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Editorial

Centenary of the Partition-Movement of Bengal (1905 - 2005) and Lokman

Centenary of the movement against the partition of Bengal or the 'Swadeshi' movement is being observed this year. On this occasion, we are publishing some important and valuable articles in this issue, apprising our sincere reverence to the movement. Conception of the society of connoisseurs is, that spontaneous mass movement initiated in our pre-political society through the movement against the partition of Bengal, the same congealed as independence movement of India in course of time and the country liberated before fifty eight years as a sequel. The achievement of these ceremonial performance of historic facts is the future generation finds opportunity to know and learn numerous through. So whoever is ardent and craving in this matter, certainly will have an endeavour to know how the condition of our society was before one hundred years. Problem is how to discover it unblemished? For this reason only, innumerable flawless, enriched with facts, objectively written articles are in demand, which is hard to obtain in our society. After due consideration of the fact we expect, the articles of this issue will be of good use to the readers.

We haven't conferred acceptance of the historian yet, but definitely this topic may be raised that the Bengali language be earned as the language of mass democratisation through this movement. Plentiful notes and magazines, notices, short and elongated brochures etc. were published almost in spoken language of the people in general to serve daily report to the public about the mass upheaval of that time. And in effect of all these Bengali language, specially the Bengali prose turned to an unprecedented motivation towards democracy. All those three newspapers that observed the role as pioneers were 'Sandhya' of Brahmandhab, 'Jugantar' of Bhupen Dutta and 'Bandemataram' of Suren Banerjee and Arobindo Ghosh. We are submitting with profound pain and regret that the persons cultivate on the history and development of Bengali literature and prose, do not discuss about the influence of 'Swadeshi' movement upon this. Besides, though Gandhijee admitted the 'Swadeshi' movement as a fountain of his political ideology and non-co-operation movement, the movement against the partition of Bengal hasn't received its due recognition till today.

Lenin mentioned that Tolstoy is the mirror of Russian society. Just the same we can say about Rabindranath also, and our good fortune is contemporary matured Rabindranath was agitated enough by the movement (despite of the presence of his commanding father), which reflected indeed through his contemporary and subsequent innumerable writings. Interested readers are requested to go through 'Rabijeebonee' (vol.5) by Prasanta Pal. That would help them realize how sensitive and thoughtful Rabindranath responded to the events of perturbed social life that time.

In this instance, it may be comprehended after a little consideration that despite of several faults and failings, how the mass upheaval of that time worked excellently as impregnate and travail home, being awakened with self-reliance to shape the nation, language, culture and industry-technology etc. of this country. This topic turned to history now, so it is possible and reasonable to form personal opinion in this matter, putting in order all the exactly recorded deeds. Because of that form only, we may be intimated about the shape of actual rise and fall of history of the nation. As in the opinion of some learned men, resurrection of Hinduism was the origin of the movement. They have placed facts and grounds in support. Besides, inconsistently a band of scholars claims with facts and reasons, motive of the movement was

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to form an undivided nation with two communities of India unitedly.

Perhaps someone will have a deep sigh as if he is quoting from the horse's mouth and with a bit of philosophic hue reveals incidents of this nature always originated in the history (historical origin) and till occurring now (current utility - vide *terrorism*), which may be metioned as, "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely." in the style of confused 'not to be' Hamlet. In these days it may be modified a little and expressed as - "the oppressor's wrong, the suicidal's insolence."

However, pain of the authors and artists suppose to be of a little more gravity still and in a word, as if the same is 'remember yet' or very likely not to sink down in the abyss of oblivion being disregarded (instance under disposal, Akshay Dutta). Do the renowned shrewd artists of modern Bengal intends to rush in any fold of the two 'Sarkars' for this reason? Let us mention with a little explanation, the readers will perceive after going through the articles of this issue with a slight attention only that how the authors exerted with single-minded devotion and prepared the deeds to regenerate the almost forgotten 'Swadeshi' movement. But what acceptance they will receive by lithographic publishing of the precious articles of this nature in our negligible, insignificant magazine? What is the value of their unselfish effort in this media-based culture of today? Probably the writers may answer this. Well, the famous statement of Sammuel Johnson is striving to think out just this moment, 'I would rather be attacked than unnoticed.'

Now we will consider by arranging all the facts and grounds at our disposal to find the actual beatitude and nature or the substance-matter of the movement. But we should always keep in mind that mere refreshing informations are not enough to form views for and against an opinion in such matters. Proper consideration of the facts also identically important. We approached the door of recently occured incident of *Lokman* to realize how the problem may be moulded to an exceedingly profound complexity.

Lokman defuncted at the age of eleven months, hence his chronicle also is very much abridged. As he came into existence from the womb of Gyanera Bibi of seventeen years at a village under Domkal P.S. in the district Murshidabad and incurred favour of the mass-media as an extraordinarily surprising infant since grown to twenty two kgs. within eleven months. This story initiated thereafter. He was admitted to the S.S.K.M. hospital in Kolkata for proper management with the assistance of the State Govt. and the board of specialist doctors there haven't find any illness anywhere in his physique. Suddenly one day he expired by suspension of breath hereafter at the hospital, as food stuff at noon pervaded into his lungs causing adversity.

It may be mentioned that we may not recognize Lokman unless he won favour of media. Because countless events of this sort originates at our State or private hospitals and nursing homes, which we do not know even in most of the cases.

In fact, death of Lokman is an insignificant incident as per computation of enumeration. Such as we don't know till this day, how many children dies every year in that very district Murshidabad in want of balanced diet and safe drinking water or of acute respiratory infection or diarrhoea complicated by malnutrition. Therefore having considered the entire facts Lokman, an infant of the economically fringed race, brought nothing about to draw a line on the pages of history at this year of centenary of the 'Swadeshi' movement. If so, for which realization we have selected Lokman as a representative? In this turn, we will narrate this dialect.

Lokman belongs to an underprivileged family and his mother is illiterate one. Percentage of female literacy in the district Murshidabad is ten percent normally, in excess granted it is fifteen percent. Gyanera Bibi was of fourteen years whereas she became married (legally invalid) and when she delivered Lokman, her first issue, she was of seventeen years (a case

of high risk primegravida). Therefore it is expected that the gestation period wasn't smooth or uneventful for Lokman and at the time of delivery he suffered from hypoxic cerebral injuries, which is a natural event in case of an underaged primegravida and subsequently all those problems activated for this reason. His extreme appetite and unusal bodyweight due to deposition of fat being within as a result (due to abnormal neurohormonal hypothalamic sensitivity as a result of birth injury). In their adolescent period it is observed that major part of them suffered from mental retardation.

We have struggled for a sustained period on behalf our Institute following this matter vigorously. Because we have found a considerable number of mentally retarded young children and adult population in our mental health survey for a long time (five years follow up study) at the two remote village areas of one lakh population each in the districts of Hooghly (Khanakul-I) and Murshidabad (Suti-I). In effect of prolonged observation under these phenomenon, we have arrived at a conclusion that innumerable infants of these kind are being found in our rural areas due to absence of proper antenatal care and bad obstretics particularly for cerebral injuries in want of oxygen at the time of their deliveries.

As a remedy we have alerted those who are assisting delivery, provided training to the untrained midwife that immediate after childbirth, each and every baby should be provided mouth to mouth breathing for at least five minutes. We have informed publicly in this matter, performed meetings, seminar, workshops, trained the midwives and quacks of villages, wrote books and booklets, but it produced no effect. Because these course of events incurred no gracious look of the media. Incidentally it is mentionable that even some time ago the assistance of delivery in villages befallen under disposal of the unskilled village midwives. Those midwives were dirty enough and cobbler by caste. Uncleanliness cannot be explained by poverty at times. Since most people will admit that the 'Santhals' are poor enough. But they are amazingly neat and clean.

However, those deliveries took place in extremely unhygienic conditions of cow-sheds and countless death of infants and mothers has occured therefore. Nowadays certainly circumstances has modified enough, but our attitude regarding the incident has not changed by far any means. Because everyone concerned in this function suppose that delivery is an untidy event, so they take the job as to be completed perfunctorily, in a hurry-scurry, for granted. As a result, numberless Lokman come into life being victims of utmost neglegency. To reform this position completely, perhaps one more centenary of the movement against the partition of Bengal is to be brought to light.

Because as Lokman grown, Gyanera has watched the ad-figures of overweight and lovely children in the visual media, so she desired her babe also should be grown of this shape, though scarcity of victuals was in her house. For that very reason, she simply has procured food and feeded her child at the instant when he craved for it. But nobody tutored this adolescent mother that how dangerous it may be. Who was the person to teach her this subject?

The Anganwadi worker or Supervisor of I.C.D.S., male or female health worker, health assistant of Block Office or Panchayat Samiti, M.O.'s of Rural hospital, child specialists etc. etc. of his subdivision and district. It is surprising that despite of so much countless appointed salaried government employees, no one noticed Lokman even, or done a little with a sense of responsibility. So he had to be fetched directly to Kolkata, at the largest hospital of this State. Still whatever illness existed with Lokman or not, it was highly essential to tutor his mother this simple task. That is, "reduce his food intake everyday by small quantities. Because he has habituated with the consumption, cannot be reduced at once. But cut it down

by degrees and he will be back to normal weight almost within a year.”

No one thought Gyanera Bibi this opinion of great value. Even though the specialist or the superspecialist doctors didn't accept the responsibility to explain this ultimate pledge to that immatured illiterate girl, notwithstanding deliberately. They became relieved of anxiety leading the obligation to others so that no one may complain on behalf of this abruptly bearded V.I.P. patient. Simply we made out through the kind look of media that Lokman couldn't be revived as certain most sophisticated instrument hasn't been imported yet so long.

Alas! regret for the modesty of 'Swadeshi movement'! Endurance and sacrifice of countless persons echoing with the victory songs at the gallows surrounding it! A shadow of dense dark cloud of the irresponsible and heartless society of this country as it were observed to be thickened on the pale stridor-faced eyes of little Lokman. As if Lokman warned, not the want of imported sophisticated gadget purchased, he couldn't find such a physician in this society (yes, it is just the doctors who should hold over leadership in such matters, because initially the community of doctors are answerable for this critical position of Lokman), such a cultured human being all around him, who can shout with a sense of responsibility by diving in the mouth of the Ganges like 'Bipro' of the poem 'Debotar Graash', to say aloud, 'Phiraye anibo tore (I will bring you back)'. **P A S**

The Swadeshi Movement through the Eyes of *The Mahratta* (1905-07)

Ramkrishna Bhattacharya

J.M. Roberts made room to mention the partition of Bengal (1905) and its aftermath¹ in his condensed 1019-page world history beginning with the advent of *the homo sapiens* and ending with the cold war. But surprisingly enough R. Palme Dutt did not consider the event even worth recording in his otherwise admirable work, *India Today*. Admittedly every historian has his own choice, but the total omission of the Swadeshi movement, which followed the partition of Bengal in 1905, is rather regrettable in view of its long-term consequences on the Indian freedom movement. The Swadeshi movement in fact is the beginning of the end of the British rule in India. The weapons deployed during the movement – boycott of British goods, establishment of national schools and colleges, passive resistance, and finally revolutionary terrorism – were utilized again and again in the decades that followed till the British were compelled to leave India on 15.8. 1947. The Swadeshi movement is indeed a seminal event in the history of our freedom struggle.

What the Swadeshi movement meant to Bengal and the Bengali has been studied extensively, though not adequately. There are certain areas which require further probe (for example, the democratization of the Bangla language, radicalization of the Bengal press, its impact on art, especially folk art and culture, etc.). But another area, of no mean importance, remains largely unexplored. We do not know enough about how the rest of India viewed the Swadeshi movement. Even a preliminary survey would make it clear that the impact was far greater and wider than it may appear to be.

In what follows I would like to put forth how the Swadeshi movement was represented in *The Mahratta*, an English weekly edited by N.C. Kelkar, an associate of B.G. Tilak, a leading light of the so-called extremists in Maharashtra.²

The editorial in *The Mahratta* (30.7.1905) is devoted to “The Bengal Partition”. The picture was apparently not yet altogether clear to people outside Bengal. They mistook the partition proposal as a device “to crush the Bengalee Hindus” only (6.8.1905). The next editorial refers to the resolutions adopted in the Town Hall meeting held on 7.8.1905 and reports that “The first of these expressed the emphatic protest of the Bengali Nation against the partition ...”. The term, Bengali Nation, deserves notice.

The editorial on 20.8.1905 welcomes the boycott move and writes :

Bengal has the hearty sympathy of the whole of India, in this outrage to her feelings, her liberties and her resources. More than this, her action has been of such a nature as to win our deep respect. We are much mistaken if the Bengal boycott, apparently insignificant at present, do not prove the beginning of a great matter in which every part of India will go in sooner or later. We must remember that another idea, destined to overwhelm Northern India with violence, began likewise in Bengal in its time at the Dum-Dum Cantonments.

The expectation was not belied. An editorial note entitled “The Bengal Agitation” (27.8.1905) says :

We are glad to find that the auspices for the agitation by the Bengal Nation against the Partition decree are fortunately becoming day by day more and more bright and hopeful. In the first place the mind of the Nation is being properly strung up to practically carry out the solemn pledge of agitation that was publicly taken at the Town Hall meeting. Bengal is evincing far greater spirit and organised action than her enemies could credit her with.

The main editorial had the dramatic title : “Exit Lord Curzon”.

In the same issue a long extract is quoted from Bipin Chandra Pal's weekly, *New India*. It runs as follows :

The most sanguine among us have been completely taken by surprise at the enthusiastic and whole-hearted support which the boycott-movement has been receiving from the people in almost every part of Bengal. It is spreading really, as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* puts it, like wildfire among the people. Young men have gone almost mad over it. Elderly men who had never joined any political agitation before have commenced to throw their stored-up energies and enthusiasm into this movement. There is said to be already an appreciable decline in the sales of imported articles in Calcutta and elsewhere. All this indicates the birth of a new spirit in the community which has proclaimed a message of new hope and joy to the country. But this boycott movement means, however, with the large majority of those who are pledging themselves to it, much more than what some of our leaders want it to be. It does not mean with them simply a threat to the British people, or a mere protest against partition. It is so put, no doubt, in the Resolutions adopted at the last Town Hall Meeting; and it is, clearly, the idea some of the old leaders who are still under the spell of the political shibboleths of British public life, and who are seeking to use it as a weapon to compel the Government under possible pressure of English public opinion to withdraw this partition for good. But the country views it in quite a different light. It means to vast majority of those who are supporting it, an expansion of what has been known and existed among us as the Swadeshi Movement.

The country had for some time past been preparing for such an organised movement not to spite the British Government or to injure the British manufac-

tures but simply with a view to help the due development of our own industrial and commercial life; and what this partition proposal has done is simply to impart a new stimulus to it. The Swadeshi Movement had started before the present partition scheme was even thought of, and will last even it is abandoned or enforced.

Quoting a letter written by an "esteemed friend", *The Mahratta* reports a students' gathering (apparently before 1.9.1905). Since the details of this meeting are not mentioned elsewhere, it is reproduced below :

There was subsequently another meeting exclusively of the student world(?) held in the Albert Hall under the chairmanship of Dr. Sarat K. Mullick. Here was an assemblage of three thousand youngmen and the utterances by the chairman and others were most enthusiastic. The procession expressive of mourning over the partition, which was organised on the day of the meeting, must have been very impressive for the time being. The closing of the shops with its clear meaning also could not possibly be lost on the public. And lastly we may notice the burning of Sir. M. Bhowmagree's effigy which cannot fail to mark the depth of feeling in the matter

The editorial of 10.9.1905 ("The Bengal Partition") records that the *London Times* (16.8.1905) published two letters in favour of the partition : one from a certain S. Mitra and another from Sir George Birdwood. *The Mahratta* comments :

Now who is S.M. Mitra? He is an M.R.A.S i.e. a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. But consistently with his recent utterances the abbreviation may be taken to stand for a member of the 'Renegades Asinine Society'. [This Mitra was editor of the *Deccan Post*]

A selection of news from *Induprakash* about a meeting of Bombay students, held at the Framji Cowasji Hall (1.9.1905) is also reported. We are informed that largely Gujarati and Marathi students were the participants with M.R. Bodas presiding. More interesting is the news that "a new store of Swadeshi articles has been opened by a company of which the leading spirit is a Professor in a private college" (10.9.1905).

Throughout September and October 1905 correspondence, reports and polemics continued. Binayak Martand Badekar and "A Mahatara (?) of Satara" (17.9.1905) set the ball rolling. Subsequently letters both for and against the boycott of British goods began to appear (24.9.1905). Selections from P. Roychoudhuri's explanation of the function of the Swadeshi Bureau of which he was the honorary secretary is reproduced. Readers are told that students were being punished for promoting Swadeshi at Amroli, Kohlapur, and other places. Quite naturally the Calcutta meeting held in and outside the Town Hall on 7.8.1905 is reported. The report says that a grand procession was organised by students and a meeting of Mohamedans was also held. Abdul Rasul's address "at the Parsibagan Square in Upper Circular Road" (now Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road) is mentioned on 1.10.1905 and the whole address is reproduced on the 8.10.1905 issue. It is a rare document, so some extracts are given below :

... I have used the words Mohamedan Bengalees purposely; because I have noticed some Mahomedans of Bengal who are just as much Bengalees as the Hindus of Bengal whereas they call themselves Mahomedans. It is no doubt due to ignorance; but how does this ignorance arise? It arises from the fact that the Mahomedans in the past have not looked to the land where they have been and bred but to their religion. They considered that all the Mahomedans of the world formed one nation, no matter what country they were born in or what language they spoke, which to my mind is as absurd as anything can be.

Rasul then refers to Persia and Morocco. He says that "a Persian cannot call [a] Moor his countryman"! If it were so an Englishman then also "might call a Frenchman his countryman" because they were Christians both. "If I were to meet a Bengalee Hindu and a Turk in a foreign country I would embrace the Bengalee Hindu as my countryman and not the Turk whom I may embrace as co-religionist." Rasul continues :

We both Hindus and Mahomedans here belong to the same mother country—Bengal (cheers). We are all Bengalees, though our different religions make us Hindus, Mahomedans, and Christians.

The mistaken idea about nationality, persisted in by our leaders and encouraged by our rulers, has been responsible for most of our political grievances not having been redressed. (Hear, hear). Whenever our Hindu countrymen, admittedly more advanced than ourselves, have made representations to Government for the redress of various grievances which equally affected us all, — Hindus, Mahomedans and Christians — the so-called Mahomedan leaders, forgetful of the interests of their co-religionists whom they pretend to represent, but always mindful of their own, have told them that they have nothing in common with the Hindus and have prevented them from joining their Hindu fellow countrymen. (Shame, shame). Gentlemen, I have [not] yet been able to discover in which way our interests differ from those of the Hindus. (Hear, hear). Take, for instance, the Resolutions that are proposed year after year by the National Congress. Now if they were all placed on the Statute Book, do you think they would not benefit us as much our countrymen, whatever their religion may be? Some of my friends do not believe in constitutional agitation which they think has been a failure. Well, I attribute that failure to the fact that the Mahomedans and Hindus were not united. If we had joined the Hindus many years ago and showed a united front to the Government, it would not have treated our representations with contempt and would have hesitated before passing some of these repressive measures under which we have all been groaning. (Hear, hear). Leaders have always told us to have implicit faith in our paternal Government and to keep ourselves aloof from the Hindus. What have we gained by such sychophancy? Are the Mahomedans better off than the Hindus as far as the Government appointments are concerned or in any other way? (Hear, hear). We have certain Associations which have approached the outgoing and incoming Governors with fine addresses and begged of them to show us special favour and each time they have been snubbed and insulted and told "first deserve then desire". (Shame, shame). Our Viceroy went so far as to say that there was no royal road for the Mahomedans to the Government offices. In spite of such insults and snubs, is it not humiliating for the Mahomedans to be told by their leaders to be patient and see what the Government does for them? (Hear, hear). [So we must help ourselves] I am glad that we have made up our minds at least to discuss the question whether we should join the Hindus. A year ago, any person, making such proposal would have been put down as a traitor to the Mahomedan cause. To my mind our salvation lies not in keeping ourselves aloof from the rest of our countrymen but in considering ourselves as belonging to Bengalee nation. (Hear, hear). I therefore consider the time has come when we should sink all our private grievances, embrace the Hindus as our fellow-countrymen and join them in all matters that tend to promote the welfare of our beloved mother country, Bengal. (Loud applause).

Rasul points out that The Partition would mean nothing to the Mahomedans. New appointments will not be filled up with the Mahomedans from the 15th October 1905. Curzon was out to scuttle the Hindu-Muslim unity. Partition is not an accomplished fact.

We ought to continue to agitate against it until it is withdrawn: and withdrawn it is sure to be, if we Hindus and Mahomedans make common cause. (Hear, hear).

Now about the Swadeshi Movement. As far as it concerns the encouragement of the consumption of indigenous goods to the exclusion of foreign goods, I do not think there can be two opinions, but the difficulty arises when we have to consider whether we should boycott specially English-made goods. I personally think we should (Hear, hear) because this is the only way in which we can appeal to the great John Bull, who does not as a rule care to interest himself in anything unless his pocket is touched (laughter) [Petitions and prostrating before the feet of Lord Curzon has proved futile] Now there is nothing left to us but to have recourse to what the oracle of Hare Street, I mean the "Englishman", calls the barbarian argument, viz., the "boycott" ... (reproduced from the *New India*).³

One Narayan Vishnu Gokhale declares in a letter that he is not against the Swadeshi movement, but, he is "certainly against the Boycott movement" (24.9.1905). *The Mahratta* retorts in an editorial, "What Boycott means in India" (1.10.1905). It explains what boycott signifies and adds : "A boycott may or may not succeed; but there can no be question as to its being a legitimate measure of retaliatory agitation."

One of the interesting items reproduced in *The Mahratta* (8.10.1905) is a letter reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian*. In this letter Sir Henry Cotton (former Chief Commissioner of Assam) warns the Manchester merchants that if the boycott "maintains itself in Calcutta it will inevitably spread to the other presidencies where public opinion has long been in its favour".

Another extract from the letter is worth quoting :

They [the Bengalees] are a law-abiding folk and have not yet, so far as I am aware, resorted to rioting. At last, however, they have fallen back on new methods, which, they hope, will operate on Englishman through their pockets. ... So a movement has been set on foot to boycott Manchester cottons in Bengal. I see that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce affect to think very lightly of this departure. This may be right. ... But they may be wrong and my personal belief is that they are mistaken. The idea of discouraging the import of British goods in favour of locally made products has been in the air for a long time and has been freely advocated in Madras and Bombay – curiously enough, not so much in Calcutta. It is in Calcutta, however, where the idea is being [put] into practical operation, and information is to the effect that it has caught on like wildfire. It is now merely a question of organisation and persistence. There are qualities which the people of Bengal are said to lack; but they are not deficient in a spirit of self-sacrifice when the occasion arises for its exercise.

The Mahratta is all praise for the Swadeshi agitation and its leaders. Yet it notes rather critically that "unfortunately strikes and kind of irresponsible rowd[y]ism... both carried on apparently on their own accord have come to be mixed up with the situation." It refers again to the Bengali people as a nation and rejoices: "The Swadeshi and Boycott agitation has not only taken a firm hold on the mind of the people, but has successfully filtered down to the masses" (8.10.1905). An extract from a speech of Abdul Rusool is quoted in the same issue:

Those who had prophesied a short life for the great national movement will have been thoroughly disillusioned, we hope, by this time. The resolution of the public to abjure foreign goods continues to spread almost every hour, and is as unshaken and unshakeable to-day as it was when first it was made, a little over a month ago. The Pujas are fast drawing close to us, but there are absolutely no signs as yet that the Puja sales of foreign goods has as yet commenced and we feel confident that a very large percentage of our people will not slacken their resolve to boycott foreign-made goods, even if they have to forego the pleasure of making and receiving the usual Puja presents, for lack of adequate supply.

The editorial entitled "The Partition Day" states :

Few things hitherto have been so deeply needed as a Day of the Nationality of India as a whole; and it is surely the very irony of fate that Lord Curzon should, of all people, be the one to furnish us with the required Era. For tomorrow, the 16th of October, being the day fixed by statute for the Partition of Bengal, is to be observed throughout that province and by her sympathisers elsewhere in India, as a day of fasting and mourning. Nor can we doubt that this celebration, being repeated annually, will spread through the length and breadth of the country and become established in our calendar as India Day, or the day of the United Indian Nation. It is not for us in Maharashtra to regard [as we have already pointed out] recent events in Bengal as if they concerned that province exclusively. Political administration may be made, both directly and indirectly, to have very close bearing upon the lives and affairs of a people, and we should learn from the partition of Bengal that we know not the moment at which a similar blow may be aimed against ourselves.

Here the expression "the United Indian Nation" reveals a new awareness as well as an ambivalence : If Bengal is to be regarded as a nation, how to view India as a whole?

A news item speaks of "the progress of agitation". It says, "The holidays were looked upon as a testing occasion. ... But the Puja holidays have come and gone without seeing any the least relaxation in the tension over the Swadeshi feeling". Another item concerning the native merchants expressed the hope: "Surely these merchants have, we believe, patriotism enough in them to understand the overbalancing good which is likely to be done to their country at some cost to them". Selection from the journal, *Rast Goftar*, are also reprinted and an appeal is made : "However we would beg of the Bengalee press and the Bengalee leaders to suppress the objectionable tactics of the students with a heavy hand" (15.10.1905). Apparently picketing affected the interests of the merchants who had thrived on selling British-made goods.

The Rakhi Bandhan is celebrated in the next issue: "All over India, as we understand, this mute appeal [the strings of yellow silk] has been sent this year and certainly next year it ought to travel from, as well as to, us." (22.10.1905) An interview of Gokhale by *Morning Post* (London) is reprinted. The veteran moderate leader in course of his answers admitted: "... the Bengalis are about the most advanced community in education, wealth, and influence."

One wonders how 'wealth' could find its place in this encomium.

Under the heading "Swadeshim in Bombay" a meeting held on 15.10.1905 is reported. B. G. Tilak was in the chair, M. Paranjape, editor of *Kal*, Ali Mahmad Bhinji, V.A. Marathe and others spoke on the occasion. Another such meeting was held in Madras, presided over by Govind Das Chaturbhuj Das, "the first merchant of the city." The following resolution was adopted: "That the meeting of the inhabitants of the City of Madras pledges itself to use

exclusively so far as possible articles of indigenous industry and to do its utmost to foster and promote such industries." It is clear that the political side of the question of boycott is left untouched; promotion of Swadeshi goods in the interest of the merchants is the only concern.

The editorial, "The Partition and Swadeshim" (22.10.1905), praises Ananda Mohan Bose's speech on the occasion of the foundation of the Federation Hall on 16.10.1905. Kelkar also criticizes the *Times of India* for its stand against the movement. The *Times of India*, however, confessed that it was wrong in assessing the impact of boycott: "We do not seek to minimise the reality of the boycott. In magnitude and cohesion it has reached dimensions which we had not anticipated and which we had hardly considered possible a few weeks ago. It cannot be denied that it affords distinct evidence of some amount of genuine though mistaken feeling." *The Mahratta* commented sarcastically: "Now even for this half-hearted and halting appreciation we say thanks" (22.10.1905).

A detailed report of the Bombay meeting and other items concerning Swadeshi also appear in the same issue.

The Mahratta published an item on boycott as political weapon from a journal called the *Indian Patriot*. When the Bengali students of Annie Besant's school appeared in mourning dress on 16.10.1905, Mrs Besant had reprimanded them. *The Mahratta* in its turn reprimands Besant (5.11.1905).⁴ The editorial, "A vicious circular", is critical of the Carlyle Circular which forbade students to participate in the anti-partition agitation. In the News and Notes section appeared how Swadeshim had spread from Bengal to Punjab: "A few days back the female members of the leading families in Lahore met at the Putri Pathshala (Girl's school), Rawalpindi, and vowed to discontinue using foreign-made articles. Several shops for the sale of country-made sugar, etc., have been started". *The Mahratta* also reprints the *Manchester Guardian's* interview with Gokhale (7.10.1905) along with the article, "The Present Situation in India" and Gokhale's speech in a Manchester meeting, in its 5.11.1905 issue.

The news of the foundation of a "National University" and Bengali students joining it, is reported on 12.11.1905 with the following comment: "What Bengal students have done today, their Bombay comrades will be forced to do in the near future; and we doubt not Madras will follow suit". The report on Swadeshi demonstration at Lahore refers to two "monstrous meetings" held on 5.11.1905. "The Swadeshi Procession and Demonstration", we are told, "compares most favourably with the biggest and the most enthusiastic meetings of Bengal." A graphic description is provided:

"The band in the van was followed by troops of students from all colleges with their college colours fluttering in the air. There were contingents from the Medical College, Mission College, *Islamia* and *Government College* and hosts of citizens of all classes forming the main body of the procession, (ital in the original). Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs and the Samajists vied with one another in showing their zeal and enthusiasm for the movement. Mr. Hyder Riza, Secretary of the Swadeshi Association at Delhi, had travelled from there to congratulate the Lahore Public on their successful agitation and to ask for their assistance to bring about a similar demonstration at Delhi. This union amongst the Hindoos and Mahomedans in Panjab speaks volumes in favour of the possibilities of the Swadeshi movement.

Professor Gokalchand of the DAV College said: "The Swadeshi movement furnished a prescription which will turn sheep into men; for its promises to do what religion, social reform and politics have failed to do, i.e. unite the heretofore heterogeneous masses of Hindus and Muslims into one compact body whose force will be irresistible and for whom nothing would

be impossible" (12.11.1905).

We come to know from *The Mahratta* that Raja Binoy Krishna Deb (of Sobhabazar Deb family, known for its loyalty to the British Raj since 1757) was one of the honorary secretaries to the Lord Curzon Memorial Fund: "The Maharajadhiraja of Burdwan has also joined the General committee. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce takes lead in the matter, and the admirers and sympathisers of the talented and gifted tyranny in India are sure to follow suit." *The Mahratta* asks: "But, pray, what can they possibly say to the enraged Bengalees in favour of the proposed memorial?"

In reply to this question the bloated zamindar of Burdwan is said to have replied: "No Viceroy has done more to try and preserve Indian art and Indian industries than he [Curzon] has done; ... the Swadeshi movement [that] has been started in Bengal is not only disloyal to the British Government ... the sooner the boycott movement subsides, and the current cant about Swadeshim is dropped, the healthier will be the public life of India, and particularly of Bengal. ..." He also declared that the British Government "which foreign though it be has been the best Government for India" (12.10.1905).

The same issue reports the Rangpur students' case and reprints a passage from *Justice* (28.10.1905):

That Bengal, notoriously the mildest and most easily governed Province, should have been goaded into little short of open insurrection, is not pleasant hearing for our pensioned pundits here at home. Hindoos and Mahomedans are eagerly joining together in the demonstrations, no longer against the partition of Bengal merely, but against our infamous blood-sucking rule as a whole. Bhownaggee, M.P., who has so slavishly done the bidding of his foreign employers, has been burnt in effigy at Calcutta and the growing antagonism to the English Raj in taking an unprecedented shape. We are heartily glad of it

The 19.11.1905 issue highlights the Council of National Education, and the National University in Bengal is the theme of its editorials. In a short entry "Exit Lord Curzon" it is ironically said: "In his farewell speech at the Byculla Club, Lord Curzon passingly referred to the partition of Bengal as the boon conferred upon the Bengalees to be appreciated by the future generations. Undoubtedly the partition question has proved to be a boon not only to Bengal but to the whole of India, for it has given rise to the Swadeshi movement. We thank Lord Curzon for this boon."

More interesting is the report on the "Official lawlessness in Bengal: "The Russianisation of the Administration and the Russianisation of the student-world is growing on apace throughout the whole of the dismembered province of Bengal". A comment from the *Manchester Guardian* (24.10.1905) echoes the same view and tells how the imperialists were alarmed by the events of 16.10.1905:

Calcutta resembles Moscow without the blood-stains. Trade is at a standstill. Colleges and schools are empty. Shops are shut or at any rate shuttered. Mobs throng the public streets and squares. Strikes and lock-outs threaten every industry in which European and native elements are associated. The Government press is paralysed, and the operations of new laws are put back, because the official *Gazette* containing the necessary proclamations cannot be brought [out].

Quoting from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Mahratta* mentions "The First Indian Boy-cotter of Foreign Goods." He was one Gourpada Swami, a Bengali ascetic, who was born in Nadia but flourished in the Bombay presidency "as a great Mahatma" in 1726. He is said to

have crusaded against all foreign goods and lectured on trade and commerce and persuaded many princes and people to solemnly pledge to discard the use of foreign goods (19.11.1905). This John the Baptist of boycott deserves further enquiry.

In the next issue (26.11.1905) we are told, on the basis of what the journal *Guzrati* said about Dadabhai Naoroji's attitude towards boycott. The Grand Old Man like all moderates was in favour of Swadeshi but disapproved of boycott. *The Mahratta* quotes from a letter "To his Bengalee friends" (published in the *Bengalee*) in which Naoroji endorses the movement, congratulates the Bengalees and says:

I look ahead to the future. Such troubles will have great influence on future progress. I wish you every success in this struggle. You are a large and homogeneous body and can do things with unity. You can take all Bengal industries in your hands, jute, coal, and others. One more important result I am looking forward to. It is the rousing up of the masses and the present is just the kind of struggle which can accomplish this object. If the people are once roused, they will always be ready to follow their leaders. I hope you will carry the legal fight to the end.

This is vintage Naoroji, avoiding all political issues and insisting on "legal fight".

The second editorial bears the title "Fuller amuck", referring to Bamfylde Fuller, the newly appointed Lt. Governor of the newly created East Bengal and Assam Province, who had resort to the worst form of what is now called state terror. The news item from the *Bengalee* describing Fuller's action at Barisal and boycott of one Prof. Russell by the 1st year students of Presidency College, Kolkata (a slipper was flung at his face) appear in the same issue. Russell, former ADPI, had written a confidential minute to the Government denouncing the students living in hostels and messes. *The Sanjibani*, a Bengali journal, procured a copy of the same and published it, causing "immense indignation", and leading to his boycott. In the 3.12.1905 issue is printed Lala Lajpat Rai's comment: "Bengal has just shown the way in agitating against the Partition of Bengal. What Bengal has done should be done by every province in ventilating its grievances". He also supported the boycott of English goods.

"Reign of Terror in new Bengal" is the caption of an item in the same issue. The National University for Bengal is also upheld as a model. *The Mahratta* regrets that "Bombay's leading men should be sleeping while the whole country is in a ferment owing to the *Swadeshi* movement." The opinions of the British Press selected from the *New Age*, *The Morning Leader*, and *The Star* are reproduced. The view of *The Star* in particular was laudatory of the *Swadeshi* movement.

The next issue of *The Mahratta* (10.12.1905) contains an interesting item on the Chinese boycott, an event that preceded the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal but seldom (if at all) noticed by Indian historians today. There are also comments on "Lord Minto and Partition Proposal", "Congress and *Swadeshi*", and "On Fuller Again". The second editorial is entitled "Scope and Purpose of the Boycott Movement".

The 17.12.1905 issue deplors 'the omission of *Swadeshi* &c. from the list of the draft resolution circulated by the Benares Congress Committee'. *The Indian Empire* of Calcutta asked: "What [is there] to make them fight shy of the *Swadeshi* movement?" The answer is provided by the same journal: "The committee is, we fancy, really sitting on the fence, and the real and formidable opposition to the Bengal agitation and the Bengal movements of the day would be coming from a well-known quarter in Bombay" (17.12.1905). The reference to the Naoroji-Wacha-Mehta clique is unmistakable.

Barisal affairs and Ambica Churan Mazumdar's letter to Fuller find mention in this issue along with a note, "What is the basis of a boycott?" Similarly there are references to Bengal

boycott as well as *Swadeshi* stores in Bombay in the 24.12.1905 issue.

The last issue of 1905 reports the Benares Congress Proceedings and quotes extensively from the speech of Gokhale, President-elect of the Congress. Some extracts are given below:

Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India. ... A great push and uprising of the waters, such as has been recently witnessed in Bengal, cannot take place without a little inundation over the banks here and there. These little excesses are inevitable, when large masses of men move spontaneously—especially when the movement is from darkness unto light, from bondage towards freedom, — and they must not be allowed to disconcert us too much.

The Mahratta reports on the boycott resolution adopted at the session and mentions that the *Bande Mataram* was sung by Mrs Saraladevi Chowdhurini (formerly Ghoshal) and other ladies.

The Mahratta kept a close watch on the progress of the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal in the subsequent months. It refers to an article by "Mr Hyndman, our old ally", a socialist leader of Britain, who wrote an article on Morley's Budget speech (16.9.1906 & 30.9.1906). Reports on the first annual general meeting of the *Swadeshi Vastu Pracharini Sabha* held at Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay, on 17.9.1906 (presided over by Chintamani Vinayak Vaidya, retd. Chief Justice of Gwalior) and the names of joint stock companies and factories started in 1905 and 1906 appear in the 23.9.1906 issue.

The progress of boycott in spite of the betrayal by the Marwari merchants is applauded in glowing terms :

The sales on the Lucky Day in Calcutta are a true index of the progress of *Swadeshi* in Bengal; and although the Marwari merchants have betrayed the trust imposed in them by going in for contracts with British merchants for Manchester goods, still the progress of *Swadeshi* has been unmistakably proved by many other indications. Large contracts for the purpose of *Swadeshi* goods from Bombay and other parts of India were entered into at Calcutta at the last Lucky Day and of one prominent European merchant at Calcutta it is reported that he has to be satisfied with a custom for only 50 or 60 thousand rupees worth of goods instead of the usual custom for nine or ten lakhs rupees worth of goods. The reduction in the consumption of foreign sugar continues with consistency at Calcutta and it is reported that vessels laden with foreign sugar could not be emptied in the Calcutta bunder [port] with the usual promptitude because of the godown being already full.

The anniversary of the Partition Day is celebrated. "By a strange irony of fate the Partition Day, the 16th of October, has proved to be a day for the celebration of the nation-idea and a day of national re-union in Bengal". *Bande Mataram's* comments against Dr Grierson's letter that appeared in *The Times* are also recorded.

The Marwaris were not the only people to betray the movement. The role of the Bombay mill owners was no less reprehensible. One such mill owner sent a letter to *Amrita Bazar Patrika* against Surendranath Banerjea, which the journal declined to print. The journal "with its usual subtle sarcasm" said:

We agree with the correspondent that it is against common sense to ask mill owners to sell their wares *cheap* to the Bengalees, because their country has been 'partitioned'. To sell cloths cheap because the province has been partitioned may be patriotism but it is not business. The question however is — Is

it a fact that the Mill-owners of Bombay took advantage of the patriotism of the Bengalees who had abjured foreign cloths to raise the price of their fabrics? At least such was the complaint here and possibly Babu Surendra Nath referred to this complaint in his speech. We agree that Bombayites have done more service to the country by opening mills than the Bengalees have done by talking. Yet this Swadeshi movement gave an excellent opportunity to the Mill-owners of Bombay to capture the Bengal market of which they have not properly availed themselves. Of this there is no doubt. By making some sacrifice in the beginning they may in the end recoup their loss by flooding their wares among eighty million of the Bengalees.

The Mahratta reprinted the whole reply apparently with approval.

The Bombay Swadeshi Vastu Pracharini Sabha organised the first All Indian Swadeshi Conference on 2.12.1907 in the Congress pandal. Nawab Sayed Mohamad Bahadur of Madras was in the chair. Among the members present were G.K. Gokhale, Nilkanth Pabaji, and M.G. Ranade, B.G.Tilak from Bombay and Surendranath Banerjea, Bipin Chandra Pal, Bhupendranath Bose, Abdul Rasul from Bengal; Lala Lajpat Rai from Punjab. Dewan Ambalal said: "It was a greatest satisfaction to him to announce that the descendant of the two greatest soldiers, Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, should preside on that occasion". N.C. Kelkar seconded the motion and said that it was a lie that the Mahomedan community did not share the same sentiment with them in the matter of Swadeshi.

The Mahratta (13.11.1907) then goes on to report the Proceeding of the conference:

Mr Gadgil said that "The object of the Sammelan was to bring into closer union the Swadeshi workers in the different provinces with a view to bring about interchange of thought and concerted action. It was also intended to appoint a National committee with a subcommittee for every province to watch over [?] the work and further the cause of Swadeshism in all movement [...] More than 15 cotton mills had been started in Bombay. ...

Mr Vishnu Dutt of Benares supported the motion and said in Hindi that Swadeshi was beneficial both to the rulers and ruled. It would give food to the hungry. In Benares new small industries of silk, nib, etc. had been started.

Mr. B.G.Tilak moved the following resolution:

1. That this Sammelan considers it desirable to appoint Provincial Committees where such do not exist at present.

(a) To preach the doctrine of Swadeshism and promote the work of the Swadeshi movement in every possible direction.

(b) To assist in starting Swadeshi Shops where such do not exist; to issue certificates of honesty to shops selling Swadeshi articles.

(c) To secure necessary information in connection with the industrial and commercial survey of the country at present; the scope of work being restricted to textile industries and sugar ...The Swadeshi movement was a movement of self-help. Swadeshi has been accepted by all over the country. ...

Lala Lajpat Rai ... seconded the resolution.

Mr Patankar supported the resolution.

Pandit Sankarananda (Panjab) supported this motion, Babu Surendranath Banerjea then addressed the meeting. The President asked the speaker to tell the audience what Bengal had been doing within the last 15 and 18 months. The speaker would repeat the answers that he told to the President.

He said Bengal spent the interval in making speeches. They began by making speeches and they were making speeches on the present movement and should continue to make speeches, until the Swadeshi torch had lighted up the whole province and until it had illuminated the whole continent. They began to educate public opinion. They began preparing those moral forces which produce decisive and determined action. Continuing the speaker compared great things with small. How did the French Revolution began [sic]? It was the encyclopaedists and it was the pamphlet writers who set the ball rolling. Theirs was [...] eighteen lakhs of rupees and the contributors for the most part belonged to the middle class and the authorities were at the present moment engaged in extending the mill. Handloom had been introduced. Indigenous salt had been largely purchased. In some districts the sale of foreign-made wine had been abolished and preference had been shown to country-made liquors. The speaker did not recommend the use of country-made liquor. But when there was a choice he would certainly recommend country-made liquor. On the 7th August they proposed to have a National Bank of their own and they also proposed to have an Insurance Company of their own. Before the 7th August they hope to start them ... "Let us all be Swadeshi in our action, in our ideas and in our aspirations. Let the Swadeshi spirit penetrate through and through, so that in the fullness of time we may bring back the glories of the great past."

Several speakers then gave some oral report of the work done during the last twelve months in the provinces. Hon. G.K. Gokhale, Lala Lajpatrai [sic], Rai Lala Murlidhar, R.B. Mudholkar and others spoke at the meeting.

The 16.6.1907 issue contains extracts from an article by Headley V. Storey of Oxford which appeared in the *New Age*. It was entitled "India and the Imperiatists/A Socialist Point of View". Storey spoke against Curzon in no uncertain terms :

Then the Bengalis organised the Swadeshi movement which is almost exactly what the Tariff Reform League wants to do, what Germany, under the lead of List has done, what "Sinn Fein" in Ireland is doing. But the Bengali Tariff Reform League is a criminal organisation, of course, ...

From 4.8.1907 to 1.12.1907 five "Letters of an American to the Indian People" appeared in *The Mahratta*. The American was Myron H. Phelps, B.A., LL.B., of the New York Bar, who also belonged to the Union League Club, New York. Phelps is known to us as an Indophile who later became a sannyasi.⁵ The first two letters carried the title "An American Swadeshi"; the third letter onwards it is changed to "The American Struggle for Swaraj".

The Mahratta's appreciation of the Swadeshi movement never abated. The following remark that appeared on 21.7.1907 speaks for itself:

The Punjabees talk and act, the Bengalees, it is said, talk and talk. But since the days of the Swadeshi Movement, at any rate, the Bengalees have begun to learn the lesson of translating their speeches into action. The report on the maritime trade of Bengal for the year 1906-07 bears testimony to Bengali's determination to act up to the Swadeshi vow. During the year under review, the imports of cotton goods into Bengal declined in value from Rs. 21.44.56,376 in 1905-06 to Rs. 18,62,79,422 in 1906-07. The decrease of nearly three crores of rupees in a single year is really encouraging, and one cannot but congratulate Bengal on this distinct success. ...

Surendranath Banerjea's speech at College Square advocating the celebration of the second anniversary of the inauguration of the boycott movement is reported in the 4.8.1907 issue. Since it is not included in Surendranath's *Speeches*, some part of it may be reproduced here :

He taunted the police, who were presented [?] in force with being a guard-of-honour to the meeting [and went] on to say that the time for speech making was past and gone and the time for action had now arrived. The orator had achieved his work and it was now for the statesman to enter the arena and to give direction and form to the national forces

Autonomous self-government under British protection is the goal of our aspirations. We may be prosecuted and persecuted and sent to jail for it, but we are resolved to avail ourselves of the constitutional means at our disposal for its attainment. ... Mr. Morley's reforms will not do; his reforms are not worth the paper upon which they are inscribed.

We stand today confronted with one of the gravest crises in history. Repression is the order of the day. The policy of repression is in the ascendant in the council of the empire. Deportation without trial, restriction to the rights of public meetings, the curtailment of the civil rights of students and the prosecution of newspapers are the most notable incidents of the new policy.

Face the situation with determined courage and play the part of men. Repression is the school of liberty. It is the foster mother of noble qualities which contribute to the upbuilding of nations and not policemen. ...

The 7th of August is fast approaching. It is a red letter day in our annals. It has witnessed the birth of the Swadeshi boycott [sic] movement which is destined to revolutionise the fortunes of the country. I ask you to celebrate the anniversary in a befitting manner. Attend in your thousands and your tens of thousand. Because we refuse to purchase foreign goods, it does not follow that we hate the foreigner. Hatred cannot save a nation. The boycott is the negative and Swadeshi the positive aspect of the same question. They are indivisible parts of the same common whole and I am not prepared to separate them.

The triumph of Swadeshi are writ large in our history. Home articles are steadily making their way and foreign articles are being steadily displaced. One pull -- a long pull and a strong pull -- will accomplish our industrial salvation with which are bound up the best interests of the country.

To this *The Mahratta* commented:

Babu Surendranath Banerjea has done well to make a clear pronouncement on the situation at a mass meeting in the College Square ... One may cynically scoff at Bengali oratory, but he must admit that nowhere in India has the work of political education of the people by the word of mouth been so splendidly accomplished as in Bengal ... Babu Surendranath deserves the best thanks of the country for his bold speech made at a time when constitutional terrorism has reached its zenith in India.

Apparently Kelkar refrained from making any snide remark on what Surendranath called "The goal of our aspiration", namely, "Autonomous self-government under British protection". Kelkar elected to confine his comments to the power of agitation, campaign by word of mouth. The expression "constitutional terrorism" is also worth noting.

Bipin Chandra Pal's refusal to participate in the trial against *Bande Mataram* and his subsequent persecution are reported (15.9.1907). A Long extract from Bipin Chandra's speech

at the Beadon Square is also reproduced. It runs as follows:

Time was when the Bengalees feared the Police and the jail the most, but now that fear was gone. In the College Square meeting held to give an ovation to Sushil Kumar, the number of Policemen present there made the speaker think from a distance that the Policemen themselves were holding some meeting to think out what to do in future cases of the thrashing of the Police by young boys. A few years before such a gathering of Policemen would have made the people living in the neighbourhood bolt their door and take shelter upstairs, but now-a-days they did not care at all for the Police and people flocked to meet them. The first day the Policemen appeared with note-books in the Swadeshi meeting the speakers were a little nervous about the Policemen's doings, but now they had become accustomed to the Police reporters and the Swadeshi speakers were still speaking as freely as before. After the first use of lathi by the Government to repress Swadeshi and *Bande Mataram* at Barisal the people got accustomed to it and the *lathi* had lost the dread it used to carry with it. If this sort of things thanks to the perversity of the Government went on for sometime longer, the people would lose all fear and would be quite ready to meet any danger.

This is the slogan of *abhay* raised long before Gandhi.

The tour of Keir Hardie, another Socialist leader of Britain, is recorded in the 6.10.1907 and several other issues that followed. Keir Hardie reached Sirajgunj, Pabna district of East Bengal, on 27.9.1907 and "was warmly received at steamer station by the local gentry with shouts to (sic) *Bande Mataram*. ... At Mr. Keir Hardie's request the *Bande Mataram* song was sung on the boat." (6.10.1907)

Bipin Chandra was not the only person to be prosecuted by the Raj. Bhupendranath Datta, the young editor of *Yugantar*, organ of the Bengal revolutionaries, was tried and found guilty for publishing two seditious articles. Bhupendranath too, like Bipin Chandra after him, refused to plead his case, for he did not believe that the British court had any right to try him. He was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. Full details of the event and what followed after his imprisonment are reported in *The Mahratta* from time to time (from 28.7.1907 to 22.9.1907)

The case against Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, editor of the popular one-paisa Bengla evening daily, *Sandhya*, came next. Like Bhupendranath he too challenged the authority of the court to try him. While the trial was on he breathed his last after a surgical operation on 7.10.1907. *The Mahratta* does not record the news of his death but reproduces the statement made by Upadhyay in full (29.9.1907).

Gokhale's speech in the Viceroy's Council in support of the Bengalis was also reproduced in a supplement to the 3.11.1907 issue. Another report of Gokhale's speech appears in the 17.11.1907 issue.

A note entitled "The Bengali has his revenge" (24.11.1907) blasts at a Tory journal:

The Bengali is going to have his revenge. Years ago he was blasphemed by Macaulay and branded with the epithet of an effeminate coward. The tide has now turned. *The National Review*, the bluest Tory organ, in its latest issue admits that Englishmen have now clearly got to review their estimate of the Bengali, "It never occurred to anybody", says the *Review*, "to question the complete accuracy of Macaulay's contemptuous opinion of the people of the lower Ganges valley; and when the late Mr. G.W. Stevens said that the Bengali had the 'leg of a slave' the Bengalis raved but the onlookers nodded acquies-

cence. Recent events in Eastern Bengal have shown beyond doubt that the Bengali has, perhaps only of late, – developed far more capacity for active offence than he has been credited with hitherto. A crowd of Bengalis can now give considerable trouble if they like and their agile intellects suggest plenty of appropriate methods.” The *Review* also regards the demand for arms from Chandranagar [sic] and other places as very significant. A year ago, while commenting on the London *Spectator's* contemptuous reference to the Bengalis, we asserted that if the Bengalis of today had no *heritage* of martial traditions, they will at least leave such traditions as a *legacy* behind them. The deeds of one generation of men become the traditions of the next, and we are inclined to find in the history of Bengal in the last twelve months evidences to confirm our assertion.

The news items, editorials, notes and articles published in *The Mahratta* provide us with an outsider's view of the Swadeshi movement. Unfortunately they have not been utilized by Bengali historians, or any historian for that matter. The journal does not get into the controversies between the moderates and the extremists. Surendranath Banerjea and Bipin Chandra Pal, exponents of two opposing views concerning Swaraj, are given equal importance. *Bande Mataram*, the daily newspaper edited de facto by Aurobindo Ghose, which proclaimed complete independence to be the goal of the Swadeshi movement, is underrepresented, perhaps because *The Mahratta* preferred to concentrate on the positive programme of Swadeshi alone, rather than getting into the political question. Nothing is said about the views of the young Bengali revolutionaries, may be due to the fact that their weekly mouthpiece, *Yugantar*, was in Bangla. However, *The Mahratta* offers a running commentary on the major events that took place in Bengal during 1905-07. If similar attempts are made to study other prominent journals published outside Bengal, it will be possible to estimate the depth and extent of the impact of the Swadeshi movement on the rest of India.

If *The Mahratta* is taken as representing the non-Bengali view of the Bengalis, it is a pointer to how the view underwent a sea-change, all because of the Swadeshi movement. So long known as slovenly, cowards and “effeminate” with the ink bottle as their only revolver (as Lytton once contemptuously said in 1879), they emerged as a real force to reckon with. They also gave a lie to what John Strachey once observed: “Physical peculiarities of race render the political opinions of Bengalees of comparatively little importance.”⁶ A new Bengal emerged during and after the Swadeshi movement and continued to flourish in politics and other spheres. *The Mahratta* bears testimony to it.

Notes and References

1. Roberts, 795-96.
2. All extracts are quoted from the microfilm of the copies of *The Mahratta* preserved in the Tilak Smarak Mandir (Memorial Hall), Pune.
3. Abdul Rasul was the president-designate of the Barisal Session of the Bengal Provincial Conference, 1906. When the conference was held at the same town in 1921 ten years after the reunification of Bengal, Bipin Chandra Pal, the president of this session, in his address recalled Rasul in the following way: “The hand of death has snatched him away from us since. He was the pioneer of the present Hindu-Moslem unity in this province and how his heart would have gratefully gone up to his God to-day to see the realisation of his heart's desire. Rasul threw himself heart and soul into the great National Movement of the last

decade, when few or no other Mahomedan of his position and standing cared or dared to stand by us. He suffered a great deal at the hands of friends and foes alike for it. We miss him with great regret to-day” (4-5).

4. For Besant's subversive activities in later times, see Datta, 1390 BS (1984), 8-9.
5. Very little is known about Phelps. See Datta, 1390 BS (1984), 8. The United States Information Service was of little help.
6. Qtd in Seal, 141 and n1. The Stracheys were connected with the Bengal and Indian Civil Services since 1842. The website <*banglapedia. search. con. bd*> may be consulted for the cv of civilians and other persons.

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Akshay Dutt, Pioneer of Indian Rationalism

Asit Kumar Bhattacharyya

[This rare article, originally published in the Rationalist Annual, London, 1962, is reprinted here with the kind permission of Prof. Santa Bhattacharyya, wife of the late Asit Kumar Bhattacharyya. We take this opportunity to present below the salient features of the life of the writer, based on facts supplied by Prof. Santa Bhattacharyya at our request.

ASIT KUMAR BHATTACHARYA (AUGUST 1, 1931 - DECEMBER 2, 1992)

Education: Hare School, Presidency College, Kolkata, Calcutta University. Subject: Economics. Studied French and German for a long time.

Active Life: Was secretary to Prof. J. B. S. Haldane during his stay at Kolkata and was publisher of the 'Journal of Genetics' edited by Haldane. Later, taught Economics at Bardhaman University. Died while engaged in teaching at the Rural Study Centre, Visva Bharati.

Founded in 1987 Society of Workers for Rural Development (SWORD). Engaged mostly in health care, this society is still functioning.

Published Books: Akshay Kumar Dutta (Sahitya Akademi 'Makers of Indian Literature Series'); Banglar Nabajug o Bankimchander Chintadhara (Bengal Renaissance and the thoughts of Bankimchandra); Sanskriti o Sahitya (Culture and Literature); Poetry : Batabaran (Environ); Ophelia-ke (To Ophelia); Aladdin, Or_ Aladdin (Aladdin, O Aladdin); Rhymes: Harbola (Ventriloquist)

He had written numerous articles both in Bangla and in English on Economics, Society and Culture, History, Literature etc. in various journals here and abroad. His special interest area was the socio-economic condition and the culture of Nineteenth century Bengal. — Ed. *Psyche and Society*]

Akshay Dutt was born in 1820 in a village on the Ganges about 50 miles to the north of Calcutta. The region has traditionally been the seat of Hindu learning and general culture in Bengal. He left his village for Calcutta in 1830 and led an active life in the city till 1855 when he had to retire after a stroke. He continued to live for thirty more years, ostensibly as an invalid, but continued his intellectual labours according to his own choice. He had by that time achieved a welcome economic independence as an author. He died in 1886.

Akshay Dutt was born sometime after the English had ceased to consider themselves as mere merchant adventurers in India. In 1818 the third and last of the Mahratta wars had been fought and won by the British and no powers were left in India to challenge British supremacy any more.^{1*} Circumstances thrust on the authorities in India the necessity of building up a workable political system. They realised that it lay in their own interests to introduce some form of western education in India, if only to train men to assist them in administration. Before 1818, the East India Co. had moved extremely slowly and was very wary about introducing European learning in India. The only institutions of higher education established by the company, were the Calcutta Madrassah (1780) under the initiative of Warren Hastings, and the Sanskrit College at Benares (1793) at the instance of Jonathan Duncan and Jay Narain Ghoshal. The aim of these institutions was to turn out men competent to explain Islamic and Hindu laws to English judges who were usually ignorant of both Arabic and Sanskrit. Apart from these two institutions, nothing was done even to maintain the indigenous system of education [see Adam's Report on the State of Education in Bengal (1835-1838) reprinted by the University of Calcutta, edited by Anath Nath Basu, (1941)].

The British Parliament put pressure on the company to do something about education in India in 1813 when it renewed the Company's charter. As a result, the Court of Directors of the E.I. Company wrote in the same year to the Government of India: "That a sum of a lac ^{2*} of rupees each year shall be set apart, and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of the sciences among the British territories of India".

Nothing however came out of this recommendation till July 1823, when a committee of public instructions was formed. The formation of this committee led to the famous controversy between orientalist and pro-westerns led by men like Ram Mohan Roy. The orientalist among whom were some genuine Sanskrit scholars of the west like H.H. Wilson (1786-1860) wanted to retain the traditional system of education based on Sanskrit grammar, and poetics, logic or rather disputations and Hindu philosophical systems. Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833) wanted western education, above all sciences, to be introduced in India.

Ram Mohan Roy deserves our attention not only because he influenced Akshay Dutt more than any other Indian. He initiated the New Age in India and was also formed by it. He carried on powerful campaigns against obvious social evils like burning of widows - a practice then dwindling but still alive; and for the freedom of the press. He is of course famous for his propagation of monotheism in India which he did as much for socio-political as for purely spiritual reasons.^{3*} He established the Brahma Samaj (then called Brahma-sabha) in 1828

1* The Sikhs who maintained some form of independence till 1849 were a marginal power confined to the north-west of the country

2. a lac equals one hundred thousand.

3* In a letter to one Dr. Tuckerman (dt. Jan. 18, 1828) he wrote "I regret to say that the present system adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interests. The distinction of castes introducing innumerable divisions and subdivisions among them has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. It is I think necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort."

where monotheists belonging to any religion could join in prayer, though his own faith was based on the teachings of the *Upanisads*.

In 1823, during the heat of the controversy on education in India, Ram Mohan threw his full weight on the pro-western side. In an open letter to Lord Amherst, then Governor General of India, he stated, "... We find that the Government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindu Pundits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India. This seminary similar in character to those which existed in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon, can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to their possessors or to society ... The Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of British Legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the government it will consequently promote more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent, and learning educated in Europe and providing a college with necessary books, instruments and other apparatus".

The western system of education finally came to be introduced in India in 1835 at the recommendation of Macaulay, then law member at the Governor General's Council in India. Meanwhile, other forces had been released that challenged the old society and its norms. In 1817, the Hindu College had been established in Calcutta offering an extensive curriculum in the Arts and Mathematics. By the end of 1820s the influence of its young students under their equally youthful European teacher Henry Louis Derozio (1809-1831) was making itself felt in the Hindu society of Bengal. Derozio encouraged his students to think for themselves. He got a debating society started in the college with the help of his students. In their debates, according to the records left by Haramohan Chatterjee, then College clerk, "... the principles and practices of Hindu religion [meaning society] were openly ridiculed and condemned and angry disputes were held on moral subjects, the sentiments of Hume had been widely diffused and warmly patronised ...".

Derozio was ultimately forced to resign in 1831 when the radical fervour of his students frightened the orthodox and the authorities alike. English education appeared to have done something more than turning out neat little Anglicans that Macaulay had looked for. It was in this milieu that Dutt, a boy of ten, was transplanted from this native village. Before he came to Calcutta, he had been troubled by various questionings about the distance of the sun from the earth, how the earth was held in space or rather "emptiness", and such like. He did not know the answers to these questions; and as he found out, the men around him knew even less. He however knew enough to realise that to get to know the answers that troubled him he would have to learn English and must not go in for the education that turned out clerks for law courts, or estate agents. His father and an elder cousin with whom he was staying in Calcutta, wanted him to go on learning Persian which was then the language of the law courts. Though a mere boy, he resolutely refused to do so. For six years the struggle over education continued. Meanwhile, he got himself admitted into a missionary school where English was taught free of charge. His guardians were alarmed at their ward falling under the influence of missionaries. They agreed to his having an English education and got him admitted into a school called the "Oriental Seminary" established by one Gourmohan Adhya who had, in starting the school, taken full advantage of the scare raised in the orthodox over the teachings of Derozio. He had held out promises to orthodox guardians in advertisements in rhymed couplets (which was the fashion in Bengal in those days) that he would keep his students free from "Irreligion" while giving them a modern education. The curriculum of this school had a definite bias for mathematics, and some teachers of the famous Hindu College

were in its staff.

Akshay Dutt was not however wasting his time while fighting over the course and character of his education. He was a born writer. At the not-too-advanced age of fourteen he wrote and got published a book of verse of which the title can be adequately translated as "Cupid's blooms". He also never missed a chance to attend any meetings where men discussed social or cultural questions. His interests and activities brought him in touch with Ishwar Gupta (1812-1859) — the prolific poet and editor of then powerful paper "Sambad Provakar". Ishwar Gupta's anti-sentimentalist verse had cleared the air in Bengali poetry of that stereotyped pseudo-religious eroticism to which the once-moving Vaishnava lyric tradition of Bengal had degenerated with the gradual decline of its original inspiration. A self-made and self-taught man who had become the editor of the most powerful paper in the language at the remarkably tender age of 19, Gupta instantly recognised talent in young Dutt, requested him to contribute to his paper, took him to various meetings, and introduced him to intellectual circles in Calcutta which in those days contained a large number of affluent landowners who aspired to culture and the Arts, or to their patronage. This introduction from the elder poet, who was to refer to him in after years as "once my pupil and now my teacher", was of great help to the young Dutt, especially as it gave him free access to the private libraries and collections of the rich.

Dutt continued in the Oriental Seminary for three years. Meanwhile his father had retired and his expenses were expected to be borne by the elder cousin with whom he was staying. This man had too many commitments of his own to see a cousin through school and Dutt's fees ran into arrears. In the end he left the Oriental Seminary.

His opinions had however started changing during his last year at school. He had read Pope's translation of the *Iliad* and also an English version of Virgil's *Aeneid*. He was struck by the remarkable similarity that popular Hinduism has with the pre-Christian religions of Mediterranean Europe. The conviction grew in him that Hinduism, like the religions of Greece and Rome, had no basis other than in human imagination. His interests in astronomy and geography moved him further from the prevalent world-view based largely on Hindu mythology. The various accounts of creation given in mythologies and accepted as the last word on such matters by the religious were in direct contradiction with the scientific explanations of nature. He was convinced that the mythological accounts were imaginary. He argued to himself that something must be wrong with religion when it can allow such palpably false opinions about the real world to go about unchecked and uncontradicted, while it was so sure about the nature of what it called 'ultimate reality'. He wanted to get a grip on how the scientists arrived at their conclusions. Hence arose his interest in scientific method. And for that, he felt, he would have to master higher mathematics.

Although Dutt left school because he had no money, the years ahead did not see him pushing his way to pile up treasure. In fact, he persistently refused to accept any job that would tie him down to any fixed routine. He refused Gupta's invitation to join him in business, and understandably, did not heed the advice of his well-meaning relations to start as a broker or a shipper's clerk, and would have nothing to do with anything that was even remotely connected with the law courts and the police. He supported himself in a manner that has been followed by intelligent young men in Bengal ever since. He gave lessons on English and mathematics to private students in his spare hours. In other hours, he devoted himself to his studies.

When he left school in 1836 he knew English and some French and had gone through the first four books of Euclid, with elementary algebra. It was after coming out of the school that he devoted himself completely to the study of mathematics and physics. Making use of the magnificent private collection of Raja Radhakanta Deva (1784-1867), a rich landowner and

a pillar of orthodoxy who yet did a good deal for the spread of modern education in Bengal, Dutt completed Euclid, and beginning with trigonometry and conic sections, learned differential calculus within a year. The various branches of physics and astronomy were not neglected, and he also devoted special attention to physical geography. The reason for this approach becomes clear if we remember that he wanted to understand the why and how of nature. He had to get a grip on the method by which scientists came to the conclusions they did, so that he himself could speak with confidence on these issues and do away with the arbitrary deities who were supposed to preside over every natural phenomenon and thus perpetuated fatalism and fear. Ignorance, as he was never tired of repeating, was the greatest ally of social reaction and moral torpor.

By the time he was nineteen he also realised that his ignorance of Sanskrit stood in his way of making an assessment of the various schools of Hindu philosophy. He set himself to learn Sanskrit seriously. He learned it sufficiently well to make in his later life a critical appraisal of the entire range of Hindu philosophy and the scriptural bases of the various Hindu cults. No less important was his critical contribution to the Brahmo creed. Some years afterwards, he dissuaded Devendranath Tagore (1817-1905) (father of the poet Rabindranath Tagore) from codifying the infallibility of the Vedas as an integral part of Brahmoism.

Meanwhile, an association called 'Tattva-bodhini Sabha' (Philosophical Association) had been established in October 1839 by Devendranath Tagore with a view to discussing theological and philosophical questions in general, and propagating the Brahmo creed of monotheism based on the teachings of *Upanisads* in particular. Devendranath Tagore, who had been under the influence of Ram Mohan Roy from his very boyhood, particularly resented the onslaughts of Christian missionaries on Hindu society. He considered them, with some justification perhaps, as cultural aggression, and felt that in order to survive, Hindu society would have to reform itself on the basis of vedic monotheism. And that, he claimed, was true Hinduism. Devendranath was a conservative but not a conventional thinker. Dutt came to be introduced to him through Ishwar Gupta and started attending the meetings of the Sabha from 1839. In 1840 the T.S. started a Bengali school of its own, and Dutt was appointed a teacher of physics and geography in it. This was his first regular appointment. He continued at this job for three years, resigning his post in 1843 when the school was shifted out of Calcutta. While a teacher at the school at the not too high salary of Rs. 10-14 per month, he published his book on geography. It was an elementary book compiled from English sources and was used as a text book in the Bengali schools in the 19th century.

Dutt's real career however started in 1843 when he was appointed the editor of the *Tattwabodhini Patrika* (Philosophical Journal) (Aug. 1843). Devendranath started the journal as a mouthpiece of the Association so that the metaphysical questions and theological doctrines discussed at its meetings could reach the growing number of educated Hindus who were increasingly getting dissatisfied with everything Hindu and Indian (considered synonymous in those days) under the impact of Western learning on the one hand, and missionary activities on the other. He chose Akshay Dutt as the editor of his journal for his excellent prose style. He believed that he could correct Dutt's opinions wherever necessary. Naturally, this led to open differences of opinions and then to parting of ways after some years. However, to turn to Dutt; within a few years time his theological opinions started taking shape. He said in 1850: "This overt and visible world and cosmos is the greatest and best book — it is the scripture written by the supreme being himself". And the duty of a true believer therefore, was to "... study and discuss things relating to that" (i.e. external reality). Rejecting all scriptures and revelations as a source of knowledge, he declared that God had revealed himself and fixed our duties by this "best of all books — the cosmic world". To study the mind of God therefore,

one has only to turn to physics and natural sciences. All existing scriptures being "imaginary" one cannot depend on them.

Dutt not only preached what to Devendranath Tagore was a pernicious doctrine but actually went on training himself on his teachings. He started attending Natural Science classes at the Calcutta Medical College to understand how God revealed himself through nature. As the editor of the *T.P.* he contributed articles one after another on the position of the earth in relation to the solar system, stating how days and nights and various seasons occur. He also collected and published news of the latest discoveries in the various sciences. Invariably, he emphasised that there was nothing arbitrary in Nature and we have only to learn the laws of nature to know our duties.

Having based religion on such an amoral foundation, the problem he faced was to evolve a scheme of values to regulate human conduct from the inexorable laws of nature which are, as it were, the only obvious divine commands discernible to human intelligence. It is perhaps just as well that he grappled with these problems before *The Origin of Species* (1859) appeared on the scene and altered the two views of Nature that were then in vogue. One, the mechanical view, held that Nature was a machine built on sound principles now moving with its own momentum, though with a prime mover existing in not quite historical time. To the devout, Nature was a sum total of arbitrary entities moved by an equally arbitrary and always interfering supreme being with absolute power (which by the way could never be defined), for a purpose not known to anybody but himself. By an happy accident of time, Dutt did not have to contend with the pseudo-scientific sociology released in Europe after Darwin which misused the great tools of Darwinism. He did not have to enter into elaborate arguments with the so-called champions of 'scientific sociology' who equated organized class-society with nature, class and national antagonisms with Darwinian struggle for existence, and survival of the fittest with the domination of the then dominating classes. He did not find himself in company with those false prophets who were there, giving a "scientific justification" to the chaotic economic and moral situation created by early industrialization under private ownership and that in the name of an hypothetical progress not defined in human terms. It is just as well that Dutt had kept himself within the bounds of Baconian Philosophy^{4*}, and tried to deduce the codes of moral behaviour from the objective needs of human beings in so far as they were revealed by the physical and biological sciences. He thus came to support vegetarianism because vegetarian food was more suitable or reasonable and therefore by definition 'natural' for the human body. He also wrote in favour of monogamy and freedom of choice in marriage because that led to more effective adjustment of men and women in society. He was married young by his parents but was not happily married and he was one of the few Indians in the 19th century who disliked negotiated marriage. It was his writings on the position of women in society, that inspired Dwarikanath Ganguli (1844-1898) in his life-long work for female education and emancipation in Eastern India.

There is no doubt that this approach had its own pitfalls. There was first of all the basic assumption about an unchangeable human nature which in itself was supposed to be rational. Psychology as a discipline was yet to appear on the scene and the mainsprings of human action were given by rationality which was also considered to be the distinguishing feature of man. As a result, like other early rationalists, he had to make a number of suppositions about the 'true character of human nature', and one gets the feeling that in doing so, human nature

4* Men the servant and interpreter of nature, performs and understands so much as he has collected concerning the order of nature by observation or reason, nor do his power or his knowledge extend farther. (Bacon : *Novum organum*, First Aphorism).

has been defined in a way that suits the purpose of philosophy rather than philosophy taking the cue from human nature.

The philosophical objection to his approach is however even more serious. In effect, like all branches of theism, it is anti-scientific. It is based on unsubstantiated assumptions or faith and not on observation and experiments. In fact, the method leads to what is known as the teleological argument of fallacy. One can, at a point of time, talk of the functions of objects in so far as one has observed them. But if one starts talking of their purpose, one has to make anthropocentric assumptions about the general scheme of things on a priori grounds, and correlate the known functions of each definite object to this assumed scheme as its purpose. This is what Dutt was led to do in his *Treatise on the relation between Human mind and external objects*.^{5*} (1st Vol. 1851 2nd Vol. 1853).

Soon however he showed signs of being aware of the pitfalls inherent in the method he had followed so far. The more he concentrated on his studies in physics, the more he came to accept the physical laws alone as immutable in time and space. He realised that they could not be set down as Commands of God. They could not originate from any source other than themselves. The idea is just an imposition and does not help man to understand natural processes. His approach necessarily changed. Instead of explaining nature in terms of God he started examining God in terms of nature. In other words, he started asking if the idea of God was valid in view of the nature of things as shown by physical and biological processes or laws. It was in this period that he started the Atmyia Sabha^{6*}. (lit. Association of Relatives, to a European the phrase Association of Brothers would convey the meaning better) whose members tried to settle all questions including the nature of God by discussion and show of hands. This treatment of God as an idea, or even a matter of opinion, naturally annoyed the elder Tagore who was the titular head of this association. Its meetings were also held in his house. All the time, Dutt was moving away from theism and made no secret of it. In reply to a query from a body of college students who asked him about the value of prayer he gave the following reply :-

Labour + Prayer = Crops
Labour - Prayer = Crops
Prayer = 0.

This equation spread like prairie fire among the youth and with its concreteness influenced them very greatly. It was understandably used as an intellectual slogan by rationalists after him. Meanwhile, his breach with Devendranath Tagore was growing, and he found his position as the editor of the *Tattwa - bodhini Patrika* more and more unbearable. He avoided philosophical discussions as much as he could, and concentrated more and more on popularising the sciences. These popular essays which were later collected and unfortunately used as text books almost up to the first world war, are remarkable for the intellectual passion he threw in them. What comes out of them, over and above the facts mentioned, is his intense delight in knowing any natural process, and his open and warm conviction that everybody else will share the same delight in sharing this knowledge.

However, as his breach with the theist Brahmos developed he found his position as the editor of the *Tattwa - bodhini Patrika*, the mouth-piece of the Brahmos, more and more unsatisfactory. His health suffered. At this critical period, the great Vidyasagar (1820-1891) came forward to offer him the post of Headmaster of the 'Normal School' which was then being

5. The original Bengali was entitled, "Bahya-bastur sahit Manab Prakritir Sambandha - bichar."

6* The name is an echo of Ram Mohan Roy's 1st monotheistic association (1818)

started in Calcutta to train teachers for the Vernacular schools in Bengal initiated at the instance of Vidyasagar himself. Dutt was only too glad to accept this post. However, almost at the same time in July 1855, he had a stroke while attending a meeting at the Brahmo Samaj. After that, he withdrew from all public activities. He was formally connected with the Normal School till Aug. 1858 when he relinquished his post. He had however been in leave since 1856.

The nature of Dutt's illness is not quite known. It prevented him from meeting dignitaries, answering letters, and above all from attending prayer meetings in which he had lost faith. More seriously, it prevented him from writing at a stretch and taking up the study of natural sciences which he wanted to do. He found that he required the services of a secretary. He lived as a recluse in Baly, then a village on the Ganges about seven miles to the north of Calcutta. His illness however did not prevent him from collecting rare shells of marine animals, and living plants; and his garden became one of the sights for intelligent young men to whom he would sometimes explain things about plant and animal life. His financial position also improved as his popular articles on science were collected and became text books for students. In 1862, he stopped taking the pension of Rs. 25/- which the T. Sabha had earlier granted him in 1857. His time was now solely devoted to a critical study of the various systems of Hindu philosophy and sects with their varied practices. In his room hung the portraits of Ram Mohan Roy, Newton, Darwin, T.H Huxley and the liberal atheist John Stuart Mill. The study of Hindu sects was no doubt inspired by H.H. Wilson's (1786-1860) writings on the subject published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (Vols. 16 and 17). Dutt's researches were however considerably more extensive, and he dealt with one hundred and eighty two sects whereas Wilson's study was confined to fortyfive (45) sects of the Hindus. His researches were published in two volumes as *Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampradaya* (Indian Religious Sects Vol. 1 (1870), & Vol. II (1883). The book however has more in it than indicated in the title. Dutt's uniqueness lies in his approach. He did not rest after giving a descriptive catalogue of the various sects. In fact, the real value of the book lies in its prefaces.

In the preface to the second volume, he discussed all the major systems of Hindu philosophy at full length including the Nastika (atheist) school of Carvaka and gave a critical estimate of the entire range of Hindu philosophy from a rationalist stand-point. Let us see what that means. The central fact of Hinduism which distinguishes it from all other major religions is that it has no single creed, and its systems of philosophy are to a large extent (especially, the Sankhya of Kapila and Vaisesika of Kanada) secular, and evoke no higher authority other than human intelligence in their favour. Its intellectual atmosphere is very different from that uncritical acceptance of mythology and endless observance of rituals relating to minor deities and taboos about food and marriage that constitute popular Hinduism. Anybody who wants to introduce something revolutionary in this atmosphere must therefore do two things. He must first discuss Hinduism as it is practised by most of its adherents – the various sects with their various creeds. He must also critically examine the great systems of thought built over centuries in India. Christian propaganda failed to move the intellectually conscious sections of the Hindus in India precisely because it concentrated all its attention in combating popular Hinduism, which after all, is the natural religion of the land, tied up with its rivers and mountains, seasons and vegetation, epics and folk-tales. Christianity from the west was either unaware of the questions raised by Hindu philosophy or did not care to answer them. Dutt showed his awareness of the problem by tackling both aspects of the question and in the end declared "Bacon, what India required was a Bacon!"

This testament of rational thought is historically important. Even as this book was being

published powerful forces were rising within Indian society that challenged free enquiry or rather the spirit behind it. It has often been said that Imperialism at least introduced western ideas in India. In fact it did just the reverse. It raised barriers in Indian mind against critical ideas and western criticism in particular, because, these ideas and criticisms came from the sources that were holding India down. Henceforward, even such a master mind as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's (1838-1894) was turned to write apologies for Hinduism because by then it had become the mark of national identity. Against rationality, joined such men as Kesab Chandra Sen*, (1838-1884) who, admiring the west for the wrong reasons, (Victorian family-life and virtue for example) superimposed Biblical rhetoric and Christian mythology on the Hindu mind and introduced a sense of sin among the pious. In the end, from the rural heart of India, Hinduism raised its head and showed the strange figure of Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886) to the world. To Ramakrishna, all religions were equally true (and according to his biographers, he had practised them all). Though this creed of equal validity of all religions is a blasphemy for all proselytizing religions, it released the religious among the non-proselytizing Hindus from the pressure of attacks of Christians and Brahmos. Henceforward they could be magnanimous to other religions without changing their feathers. To Ramakrishna, knowledge meant the knowledge or rather the realisation of God, all else being transitory and therefore untrue; and abstinence was the highest practice of virtue. This was a far cry from Dutt who had laid all stress on observation and intellect, and thought virtue to lie in the simultaneous development of all human faculties and ignoring the dark recesses of the human mind, believed that intellectual understanding of nature to be the most human and therefore the most important aspect of human nature.

It is no wonder therefore that he spent his last years in isolation. His perverse sense of humour kept him off from the common run of men. On auspicious days when millions rushed to the Ganges to take a holy dip in the river, he purposely set out in the opposite direction to bathe in a pond. He would deliberately set out on journeys on days and hours marked as "inauspicious" by the astrologers. He would break all taboos regarding caste in his day-to-day life, and would encourage young men to go even against their fathers, when they wanted to study medicine and their fathers pushed them to take up law.

Forsaken by the Brahmos who flattered themselves on being modern, and forgotten by the orthodox, Dutt died in 1886 in his own home. Bengal was then in the throes of what has come to be known as the neo-Hindu revival. This neo-Hinduism joined hands with the growing middle class discontent created by the political and economic situation then prevailing in India and laid the ideological basis for the first nationalist movement in Bengal known as the Swadeshi movement (1905). Men like Dutt were temporarily eclipsed in the emotional fervour generated by challenging nationalism. He had not however lived in vain. He had inspired men to work for the rights of women and working classes. He had also made people aware of the realities of British rule in India by drawing attention, among other things, to the increasing rate of crimes committed in British India. Ultimately, nationalism also grew less emotional. Nationalists started to examine the national body politic more critically and gave up collective self-glorification as their major stock-in-trade. That, men like Nehru who have not spared any aspect of traditional beliefs and customs of Hindu society from their criticisms could yet come to lead the nation, is a clear indication that the pioneer work of men like Akshay Dutt had not been lost in the tremendous contradictions of Hindu Society. P A S

* K.C. Sen. Leader of the young brahmos from 1865 to 1878.

There was a Viceroy Called ...

Subhendu Sarkar

[This is the concluding part of the article published in *PAS*, Vol.3 No.1]

When the Cabinet remained unmoved, Curzon decided not to hold the Durbar. He even threatened resignation saying "If a public servant has lost the confidence of his master, they have the right to recall him and you can exercise that right in the present case."²¹ But the Cabinet still refused to accede and Curzon had no alternative but to swallow the insult.

Curzon will remain forever infamous to us chiefly for passing three Bills as the Viceroy of India: the Calcutta Corporation Act (1899), the Universities Act (1904) and the Partition of Bengal (1905). Without going into the minute details, let us only inquire how much the man was responsible for these Acts.

In 1897, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, introduced a Bill concerning the Calcutta Corporation. His intention was to strengthen the hands of the Chairman and thereby the powers of the Europeans. Though the number of the elected Commissioners (50 at that time) was to remain the same, Mackenzie proposed that the remaining one-third of the Corporation should comprise 15 Government nominees and the people representing commercial interests. The authority of the Corporation was to be further restricted by the establishment of an Executive Committee of 12 nominated members. The Bill was introduced chiefly for the interests of the Calcutta European business committee. It is interesting to note that Mackenzie was the brother of a Burn Company partner who was also the representative in the Legislative Council of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.²² The Mackenzie Bill had been sanctioned by the Secretary of State and the Government of India and already placed before the Bengal Legislative Council at the time of Curzon's arrival. Most of the Viceroys would have hesitated to get involved in such a controversial issue, particularly at the beginning of the term of his office. But Curzon could not resist the temptation to put his stamp on the measure. With one stroke he brought down the number of the elected numbers to half. Moreover, he cut down the all-powerful 12-member Executive Committee to one-third. The more difficult the challenge, the more hazardous the task, the greater was Curzon's pride in daring to do what he considered right by the Empire.

It was more or less the same kind of thinking that went on behind the Universities Act. Under the pretext of raising the standard of education in India, the number of the elected Senate members was slashed, the ultimate decision in the matter of college affiliation and school recognition was transferred to government officials and the minimum amount of college fees was fixed. The brain behind all these measures was certainly Curzon's. Universities reform was formulated at a secret and purely white conference at Simla in 1901 and worked out by a Universities Commission whose sole Indian member, Gurudas Banerji, strongly disagreed with the proposal.²³ Indians had not welcomed the Corporation Bill and the publication of the Indian Universities Report in 1902 sent out shock waves. Surendranath Banerjee opined:

Under the plea of efficiency he [the Viceroy] had officialized the Calcutta Municipality; under the same plea he now proceeded to officialize the universities, and to bring the entire system of higher education under the control of Government. Efficiency was his watchword; popular sentiment counted

for nothing, and in his mad worship of this fetish Lord Curzon set popular opinion at open defiance.²⁴

That the claim of educational improvement was eyewash had been proved by the fact that the total expenditure on education was only Rs. 20.46 million in 1903-04 and Rs. 24.49 million in 1905-06. When the Bill was finally passed in 1904, hundreds of students took to the streets in protest. Dismissing the agitation as hysteria, Curzon wrote to the Secretary of State, "You need not be in the least disturbed at the popular native outcry against the Universities' Bill, it is largely manufactured."²⁵

Now let us turn our attention to the Partition of Bengal.²⁶ It must be remembered that proposals for partitioning Bengal were made even before 1905. After the Orissa famine in 1866, it was Sir Stafford Northcote who first suggested reducing the size of Bengal Presidency that was thought to be too large to remain under a single administration. In 1874 the province of Assam was stripped from Bengal Presidency and put under a Chief Commissioner. Sylhet, a predominantly Bengali-speaking area, was also transferred to the newly created province at that time. Since then, from time to time, suggestions had been advanced to separate the districts of Dacca, Mymensingh, Chittagong, etc. from Bengal. In 1901 when the question of Bengal's boundaries was revived, the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, Sir Andrew Fraser (he became the Lt. Governor of Bengal in 1903) put forward the idea of attaching Sambalpur to the Central Provinces. The file on the subject reached the Viceroy's office 14 months later. Surprised to find the Secretaries of the Viceroy's Council had been working on the subject for so long a time, Curzon, could not help commenting on 24 May 1902 that there were engaged in

... calmly carving about and rearranging provinces on paper, colouring and recolouring the map of India according to geographical, historical, political and linguistic considerations – in the manner that appealed most to their fancy ... Round and round, like the diurnal revolution of the earth went the file, stately, solemn, sure, and slow; and now, in our season, it has completed its orbit, and I am invited to register the concluding stage.²⁷

It should be acknowledged that the different proposals of partitioning Bengal until 1902 were made solely on the basis of administrative and commercial considerations. In the discussion that followed Curzon's famous outburst against "departmentalism", Fraser in his note of 28 March 1903 strongly urged the transfer of both Chittagong division, Dacca and Mymensingh, thus for the first time highlighting the political benefits of the scheme, though the issue of administrative convenience was still stressed in public. Fraser was convinced that certain districts in Bengal had become "a hotbed of the purely Bengali movement, unfriendly if not seditious in character".²⁸ Sir Herbert Risley, the Home Secretary to the Government of India, believed that the predominance of the Bengalis in provincial politics required to be diminished and it could best be done by dividing them. On 7 February 1904, he wrote in a note: "Bengal united is a power. Bengal divided will pull several different ways."²⁹ Both Fraser and Risley saw in Curzon a man who would not be able to resist the temptation to plunge headlong where his predecessor were reluctant to tread. The very fact that Lord Elgin had not felt equal to the task was enough incentive for provoking Curzon. He accepted the proposal of Partition on 1 June 1903.

No doubt, the British have already started pursuing the age-old imperialist policy of divide and rule by the beginning of the 20th century. To support this assumption let us remember that the Marathi-speaking Berar (acquired from the Nizam in 1902) was attached to the Central Provinces, instead of Maharashtra. Joining Berar to Maharashtra would have added to the influence of the Poona Brahmans. Curzon therefore said, "The last thing that we want to do is to consolidate the Mahratta race."³⁰

If Bengal had been divided chiefly out of administrative consideration, Bihar and Orissa would have been separated. In fact, such a suggestion was offered by the Congress President, Sir Henry Cotton. He thought it would be better to separate Hindi-and Oriya-speaking people from the Bengalis. It would reduce the size of Bengal, the supposed ground for Partition, while maintaining the integrity of the Bengalis. The Congress denounced the Risley scheme in 1903 as "preposterous" for it would undo the unity of India and might endanger communal harmony. Two alternatives were offered to the Risley scheme: first, separation of Bihar and Orissa (the ultimate 1911 solution) and second, conversion of Bengal into a Governor's province like Bombay and Madras.³¹

In the Partition scheme there was however another consideration as well. By dividing Bengal on communal lines and encouraging Muslim ascendancy in the east, the Government was, according to Risley, weakening a solid body of opponents to the British Raj. Curzon in his speech on 18 February 1904 declared that the Partition "would invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussulman viceroys and kings."³² To use Partition as a political weapon, he even sanctioned a loan of 100,000 pounds to Nawab Sallimullah of Dacca.

Of course, the Partition of Bengal was the brainchild of Fraser and Risley, because Curzon was on holiday in England for the most part of 1904. In his absence, the acting Viceroy, Lord Amphill, took little interest in the matter. But when Curzon returned, it was mainly he who took much trouble to see the plan executed. This is evident in his correspondence with John Brodrick, the Secretary of State for India. That the motive behind Partition was chiefly political is clear from what Curzon wrote to Brodrick on 17 February :

The Bengalis, who like to think themselves a nation, and who dream of a future when the English will have been turned out, and a Bengali Babu will be installed in Government House, Calcutta, of course bitterly resent any disruption that will be likely to interfere with the realization of this dream. If we are weak enough to yield to their clamour now, we shall not be able to dismember or reduce Bengal again; and you will be cementing and solidifying, on the eastern flank of India, a force already formidable, and certain to be a source of increasing trouble in the future.³³

Curzon sent off the final scheme on 25 February 1905. But at the last moment the Secretary of State's Council put forward the idea that relief could be given by setting up autonomous commissionerships for Chota Nagpur and Orissa on the Sind model -- a diluted version of Cotton's plan. The Viceroy was naturally exasperated. If his scheme was rejected at the final hour, Curzon cautioned that the prestige of the Government of India would be seriously damaged. Not only that, the alternative suggested by India Council "would tend to consolidate the Bengali element by detaching it from outside factors, and would produce the very effect that we desire to avoid. The best guarantee of the political advantage of our proposal is its dislike by the Congress Party."³⁴ Brodrick passed the scheme reluctantly, writing on 9 June 1905:

That a large and upon the whole homogenous community of 41.5 millions, with Calcutta as their centre of culture and political and commercial life, should object to the transfer of 3/5th of their number to a new administration with a distant capital, involving the severance of old and historic ties and breaking up of racial unity, appears to me in no way surprising.³⁵

In bowing down to a more dominant personality, Brodrick had relinquished his duty, though his Councillors made him aware of it. Finally after the announcement on 1 September, Bengal was officially partitioned on 16 October 1905.

The British had however underestimated the sense of unity among the Bengalis. The Partition decision had proved a national humiliation to them. Disappointed with the paltry achievements of 20 years of "mendicant" Moderate agitation, the nationalist movement took a new turn. The innovative forms of protest like boycott of British goods, organization of national schools and Swadeshi industries and attempts at village improvement soon led to a call for the struggle for Swaraj or complete independence and recourse to armed struggle. What the general mood of the Bengalis was even after a year of the declaration of Partition can well be conjectured from the speech entitled "Partition and Government" delivered by Aurobindo Ghosh (later Sri Aurobindo) in 1906 :

The Government must have seen already that without some such revocation or modification of the administrative arrangements in Bengal, as will reunite at least the Bengalee-speaking populations of the Province under one local Government, the present discontent will not be allayed. They have tried many things during the last twelve months; - persecution of school boys, application of regulation lathis, the prostitution of British justice and British administration for saving British prestige and British trade in the country, have all been tried and all have equally failed to create the least impression upon the grim determination of the people to boycott British goods; and it must have, by this time, become clear even to the habitually purblind Indian Bureaucracy that the obnoxious Partition measure must be revoked or substantially modified to meet the irresistible demands of Indian opinion which, unlike what it was before, is now not an empty, wordy things, but has a new and growing force behind it.³⁶

Finally in December 1911, King-Emperor George the Fifth announced the revocation of the Partition at the Delhi Durbar. The King had personally experienced the Bengal agitation when he visited India as the Prince of Wales in 1905-06. The suggestion of the King was strongly endorsed by Home Member, Jenkins, who was worried about the continuing revolutionary terrorism in Bengal and felt that "until we get rid of the partition ulcer, we shall have no peace."³⁷ The Government of India dispatch of 25 August 1911 linked the reunion of Bengal under a Governor-in-Council with a transfer of the capital of India to Delhi. But that is an altogether different story. Let us return to our study of Lord Curzon.

Though Curzon was appointed for the second term in his office in 1905, it was already apparent that he had become somewhat uncontrollable. His relation with the Secretary of State, the India Council and the British Cabinet worsened day by day. To curb his power, the authorities in England came out with a plan. It was decided that the Military Member with whom were vested the matters relating to finance, stores and supply, and who had a seat on Viceroy's Council and powers to veto the Commander-in-Chief's recommendations, was to be replaced by a junior officer in civilian clothes renamed Military Supply Member controlling only stores and transport. The man who emerged powerful in this situation was the new Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener. It is believed that Kitchener had manipulated opinion in England. Curzon threatened resignation if the Cabinet did not accept his choice of General Barrow as the Military Supply Member. But he did not realize that the times had already changed. Within ten days Curzon was informed that the King had accepted his resignation. The House of Commons had also criticized Curzon for his erratic action. However he had to stay in India for the preparations of welcoming the Prince of Wales. As the arrival of the next Viceroy, Minto was being delayed, Brodrick asked Amphill to act as the Viceroy. Curzon's wife, Mary, said bitterly, "George's seven years of work are as though they had never been."³⁸ He received the Mintos at the Viceregal House rather discourteously, clad in a casual coat and a pair of slippers - hardly the clothes in which a Viceroy should receive another. It was

his old manner of taking "sweet revenge". On 18 November 1905, along with Mary, Curzon sailed out of Bombay harbour never to return to the country he thought he ruled since 1899.

All was still not lost. After the initial setback due to the Indian experience coupled by Mary's tragic death in 1906 which had no doubt left him a broken man, Curzon managed to come once again under the spotlight in 1908 when finally he got his earldom and entered the House of Lords. Since then he occupied quite a few important political positions. In the coalition government of 1915 he was Lord Privy Seal; when Asquith's Government fell in 1916, he became one of the four ministers in Lloyd George's War Cabinet. Simultaneously he announced his engagement to the wealthy American widow, Grace Duggan, after parting with the famous actress-novelist Elinor Glyn with whom he enjoyed an eight-year relationship. In Bonar Law's Cabinet, Curzon held the posts of the Foreign Secretary and the deputy Prime Minister. He was also the leader of the House of Lords. The only dream yet to be realized was to become the Prime Minister of England. When Lloyd George's coalition government collapsed, the premiership was almost within Curzon's grasp. But it was at this moment that elder Tory statesman, Bonar Law, returned to the political field and Curzon realized that he had to wait a little longer. But less than a year later news of Law's retirement arrived. Suddenly the possibility of becoming the Prime Minister was once again before him.

Curzon was certain that there would be no obstacle this time. In fact, no one could dare challenge his seniority, his brilliance, his knowledge and his claim to the highest office in England. He expected the King to call him any moment. With his characteristic aristocratic worldview, he thought it proper to retire to his country house at Montecute in Somerset and wait for the prize to come his way. The second Lady Curzon, Grace, who was always away busy partying and neglected her ailing husband, had also joined him at Montecute for she said, "If my Boy becomes PM, I will not go to B.A [Buenos Aires] as he will need me at home."³⁹

Finally, late in the evening of Monday 21 May 1923, Curzon received an urgent telegram from Lord Stamfordham, the Private Secretary to the King of England, asking him to return to London at once. Next morning when the Curzons arrived at the railway station, people had already gathered, cheering and clapping. Grace recalled "Our journey from Montecute to 1 Carlton House Terrace must have been the most photographed one of our lives together. All newspapers seemed to be sure that George was about to become Prime Minister."⁴⁰ When they reached 1 Carlton House Terrace, a message from Lord Stamfordham saying he would call at 2.30 p.m. the same afternoon was awaiting Curzon. Lord Stamfordham arrived on time and began explaining the great difficulty which the King had been placed in since Bonar Law had not named his successor. Then Lord Stamfordham went on to tell that the king was fully aware of Curzon's claims to the post. But suddenly Lord Stamfordham's tone of voice changed and slowly he made clear that in spite of Curzon's qualifications, he could not be named the Prime Minister of England.

Why, despite having all the necessary qualities, Curzon could not avail the premiership? To answer this all-important question, we must try to understand the socio-economic condition of England prevalent in the early 1920s. Birth in an aristocratic family, education at Eton and Oxford and an active career in politics were enough to enable one to hold a high position in the Victorian Age. But things changed dramatically in the 20th century, particularly after the First World War (1914-18). The aristocracy had been relegated to the background while the bourgeoisie had taken the economic control of the society. Simultaneously a new life had been breathed into the working class movement in the aftermath of the October Revolution in 1917. In England, the Labour Party had managed to secure quite a number of seats in the Parliament, something unimaginable during Victoria's reign. As a result, the House of Commons had emerged more powerful than the House of Lords. No doubt, Curzon could have

found it hard to believe in his youth that within his lifetime he would have to see the Labour Party in power with Ramsay Macdonald at 10 Downing Street.

Seen in this light, the explanation provided by George the Fifth in preferring Stanley Baldwin to Curzon acquires a new significance. According to Lord Stamfordham, the King had convinced himself that as the largest section of the opposition to the Government comprised the Labour Party and as the Labour Party was not represented in the House of Lords, the Leader of the Government must be from the House of Commons, where he could answer the Labour Leader with full authority. That was the reason why the King appointed Baldwin, the Leader of House of Commons, and not Curzon, the Leader of the House of Lords.

Curzon was naturally shocked; he could not believe his own ears. He had lost the race to someone he always considered to be a man of utmost insignificance. He could not help pointing out that the King's decision was equivalent to laying down a theory that a peer could never again be Prime Minister of England. "I earnestly protest against the new doctrine", he said, because "It involves an additional and perpetual and cruel disability upon the order of the House to which I belong."⁴¹ The proud Lord Curzon is said to have broken down and wailed like a child.

The man who had served his country travelling to far off corners of the world, always held high the cause of the Empire and proved himself equipped for the post of the Prime Minister had to remain occupied with the duties at the Foreign Office and the paltry office of Lord Presidentship of the Council under Baldwin during the last two years of his life. When the end of Lord Curzon, the 1st Viscount of Scarsdale, came on 20 March 1925 after a second fatal haemorrhage, he was unattended by his wife. Time had once placed him at the pinnacle of power when he started believing himself superior to all others around him, but by the end of his life it was Time again that left him undistinguished and insignificant, making a desperate but futile effort to remain in the corridors of power. Heirless (Curzon had three daughters, though he did not lose hope of fathering a son even not long before his death), Curzon was laid to rest beside his beloved first wife, Mary in the family vault of the Memorial Chapel at Kedleston.

Note and References

21. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 159.
22. See Sarkar, *Modern India* 105.
23. See Sarkar, *Modern India* 105.
24. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 183.
25. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 185.
26. For a brief history of the Partition of Bengal see Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal. 1903-1908* (1973; New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1994) 9-30 and Amal Tripathi, *The Extremist Challenge. India Between 1890 and 1910* (Calcutta: Orient Longmans, 1967) 85-103.
27. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 212.
28. Quoted in Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement* 17.
29. Quoted in Tripathi, *Extremist Challenge* 94-95.
30. Quoted in Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement* 15.
31. See Tripathi, *Extremist Challenge* 95.
32. Quoted in Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement* 18.
33. Quoted in Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement* 19-20.
34. Quoted in Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement* 16.
35. See Tripathi, *Extremist Challenge* 101.
36. Sri Aurobindo, *On Nationalism. Selected Writings and Speeches*, (1965 ; Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1996) 87.
37. Quoted in Sarkar, *Modern India* 143.
38. Quoted in Goradia; *Lord Curzon* 237.
39. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 4.
40. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 5.
41. Quoted in Goradia, *Lord Curzon* 8.

Psychiatrist Dhirendranath

(Continued article - 5th part)

Basu Dev Mukherjee

[We consider Dhirendranath as one of the leading pioneers of psychiatry in India. In the previous issues of this magazine we had included the intellectual formation and socio-psychological development of Dhirendranath as a psychiatrist. He had many introductions but over all other introductions, being a psychiatrist can claim to one of the fundamental ones. We will examine the matter further in this issue regarding his achievement as a psychiatrist in practice. Ed. PAS.]

Practice of Psychiatry

In practice there is not much done in our mental clinics other than writing out some routine prescriptions for the patients. One does not get the complete treatment expected from our medical practitioners. Here Dhirendranath can be considered to be a person who set an example. In this it has also to be mentioned that he started a completely new school in this method of treatment. Very briefly his method was that at the first meeting he would carefully hear the patient and his family members and also make notes. Then he would give necessary and appropriate advice to the patient and prescribe two or three medicines. He would also explain to them the possible side-effects of the medicines. All this took him quite some time, but he was very careful about it.

Of course interconnected with all this was his name and reputation, but since he was not attached to any teaching institution he hoped and expected that after they get better, these patients would act as his permanent publicity agents. In all this he would see any patient with a holistic attitude. I am not aware whether other doctors would also see their patients with the same humane feeling as Dhirendranath, because he would regularly try to demonstrate it to us in various ways. He had a tremendous ability to understand fully and very quickly the intrinsic problem of a patient.

In this connection let me say that he disliked our method of diagnosis since he felt through it a patient would quickly become a case of anxiety or depression or schizophrenia. He preferred that every individual continued to be a human being even with all his problems. It is not that this also did not have its problems. Any problem can be due to a combination of different problems, and it is difficult to identify any single cause thus making it difficult to decide on a line of treatment. He would have to evolve and establish a system to recognise these patients and also teach them to his students. And this was not a very easy task, since in many patients one could not find a clear interpretation of the indications, and even if possible they were very complicated which behave difficult to explain to the inexperienced students. It was a completely different matter to understand and recognise these patients through one's continuing experience and to explain it to others.

However, at the second or third sitting the first task of Dhirendranath was to prepare the patient for his suggestions and also to prepare himself. For this he would go over the details about the patient. If necessary he would discuss again some selected points and would give his selections only after he was sure about the facts. His treatment continued along these lines. Overall the situation can be viewed as follows. 1. The minimal dosage of medicines

would be prescribed for the immediate problems, but ensuring the patient is able to go about his own work. His comfort level and ability to work will improve with a lowering of the problems. 2. He will have to try to get to the basic cause of the problem and then to remove it. It is true to say that in many cases one is not able to get to basic cause, and even if possible it cannot be removed.

Hence he would in many instances tell them, "I am sorry I cannot resolve your material problem." But inspite of this his aim was to ensure that the patient at least is suitably prepared so that he is able to fight against the material problems. He would ask the patient to ignore any problem which could not be resolved — "which cannot be cured must be endured." Here I can clearly visualise one of his suggestions "... if you ignore the symptoms, the symptoms will ignore you." 3. The factors which are affecting the mobility of the patient or his ability to work to be identified and treated to be able to improve this condition. 4. If to counter his illness the patient has take on any adaptive strategy and if it does not create any difficulty for him or his family members (getting a ring with an expensive gemstone for say Rs. 20,000) or placing trust in religious beliefs, then it is best not to interfere in such matters. 5. Suggest that the environment and surroundings around the patient is kept in a state which makes it easier for him to work best. 6. Anything found near at hand to be used to minimise the problems faced by the patient, but one has to be careful that as a result this will not cause any danger to the patient.

It may be mentioned that three diagnostic models have been prevalent in the Western countries. One is the Platonic method which is the basis for the diagnostic criteria for America (D.S.M.- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual), while the Aristotelian method formed the basis for biological psychiatry and I.C.D. (International Classification of Diseases). There is also one model which can be called the Hippocratic model by which an overall humane view is taken on the treatment and the complete individual is considered in entirety for treatment. Dhirendranath was probably in favour of this Hippocratic model, because his mentor Pavlov was also inclined towards it. Specifically Pavlov had totally based his explanation of the brain types on the Hippocratic forms like choleric, sanguinous, melancholic etc..

Socio-psycho-biological Marker

At the beginning of Dhirendranath's career the diseases fell into certain categories, and thereafter these were changed at subsequent intervals. Finally very few of the original categories remained. In fact it was also seen the interpretation of some of the diagnosis had changed. For example although 'psychosis' had all the sign and symptoms of madness, it was later considered that its social and personal functioning was more dominant and significant. Anyhow Dhirendranath was not unduly perturbed with this fine dividing lines on the classification of these illness. One could say he was not very enthusiastic about these matters. On the other hand Dhirendranath was definitely opposed to identifying a person as a psychiatric case and thus putting him in a disadvantageous position in society. History also tells us there were factual examples about this. Nazi Germany killed numerous people in the gas chamber under the guise of 'psychosis'. In protest against this Dhirendranath wrote in his magazine, "The chronic schizophrenic must be protected at any cost with proper humane honour, dignity and rights."

Dhirendranath gave considerable importance to certain signs and symptoms, like for example the disorganisation in schizophrenia. Further, the terms psychasthenia or neurasthenia were frequently used at that time. The term psychopathy was also used which has now become a part of personality disorder. It seems that this term also included criminal tendencies. I should mention that under the influence of Soviet Russia guilty or accused people were tried as psychiatric cases who could be reformed. Dhirendranath preferred to see

psychiatric cases within the paradigm of disorder or problem. A psychiatric case or mental disorder was equivalent to 'Evil' described by Shakespeare.

To him he always disliked the classification of mental disorder as seen in Ayurveda. Here he followed the classification of the illnesses used in foreign countries, although he had many reservations there. He agreed that the problems of mental disorder should be made more methodical and formalised, but also accepted that it is a herculean if not an impossible task in our country with its large number of languages, cultures and caste based social systems. It is significant that we the psychiatrists of the third world country use two ideal methods for classifying psychiatry cases, one is American DSM and the other is W.H.O.'s I.C.D.. Dhirendranath was not satisfied with either of them but comparatively I.C.D. seemed more suitable to him.

Here we must carefully consider his views on this. He would say we must not get confused between disorder (disease, syndrome or symptom complex) and diagnosis. In medical entity we normally diagnose all disorders as a disease. But if we examine it carefully we will realise that in psychiatry we essentially address the major disorder, for the time being ignoring the disease or the diagnosis. Disorder has an ontological status whereas diagnosis is the final entity and that follows a disorder. But it does not mean that any diagnosis will necessarily include all disorders in that category. It is possible that in any one entity different disorders will come under the same diagnosis. Here there will be continuous tussle between realism and nominalism. For example disorder is realism because it has an independent existence, irrespective of how it is described or identified. On the other hand disease does not have an independent existence and therefore will be categorised under nominalism. For this reason Dhirendranath would directly challenge any diagnostic categorisation. He would say, they will have to explain the valid knowledge which forms the basis of the classification. This argument would continue, because we had accepted that the classification of mental disorder is important.

The classification of mental disorder is necessary for diagnostic validity, research validity, academic training validity, forensic report validity and so on. But Dhirendranath maintained that we should not be preoccupied from the very beginning with disease diagnosis. This is because we will not say that we are unable to find a reason for this. This argument gradually turned into a search of ultimate cause versus a proximate cause or a problem with generality versus specificity or universality versus diversity. In any case Dhirendranath concluded that classification is a dimensional system where the patient comes with a disorder or problem. It is possible that at that time the mind or his body has one or more markers.

It is also possible that later this problem undergoes a change as a result of partial treatment or the help of some social and family conditions or his personal bio-psychological reasons. Here also it is a fact that his disorder is undergoing an expression. Whether as a result this will upset or slow down our diagnosis will only have a secondary importance. We will have to progress along this disorder or problem. Dhirendranath used to argue that surely this does not happen only in psychiatry. For example in any form of cancer it is first seen whether it is present or not. It is possible that the body has tissues in a precancerous condition. Or once it is certain that cancer is present then its condition or stage has to be determined in order to decide the line of treatment.

Dhirendranath of course accepted that some mental disorders will have a definite biological marker which will help a positive diagnosis. This diagnosis will be coordinated with 1. Important clinical variables in external domain of familial genetic transmission; 2. course of illness; 3. treatment response; 4. biological marker; and so on. It will never be possible from this diagnosis to say with certainty whether a particular disease is present or not.

Amongst the third world countries Cuba and China carried out the classification of

diseases in their country. In 1975 the Cuban Glossary of Psychiatry was published, based on the I.C.D., and we were extremely impressed with its style of language. Dhirendranath would say, "It is a matter of pride for us that this is probably the first time the Americans are praising the work of some other country." It can truly be said that we cannot but appreciate the manner in which the above classifications have been incorporated so beautifully the idioms of distress of that country. Dhirendranath had regretted that a similar classification of mental disorders could not be completed in his own country. At the same time he accepted that this work is very difficult.

On this he had expressed the following principles which need to be followed for this — 1. It has to be compatible with ICD and it should conform to the diagnostic codes, using qualifying phrases whenever necessary. 2. It should give proper importance to all discussion panels and papers on this at the national and regional levels and it should accept the views of others. 3. Efforts must continue to harmonise the efforts of others on this. 4. Even apart from psychiatrists and psychologists it require the help and assistance of others also, like teachers in school and colleges, social workers, forensic experts or practitioners.

In comparison the classification of mental disorders in China has a special importance, since in the West specially in America they are at present the largest ethnic minority. As a result the psychiatrists in the West cannot practice without knowing and understanding this classification. After seeing the Chinese classification Dhirendranath felt they do not accept the presence of somatoform disorder. It was our firm belief that there is a greater presence of diseases like somatoform in the backward societies. But Dhirendranath corrected this impression we had. The Chinese did not make any mention of the disease in their classification although they talked about ICD or DSM for a somatoform disorder. It is for this reason that the Traditional Chinese Medicine does not distinguish between physical and mental disorders, just like our own Ayurveda medicine. As a result when a Chinese person talks about the symptoms of his physical illness, he accepts and does not try to hide that it could be due to his mental stresses. One can say this is a context of dependant strategy to impress the clinician. Dhirendranath therefore preferred to refer to any somatoform type of diseases as neurosis or psychosomatic illnesses.

I have said earlier Dhirendranath had his own system for identifying and classifying mental disorder, and he followed this in the case of his own patients. It is not that he did not deviate from his method. He would always think about his patients and tried to alternate the sources and symptoms of their disorders between a general condition and a particular condition and vice versa. As a result the mental disorders would show up to him in a particular form. For example, he also accepted the classification into the three stages. One of this was the disorganization in the thought process, one abnormal affect or emotion or confused temperament and the other a state of anxiety or being predominately anxious about everything. If these three are used to determine the disease the first is called schizophrenia, the second is mood disorder and the third anxiety disorder.

The diseases considered to have the maximum genetic influence are Alzheimer, schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, alcoholism and others. Whenever any such cases came to Dhirendranath he would closely go into the family history. But he gave major importance to the constitutional set up of the patient. Here he would, for example, notice — 1. how much and how quickly the patient reacts to external stimulus; 2. whether he sleeps properly, and here he became very wary if children or youth did not sleep well; 3. whether he initially avoids external stimulus, and then expresses his reactions after some time, or is he eager to express himself quite easily; 4. how quickly is he able to adjust himself to changed situations; 5. whether he is able to concentrate with focussed attention or is he easily distracted; 6. is

their continuity in his behavior and symptoms or they change frequently; 7. whether he maintains normal dispositions or does it go through sudden changes; 8. does he have a simple and easy temperament or is it hard and complicated; 9. does he become enthusiastic about anything normally or is it difficult to get him interested; 10. is he able to accept neighbouring situations; 11. does he like and accept people; 12. can he concentrate on any work; 13. can he accept everything with an open mind; 14. can he start any work, with fresh ideas.

We cannot ignore that a major part of the temperament qualities of an individual develops from his family relationships and from the environment, and his personality develops on this foundation. The elements required for the development of an individual come more easily if he has a good family atmosphere. Conversely a person will have to struggle hard if the family atmosphere is not good. We can mention here that Dhirendranath would divide intelligence into different sections, keeping in mind his theories developed with his educational background. He would say for example that good sportsmen show a natural development of kinesthetic intelligence. But they do not show much intelligence in many other areas. Thus he would demonstrate that a different kind of intelligence is required to understand properly performing arts (like singing, acting, cinema, etc.). Similarly there is a group who show a particular expertise about mathematics. They try to explain everything through mathematics. Another section has a conceptual form of intelligence, which helps them to understand, abstract and explain environmental situations much better. But the status of these personalities are never fixed or rigid. They adjust and change in particular situations. Dhirendranath had the view that in case of any mental disorder of these different types of individuals it will also be expressed or show up in different ways.

The signs and symptoms which Dhirendranath gave importance included — anxiety, any kind of malicious behavior, compulsion, any physical illnesses, delusion, (paranoid or nonparanoid), acute dissociative state, severe dysphoric mood, hallucination, suicidal thoughts or tendencies, lack of nourishment or being careless about own health, acute manic behavior, restless behavior or being confused, obsession, phobia, any form of retardation, disorganised mental state, withdrawn or to try and run away from everything (being ascetic, wanderer etc.), homicidal behavior, habitual addiction to drugs, not willing to do any work or abhors any kind of work etc.. One should mention he tried to coordinate and correlate all those signs and symptoms, and then have a detailed discussion on all of them.

He would for example say such individual is organised about his signs/symptoms in a different way or self-similar way. In some cases it may express very fast or with high intensity and in others it may be more gradual. And its future effect can also vary from person to person. Meaning that they become resolute in different ways. It is also seen that each sign/symptom can subside differently from one person to another. Any standard fixed pattern seen here would appear to be an exception. So when a person is well or normal he seems to flower in his appearances, as if he is perfectly self-similar. Conversely when he is unwell, his individuality seems to subside considerably and then there is a commonness in his signs/symptoms with those of other ill persons, and we find a lot of similarities. On the other hand it is also possible that we will not find the signs / symptoms we are familiar with or which we read in textbooks.

Similarly when he talked about our thoughts or cognitive process is now called decision making algorithm or fuzzy logic. Dhirendranath held the view this should be the ideal for biology. Usually from a theoretical or conventional point of view we are used to think about the all or none law, the black or white and similar processes. But in practice it is not possible to make a decision like this. While considering anything or taking a decision we normally see whether there are aspects like multifaceted, contradictory, competing possibilities, bias etc.

connected with it. Compared to what we want to express in this there is much more we express through body languages, without words or through silence. Therefore there is always the possibility of our making a mistake if we make a judgement about a person based on what he has expressed in spoken words. Further there are several things which we do not wish to express through words. Dhirendranath understood this very well and in this he was helped considerably by the classification based on Pavlovian brain type.

Talking about the thought process, Dhirendranath used to say, a person may be thinking about something and at the same time there may be several other thoughts going through his mind which could be self-contradictory. It will be seen that most of these thoughts are largely illogical. But if one has these thoughts regularly then it becomes a process of stereotyped thoughts, which in Pavlovian language is called dynamic stereotype. This has an important adaptive value, since there is less wastage of strength or power here, it simplifies carrying on a conversation, and so on. In many instances it is seen that in the midst of all this a person has already taken a number of decisions. But strangely in most cases it is seen there is no supporting evidence for taking this decision. If he is then asked "why are you saying this?" He would turn around and say with confidence, "I know this is how it happens, and there cannot be an alternative." All psychiatrists are faced with this dichotomy, and as a result are uncomfortable about a formal diagnosis criteria for their patients. They therefore prefer a diagnosis criteria which is related to their work.

Every individual has a particular style of thinking. But of course it changes depending on circumstances. What is to be noted here is — 1. How he utilises and gives consideration to data or information easily and immediately available to him. And particularly to make him see which data he discards or omits, which get more importance and whether he uses his intuition. 2. How logical is his thinking. 3. Whether his decisions are biased, distorted, flexible or rigid and how much. 4. Whether he is careful or impulsive in his use of language / words, and so on. We would see that often an individual is so preoccupied with rules and conventions, values, self-consciousness etc. that it was extremely difficult to make him see a different view. Dhirendranath did not like this kind of rigidity, including in his patients.

He would not spare his patients or his family members if they had this attitude of arguing. He would describe these as maladaptive temperament. In comparison he had a soft corner for people with an artistic brain type (who in Pavlovian language had a more active first signalling system). This was even though their thoughts were global, diffuse, impressionistic, emotionally laden evaluation purely adaptive to detail oriented work or goal directed work. Even then those people liked Dhirendranath because even with the pride or arrogance of the artist they felt that this doctor would empathise with their problem.

Dhirendranath would become very disturbed if he felt there was any deficit in the abstract power of thinking of any patient, because the absence of this power or any confusion was indicative of developing retardation. He considered that it was essential for this power to continue unhindered for the treatment of the patient or for returning into the mainstream of society. He would identify the following elements for this abstract power of thinking, viz thinking in 1. complex association, 2. abstract common properties. 3. all aspects of a complex situation, mobility from feature to feature, 4. simultaneous thinking capacities of various different, vague, subtle aspects of the situation, to appreciate differing and contradictory situations, to integrate all dismultiple dimension — differentiatedness and nuance, 5. to free themselves from the literal or superficial meanings of words, and others. But for the purpose of deciding on the source of these illnesses Dhirendranath gave the maximum importance to fear and insecurity.

It can be said that to him the major markers for mental disorder was fear or insecurity.

Whenever any psychiatric patient would talk about his history he would always try to look out for the source of his fear. Why he feels so much of anxiety. Why he is being crippled through fear, and is even losing all ability to do any work or lead a normal life. He would see this demon called 'fear' as the major source of sociology, psychology and biology. In this the main source for his knowledge was Marxian sociology and probably helped by the *Upanishad* and Rabindranath. Right from the beginning of his consciousness Man is alone and isolated for his fragile power of abstraction. In this he highly acclaimed a number of verses of *Upanishad*. The source of all his fear and lack of security was this state of loneliness, lack of company and isolation. He could rattle off a number of verses from the *Upanishad* on this matter. The patients could hear these even in the suggestions. In addition he would look out for all the songs and verses of Rabindranath on driving out fear so that he could include them as necessary in his suggestions or counselling.

On the other hand anger and fear were to him two faces of the same coin. That is his view was that the anger and fear of a person are directly proportional. He considered that fear worked on the mind of a person in various levels and this resulted in different illnesses. A rise in the intensity of this illness could result in schizophrenia, at lower levels it is sometimes seen as anxiety, when he is unable to bear it he goes into a state of depression, or sometimes it turns into psychosomatic disorders. And when the patient realises that we will not be able to get out of this fear or insecurity in any way, he takes on an adaptive strategy through psychosomatic illnesses to be able to get out of this fear or insecurity in any way, he takes on an adaptive strategy through psychosomatic illnesses to be able to live with this fear. And when he is helpless then he develops depression consulting from the helplessness and loneliness.

In simpler terms one can say that depending on the personality type of the patient this fear develops various signs and symptoms; while some signs and symptoms also develop out of the efforts by the patient to get out of this fear or lack of security. If the patient has weak brain type this fear is seen a more acute form and the patient faces a lot of difficulty in his treatment of the illness. On the other hand the illness will not show up in an acute form and it will be easier to treat him if the brain type of the patient is relatively strong. By this logic with an acute thrust of the illness the patient will behave like anxiety problems and with a lesser degree of illness so it will be easier to treat. The schizophrenic core we heard earlier from him was probably because of this fear.

After this we will talk about the important subject of the emotional intelligence and its abnormality of the patient. Because at one time Dhirendranath was keen to work on this subject.

(To be continued) **P A S**

Is Old Age Home Welcome?

Goutam Bandyopadhyay

'Is old age home welcome?' — This slogan in the present age is a sensational issue and issue all over the country. In the age of speed today, possibly the necessity of old age home is coming into force gradually. Where is the time left to look after old men and women in the present set up of our society. Rather in the old age home, the old people can share their pleasant and unpleasant memories with other old people of same class.

In reality does it happen so? My little experience says, the scenario in old age home is very pathetic and miserable. Let us start from our childhood when we find that in every stage a community feeling develops where we can integrate our own self or identity. The sense of

cohesion at the initial stage of childhood as well as at the stage very close to death remains lost. In the childhood, the universe ahead is vast and endless. The ideas and thoughts do not mature. Dependence on the parents is the pivot of ideas and thinkings. In fact, the mental world starts from adolescence, to build up future career. Urge to reach the goal ahead begins. Friends of same age group as if act individually as mirror of their sorrows, miseries, happiness and crisis.

On the other hand, as the decrepitude aheads more and more close to death, the aspirations of near future become bleak more and more and ultimately become insignificant. Memories of the past gradually start to be powerful. All ideas and thoughts then become past oriented and full of memories. Life starts with recollection of old memories resulting exchange of incidents of happiness, sorrows and miseries amongst the inmates and such exchanges end in no time. The reason is life ahead is nearing end.

In such a mental state being aimless, one looks back only to the past incidents. One feels his life meaningful when he senses his involvement in the society and in his family surrounded by sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters of his own. Urge dominates for expressing memorable events of his life as death reaches close. Desire of last life obviously is to maintain his resemblance in his generation. At this stage he has the tendency to talk more, to make others hear and not to listen to others. It is for this reason, I have seen old age home, when one talks of his incidents of dejection to others, they get unmindful and tired of hearing. When one talks of the incidents of torture of his daughter-in-law, others instead of being attentive go to other topics ask, "what is the time now? When will be the time for food?" So on and so forth.

When one begins to talk of the history of blood sugar, others may not relish and show more interest in radio news, informations about weather forecast etc.. The fact is no story or discussion crystallises and ends in a word or two. Some has the fascination to be very particular and methodical in timely taking meal, brushing teeth, taking medicine. Particularity in timings keeps one away from loneliness by tuning his lifestyle with watch. Watch keeps him busy with observing time frequently. To observe punctuality there often arises conflict between the two for timely holding water from the tap of water basin.

The confidence in physical ability gradually is narrowed down. Within the close compartment, he has to depend on one or two most choosy own items e.g., bowl of betel leaves, garland for worship, old *Geeta*, walking stick with art of Benaras or container of snuff etc.. Time does not pass even with open air evening walk, timely taking of food and medicine. The question now comes — should we accept this scenario?

The arguments in opposition are like this that in the modern age society is passing through turmoil of changes. People are gradually enjoying the taste of freedom. People of various age groups have developed more maturity within themselves and their mobility has increased. People with old culture and heritage repent for the breakdown of full fledged ideal family structure. Elderly and old section of the society will also enjoy liberty. An association will crystallise amongst themselves. They feel much dignified to spend rest of life without being burden and liable to sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters. With such temperament of self dependence, a sense of self respect also develops.

In the past, the ownership of the property belonged to the old man who used to act as head of the family. The other members of the family were also dependent on property and for this reason to honour the guardianship, dignity, loyalty, services, care were all mostly inclined to him. The above sense of possession of the past is now on the verge of abolition and in course of time the new generation depends on independent job and naturally the leadership and dignity of the old man is going to be jeopardised.

This is the reason why old age home has now become the new address for the old people for the sake of their dignity and independence. This does not necessarily mean that Indian tradition and culture is finished. The connections and relationship with nearest ones remain rather sweet and normal from old age home. In the newly changed pattern of society, men of various age groups keep themselves busy with inmates of respective age groups, thereby cohesion amongst themselves develops gradually. Taking old age home as centre, the rest of life will encompass with dignity, independence and with a new style. The repentance for sweet memories of narrating stories from *Thakurmar Jhuli* is nothing but attempts to catch hold of old traditions.

So long as it is felt, that boundary line of life is limited and life is studied with respect to contingent advantage and disadvantage situations, the aforesaid analysis of arguments appear to be comprehensive. At the same time, when life is studied from philosophical angle and looked at its past and future and tie of life is studied with respect to vast span of past and future, this argument carries no meaning. Life of a man can never reach a solid state of development with one sided relation.

The diversity in multifarious relation and emotion can only help a man to develop precisely and in a larger scale. Each relation is an indication of each type of emotion. The manifestation of the personality depends on the diversity of relation one has. One should realise his future with respect to his old generation. His own past is to be realised through child. His area of consciousness spreading over the aforesaid two extreme stages develops maturity and personality and through this the sense of responsibility to the civilisation and sense of affection grows and one can find out his distant identity in his own species. In the modern world with high speed of life, the emotion and diversity in relation can not prosper, the result of which is the mind of people suffers from instantaneity, distraction and roughness in temperament, lack of responsibility and urge for apparent pleasure overpower a man. More is the desire for pleasure, less is his depth and urge for survival dominates. He is highly tuned to feel for his own life and actualisation.

In absence of spread effect of his feeling, in course of time, he becomes restless and very much after instant pleasure. He becomes wild, restless, aimless and suicidal. One becomes a complete man with sense of responsibility and affection when he can realise within himself the past when he was a child and also the flow towards future in the tenure of his old age. Family photograph exhibits various family relationship, scene of listening to old stories of *Thakurmar Jhuli*. Is it difficult for the psychiatrist to find out the reason for such emotions? Such emotions are not at all temporary.

On the other hand, choice in favour of old age home means loosing of happy and full fledged family structure, affection of grandmother, stories of *Mahabharata* and such other things in life. As an instance, a family becomes prosperous at the cost of freedom of women and their association with outerworld. Bondage of housewives proves to be ineffective and ultimately extends to the activity of telling stories of *Ramayana* to others when they become grandmother. The activities of women in outer world who are not housewives also end when they become old. Then they also do not have any activity other than listening to or teaching *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata* amidst the group of grandsons and granddaughters, when they become old. They remain memorable to grandsons and granddaughter through the various roles of diversity of *Mahabharata*. The feelings of grandsons and granddaughters get enlarged. It is therefore not a matter of mere emotion. If one avoids this scenario, the path of life is lost for ever.

Had it been so that old age home is the shelter full of miseries for the old people and had been so that for this reason, old age home needs be avoided to get rid of sorrows and

miseries, then life would have been treated cleft and incomplete. Each and every relation in life is complementary to each other. Experience, love, affection of old age are special assets in our family structure. Old people are never hasty and their mobility gradually retards, as we say it homeostenosis. They are after a protection by way of assurance and consolation side by side our fast lifestyle. With the aspiration of tomorrows existence, old people desires to survive more. Affection to parents extends to greater sphere eg., nation, civilisation as a part of responsibility in the society. Thus man gets perfection and completes his duties in the society when he feels his past and future through child and old. If not, value of life could have been minimised and survival within limited boundary of life would have been highly tempered.

Now the question arises, more the women are becoming free of dependence on men and self dependent, more the durability of marriage is on the point of collapse. The walls of family structure are on the point of ruins. The entity of family is getting mixed with outside Community, Club, Association. From now onwards through lifestyle, the old generation will find themselves within the association of old. Old age home is one of such forms. It does not mean only to stay, eat and sleep. Its improvements are likely to occur through initiatives of senior citizen in socio-cultural fields.

Old people will live with maturity and wide spread senses, when the family structure is on the point of collapse. Then how it becomes possible to maintain the clean and ideal picture of the family?

No, it can never happen so. We cannot under compulsion hold the transparent and ideal picture of our family in fact. It is our everlasting demand which will hold good our family tie. We will be misled if we consider that people do not deserve family tie. To fly in the sky is a joy to bird when it feels that it will get a shelter in the branches of trees of earth on coming back. A man with desire for enthusiasm and volubility in external world equally wants assurance to return home safe. The conflict amongst these two is hard reality. It is for this reason that the family will take its complete shape through the compromise between inner world and outer world. The family then may not remain so rigid or conservative. The external emotion and relation outside the family will also get recognition. Besides, with growing age, mind will try to remain under the protection and coverage of family. Telling stories of own family to grandsons and granddaughters are more meaningful and sweet compared to stories of blood sugar, blood pressure in old age homes. Because of age factor life of everybody in old age home is past oriented with least future having almost non existence. Old get pleasure in telling his past to others and not in listening to other's past. A child has no past. Almost remaining of his life is 'future'. He is eager to hear others. These two urges of opposite characters ring face to face at a time.

We are confused with the society of new era. How to keep the family structure intact? To solve this burning question old age home has become the essential and only alternative. The society of today is passing through the juncture of destruction and creation. The family tie that has been created through evolution of many eras is not based on the dominancy of men. The everlasting urge to return home is also mingled as one of the sources of family tie. The external association is formed based on the requirements of same age group of same temperament. After that the family where we intend to return remains consolidated because of various requirements which are complementary to each other and interdependent. For this, the family through series of changes will have a strong foothold with improved controversial social relations, and it will not ruin. Members of the family of different age groups will have an external world, simultaneously the period for staying in the home will be short compared to earlier days, but at the same time desire for returning home will persist. Similarly elderly people form their association in the external world thereby give time outside home, gets

nourished and developed. Possibly various centres for social and cultural activities will be set up by elderly people without curtailing definite time to return home.

In the realm of changed society, the necessity of old age home will be realised to a great extent, specially for abandoned old men and women. Still old age home can not become main stream of life. The internal emotion of mind and perpetuality of nature will resist it. If it is felt that old age home is going to be main stream of life, then we are to accept that society is passing through a critical state of affairs. Probably civilisation is going to face a havoc destruction. For this reason how old age home is welcome?

P A S

Medical Hypnosis and Psychosomatic Disorder

Shyamali Dasgupta

There is an air of mystery round the word 'hypnosis'. It is associated with a kind of unknown fear, a kind of mysterious feelings. It arises an uncanny apprehension. When I was in my teens, my grandmother used to warn me to be very much careful about those bad people who applied hypnotism to kidnap little boys and girls. She told us stories about *Tantrikas* who could do harm to people with the help of hypnotism. The association of hypnotism with 'Black magic' in the middle ages was perhaps the reason behind this fear. Even today hypnosis is regarded by most of us as nothing but quackery or magic trick. It has no scientific basis.

Hypnosis can be dated back to the dawn of ancient civilizations. It was part of religious practices and was sometimes applied as a method of treatment. But in the middle ages it was thought of as *black magic*. During the second half of the 18th century German physician Mesmer brought it to the limelight. He developed this interesting technique as a therapeutic medium in his own way. But he could not use or explain its scientific basis. So hypnotism, rather Mesmerism failed to justify its efficacy as a method of therapy. In the forties of the 19th century the researches of English surgeon James Braid again attracted the physicians to hypnosis. Since then it has been a subject of controversy.

What is hypnosis? There are different theories, different definitions, different meaning of this 'word'. Actually *hypnos* is a Greek word means sleep. If we consult dictionary we shall find that hypnosis means an artificially produced state of sleep or sleep like condition in which a person's actions may be influenced by suggestions by another person. According to Pavlov hypnosis is a state of partial sleep. It is a phase of sleeping condition. Pavlov described it as 'suggested sleep' or conditioned inhibition. All animals pass through several phases of inhibition before deep sleep.

There are three phases of sleep (inhibition) which Pavlov described *i.e.* (a) phase of equality when stimuli, big or small, elicit the same amount of response. (b) Phase of paradox, when small stimuli give strong and quantitatively bigger response. (c) Phase of ultra-paradox, when positive stimulus give negative response and vice verse.

In this classification hypnotic state is the phase of paradox when a small stimulus like 'word' through suggestion or command of the hypnotist elicits very strong response. According to Pavlov meaningful word is a conditioned stimulus. Speech or the second signalling system helps man in generalisation of abstraction. His concept on hypnosis, suggestions & auto-suggestions is derived from his hypothesis of the psychology based on conditioned reflex theory.

Suggestions under suggested sleep or hypnosis are, according to Pavlov, "a concentrated, excitation of a definite point or region of the cerebral hemisphere in the form of a definite excitation, sensation, or its trace - an idea now called forth by emotions, that is, excited from

the subcortex, now produced abruptly from the outside, now by means of internal connections, associations, an excitation which acquires a predominant, undue and irresistible significance. It exists and acts, *i.e.* passes over into movement, into one or another motor act, not because it is maintained by various associations, that is, connections with many present and past stimuli, sensations and ideas - this would produce resolute and sensible action, such as is usual with a normal strong cortex, but because in weak cortex, with a low weak tone this concentrated excitation in accompanied by a strong negative induction which detaches and isolates it from all indispensable extraneous influences. This is the mechanism of hypnotic and post-hypnotic suggestion. During hypnosis we observe in a normal and strong cortex a lowered positive tone owing to irradiated inhibition. When the word or the command of the hypnoist is directed to a definite point of such a cortex as a stimulus, the latter concentrates the excitatory process in a corresponding point and is immediately followed by negative induction, which meeting little resistance on its ways, spreads over the entire cortex: thanks to this, the word or command is completely isolated from all influences & becomes an absolute, irresistible stimulus, continuing to operate even subsequently, when the individual returns to an alert state." This long quotations of Pavlov are quoted from essays on *The Pathophysiology of the Higher Nervous Activity* by Ivanov Smolensky, moscow, 1952 (pp 247-48).

Ivanov Smolensky further adds, "In this way suggestions & autosuggestions change not only external behaviour, but evoke more or less easily, changes in the vegetative functions; in the work of the internal organs and the metabolic process."

Now lets come to the definition of psychosomatic disorders. Psychosomatic disorders may be defined as such conditions where a physical disturbance of bodily function is caused by emotional or psychological factors. In simple words these are caused or made worse by mental stress. These diseases may affect any of the bodily systems such as gastrointestinal, respiratory, genitourinary, skin etc.. Here we should bear in mind that there are many diseases which may produce disturbances in thinking, emotion and behaviour through secondary involvement of the central nervous system. Endocrine disorders can present anxiety states. A large number of conditions which have a toxic effect on the body may produce psychiatric symptoms.

But investigations find out the etiology of the disease and it is clinically treated. But in case of psychosomatic disorders such as asthma, colitis, hypertension, migraine clinical examinatinns fail to detect any positive reason. These are caused and made worse by mental stress. We can take peptic ulcer as an example.

There is a clear cut association between peptic ulcer and emotional factors. The stomach produces acid-peptic juice as part of the meachanism of digesting food. During stress the mucosal lining of stomach becomes a source of increased secretory activity and this is mediated through the autonomic nervous system. Under certain conditions the lining can develop a small erosion and the overactivity then produces a situation where the individual's gastric juice, start to digest their own stomach lining. If long standing tension induces constant overactivity, a chronic ulcer can be produced.

Under chronic stress the bowel habit of many people is changed and they develop a nervous diarrhoea, now a days called irritable bowel syndrome. Another common symptom with which we are familiar is the urge or need to pass urine more frequently at times of emotimal stress and tension.

We know that during examinations some students suffer from fevers or diarrhoea or some other kind of physical illness. Sometimes pharmacological treatment fail to effect a complete cure. It recurs, but automatically remits as soon as the examination starts or is over. Life now a days is very hard. It is full of morbid or unhealthy competitions. Consumersim, competition, rat race for success, all combined together creates an atmosphere of uncertainty

and loneliness where man is afraid of defeat, is afraid of future contingent situations. He suffers from a sense of insecurity.

Brains are of different types. Their reactions to this outer pressure are also different. Some can take it easily. Some yield to it and become mental patients. In some this anxiety tension manifest itself in the form of what can be called physical disturbance of bodily function or psychosomatic disorders.

How can hypnosis help in the treatment of these psychosomatic disorders? The psycho-therapist tries to find out the origin of these disorders. Once the root of the anxiety or depression detected, he starts hypnotherapy along with pharmacological treatment. Suggestions during hypnosis increases the normal functioning of the nervous system of the patient. A question may arise as to how it can be done?

To quote Pavlov, "Most important, strongest and constant impression from the study of higher nervous activity is the extraordinary plasticity of this activity, its enormous potentialities. Nothing remains immovable, everything can be attained and changed for the best, provided the corresponding conditions are on hand." Normal reflexes can easily be conditioned by hypnotic suggestions. These increase the strength of the brain cells and thus helps the individual to cope up with the stress. Here the second signalling system plays a great role. To Pavlov meaningful word is a conditioned stimulus. Word can give pleasure to a man it can also hurt his feelings. It can inspire. So can it depress. The hypnotist uses this magic power of word.

He explains to his subject the reason of his physical disorder, takes him to a state of suggested sleep, gives suggestions of reassurance and recovery to remove his fear and anxiety. We know that hypnosis is the paradoxical phase of sleep when small stimuli give strong and quantitatively bigger response. The word or command of the therapist becomes an absolute irresistible stimulus. It creates a positive emotion in the patient's mind which persists even when the patient awakes from this hypnotherapy.

Hypnotherapy is now recognised by British Medical Association and American Medical and Psychiatry Association. But this technique should be used very carefully. Indeed all therapists do not have the necessary experience to practice hypnosis. Moreover only physicians and dentists should use hypnosis. Without deep and thorough knowledge of physiology it is dangerous to practice hypnotherapy. Because its unscientific application can do irreparable harm to the patient. We must not forget that this is a close correlation between conditions affecting mood, thought and behaviour and those of general medicine. So before practicing hypnosis one must possess general medical and surgical skills. **P A S**

Answer to the Questions Reply given by Editor

Satyaranjan Adhikary from Baranagar -- Sinter of Kolkata asked for consultation through correspondence that what should be done with his son at present, suffering from schizophrenia now in a chronic residual state. Age of the son is forty years, and almost immobile now though under medical treatment. Moreover Satyaranjan Babu become sufficiently aged, his wife expired, his means are affluent; but none of his descendants stays nearer to him, still they have to continue by venture of the attendants. In this position he is burdened with cares for this reason, as he guess the condition would be compelled to his son immediate after the day he will shut the eyes. So he asked for our advice how to be recovered from this difficult state.

It is almost an impossible act to advise Satyaranjan babu precisely in such a circumstances. Because a 'Day-care centre' or 'home' of this sort, where he may place his son in

trust and shut his eyes peacefully; is necessary for his son. But the unfortunate concern is not only in our State, such an institution is rare in India even. Because whoever the persons will organize such institutions, certainly they will not manage the same with an expectation of profit. Since those psychiatry patients will be provided services here, are extremely poor in majority. Hence the Government should organize such unprofitable or charitable institutions. In fact the private organizations, called N.G.O. are of the sole expectation in cases of rehabilitation of the chronic psychiatry patients of this nature. But the puzzle is all these institutions even are being managed for the attainment of some individual or assembled persons own object, whatever being their gazetted proposal. As a result we observe, the act of services to the psychiatry patients without any self-interest is possible for the religious organizations only. Moreover there are no religious organizations of this form, who adheres to the psychiatry patients exclusively. Otherwise if one or two exists even, very likely it is not possible for them also to serve the purpose, as the burden of our patients is so much. Perhaps the same will be in future, but does not exist at present, this is just the reality.

Almost during fifty years, on behalf of our Institute we are accustomed to proclaim this problem, following our ability, that is the object of rehabilitation of the chronic psychiatry patients, but produced no effect. Since poor and thickly populated our country is, excessive unemployment problem being here, even now seventy per cent human being of the land don't get pure drinking water here, So there is no cause of doubt with this, that the treatment and rehabilitation of these type marginal persons as chronic psychiatry patients would be considered as a luxury in such a society. Though you are being compelled to lessen your inward grief a little, if any of your close friends and relatives may supervise the function to take care of your son, then it would be better in all respect to appoint a person to provide necessary services for him.

Since you submit that you have no shortage of finance. But if you don't find any trustworthy friends and relative for this, then you have to negotiate with any institution, which provide services to such chronic psychiatry patients. But we are unable to recommend any institution of this sort at present on behalf of ours. Already we have intimated its reason to you. Except that if he needs any guideline for his treatment and services, that we may hold over, and perform the follow-up services also, if brought to us in time. But we are unable to recommend at this moment that in what manner he will spend the rest of his life and where. As it is better not to expect some more with us, because that is beyond our capacity even. Moreover not that we submit these undesired account to you only. We have informed the same still more people before this. We also feel very much discomfort to say these words, but on the other hand the unpleasant truth, strikes as healthy by far, compared to pleasant falsehood. **P A S**

Declaration

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 I declare that the above statement is best of my knowledge

Sd/-

(Goutam Banerjee)