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By Reverence : By Questioning : By Service.

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IN MEMORIAM.

It is with great sorrow and regret that we have to record the untimely death of S^r. Binodebehari Ghosh, Head-Assistant of the Office, which melancholy event took place on the 11th February last. The deceased was suffering from intermittent fever for a long time, but nobody suspected that his health had been thoroughly undermined, and that he would pass away so suddenly from our midst. He leaves behind a brilliant record of thirty years' most faithful and loyal service in the College, and both the staff and the students, past and present, will bear testimony to his amiable disposition which made him so popular with all who came in touch with him. He was only three and died in harness. May his soul rest in peace !
Our sincere condolence to his bereaved family.

As a mark of respect for the memory of the deceased the College and the College-School remained closed on the 15th February.

NOTES.

The great problem that faces the country to-day is that of education. As to the inefficiency of the present system of education in Bengal, there are, we think, no two views. The need for reformation in education is therefore just what the

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country has long felt, and undoubtedly a thorough reform in direction is just what Bengal wants badly today. But the question is—what kind of educational reform will suit her most attention being paid to her needs and requirements? This, we frankly confess, is the great Serbonian bog where armies who have sunk. People who are thoroughly dissatisfied with the existing system look upon the contemplated Board of Secondary Education as the long looked-for panacea, for their eagerness for a change leads them to think that any change will be a change for the better. Others, however, regard the proposed Board with suspicion, and not without reason. Of course it is premature to pass any remark upon the Board at this stage since it has not yet come into existence, and since we are quite in the dark as to what its nature and constitution will be. Suffice it to say that there are conflicting views about the good it may do. Great and high authorities rise on either side so as to make the perplexing question of educational reform in Bengal still more perplexing.

It is but natural that the proposal for a Board should be viewed with suspicion by the bulk of our countrymen. Rightly or wrongly, the public have no faith in the present system of Government. Rightly or wrongly, the people of Bengal have learned to think that the attitude of their rulers has been anything but friendly to the cause of education. Any proposal to bring about a reform in education coming from a Government which does not enjoy the confidence of the people, is bound to be looked upon with suspicion. Fears have therefore been already expressed that the creation of the Board will lay the axe at the root of higher education in Bengal in the name of efficiency. We confess His Excellency's last Convocation address has not thrown much light upon the matter so as to dispel these fears and suspicions from the public mind. We think the time has come when the Government should no longer keep the public in the dark, and should declare in clear, unmistakable terms what educational reform

have in contemplation. The matter is a serious one and the public have a right to know what is going on behind the scenes.

As to the proposed Board, even those who favour its formation want that it should be a purely non-official body, free of all Government control; and unless this is done, all talk of educational reform is pure sham. No doubt the finance is to come from the Government, but merely for that the Government cannot claim a strict supervision of the affairs of an independent body consisting of the best and ablest of our educated men. It would be unfortunate indeed if the loosening of the reins of the Government purse were attended with the tightening of its firm grip over educational affairs. 'Efficiency' again is a beautiful catch-word, but in a country like Bengal where the large majority of the people are steeped in illiteracy and ignorance, diffusion is to be valued more than mere efficiency. Nobody wants that the rapid strides education has made of late in this province should be checked in the name of efficiency. We are afraid the time has not yet come to cry halt. And if the Board cannot combine efficiency with diffusion—those two things which are now considered as alien—its creation will do more than good to our countrymen. The present system is always no doubt; yet nobody wants to go from this great deep to a still greater deep of which he has no experience.

Another perplexing question is whether the Intermediate classes are to be separated from the B.A. classes, and placed under the control of the Board of Secondary Education. It is that the Colleges of Bengal will be vitally affected. Apart from the reduction of status to which many Colleges are bound to succumb if the ponderous axe of the proposed Board is aimed at the separation of the head from the trunk, such an action will destroy the great tradition that has so beautifully grown about the University ever since its

foundation. A tradition of over sixty years has taught both the University and its alumni to look upon the Intermediate and B.A. classes as inseparable from each other, as inseparable and vitally connected in fact as the different members of the body are; and under its benign influence the Colleges of Bengal have been allowed to develop themselves into a beautiful, harmonious whole. Any attempt to break down this noble tradition is sure to throw education into wild confusion, and who knows what monster may come out of this chaos? Already our boys when they come to Colleges fresh from schools seem to be "moving about in worlds not realised" with "blank misgivings" on their face, and their bewilderment grows more and more when they pass from their Colleges to the vast, grander, but all the same more alien, Post-Graduate Classes. What good will it do if the proposed Board widens further this yawning gulf between higher and secondary education? What good will come out if the plant is denied a sound, healthy, natural growth in its native soil, and transferred from atmosphere to atmosphere only to be artificially fed and developed? Will not the very act of transplantation kill its genial soul, its very vitality, and make it languish and die a premature death or at best live a dwarfed, unnatural life? We pause for a reply.

As for the much vexed question of Arts and Science, quote the following remarks of the Director of Public Instruction for what they are worth:

"The belief.....that literary education has no market value tends to increase, and the land-slide towards B.Sc., and I.Sc., courses continues. Colleges, if they are to live, are forced to provide, often with great financial difficulty, expensive facilities for the new type of university course which are often beyond their resources. Within reason there is much ground for satisfaction in the diversification of college studies which is the result of the change. But the time has come to

enter a "caveat" against some of the assumptions of the movement which is taking place. A science degree has probably no more strictly "vocational" value at least for most of those who take it, and may have less, than a degree in arts. The degree and the subject studied, are not the sole factor; the educational process through which the degree is attained is equally important. Badly taught and badly studied science is as valueless an instrument of education as badly studied arts. While all men should know some science, it is by no means a form of education which, as a main subject, forms the best preparation for those professions which have in the past attracted and will certainly continue to attract the *bhadralog* of Bengal. If a man intends to be a lawyer or a civil servant or a clerk or a journalist or to enter commerce in some form or other, it is probably not wise of him to study Chemistry or Physics or Botany until he is 23, save in exceptional instances. It is significant that the movement is so largely simply a reaction against arts classes. When an equal reaction sets in against science classes, as will one day be the case, when it is discovered that they, too, can lead to unemployment, the significance of the demand will be clear. The prevailing dissatisfaction with arts education is really, though disguised as a demand for science, an expression of dissatisfaction with the whole university system as such. It is a demand for good schools, for the transformation of the colleges especially in the intermediate stages into places of sound education, and for the modification of the educational system in the light of ascertained needs and existing realities."

The Bengal Legislative Council has passed an important resolution urging the introduction of compulsory physical training into the schools and colleges of Bengal. If this resolution is given effect to, it will no doubt remove a long-felt want. Over 60% of our boys have a defective physique, and we all feel that something should be done to make our boys more healthy and active. It will be a crime if we still persist in

the old error of developing the mind at the expense of the body—an error which has done infinite harm to our young men, hindering as it has done the development not only of their physique but of their mentality as well. There cannot be a healthy mind without a healthy body. We all know this, and yet this truth has been wilfully and criminally neglected in this province with what sad results we shudder to point out. We understand that the University of Calcutta has already taken a lead in the matter of facilitating the introduction of physical culture into the Colleges of Bengal. Most of the Colleges have readily consented to undertake the task of imparting physical training to their alumni. But most of the Colleges in Calcutta suffer from great inconvenience in this matter, the greatest of which is the want of suitable grounds for physical exercise. It is here that the Government should step in and provide the Colleges with proper equipments and facilities such as the acquisition of suitable plots of land on lease or other terms, without which much cannot be expected of these Colleges, completely handicapped as they are at present.

The Long Vacation is near and our boys will be going home to stay there for about three months. While wishing them a happy vacation may we not be permitted to lay before them the following programme of work during the holidays? We do not want our young men to be good boys, to pore over their books and lose their health and vitality. We shall be happy if they recognise their duties to their fellow-men, and take up any one, if not all, of the following items of work:—

(a) Helping the cause of mass education by opening night schools for the labourers and their children, and leaving the conduct of these schools in the hands of their younger brethren who live in the villages;

(b) Improvement of the sanitary condition of the village they live in, special attention being paid to the destruction of the water-hyacinth and other weeds, as well as to the construc-

tion of small roads and waterways by the children of the village in the evenings and moonlit nights;

(c) Education of the jute-cultivators so as to render them free from the tyrannic and profiteering grasp of the middle men and money-lenders, by the formation of effective combinations against these.

If any student does not like any one of these items let him spend the vacation as profitably as he can. Only let him never pay exclusive attention to his studies. It is better that he should come back to his college with radiant smiles of health and life than with sadder, though wiser, looks.

It has been decided by the H. N. Mitra Memorial Fund Committee that all contributions hitherto received should be converted into 3½ per cent. Government Securities and the entire amount placed in the hands of the University, requesting that august body to create a prize in Botany, in the name of late Prof. H. N. Mitra, out of the annual interest of the Funds, to be awarded annually to a student of this College who stands first in Botany from among its successful candidates at the Intermediate Examination.

Sir Sidney Lee, the eminent Shakespearian scholar, author of the Standard Biography of Shakespeare and editor of the Dictionary of National Biography, is no more. His death will be looked upon as a grave calamity by the literary world.

Closely following the news of Sir Sidney Lee's death comes the melancholy news of a sudden outbreak of fire at Stratford-on-Avon—a name that thrills the heart of every lover of Shakespeare. The famous Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and a tower adjoining it have been burnt down. Many valuable costumes stored beneath the stage have been destroyed. Fortunately all is not lost. The Museum and the Picture Gallery with valuable relics of the great poet and dramatist have been saved. It has been definitely decided to rebuild the

Memorial Theatre, and a fund to raise £ 100,000 will be launched shortly. The destruction of the Theatre will not interfere with the holding of the birthday and summer festivals at Shakespeare's birth-place.

THE COLLEGE UNION.

The College Union held its fifth and sixth sittings respectively on the 20th January and 20th February last. On both the occasions the gathering was small—an unmistakable sign that the members of the Union have ceased to take a keen interest in its proceedings—which is much to be regretted. No paper was read, but there were interesting discussions on diverse topics and the proceedings closed with a sumptuous repast on each occasion. The sixth sitting passed two important resolutions; one was that to perpetuate the memory of their late lamented colleague all contributions from the members of the staff to the H. N. Mitra Memorial Fund should be placed in the hands of the University so as to create an Endowment in order to award every year either a prize or a silver medal to the student who stands first in Botany at the Intermediate Examination from Bangabasi College; the other was a condolence resolution expressing the Union's profound sorrow for the untimely and unexpected death of one of its members, the late Babu Binodebepari Ghosh.

THE ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION.

I.

The First General Meeting of the Economics Association, for the new session, came off on Saturday the 16th January, 1926, under the presidency of Prof. D. N. Mukherjee, M.A., B.L. Following was the item of business:—