

THE VALUE OF CO-OPERATION IN COLLEGE LIFE.

Boys when they join a College at the successful close of their School-career look towards the imposing-looking College-building with longing and lingering eyes and paint in their imagination only the bright side of the shield, eagerly anticipating the life of freedom and joyful activity which they will now have before them. To them the College is a play-ground where umpires unfurl the flag of laxity without fastening any sort of bitter and distasteful pill of responsibility in its tail-end! But their rosy pictures of 'merry pic-nic boys' begin to slip even as they approach the threshold of the College and receive the Salaam of the gate-keeper, and a waking sense of the responsibilities of their new life begins to dawn upon their disillusioned minds. The sound of the College bell is a death-knell to their fine dream of 'no work and all play.'

Indeed, the responsibilities and duties of College life are varied and manifold. Strictly speaking, in my humble opinion, College life does not begin when the great question of admission has been settled satisfactorily nor does it end after four or more years with the obtaining of a diploma from the 'honour-giving hand' of the august Chancellor. But from the standpoint of reality, College life commences when the sense of responsibility is matured and an ardent enthusiasm for the actual feeling of Co-operation begins to well out and is translated into vigorous action. It is too much to expect anything grand and great from the blooming faces just imported from the rural area, though they vibrate with a thrilling sensation of new hopes and aspirations. Undoubtedly their lives are rejuvenated and pulsate with new vigour and noble zeal mingled with courage only possible in youthful intellects. But they lack organization, solidity and training. They are like so many new recruits of the would-be-formed army. In them are found the necessary materials, all the indispensable requisites are there, but the spirit is still absent which will vivify the dry bones or to use a homely image, 'For want of a nail the wheel comes off.' The moment that nail is stuck to the sticking-place, or to speak in

plain terms, the moment the necessary training is obtained, they adorn the nation and country and become full-fledged soldiers. The same analogy is true and apposite in the case of raw College Students. They are not devoid of energy, they are not devoid of enthusiasm, vigour, zeal, and intelligence, they are not destitute of strength and courage, they are ready to obey, still they cannot make the College life what it should be. In this case also, the nail is wanting. Here also the lack of the necessary training stands as an obstacle in the way of transforming the College to an ideal institution. These raw young men when they learn the secret of Co-operation, are on a fair way to become useful members of the College corporate body.

Co-operation is indeed the indispensable factor in every sphere of life. Consider for a moment what society will come to, if there is no co-operation there. The moment we cease co-operating with our family and our neighbours, Society becomes a chaos. This is also true in politics, nay true in all departments of life. It is said that a College is the intellectual training-ground of our youths but this is but one segment of the vast circle of truth. I affirm with all the emphasis that I can command that a College is not only the intellectual training-ground but it is also the training-ground for our physique, morality and spirituality, in a word it is the fit place to learn everything which will be of any concern to us in our future lives. We must learn here everything, no matter whatever calling we take up hereafter.

Consider, for a moment, what a College will be, if there be no Co-operation among the students and teachers. A regular reciprocation must subsist between the teacher ready to teach, inspire, mould the character of his pupils, and the student ready to learn, to imbibe the influence of his teacher. 'All else confusion'.

There is no doubt if the teachers can handle the students with gravity of temper and the spirit of 'forgive and forget' which were the essential attributes of a teacher of old, then the students are bound to be gentle, docile and loving. It is true to some extent that at the present day the teachers and the taught do not come in close contact. The reason is not far to seek. The number of students has increased by leaps and bounds to such an abnormal

extent in the Colleges that it has been simply impossible for a teacher to remember the names or faces of all the students except those of a fortunate few who often come in contact with the teacher by accident or necessity. The increase is a happy thing no doubt. But a way must be found out by which we can be fastened together in the bonds of love and friendship, and co-operate and take an active part in order to make the College what it should be.

Friends, you will be surprised to hear what the students of a College can do if they co-operate with one another and with their teachers. I may be permitted to refer to the College of my own district. When the Cholera rages from one end of the town to the other, when consternation and havoc reign supreme, it is at this time that the students of the B. M. College, Barisal in small parties are seen running hurriedly with lanterns in their hands and passing their nights by the bed-side of the patients and fresh volunteers come to relieve them every two hours. In cases of death they themselves carry the dead bodies to the cremation-ground in the midst of palpable darkness and heavy rain. It is no doubt a sight for the Gods to see and approve of. It can be boldly asked that if such noble and benevolent work is done through the concerted action of a few hundred boys in a mofussil town, then what a stupendous work can be done and ought to be done by the thousands that flock to the Colleges of this great city? Co-operation can do such grand things that the world cannot dream of.

We readily admit that there are some drawbacks in the way of solidarity in Calcutta Colleges. First of all, here we meet with people of different districts, nay sometimes different Provinces, of different religion, race and language. Yet notwithstanding all these diversities of elements, work may be accomplished, no matter however arduous the task may be, if there is proper organisation. The question is not the complexity of the problem as the importance and value of the problem when solved. The world is not a bed of roses. The vast field of work is before us; we shall learn it here or shall never learn it at all. This is the best portion of our life. My young friends, turn your eyes for a moment to the West, see and be amazed to see what great works they achieve

in their Colleges. Their sense of Co-operation is admirable and they make the College an ideal institution. I do not depreciate ourselves. But if we take a lesson from the West in this matter, we can learn much.

Friends, I have detained you long and I shall not tax your patience any more. Let us work while the sun shines and begin at this stage of our life. Let us steer our course amidst privation, penury and tribulation undauntedly and prove to the world what stuff we are made of. Remember our destiny is to be decided not by the high standard of education, intellect, and the Degree of the University we have attained at but by what we have been able to achieve for our society by the power of organisation and co-operation. When you have attained that object, your name shall be blazoned in characters of gold and posterity shall judge us, not by what we have learnt but by what we have done and left for them as legacy.

HIRENDRANATH GHOSH,

Fourth Year Class.

ভারতের বর্তমান আর্থিক অবস্থা

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তাহার উন্নতিবিধান।

(পূর্বানুবৃত্তি)

আদম-হুমারীর রিপোর্ট-সমূহ পাঠ করিলে জানিতে পারা যায় যে, ভারতের জনসংখ্যা উত্তরোত্তর বৃদ্ধিপ্রাপ্ত হইতেছে। মানবের জীবনরক্ষার অল্প কিয়ৎপরিমাণ খাদ্যের প্রয়োজন। মানবের বংশবৃদ্ধির সহিত যদি শস্তোৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি না পায় তাহা হইলে উপযুক্ত-পরিমাণ খাদ্যের অভাবে জাতীয় জীবনী শক্তি হ্রাস প্রাপ্ত হয় এবং ইহা জাতীয় জীবনের পক্ষে অত্যন্ত অহিতকর। এই জন্য প্রায় সকল দেশেই জনসংখ্যা-বৃদ্ধির সহিত যাহাতে অধিক পরিমাণে শস্ত জন্মিতে পারে তাহার নানাবিধ উদ্যোগ আয়োজন চলিয়াছে, সকল দেশেই কৃষির উন্নতির জন্য একটা সাড়া পড়িয়া গিয়াছে।