

EXCERPTS FROM THE OLD MINUTES OF  
OUR UNIVERSITY.

1.

The following paragraphs of a despatch from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors (No. 123 of 1858) will, we doubt not, open the eyes of our educationists to the necessity of raising the standard of the examinations of this university:—

“On the important question of the standard of examination we approve the view taken by the Committee, in proposing for the B. A. Degree a standard somewhat higher than was contemplated in our instructions on the subject. In addition to the arguments used by the Committee, in support of their commendation in this respect, it is obvious that, in according to those who obtain degrees in the Universities of India the titles enjoyed by the Graduates of English Universities, the Government is bound to require an amount of qualification in those admitted to Degrees in India, at least corresponding with the standard of acquirement fixed for similar distinctions in this country. So clear indeed is the connexion between the questions of titles and of standards of qualification, that the Committee urged the essential identity of the qualifications required for Degrees, as an argument for the use in India of the terms employed to designate those obtaining such distinctions, in the English Universities.

“We are unable, however, to assent to the reasoning which led the Committee to refrain from fixing a minimum of qualification which should entitle a candidate to the Degree of Bachelor of Arts. It appears to us, that the arguments in favour of a high standard referred to in the preceding paragraph lose almost all their weight, if the standard fixed is known to be only “the maximum” and if it is acknowledged that a Degree may be obtained on passing a test much lower than that

indicated as the standard, such lower test, moreover, being left to be fixed "by the Examiners acting under the instructions of the Senate" in each case. On this point we entirely concur in the remarks recorded by your Government, and we are of opinion that steps should be taken for obtaining an authoritative declaration of the nature and extent of the acquirements, which, allowing for the difference which must naturally be expected in the application of the test by the examiners, will be indispensably required in candidates for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

## II.

Now that there is a widespread public apprehension that the raising of the minimum for a pass (specially in English) at the Arts Examinations of this University will inevitably bring about a falling-off in the percentage of passed candidates, the following paragraphs from the convocation speech of the Vice-chancellor (March 10, 1876-77) will, we hope, prove interesting as well as instructive to our readers:—

"Those who were present at our meeting of last year may possibly remember that, while congratulating the University on its progress from its birth onwards, I had to lament the results of the particular year 1875. I am glad to say of the year 1876 that the results shown by the examinations are eminently satisfactory. In the three principal examinations which affect the bulk of our students, for Entrance, for First Arts, and for Bachelor of Arts, there has been an increase of candidates, and a large increase of successful candidates. For instance, in the Entrance Examination for last year, the year 1875, only 36 per cent. of the candidates succeeded; but in this year, by which I mean the year 1876, 50 per cent. succeeded. To speak in plainer English, and to speak approximately, for every 10 that succeeded last year, 14 succeeded

this year. So in the First Arts Examination, for every 10 who succeeded last year, 15 succeeded this year; and in the B.A. Examination, for every 10 who succeeded last year, very nearly 20 succeeded this year. That is a satisfactory result, and I am informed on the best authority that it is not due to any change in the Examiners or the papers, but that it is due entirely to the better training of the candidates. They, it appears, have applied themselves less to the show of learning and more to its substance, less to the husk and more to the kernel, less to the letter and more to the spirit.

The improvement which is noticeable throughout their work is particularly conspicuous on the subjects of Mathematics and English. These two crucial subjects, the stiffest of our fences, which in 1875 caused so many downfalls, have now caused comparatively few; and it is on this account that the Examiners can say with greater confidence, that the improvement we have to record is a real substantial improvement in the training of the candidates.

The improvement in English is particularly satisfactory on all grounds. In the first place, it shows that the difficulties created by the abolition of text-books have been to a great extent, if not wholly, surmounted; and that a step which we took for the purpose of abating the practice of cram, and for the encouragement of sound training, is meeting with success. But besides that, I cannot help rejoicing on general grounds whenever I hear that a genuine knowledge of English is on the increase in this country.

All who know the history of our educational efforts are well aware how earnestly it has been debated by what vehicle a due knowledge of European thought and learning shall be conveyed to the Indian mind, and how steadfastly our University has adhered to the requisition of English. Well, one of the

latest acts of your Syndicate has been to instruct the Examiners to pay still more attention to English composition, and to take care that our students shall be able to clothe the dry bones of the language with their due amount of nerve, of muscle, and of polished skin.

It may be my prejudice as an Englishman, but I cannot help believing that, however much more vividly each man may receive ideas through his mother tongue, the spread of the English language in this country is a most important element of progress. I do not insist so much on the fact, which indeed I can only know by hearsay, that the positive and exact thought of Europe can hardly be conveyed to the mind through the language of those whose thoughts have run in a very different channel. If that were all, some other European language might suit you as well as English, though you could hardly learn any other so easily. Neither do I dwell on the undoubted fact, that a knowledge of English fits you for doing business under English rule. I speak on the general capacity which the language gives you. And what I say is that the man who has made himself master of English, becomes capable of communicating with the greatest society in the world, or that ever was in the world, of thinking and reading men. English is spoken over a far vaster extent of the earth's surface than any other language; probably the numbers of its speakers at the present moment exceed the numbers of those who speak any other language; if it is not yet spoken, it is at all events read and written by more people than any other language; its speakers are increasing in a much quicker ratio than the speakers of any other language; and it has a noble literature; which for power and range is second to none. I think, then, that this University has done very wisely in insisting on the study of English, and that it will do wisely in *raising the standard on every*

*favourable opportunity.* There are things for which we English rulers of this country have been reproached because it is said that, with the best of intentions, we have in a somewhat pedantic and blundering fashion introduced them into Indian society ; but I can look any one of my Indian friends in the face and say that among those things he cannot reckon the study of the English tongue."

## विजयता ।

(*Alexander Selkirk*)

यदिदमिह समस्तं दृश्यतेऽप्यत्र तस्मिन्  
नधिपतिरहमेकोऽव्याहृतो मत्प्रभावः ।  
अभित इति च केन्द्रं सर्वतोऽप्यासमुद्रं  
सकलमृगं खगानास्वाम्ययं केवलोऽहम् ॥

कुत्रापि विजयते रमणीय-कान्ति  
या मण्डिता कविगणैः मुखमण्डले तैः ।  
शङ्काभिसङ्कुलभवे वसतिर्वरंसा  
नैतद्भयवहपदेऽभिलषामि राज्यम् ॥

न मनुज-नयनानां साम्प्रतं गोचरेऽह-  
मिह मम भवितव्या निर्जने जौदयात्रा ।  
न ललित-नरकर्णं भूय आकर्णयिष्ये  
भवति चकित आत्माचात्र मे स्वस्वरेण ॥

क्षेत्रेष्विमे मृगगणा विहरन्ति यैः  
वासं विहाय वसतो मदिहभ्रमन्ति ।