

number of which, though dated September 1916, has reached us, lately, and the Ravenshavian (Organ of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack) the first number of which was issued in December 1916. The former is expected to appear nine times in the year and the latter thrice in the year. We wish our contemporaries a useful and prosperous career. The first issues are replete with readable matter and we may fairly hope that they will be able to keep up to this level in future issues.

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The January issue of the Presidency College Magazine just to hand deserves something more than a formal acknowledgment. 'It has been attempted to give a special character to this number to commemorate the Centenary of the College'—says the Editorial Note and we may add that we have derived great pleasure and profit from the articles especially written for this object by Mr. Wordsworth, the present Principal and Mr. James the former Principal as well as by Sir Gooroodas Banerjee Kt., Dr. P. C. Ray, Mr. Shyamacharan Ganguli (late Principal, Utterpara College), Mr. Abdur Rahim—old alumni of the College and a writer who signs his name as D. G. These articles on the Centenary Celebration deserve a wider circulation among old students of the College and we may take the liberty of suggesting that they should be reprinted in the form of a neat little pamphlet instead of being confined to the pages of the College Magazine.

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### ROMANTICISM.

Of the various aspects of Romanticism, only the literary one concerns us here. But it is interesting to note that the love for truth, for Nature which stimulated the *Lyrical Ballads*, stimulated no less the root-motive of the French Revolution. The first impulse of the Romantics was to free the human chord from the rust of classicism under which it had long remained 'cribbed, cabined and confined.' The heroic couplet had a long tyrannic rule. Literary praise—the ever-guiding factor of the "Correct Poets"—was what Wordsworth wished to be freed from and he adopted his strange 'diction', not because it was the vehicle of natural feeling and common thought but because it gave the most

faithful expression of the rarest and sincerest passion. The same love for freedom drove them to the mountains and the ocean-roar. The love of mediæval odds and quaint grammar led to the publication of *Percy's Reliques*. But the movement goes further. It turned a new leaf for human study. It created an air of sensitive touchstone. We find Nature in a garb of more vivacity, more alacrity and enthusiasm. With Wordsworth it is a living Presence—a strange Pantheistic doctrine—that entering into every object, organic or inorganic, endowed it with a soul, capable of maintaining a "pre-arranged harmony" between it and the mind of Man. His is the *reflective* aspect of Nature-worship. To him,

"The meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Shelley was no less inspired with the same spirit-ideal: but while with Wordsworth this inborn spirit is *thought*, with Shelley it is *sympathetic Love*,—

"He is a portion of the loveliness  
Which once he made more lovely."

Byron is essentially a votary of Man. With him Nature is in the back-ground. But at the same time we must not overlook his lukewarm interest in the spirit-world of Wordsworth and Shelley—

"Are not the mountains, waves and skies, a part  
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?"

But the movement also developed a historic interest. Scott was the genius to uplift old romance. By giving a historical background to his notable heroes of fiction and by intermingling them with pictures of real personages, he created a peculiar world of his own. His method was also adopted in the Novels of the Contemporary period.

Besides this upheaval of the historical interest, the discovery of a new bond, the tie of the real and the unreal is no less important. It brought on a connecting link between the outward world and the romance, the fiction, the supernatural. With the diverse conception of the Nature Spirit of Byron, Shelley and Wordsworth, the ideal of Scott and Coleridge stands pre-eminent. Besides the adhesion of Nature and Romance, they brought themselves to the close study of literature and art. Indeed the Romantic upspring is the "Golden Age of criticism." If it may be said of Wordsworth to have given a twist to the human mind and brought about a reverence for Nature, it must be said of Coleridge to have brought about a "Renaissance of Wonder." He turned the supernatural into a

literary force and by freeing it from the jarring tone of Mrs. Radcliffe and Walpole, mystified it into a suggestive and indefinite factor which at once gave an interest and life to his compositions. With Shelley the simile took a different form. In Keats, the description of a garden becomes a mild tropical land in which to repose his high expressive style and imagination.

But the prose-writers of the age brought back an egotistic tone. Lamb, Hazlitt and De Quincey are more or less enthusiastic in their egotism.

The Victorian era expanded the imaginative scope from Nature and History to the intricate labyrinth of the human character. Tennyson is a product of a psychic and scientific age. It is his psychology which speaks—

“Star to star vibrates light : may soul to soul  
Strike thro’ a finer element of her own ?  
So,—from afar,—touch as at once ? or why  
That night, that moment, when she named his name  
Did the keen shriek ‘yes love, yes, Edith, yes’,  
Shrill.....”

His again is Nature ‘red in tooth and claw.’ But Arnold’s studied criticism lacks the humanizing mood. He sometimes approaches Wordsworth, when he says,

“Blow, ye winds ! lift me with you ;  
I come to the wild.  
Fold closely, O Nature !  
Thine arms round thy child,”

but the general tenour of his ideal is in the question,

“Will ye not learn it, and know,  
When ye mourn that a poet is dead,  
That the singer was less than his themes,  
Life, and emotion, and I ?”

Again, with the Novel the interest in life was greatly excited and Dickens, Thackeray and ‘George Eliot’ created a marvellous change. In a word, beauty in the abstract, the true essence in Nature and Art has found a wider sympathy and is progressing onward.

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