୍ଟଲ ଆମରା ଦେଖାତେ ପାଇନା । ଆମି ସଦିଓ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇନି ତଥାପି ଇଂରେଜୀ ମାହିତ୍ୟ କିଛୁ କିଛୁ ପରେଛି । ଆମି ନାମନ୍ ଶେଳୀ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ପଡ଼ି ତଥନ କୋନ କୋନ ଯାଯଗାର ରମଟି ଟିକ ନା ବୁଝିଲେନ ମନେ କରି ଯେନେ ମେଓରୀଇ ଭାଲ । ଏ ଛାଡ଼ା ଗତି ନେଇ, ବିଶେଷତଃ ସଥନ ତା ନା କରିଲେ ପାସ କରା ଅମ୍ଭବ । ଇଂରେଜୀତେ ମନୋମୋହନ ସୌମ୍ୟର ଆସାଧାରଣ କୁତ୍ତିତ୍ୱ ଛିଲ । ତିନି ଇଂଲାଣ୍ଡେ ମାନୁଷ ହରେଛିଲେନ ଓ ଅଞ୍ଚଳକୋରେ ଶୁଣ୍ଗୀଦେର ସଂଗର ଲାଭ କରେଛିଲେନ । କାହେଇ ମେ ଦେଶେର ଭାଷାର ସଙ୍ଗେ ତାର ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ପରିଚୟ ଛିଲ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେ ଭାଷାଯ ତିନି କାବ୍ୟ ରଚନା କରେଛିଲେନ ତାର ମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଗିଲ ଏ ଦେଶବାସୀର ପକ୍ଷେ ଅମ୍ଭବ । ଏହି ବେଦନା ଛିଲ ତାର ଜୀବନେ । ତିନି କବି ଥେକେ ଇଙ୍କୁଳ ମାଟ୍ଟାର ହେଁଛିଲେନ । ଆବାର ଅମ୍ଭାଗ୍ୟ ଅଧିକାର ନିଯେ ଯେ ଭାଷାର ତିନି ତାର ବାଞ୍ଶୀ ବାଜିରେଛିଲେନ ସେ ଭାଷାର ଦେଶ ଏଦେଶ ନୟ । ତିନି ବୁଝେଛିଲେନ କରିବି ଦିକ ଥେକେ ତାର ଟିକ ସଙ୍ଗ ଆମାଦେର ଦେଶେ ପା ଓରା କଟିନ । ତିନି ସଦି ଚିରଦିନ ଇଂଲାଣ୍ଡେ ଥାକିଲେନ ତବେ ଯେ ସବ କବିର ମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବାଲୋ ପେରେଛିଲେନ ତାଦେର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଥେକେ ତିନି ଏତ ଏକଳା ହେଁ ପଡ଼ିଲେନ ନା । ପରମ୍ପରେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ତାର ରମ ବିରିନ୍ମଯ ହତେ ପାରିବ । ଏହି ରମ ବିରିନ୍ମଯର ପ୍ରୋଗ୍ରାମ ଯେ ନାହିଁ, ଏକଥା କଥନୋ ସ୍ଥିକାର କରା ଯାଏ ନା । ମାନୁଷେର ମହିତ ମାନୁଷେର ସଙ୍ଗେର ଭିତର ଦିରେଇ ପ୍ରାଗଶକ୍ତିର ଉଦ୍ବୋଧନ ହୟ । ମାନୁଷେର ଚିତ୍ତ ଅନ୍ୟ ଚିତ୍ତର ଅପେକ୍ଷା ରାଖେ । କେଉ ଅନ୍ତକ୍ଷାବ କରେ ବଲତେ ପାରେନ ନା, ଆମି କବି ହିସାବେ ଅତ୍ୟର ଅପେକ୍ଷା ରାଖିଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହି ମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନା ପେଯେ ମନୋମୋହନ ସୌଷ ହାଲ ଛାଡ଼ିଲନି । ଆପନାର

ଭିତରେ ସମାହିତ ହୁୟେ ତିନି କାବ୍ୟେର ଆରାଧନା କରେ ଗେଛେନ । ମେ କାବ୍ୟେର ଜୟ ଜୟ କାର ହୌକ । ମାନୁଷେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ଚିତ୍ତେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧ ସ୍ଥାପନ କରିବାର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଏକଟା ଗୌରବ ଆଛେ । ବିଶ୍ଵଜଗତେର ମାନୁଷେର ସଙ୍ଗେ, ଏକଟା ସତ୍ୟକାର ଯୋଗ ହବେ, ଆମାଦେର ଅନ୍ତରେର ମଧ୍ୟେ ମେ ଇଚ୍ଛାକି ନେଇ ? ସଥନ ମେ ସମ୍ମ ନା ପାଇ ତଥନ ଅଭିଶାନେ ବଲି, କାଟୁକେ ଆମାର ଚାହିନେ । ମାନୁଷେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ଯୋଗ-ସ୍ଥାପନେର ମାନୁଷେର ମେ ସ୍ଵାଭାବିକ ଇଚ୍ଛା ସଥନ ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ ହୁୟ ତଥନି ଆମରା ଅଭିଶାନ କରେ ବଲି, ଆମି କାରୋ ମନ୍ଦ ଚାହିନେ ।

“କବି ମନୋମୋହନେବ କାବ୍ୟେର ସଥନ ପ୍ରକାଶ ହବେ ତଥନ ସମସ୍ତ ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ଦେଶେର କାହେ ବାଂଲା ଦେଶେର ଆଲୋକ କି ଉଜ୍ଜଳ ହବେ ନା ? ତାରା କି ବଲବେ ନା, ଏ’ଦେର ସୁନ୍ଦର ଭାଷ୍ଯର୍ଥ ଶକ୍ତି ଆଛେ ? ପ୍ରକାଶ ମାନେଇ ହଛେ ବିଶ୍ଵଜଗତେର ସର୍ବତ୍ର ପ୍ରେସିଡେସନ୍ । ଯେ ଜ୍ୟୋତିକ୍ରମ ଆଛେ, ତାବ କେବଳ ଏପାରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ, ଓପାରେ ନନ୍ଦ, ଏତୋ ହୁୟ ନା । ‘ସାହିତ୍ୟ’ ଶବ୍ଦେର ଧାତୁଗତ ଅର୍ଥ ଆମି ଜାନିନେ । ଏକବାର ଆମି ବଲେଛିଲାମ, ‘ସାହିତ୍ୟ’ ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ ସକଳେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ସେ ସମ୍ମ ଆତ୍ । କାଲିଦାସ, ବୈଦ୍ୟାଲୟ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ସକଳ ମହାକବି ସମସ୍ତ ପୃଥିବୀର ମାନୁଷେବ କାହେ ତାରତେର ଚିତ୍ରଜ୍ୟାତିକରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରେଛେ । ସକଳେଇ ବଲେଚେନ, ଏ କବି ଆମାଦେବେଷ କବି । ଯେ ସମସ୍ତ ଐଶ୍ୱରୀ ଦ୍ୱାରା ବିଶ୍ଵ ଧନୀ ହୁୟ, ମେ ସମସ୍ତ ଐଶ୍ୱରୀଦ୍ୱାରାଇ ସମକଳତାବ ଯୋଗ ସ୍ଥାପିତ ହୁୟ । ସାହିତ୍ୟ ମାନେ ସମକଳତାବ ଯୋଗ । ଏହି କବି ମନୋମୋହନ ନିଗ୍ରଂ ନିକେତନ ଥେକେ ଯା ବେର କରେଛେ ତା ତାଜୋ ଢାକା ରହେଛେ । ଏ ସଥନ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାବେ ତଥନ ବାଂଲା ଦେଶେବ ଏକଟି ମହିମା ସର୍ବତ୍ର ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୁୟ । ଆମରା ଯଦିଓ ଏକଟୁ ବନ୍ଧିତ ହୁୟେଇ, କିନ୍ତୁ ତାତେ ତୁମ ଦୋଷ ନେଇ । ଆର କବିତ କେବଳ ଇଂବେଳ୍ଡି ନନ୍ଦ, କେବଳ ବାଙ୍ଗାଲୀ ନନ୍ଦ—କବି ସକଳ ଦେଶେରଟି କବି । ଏହି କବିର କାବ୍ୟ ପ୍ରକାଶ ହଲେ ପର ସକଳେଇ ଆନନ୍ଦେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ତାକେ ଅଭ୍ୟର୍ଥନା କରିବେ । ଆଜ ତୁମ ସ୍ମୃତିତେ ଆମି ଆମାର ଶକ୍ତି ନିବେଦନ କରିଛି । ତାର କାବ୍ୟେର ସଙ୍ଗେ ଆମାର କିଛି ପବିଚିଯ ଛିଲ ; ତିନି ପ୍ରାୟଇ ତୁମ କାବ୍ୟ ଆମାକେ ଶୁଣାଇନେ । ଆମି ଶୁଣେ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ହତେ । ତୁମ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଶବ୍ଦଚରନେର ମଧ୍ୟେ ଏକଟା ବିଶେଷ ସୋନ୍ଦର୍ୟ ଛିଲ--ଭାଷ୍ୟର୍ୟ ନୈପୁଣ୍ୟେର ସହିତ ତିନି ତୁମ କାବ୍ୟେର ରୂପ ଦିଶେଇଲେନ । ଆମାବ ଆଶା ଆଛେ ଏ ସକଳ କାବ୍ୟ ହତେ ସକଳ ଦେଶେବ ଲୋକ ତାନନ୍ଦ ପାବେ—କେବଳ ‘‘ଗୌଡ଼ଜନ’’ ନହେ—ସମସ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ଵଜନ ‘‘ତାହେ ଆନନ୍ଦ କରିବେ ପାନ ସ୍ଵଧା ନିରବଧି’’ ।

* ପ୍ରେସିଡେସନ୍ କଲେଜେର ଭୂତପୂର୍ବ ଛାତ୍ର—

ଶ୍ରୀହଂଦୁରଙ୍ଗ ରାୟ କର୍ତ୍ତକ ଅନୁଲିଖିତ ।



