

BANGABASI COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
1. The Month	... 21	4. Prize-Essay — Folk-tales of Bengal,—(IV) The Bride of the Serpent-Prince, by Nalini Nath Ghosh (<i>1st Year Class</i>)	... 33
2. The 'Old Order Changeth, yielding place to new, by Manindra Lall Banerji. (<i>Third Year Class</i>)	... 26	5. সন্ধ্যা সমাগমে, by Dineschandra Chaudhuri (<i>Third Year Class</i>)	... 35
3. Signor Mustachio (A true story) by L. K. B.	... 28	6. The College Staff	... 36
		7. Notices	... 36

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THE MONTH.

The Faculty of Arts met the other day to elect representatives to the Syndicate for the ensuing academical year. The ballot resulted in the election of the following gentlemen: Dr. Asutosh Mukerji, Mr. A. Pedler, the Rev. Fr. Lafont, Mr. A. M. Bose, and Moulvi Shamsul Huda. The Faculty has again contrived to give significant expression to its poor opinion of the teaching profession. Only two teachers were put up for election, The Rev. Fr. Lafont and Mr. A. C. Edwards, both having been members of the Syndicate during the current year. We presume, however, that in view of impending University legislation the Faculty desired to give emphatic testimony of its unalterable conviction that the teacher should as far as possible be excluded from an effective share in the management of the University. On no other supposition can we account for its rejection of Mr. Edwards. This gentleman is Principal of the first College in Bengal: he has officiated as Director of Public

52/52

Instruction : he is a teacher of great experience and considerable reputation : he has been Registrar of the University ; he has been appointed by the Senate to serve on important sub-committees : and in connection with the Universities Bill he has shown himself an independent educationist, and contributed in no small measure to the practical and temperate report submitted to the Senate by the sub-committee appointed to consider the Bill. We cannot suppose that the members of the Faculty ignored these considerations. They doubtless bore them in mind, but viewed them as affording a convenient opportunity for a final and emphatic expression of opinion on a vexatious question. If we cannot congratulate the Faculty on its wisdom, we must at any rate admire its consistency at a crisis which might well have shaken even the most determined.

The apprehension expressed in a signed article on the Universities Bill in our last number is amply confirmed by the Report of the Select committee with its instructive and interesting appendices in the shape of notes of dissent. Our article expressed the opinion that the Bill was unduly repressive and tended to deprive the University of any semblance of an independent character. That the Bill is designed by Government to achieve this purpose seems a fair inference from the very curious note of dissent appended to the Report of the Select committee by the official members, the Hon'ble Mr. Raleigh, the Hon'ble Sir Denzil Ibbetson, and the Hon'ble Mr. Pedler. It was proposed and carried by a majority of the committee, that a clause should be added to the Bill to the effect that at least one half of the members of the Senate should be gentlemen following the profession of teaching in the province. From this proposal the three official gentlemen above named emphatically dissent and prefer to leave the Government entirely unrestricted in the matter of appointments to the Senate. We may be permitted to express both our regret and our astonishment at such a line being taken by Mr. Raleigh and Mr. Pedler who in their Report as members of the Universities Commission laid down—in what

we regarded as one of the most valuable sections in that Report—very clearly enunciated principles to govern appointments to the Senate. That they should now decline to embody those principles in the Bill is indeed amazing; that they should decline to make statutory provision for an adequate representation of teachers on the Senate is, having regard to their own previous utterances, an almost inconceivable inconsistency. But perhaps these gentlemen have at last succumbed to the quiet persistence with which the Faculty of Arts of the Calcutta University urges its grand doctrine that the teacher should teach but not control teaching, unless it be that their conversion is due to forces operating from higher and more hidden spheres.

The Honourable gentlemen in question may perhaps reply that they have provided by statute against teachers being found in a minority on the Syndicate which is the executive organ of the Senate. It is however this very provision which when taken in connection with the refusal to make a similar regulation for the Senate renders the official position open to suspicion. If the Government was as anxious as it proposes to be to place the University in the hands of educationists, and to restore to the teacher, as teacher, the place he should, as teacher, occupy in the counsels of the University, why does it not construct its Bill so as to place him in the most effective position for this purpose? To place him in a commanding position on the Syndicate alone may mean nothing but vexation, for every work of importance he carries out will be subject to revision by the Senate. And if the teaching body as a whole were consulted we have no doubt that it would gladly forego the honour of a statutory majority on the Syndicate, if it were granted instead a statutory majority on the Senate. The refusal to grant them this latter position inevitably gives rise to the suspicion that the granting them a majority on the Syndicate is an ingenious attempt to blind them to the true nature of the intentions of Government. The situation may be put in a nutshell. If the Government is unrestricted in its nominations to the Senate, it can afford to place the teacher in a majority on the

Syndicate without imperilling official control over the University. If however a restriction be provided and a majority of teachers be required by statute on the Senate, there is just a possibility that the University may in time acquire an independent academic life and spirit of its own. It would seem that Government regard this possibility as a contingency to be avoided at all costs. Finally having regard to the professions repeatedly made by Government, why does it refuse to embody in its Bill a section which would permanently secure the very situation which it declares to be the object of its policy?

Bengal in general, and the Calcutta University in particular, have good reason to be proud of the exceedingly able Note of Dissent written by Dr. Asutosh Mukerjea. It shows a spirit of independence which is not obstructive, and a patriotism which is not hysterical, and is marked throughout by a most commendable sobriety of tone and ripeness of judgment. The note has special claims on the gratitude of teachers as it emphatically insists on the distinct recognition of the principle that there should be an adequate representation of teachers on the new Senate.

The convocation of the University elicited an eloquent speech from the Chancellor. Our ecstasies are however checked by the reflection that practical legislation is not always as innocently pleasing as eloquent rhetoric, and not always based on the principles uttered from the orator's platform. The Vice-chancellor's farewell speech was interesting and graceful. We have not been able to see eye to eye with Mr. Raleigh in University matters, but we cannot but regret the departure of a Vice-chancellor whose courtesy has been unvarying, whose patience has been exemplary, and whose zeal for the University has been of a kind not often to be met with in Indian officials. We were disposed to say much more than this, but Mr. Raleigh's unfortunate Note of Dissent restrains us.

By a curious oversight—we hope it was no more—no invitations to convocation were issued to the teaching staff of the College. The teacher is indeed in a parlous way. He is unfit to regulate the work of the University and apparently also unfit to attend the convocation when his students obtain their degrees.

We deeply regret to record the death of Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar, M.D., C.I.E., the like of whom we shall not see again for a long time to come. In him, we have lost a great friend and well-wisher, and the country a faithful votary of science. The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, an institution quite unique in its nature so far as India is concerned, will ever stand as a lofty and fitting monument of his lifelong single-hearted steady devotion to the cause of science and scientific education. He was an early product of the Calcutta University and soon came to be a thorough University man, a distinction which can hardly be claimed for many of our graduates. As an exponent of scientific education, he was a tower of strength in the deliberations of the Senate, the Faculty of Arts and the Syndicate, and his loss at a time when University reforms are exercising the best intellects of the country and its rulers and when his co-operation would have been simply invaluable, is simply incalculable. A man whose life and work may be set up as an example for *our country* to imitate and approach, has not lived in vain. Such a man has passed away in the person of our great Doctor, but from his ashes let us hope will arise others who will fain take up the work where he left it and bring it to consummation and fruition.

The Calcutta University Magazine informs us that Mr. Arden Wood will act as Head Examiner in F.A. Chemistry and Mr. Tate will act as one of the examiners in B.A. Chemistry this year.

The following Graduates of the Calcutta University have been granted Research Scholarships of Rs. 100 a month each for one year, with effect from the 1st February 1904:—

(1) Babu Bhabesh Chandra Banerjee M.A., (Sanskrit College)—Hindu Philosophy; (2) Babu Hem Chandra Sen Gupta M.A.,