

BANGABASI COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

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Vol. II.

JUNE.

No. 4.

1904.

THE MONTH.

The College having closed for two months for the summer recess, there were no issues of the Magazine for April and May. The present number for June therefore is next to that for March last.

We give our young fellows a hearty welcome and a mighty handshake on their return to College at its reopening on the 23rd June after the long summer recess. It must have cost most of them many a bitter tear to wrench themselves off from their dear homes, dearer relations and, shall we add, no less dear bumper mango crop of the season. The recess no doubt was a period of comparative ease to some, but certainly was a time of great suspense and tribulation to many more. Of these latter, it sealed the fate of many and opened up the prospects of a few. A comparison of the number of the "many" with that of "a few,"—what a sad tale it unfolds! But the less said on the point the better.

Jr/5d

We are glad to be able to announce the following valuable additions to the teaching staff of the College. Babu Kalidas Mullick who is a first class M. A. in physics and has served with distinction and popularity in a well known College in Bengal for over ten years has taken charge of the physics classes from the date of the reopening of the College. Babu Surya Kumar Karforma who stood first in Mathematics in all the University examinations from the matriculation upwards and is a first class M. A. in Mathematics has also commenced work from the beginning of the new session, as was announced in the March number of the College Magazine. He has had a brilliant University career, and brings with him a splendid record of teaching work. Latterly he was for ten years at Agra College from where he comes with matured experience.

We print elsewhere the names of our successful students at the last F. A. and B. A. Examinations. At the B. A. Examination, we have passed 18, one of whom, Babu Haripada Sen Gupta, has obtained Honours in Sanskrit, in which subject he stands first. We congratulate him and ourselves on the distinction achieved by him. Considering the general character of the B. A. results of our University this and in previous years, we find no reason for being ashamed of our out-turn. At the F. A. Examination, we have passed 84 ; this by itself is a respectable number, and we have nothing to lose even by a comparison with our neighbours. Of these, 56 have passed in the 3rd division, 27 in the 2nd division and 1 in the first division. The lucky chap is Babu Suresranjan Pal, an Assamese student who appeared from Gowhati centre. The University Examinations have their glorious uncertainties like those of a game of cricket, and this accounts for the otherwise unaccountable fact of the paucity of passes in the highest division. We hasten to offer our sincerest condolences to those of our young men who have passed lower than they deserved. Let them bear in mind a fact very apt to be ignored in this country, that success in examinations is neither the sole nor the adequate test of merit or intelligence or scholarly attainments. Let them take for their

motto the wise words of the genial writer with whom they are familiar :—

'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius ; we'll deserve it.

The school is to be congratulated on the success it achieved at the last Entrance Examination. It passed 12 out of 24 students sent up, of whom 2 were placed in the first, 2 in the second, and 8 in the third division. The result does not compare unfavourably with the poor general out-turn of the year, and certainly with the neighbouring institutions.

The results of the University Examinations call for a few remarks. One remarkable feature of the results of this year is the unusually low percentage of passes in all the examinations from the B. A. down to the Entrance. At the last Examination the falling off is surprisingly abrupt, the average having come down from about 70 per cent to about from 35 per cent. We are almost tempted to believe that the authorities of our university have lost all patience, over 'laws' delay and intend to bring the new universities Act into immediate operation, without waiting for the regular announcement of Government in due course. We greatly admire this spirit of reform and re-organisation but we have our honest doubts about the efficacy of this principle of decimation in securing a better order of students for our colleges. We had occasion to criticise the vicious character of the papers set in English at the last Entrance Examination, and we are by no means certain that the university would be able to manufacture a better order of students and to initiate or encourage a better mode of teaching, so long as the examination-papers do not improve or alter in character. Can not the old Senate, if they have got so much hasty zeal in them for reform and re-organisation, deliberately set about devising a new and improved scheme for the Entrance Examination ? We are however afraid that our humble suggestion is a veritable cry in the wilderness. The

results have given a rude shock to many a school both in and out of the metropolis, and if the reverses of this year compell the moribund institutions to 'shut up shop,' and the more respectable ones to set their house in order, the war-have not been in vain. Out of evil, cometh forth good.

This is the time for admission of students in the first and third year classes and the college office presents a pleasantly busy scene. Many are the beaming faces of lads quite within their teens, innocent of the ways of Calcutta and Calcutta colleges to which they flock from all quarters in high expectations of a metropolitan training and a brilliant University career. Unfortunately for them, there being no University atmosphere and *esprit de corps* in this University town, the boys are mostly left to themselves or their ill-informed, sometimes self-constituted guardians to select a "mess" from among a number of ill-ventilated insanitary unsightly places which are least adapted to study and healthy moral or physical development. Many a young man who have not yet arrived at the age of discretion succumb to this latter initial difficulty while those who manage to override it perhaps fall a prey to the gaieties and glamour of the town. To guard against these evils, Government have framed certain rules for the housing of students in duly licensed hostels and "messes," and it should be our endeavour to enforce these rules as rigidly as possible. To avoid future difficulties in the matter of selecting "messes," all the students belonging to any particular college should try to live together as far as possible and as near their college as practicable.

The University examinations are come and gone. Unprecedented failures at them, especially at the B. A. Examination, seem to have taken away the heart from many teachers and certainly many more students. It would be a very daring assertion to say that all the colleges are wanting in good teachers or that all the students have suddenly depreciated in quality, so that the heavy failures should be laid at their door. A satisfactory solution of the problem is no doubt difficult and its root

lies perhaps deeper than what appears at first sight. However to command success in examinations should not be the only aim of the student or of the teacher. A college and its teachers will have greatly justified their existence, and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities if they succeed in imparting to their students a sound liberal training befitting them to manfully play their part in the community in which they move and have their being. Until this fact is realized and the supreme importance of examinations is curtailed, subordinating them to genuine and healthy liberal training, the university will be a snare and the colleges attached to it mere so many mechanical workshops.

We have been favoured with a copy of the Fourth Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in India during five years 1897-98 to 1901-02. The Review is illustrated with four pairs of coloured maps showing at a glance the percentage under instruction of (1) children, (2) boys in the secondary stage, (3) boys in the primary stage and (4) girls, the pairs being meant to pointedly draw out the progress or decline under each head for the two years 1897-98 and 1901-1902. In the latter year under the first head namely percentage of children under instruction, Burma stands foremost with a percentage above 18 ; Bombay and Madras next with a percentage of 15 to 18 ; Bengal and Assam third with a percentage of 12 to 15 ; Punjab, United Provinces and Central Provinces last with a percentage of 6 to 9. Under the second head namely percentage of boys in the secondary stage of instruction, Bengal, Madras and Bombay rank first with a percentage above $1\frac{1}{2}$; Punjab second with a percentage of $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$; Central Provinces third with a percentage of 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$; Assam and Burma fourth with a percentage of $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 ; and United Provinces last with a percentage of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$. Under the third head namely the percentage of boys in the primary stage of instruction, Bengal and Bombay come out first with a percentage of 20 to 24 ; Madras, Burma and Assam second with a percentage of 16 to 20 ; Central Provinces third with a percentage of 12 to 16 ; Punjab and

United Provinces last with a percentage of 8 to 12. Under the fourth head namely the percentage of girls under education, Madras, Bombay and Burma stand at the top with a percentage above 4 ; Bengal, Assam, Central Provinces and Punjab next with a percentage of 1 to 2 ; and United Provinces last with a percentage of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1.

On a comparison of the figures for 1901-92 with those for 1897-98 in the same order, we find that in the percentage of children under instruction while Burma, United Provinces, Madras and Assam have gained, Bengal, Central Provinces and Punjab stand still ; that in the percentage of boys in the secondary stage of instruction all provinces have gained, except Assam and Bombay which show neither progress nor falling off ; that in the percentage of boys in the primary stage of instruction Punjab, United Provinces and Central Provinces show an increase while Burma shows a falling off, and Bengal, Assam, Madras and Bombay show neither increase nor falling off ; that all the provinces show an increase in female education excepting Bengal and Assam which stand at the end of the quinquennium exactly where they stood at the beginning of it.

Thus Bengal with which we are more nearly concerned has no progress to show in the matter of primary and female education, though there has been a slight advance in secondary education. The latter certainly is not a set off against the stationary character of female and primary education which marks the real progress of a community and in both of which Bengal has been left behind by her sister province of Madras and Bombay.

With regard to college education, it will perhaps interest our readers to know that there are altogether 185 colleges affiliated to the five Universities of India. Of these 185 colleges,

138 are in British India, and 47 outside it. Out of these 138 colleges in British India, 24 are Government institutions ; 6 are semi-official institutions managed by committees ; 5 are governed by Municipalities ; 38 belong to mission institutions ; 42 are under native management ; 11 are primarily for the education of European boys ; and 12 for the education of females.

In Bengal alone there are in all 46 colleges, of which 29 are first grade and 17 second grade. Of the 29 first grade colleges, 10 are Government, 13 native, 4 missionary and 2 for Europeans ; 15 of these 29 colleges being situated in Calcutta and 14 in the province of Bengal outside Calcutta. Of the second grade colleges in Bengal 17 in all, 5 are in Calcutta and 12 outside Calcutta.

The total number of college-students in India amounted in 1901-02 to 17, 148, which is an increase of 3,215 over the number during the previous quinquennium. Nearly one-half of the total number belong to Bengal. The pupils of private managed colleges numbered nearly 13,000, those of Government colleges 4,000, and the balance comprised Board colleges and Native State colleges. Out of 5,806 students of unaided colleges, 4,541 belonged to Bengal. Out of the total number of college students given above, 177 were females ; 55 belonging to Bengal, 49 to United Provinces, 35 to Madras, 30 to Bombay, and 8 to Burma.

The total expenditure on arts colleges amounted to 25½ lakhs in 1901-92, which is an increase of 2½ lakhs over the expenditure during the previous quinquennium. Out of this total expenditure about 8½ lakhs was incurred in Bengal, 6½ lakhs in Madras, 4½ lakhs in the United Provinces, 3½ lakhs in Bombay, and 1½ lakhs in the Punjab.

As regards tuition in arts subjects, the following paragraph of the Review is well worth perusal :—

“ In most colleges teaching in the arts subjects is given almost exclusively by means of lectures delivered by the college professors, and there is little instruction by tutors or “ coaches ” similar to that given at Oxford and Cambridge. On the other hand the number of lectures is much greater than in the Universities of the United Kingdom.....A student in a Scottish University may obtain his degree after attending about 700 lectures, the Indian student often attends as many as 3,000.”

As the crying demand for university reform has not yet taken any practical form, it is time for the college authorities to seriously think of curtailing the number of lectures in view of the facts disclosed in the paragraph quoted above and of replacing it by tutorial work.

P R I Z E E S S A Y .

FOLK-TALES OF BENGAL.

9. A MAN AND HIS SHADOW

OR

The night-blind son-in-law.

It was the month of *Bhadra* (August—September). The roads were covered with mud and water and from time to time a solitary traveller was seen trudging along the high road in one of the districts of western Bengal.

It was a bright morning. The sun showed his pleasant face from behind the clouds and the way-farers felt glad.

At this time a young man of five and twenty was seen walking along the muddy road. The external finery of his dress leaves no doubt in the mind of a shrewd observer that he was a newly married bridegroom and that he was going on a visit to his father-in-law's house. From the energy with which