



The Magazine,

St. Thomas' College, Trichur.

Vol. 1, No. 4]

[March, 1926.

Plato's Allegory of the Cave.

IN Plato's philosophic system Ethics and Politics are intimately bound together. The state exists only as a means of enabling the individual to attain his highest good, or self-realization, which is happiness subjectively, and objectively the ideal Goodness or God. Now the great instrument of self-realization is virtue or harmonious ordering of mental and moral powers, and virtue is not merely conditioned by wisdom, but *is* wisdom itself. The individual should be trained from childhood in the love and service of wisdom, and in order to this, there is need of an organized Education, an education that will develop and regulate the faculties and tendencies of the child and lead him step by step to true wisdom which is true virtue. Such an organized education cannot be achieved but in a well-ordered society. This ideal society is the state and it should be modelled on the individual himself. In the individual man the reasonable soul is the guiding and controlling power; it moderates and directs the concupiscible and irascible faculties of man. So likewise should be the government of the state. To the concupiscible and irascible parts of the individual, correspond in the state the producers and warriors, including all the different avocations and interests of society in general, and all these should be guided as in the individual by the reasonable soul of society, that is, the truly wise. Thus the guardians, magistrates and governors of the state should be wise men or philosophers. The state should, in short, be ruled by an aristocracy of intellect.

To illustrate the condition of ordinary men and the nature of the work performed by true philosophers Plato makes use of the Allegory of the Cave. Let us suppose a number of men, from early childhood, shut up in an underground cavern, their legs and necks so fettered as to oblige them to sit still and be looking

in front of them at the opposite wall. This cave has an opening at the back which the occupants cannot see. Just behind the cave there is a road flanked by a wall as high as a man. Along this road men are marching with all sorts of objects on their heads. The high wall conceals the pedestrians and only the objects they carry can be seen above it. Let us also suppose that a fire is burning on the other side of the road. The light of this fire will make the objects carried by the men walking along the road cast their shadows on the wall opposite the imprisoned unfortunates. Since the objects are carried continually onwards by the pedestrians their shadows will be seen, moving also. Now let the pedestrians be speaking and shouting. Their voices will be echoed against the wall of the cave in the interior. All this while the prisoners are merely looking on and contemplating the shadows and the echoes in front of them. Since they have no knowledge of the real state of things, they will naturally imagine that the shadows are speaking, acting and moving by their own power. In the course of their cavernous existence these deluded men will come gradually to construct a shadowy world of their own. They will read a meaning into all the sounds and motions on the wall, they will connect certain sounds with particular shadows. As years pass by their first impressions and guesses will be confirmed and re-enforced, and they will at last build up their experiences into a connected system. They will talk among themselves about what they see and hear; they will communicate their opinions to one another and this mutual intercourse will further strengthen and stereotype their personal impressions. Thus they live in a little world of shadows and illusions, fancying them all the while to be the only realities.

In the second place let us imagine that one of them manages to free himself from his shackles, and through the opening at the back goes up to the world outside. At first his eyes and other organs and faculties will be dazed and benumbed by the strong light of the fire. At first he will not be able to distinguish one thing from another. But by and bye his weak eyes will get accustomed to his new surroundings, and one object after another in increasing degrees of distinctness and brilliancy will reveal themselves to him. His attention will be drawn to the

fire, the road, the procession of persons carrying different objects on their heads and he will ere long come to realise how these objects cast their shadows into the cave from which he so recently escaped. He will learn for the first time that what he had been contemplating so long are not the real things but only the reflexions and echoes of what he had not in the cave thought to exist.

Moved with pity for his former comrades and filled with an ardent zeal for enlightening them as to the real truth he condescends to go down into the cave once more and resumes his old seat among them. No doubt the dim light of the cave will at first be embarrassing to his eyes now trained to the piercing light of the outside world and he will for a time be ill-at-ease and behave himself in a strange manner. But he will soon be able to accommodate himself to the requirements of the situation. He will thus succeed to interpret the phenomena seen on the wall and to explain how such a shadow and such an echo came to be at all. Each and every sign on the wall will be deciphered and traced to their original prototypes and forms. He will thus be able to read the riddle of his cave-universe. The vision and enjoyment of those empty vanities will have no attraction for him; their apparent loveliness and charm will be for him a constant and poignant reminder how unworthy they are of his admiration; his heart will turn aside from their hollow flatteries and be rivetted the more firmly on the substantial things he left behind him in the outer world. Day in, day out he will long for his true home and say to himself: *Non Caduca, sed aeterna.*

He has delivered himself at last from his besetting illusions. He now turns to his companions to instruct them and enlighten them on the real meaning and significance of the world they live in. At first they listen to him with curiosity and wonderment, then they turn against him and despise him. He protests and redoubles his zeal, but they are only the more hardened in their first convictions; they treat him as a visionary and eccentric fellow and turn to the enjoyment of the good things of their present and according to them the only world.

This according to Plato, is a real picture of what material objects are in themselves, of the mental attitude of ordinary men towards the world and of the mission and fortunes of true philosophers.

According to Plato, then, there are two worlds—the world of sense and the world of pure thought or reason. The object of the sensible world are shadowy copies or imitations of the true realities existing in the suprasensible world. To every class or variety of sensible objects, such as good, true, just, beautiful and so on there is correspondingly an absolute goodness, an absolute truth, an absolute justice, an absolute beauty and so forth, which exist in themselves ‘corporeally’ and not simply mentally as objects of thought. And the material world is a kaleidoscopic image and reflexion of these ideal forms.

Before our souls came into this unreal, illusory world they existed elsewhere contemplating face to face these eternal and the only real things. But their memory was smothered by the deadening weight of our material bodies, and yet on the occasion of receiving a quickening impulse from the outside world, our souls can wake from their lethargy recognise the faint voices and the faint features of the real things. The process of knowledge is a process of reminiscence and recollection. In the light of this recollection we know things, we classify them, draw inferences and build up the grand edifice of human knowledge.

But this knowledge, being one of shadows and reflexions, is of secondary importance, and does not deserve the title of wisdom. True knowledge or wisdom is of the essential prototypes or forms of phenomena and is the object and pursuit of philosophy. Philosophers are its high priests and the kings of human society. And if mankind is to be truly wise and consequently truly virtuous and happy, they should place themselves under their guidance, and fleeing the fleeting vanities of this unreal world must reach out to the world of real existences; they should withdraw from the degrading and brutalising influences of this work-a-day world and live ‘the life of heaven upon earth.’

The Allegory of the Cave may be criticised from two points of view. First as a Theory of Knowledge and secondly as a Theory of Self-realization or Ethical Perfection. In Plato both these aspects are combined, they are identical. To know is to be virtuous (knowledge is virtue) and to be virtuous is to realise oneself, is to save one's soul, to express it in Christian phraseology.

First as regards Moral Perfection. What is the value of material things for a virtuous man? What ought to be his attitude towards the world in his pursuit of moral excellence? All ethical systems advocate a certain degree of abstraction or withdrawal from sensible objects in the cultivation of our moral personality. The naturalistic system of Ethics would recommend moderation in 'the use of creatures' in order to promote the efficiency of our self in compassing its destiny which is nothing more than the control of natural forces and the securing of the highest possible degree of material comfort. This system leaves out of account man's higher and nobler instincts and aspirations and reduces him to the level of animal creation. And as such it scarcely merits to be called a moral code. The moral system of the stoics, Manicheans and Buddhists gravitates to the opposite extreme. The world and material objects, including the human body are *essentially* evil, and our moral perfection can be attained only by waging a truceless war against our material nature and the wider world around us. The virtuous man should *destroy* his natural tendencies and passions, and thus recover his moral self. This moral code does scant justice to the possibilities and potential capabilities of the lower nature of man. Instead of enlisting its service and co-operation in the noble work of self-perfection these pessimistic moralists drive it into open enmity and make human nature an enigma and monstrosity. The Platonic morality does not condemn material nature as an essential evil, but as an unreal and therefore meaningless burden. Moreover it ignores the fact that a man may know perfectly that something is good and yet not follow it—*video meliora deteriora sequor* is a truth as deep and wide as human nature itself. Like the preceding system it creates a separation and total divorce between our higher and lower nature, and is for this very reason self-condemned.

There is an element of truth in all these three systems of morality. Man has a magnificent destiny here below in the control and mastery of Nature; there is a degree of evil in our lower tendencies; moral excellence must certainly be an *enlightened* self-knowledge; and compared to the moral and spiritual worth of ourselves, the external world has a certain unreality. All these elements of truth are admirably combined and adjusted in the Christian conception of our moral vocation. The pursuit of material happiness is good and commendable; only it should be subordinated, and made a stepping stone, to the acquisition of a higher perfection; nay more our material pursuit achieve their end and excellence only in this service. Human nature is *essentialiter* good, only it has certain vicious tendencies. These tendencies must be curbed and perfected; they should not be destroyed, but purified and pressed into the service of our higher destiny. Thus our material and lower nature should not be crushed but rectified, strengthened, perfected and elevated. It should be the support, and ally of our highest moral perfection. Thus and thus alone can the human nature attain its magnificent destiny. Lastly the objects of sense are unreal and shadowy not in themselves, but in comparison to the ever-enduring and eternal interests of our higher nature. Their reality and worth are emphasised by the fact that only by a proper use of them can the soul work out its salvation, that is, its highest moral perfection.

As a Theory of Knowledge Plato's Allegory of the Cave may be said to embody the central doctrine of his entire system. How do we form universal concepts? Socrates, by insisting on the necessity of defining things before discoursing about them brought this problem for the first time to the forefront of philosophical discussion. Things as they exist actually are many and diverse, and yet they fall into distinct classes and types each of which is denominated by a general term. Now if the class concept be considered as the result of comparing the different individuals and abstracting the common characteristics, the question arises how we are to recognise and bring together the different members of the class before knowing that they realise the common concept in virtue of which they form the class. Thus if the idea of justice is said to be obtained by the comparison of

just things, how, we may ask, do we know they are just things unless we saw already that justice could be predicated of them. Hence the very idea of justice has to be presupposed in the process of forming the concept of justice. To obviate this difficulty Plato propounded the Ideal Theory, and the allegory is intended to show how the material objects stand in relation to universal concepts as shadows and reflexions to the same material objects.

On the face of it this theory looks rather like a poetic conception than a strictly philosophical explanation. Evidently, *if* ideal forms existed in themselves, *if* our souls in a previous existence have contemplated them face to face, and *if* the material objects have been created to the image and likeness of them, then the problem of the universal is thus far satisfactorily solved. But the various suppositions and assumptions herein involved are clearly gratuitous. Philosophically and scientifically it is conclusively manifest that whatever exists physically in itself must be particular invested with all the characteristics of individual existence, and no universal as a universal can have such a mode of being.

The Doctrine of Innate Ideas is a mitigated form of Plato's Ideal Theory. Against both there is the same objection that the supposition is gratuitously made and that the nature and formation of universal concepts can be satisfactorily explained without such assumptions. Both these systems lay themselves open to the further objection that they assign to sense impressions no share at all in the process, and that consequently they fail to recognise the substantial unity of human existence and conscious

life. All theories of knowledge worth our attention should allow

to sense impressions *a positive part* in the elaboration of Universal ideas. In fact if the organic unity of man and the validity of our intellectual ideas in their application to individual sense objects and experiences are to be maintained and safeguarded, then the claims of both our reasonable and sensible faculties must be properly adjusted in any theory of knowledge.

J. Palocaren.

India and Foreign Capital.

G. Parameswaran B. A. (Hons.)

The problem of the necessity for foreign capital in India for her industrial development is engaging the attention of eminent Indian economists. Two questions arise in a discussion of this subject. Can India do without foreign capital of any form? If foreign capital be required could it be allowed to enter under certain restrictive conditions whereby its injurious defects might be partially or wholly prevented? We endorse the opinion of the External Capital Committee that the real solution to the problem lies in the development of India's own capital resources. The difficulties of Indian industrialists consist not so much in the fact that Indian capital is shy and is not willing to flow into the business but that it requires 'an impossibly high return'. It is hence very dear and must be made very cheap by increasing the volume available for industrial activities. This could only be effected by developing her banking organization. But for the present and many years to come there can be no question that India must rely on external capital.

Thus if we know that we cannot do without foreign capital what are the restrictions to be imposed on the inflow of foreign capital? There is no doubt the other side of the question. Certain eminent statesmen, including of course Lord Curzon maintain that capital being international must be allowed free entrance. Lord Curzon says: "When I hear the employment of British capital in India deplored I feel tempted to ask where, without it, would have been Calcutta? Where would have been Bombay? Where would have been our railways, our shipping, our river navigation, our immense and prosperous trade? And, why should a different argument be applied to India from any other country in the world? When Great Britain poured her wealth into South America and China I have never heard those countries complain that they were being ruined..... It was foreign capital and foreign brains that exploited the industries of Russia, which are now beginning to be a source of such profit to that

country. When America floods England, as she is doing, with the resources of her accumulated capital, her amazing inventiveness, and her commercial geniuns, none of us at home sits down and bewails our cruel lot at being bled by a foreign drain. I therefore would say to the people of this country—if my words would have the slightest effect—look facts in the face. Recognise that capital does not wrap itself in the flag of any one country. It is international. It is like the wind which bloweth where it listeth, and comes and goes as it will. The whole industrial and commerical world is one great field for the tiller to till and if the man who lives on the spot will not cultivate it with his own spade, then he has no right to blame the outsider who enters it with his plough". It is needless to expose the obvious fallacy of his lordship's plea. Capital, in our time, is no doubt international' and "the whole industrial and commerical world is one great field for the tiller to till" but it cannot pursue its own object without regard to the supreme economic, industrial and even political interests of the different peoples among whom history had parcelled out this "great field". British capital cannot work in South America or Russia or even in China, in the same way as it has and is doing in India.

Following the classification of foreign capital adopted by the External Capital Committee we may distinguish between three forms:—

(1) Investments in which the foreign external investor is merely entitled to a rate of interest and acquires right of control only when there is default. To this class belong state and municipal loans, bonds of port authorities, bonds and debentures of private companies and bank loans. With regard to this there can be no objection to its entry.

(2) Investments in which the foreign capitalist enters into competitive business in India competing on equal terms with Indian enterprise as in the case of cotton and other textile mills, mercantile houses and the like. This has given rise to a great deal of controversy. Indian opinion however is in favour of imposing strict restrictions on the free entrance of foreign capital in these cases. Foreign Companies wishing to do business in

India should be registered in India with rupee capital. Unless this is done Indian Capitalists will have little chance of investing in companies which are formed on the basis of foreign money and which raise their capital in foreign land. It must be laid down by law that a majority of the shareholders and a majority of the Directors in such companies trading in India should be Indians. The Fiscal Commission and the External Capital Committee have raised their voices against these on the ground that they are impracticable. But we beg to differ from the learned opinion of these committees. The difficulties which they think will arise in the working out of these proposals are not so insurmountable as they seem to consider. Dr. Grunzel in his "Economic Protectionism" points out that similar measures with a view to oust foreign capital have been adopted in China, Australia, Roumania, Greece and Chili. If these countries can overcome the difficulties in this matter India too can. No doubt there is one difficulty. If the Indian character of the companies is to be maintained by having a majority of the Indian shareholders the Indian shareholders will not be allowed to transfer their shares to non-Indians. To this extent their field for transferring their shares will be restricted. But as a well-known Indian economist has remarked "it is a price which they must pay for the benefits which they will enjoy on account of their having the controlling voice in the management of Indian companies". Here we venture to say that if the Indian Government is to be just in its dealings with the millions which have been entrusted to their charge, for the matter of that the Indian Government is merely a trustee, if they care for the economic prosperity of India, they should see that the Indian character of the companies, in the real sense of the expression, is maintained.

The restrictions suggested above are only temporary. India will take time to develop her own internal capital resources. Meanwhile it is not advantageous for Indian capitalists to compete with foreigners in India. The prospect of afterwar-trade and the natural desire of Indian capitalists to reap their share of these have also led to the organization of a few Indian companies for the utilisation of our immense natural resources. These good people seem to think that this is the only practical way by which

foreign capitalist exploitation of our economic life and capabilities, may, to some extent at least, be checked. But the work is absolutely hopeless. In the first place, we have not the quality of fluid capital in the country which could enter into effective competition with foreign capitalist exploitation. In the next place, Indian enterprises of this kind which require machineries and accessories for this work, are inevitably dependent upon foreign manufacturers and shipping concerns for the supply of these. India lacks expert knowledge and large experience of the working of these large enterprises. Foreign agencies are very important for trade. Whether we are buyers or sellers, we must have these agencies, if our trade is to be retained in our own hands. But there are few Indian agencies in England or America. The Tatas have a London office and this is, we think, about the only Indian agency worth mentioning in the United Kingdom. Indian enterprises which do not command the huge financial resources of the Tatas cannot expect to establish themselves in the same way or to the same extent as the Tatas have done.

The real solution, then, of her present economic dependency is the development of her own internal resources. Much has been and is said about education as the panacea for all social and economic ills. As regards our banking facilities we have to admit that they are in a very backward condition. Co-operative credit societies are slowly progressing. They are attracting more and more capital year after year. But there is much scope for development. The Imperial Bank has undertaken to open more branches in the country. These no doubt indicate signs of progress. But practically nothing is offered to meet the necessities of Indian industrialists for long-term loans. Attempts at establishing industrial banks have been in vain. Government initiative is lacking in this respect. The government must establish industrial bank as the Government of Japan has done. The industrial Bank set up by the Japanese Government has been successful and beneficial in the industrial progress of that country. The bank with the support of the government behind it is able to feel the pulse of the nation and closely watch the movements of trade. More and more industries are being started there. Or again as a few leading Indian economists have suggested the

Imperial Bank may be asked to open a department for industrial banking. Some such step is highly essential. The absence of a central banking institution like the Bank of England or the Bank of France with the right of note issue is no doubt a very serious menace to the industrial development of India. Such central institutions give the lead in economic matters. Unless the Indian banking system is improved capital will not be forthcoming and industrial progress will be slack. In view of these serious drawbacks it is no surprise to find foreign capitalists successfully carrying on trade in India and exploiting her natural resources. As Lord Curzon once remarked "exploitation and administration are parts of the same duty in the government of India". So long as the Indian banking system remains what it is at present and so long as the Indian government remains blind to the welfare of the inhabitants of the country, India cannot dispense with foreign capital.



It is the crime of the age not to hate evil, but to discuss peace with it and make proposals to it. There is only one proposal to make to it—that it should disappear.



Men of strict principles may hear themselves accused of bigotry, intolerance or stiffneckedness, but those of lax principles are not deeply venerated even by their admirers.



We cannot have yesterday back. We must make the best of today.



Good humoured people render a service to suffering humanity.

“The Yellow Bubble.”

P. S. Venkiteswaran II. U. C.

IN solitude and undisturbed tranquillity the human mind delights to muse over the reminiscences of the Past. Thus it was that, lounging at ease in my arm-chair, I found myself speeding through the already traversed realms of the Past in my train of thoughts. I sped through the Past with remorse, swiftly came to the realms of the Present, traversed it with indifferent concern, and then passing on to the future began to build up delightful castles in the air. So wrapt was I in my idle contemplation, and so much did I enjoy the still silence of my thoughts, that a desire to escape for a while from the sickening hurry and dash of the world around grew strong within me; and as a preliminary step to realising this desire, I slowly closed my eyes. For a few minutes more I thought on with clearness; but then the world began to recede from me. I saw it a long way off, growing dimmer and still dimmer, until at last it altogether disappeared in the distance.

A few moments of oblivion, and then I found myself in a vast plain the ends of which I could not discern with all the straining of my eyes. A large and attractive meadow, alive with the life of living men, birds, beasts, and trees, was set in the centre of the plain and adorned it with all the beauty and picturesqueness of Nature. The meadow was shaded with green on all sides. Trees rose up therein to almost gigantic heights, casting their long shadows on the soft earth in the morning sun. On their branches nestled groups of beautiful birds, which with their melodious songs diffused an atmosphere of happiness and peaceful harmony all over the plain. In the very centre of the meadow was situated a pretty lake—its shining, transparent water reflecting the neighbouring objects and thereby itself in its clear depths. Along its banks stood circular rows of banyans, their long shadows lying smooth on its liquid bosom. A line of herons and storks stood sentinel over the inhabitants of the water. The whole plain itself was encompassed by a splendour and divine luster which proceeded from, I could not then discern what but later found to be, the Guardian, of the plain. The place seemed to me a very paradise, the picturesque bloom and enchanting beauty of which no words could describe nor colours paint.

I had feasted my eyes for some time on the attractive charm of the plain, when I began to become conscious of the existence of a large number of people in it. I felt at first a little surprised and strange among them; but soon, getting the better of my strangeness, I began to take stock of the scenes around me. What first struck me was that the inhabitants of this fair meadow were all eagerly running after a shining yellow bubble, on which were written in bold characters: **G O L D**. The bubble flitted and flew from place to place in the clear horizon, and many people of all sorts and all ages were running breathlessly after it. I noticed one old gentleman, who had stretched himself down on the grass to rest his weary limbs, start up suddenly at the sight of the bubble and the inscription thereon, and pursue it with all the vehemence and ardour of youth. I saw a woman, fondly suckling her child, suddenly let it drop on the ground, and rush forward to join in the mad pursuit. "So pretty" I thought "Your baby's nothing to that bubble", and looking up, saw her mix with the people who were all rushing up in one hurly-burly race, thrusting, jostling and pushing one another in their eagerness to catch that flying yellow bubble.

I was looking at this mad race with surprise in my countenance, when an old man came up, and, seeing in me more of a spectator than a partaker of this race, began a conversation with me. "Lo, you're after that bubble?" he asked. "Thank you, no!" I replied. "There you're right" said he, and warmly shook my hands. "I am reckoned an old man in these parts and I could say that those whom you but just now saw after that flitting bubble are but fools and no wise man questions me." As if to confirm his statement, he continued: "For, you see, though so fascinating and attractive on the outside, that yonder floating gold-bubble is but a vacuity after all—a mere nonentity devoid of real beauty and charm." "You must know," he went on to say seeing me interested in his conversation, "that the benevolent Guardian of this Plain—he who looks after us and protects us and demands nothing from us but a return of love—has an enemy here who, though but a subject, rose up in rebellion against his liege lord, and, unable to attain the position or power of our great Master in any way, has determined to wreak his vengeance and malice on His

subjects by decoying them from the service of our great Guardian." Thought I, "That rebel corresponds to Satan." The old man continued: "One of the chief instruments that he employs for his purpose is that bubble-gold which you may yet see yonder floating in the still air. Just see how it lures all incautious and foolhardy men into its fatal grasp by the external semblance of beauty and fascination which it possesses. Do you know whither it is leading all its followers?" he asked, and on confessing my ignorance of the matter, said "Ay, but you should know, to Beucataloplis himself, who, you must understand, is the sworn enemy of our great Master." "So you call that traitor Poo cathala....!" "Beucataloplis" he repeated. "Really," said I, "I'm sure I thank you, but pray, what is the name of your Great Guardian?" "O," he said, "He has no name in this country. He is nameless. We call him Father; He is really a father to all of us. We all know his goodness, his benevolence, his mercy and his love for us. Should we not then seek Him and His kingdom first rather than madly rush after that bubble which leads one to perdition?"

I was highly edified by the conversation of this good man and was just going to put him a question, which I am not going to tax my memory to recall, when my attention was suddenly diverted by the noise of a scuffle proceeding from the direction of the Gold-bubble. It seems that one of them had caught it, and the others were trying to snatch it from him. In the general confusion, persons came to be mistaken, and the assault intended to be directed against a single person gradually spread into a general fray. Each one was kicking and pushing his neighbour, and I found the people formerly engaged in the Gold-bubble-pursuit now engaged with as much ardour in fighting with one another. The confusion gradually spread on all sides, words came to blows and cuffs, which rained as plentifully as blackberries in autumn or hailstones in winter. Some people soundly beaten, were roaring for mercy; others not so badly handled, were yelling with anger; while not a few were shrieking to add to the general up-roar. The thunder-like sound, produced from the throats of all these bubble-seekers, rang and reverberated in my ears; and I started up to find myself standing, not by the side of the old man of the meadow, but by the side of my brother, who was calling me up for tea.

Meg Merrilies.

OLD MEG she was a Gipsy,
And liv'd upon the Moors :
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.

* * * * *

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen
And tall as Amazon :
An old red blanket cloak she wore ;
A clip hat had she on.
God rest her aged bones somewhere —
She died full long ago !

J. Keats.

TO readers of Scott's *Guy Mannering* the wild remantic personality of Meg Merrilies, the Gipsy, has a peculiar fascination. The novel is one of those which deal with the life of Scotland in the eighteenth century, and Scott has described his own country and his own people with loving care. But the romantic genius of the "Wizard of the North" was ever seeking to escape from the real to revel in the marvellous and the supernatural. In his novels he has created a world of ideal probability where known and familiar types of character jostle and mingle with strange accidents, singular characters, strange states of society. In *Guy Mannering* the familiar, realistic and humorous is represented by Dandie Duimont; the unfamiliar, strange and pathetic by Meg Merrilies.

Meg Merrilies, as we know, had her prototype in the world of the living but, for all that, she seems to us a being dropped from the world of the supernatural. She seems properly to belong to another sphere: to a world which, though it appears strange, is yet familiar to the hearts of men, the world where Reason bows before the Incredible. When we think of her we think somehow of "old, unhappy far-off things".

Her very appearance made *Mannering* start. "Nobody, that's seen her", says Mrs. Rebecea, "will ever forget her." "Of a truth she is one not to be forgotten", says the 'stick-it' minister,

Sampson, 'the like of Meg Merrilies is not to be seen in any land.' She was exceedingly tall. Her hair was 'as black as midnight'. "Her dark elf-locks shot out like the snakes of a gorgon..... heightening the singular effect of her strong and weather-beaten features, which they partly shadowed, while her eye had a wild roll that indicated something like real or affected insanity". She was usually equipped in a habit which mingled the national dress of the scottish common people into something of an eastern costume.

She followed a strange profession. She was regarded by most people as a witch; as one of those 'who had familiar spirits and consulted in the divination, and sorcery, and lots.' She preyed upon the superstitious fears of the ignorant countryfolk. She told fortunes and sang charms. The smuggler-gang sent for her to bless their ship and their voyage. She was often requisitioned to attend death-beds in the homes of the vulgar and ignorant who believed that her prayers, or rather spells, had the power to speed the passage of a passing spirit. The bold and desperate captain of the smugglers would rather not interfere with her unnecessarily: "I had never such weather as after having drawn her blood—Neiu neiu, I'll meddle with her no more— she's a witch of the fiend—a real deyvil's kind."

Her manners were entirely in keeping with her strange appearance and stranger pfeession. She was wild and untamed. When she talked it was not only her mouth but her whole body that spoke. She arrested attention as much by her attitudes and gestures—which were often extravagant and theatrical—as by her wild speech. The first impression she produced on most people was that of a crack-brained woman with 'a bee in her head'. But further intercourse made it plain that there was a method even in her madness. "Your words and your manner", says young Harlewood addressing her, "would persuade me you are mad, and yet there is a strange combination in what you say."

This picturesque—almost melodramatic—figure, fascinates us more than Julia Mannering, who was manifestly cast for a leading part in the novel. Scott's heros and heroines are often uninteresting. It is in many of his humorous creations and secondary

characters that he succeeds in moving the affections of the reader for his *dramatis personae*. Nor is the role of Meg Merrilies anything very subordinate. She forms, as it were, the very backbone of the plot. The story, as we know, deals with a great crisis in the fortunes of the Ellangowan family—a crisis which threatened it with extinction. When Harry Bertram was born it was foretold that his life would be in danger on three different occasions before the completion of his twenty-first year, and that, if he survived those dangers, he would bring back to the family its former prestige and influence, and live long and happily. The personality of the gipsy is intimately connected with this prophecy and its fulfilment. She was in the house when Harry was born. In her own queer way she told his fortune—foretold the dangers which awaited him and foretold also that he would be the pride of his family and restore its fallen fortunes. The very genius of the place seemed to have come to life in her to demonstrate the strength of a loyalty almost as ancient as the hills.

Scott says that the original of Meg Merrilies possessed the savage virtue of fidelity in perfection, and the quality which stands out prominently in Meg Merrilies is what Courthope somewhere calls her 'wild-animal attachment' to Ellangowan and to Harry Bertram. When Godfrey Bertram J.P. sent the gipsies packing out of his estate to escape the taunts of his new official friends, he did Meg and her people the greatest injury imaginable. They had been in undisturbed possession of the place from very ancient times. They had earned the right to live there by services rendered to the family all through the period of their stay. Stung by the injury Meg Merrilies could not help cursing the land in her parting words, but her curse did not extend to his son and heir. On the other hand 'her ancient attachment to the family, repelled and checked in every other direction, seemed to rejoice in having some object on which it could yet repose and expand itself.' While the relations between the land and the gipsies were getting strained Meg Merrilies found it more and more difficult to secure access to the house. But she doted on the boy and found some means or other to satisfy her affectionate cravings. "She often contrived to way-lay him in his walks, sing him a gipsy song, give him a ride upon her jackass, and

thrust into his pocket a piece of gingerbread or a red-cheeked apple.....On one occasion, when the child was ill, she lay all night below the window, chanting a rhyme which she believed sovereign as a febrifuge, and could neither be prevailed upon to enter the house, nor to leave the station she had chosen, till she was informed that the crisis was over."

Then, and always, she was a fairy godmother to Harry Bertram. But for her providential presence at Warrock Point when the excise-officer, Kennedy, was done to death by the smugglers, Harry Bertram would have shared the fate of his companion. This is borne out by Meg's dying declaration: "I was there like a wandering spirit—for I longed to see that wood or we left the country. I saved the bairn's life, and sair, sair I prigged and prayed they would leave him wi'me—But they bore him away, and he's been long ower the sea, and now he's come for his ain, and what should withstand him? I swore to keep the secret till he was ane-an'—twenty—I kenn'd he behoved to dree his weird till that day cam—I keep it that oath which I took to them—but I made another vow to myself, and if I lived to see the day of his return, I would set him in his father's seat, if every step was on a lead man."

It would be a mistake to think that all shady characters like the smugglers and the gipsies, because their hands are dyed in crime, are incapable of all higher feelings. Dirk Hatteraik with all his crimes was a man of his word. We have Dirk's testimony to prove that Meg too knew how to keep a promise. He is answering Slossin's anxious doubt whether she could be trusted to keep the secret of Kennedy's murder: "Not she—she won't start—she swore by the salmon, if we did the kinchin no harm, she would never tell how the ganger got it. Why, man, though I gave her a wibe with my hanger in the heat of the matter, and cut her arm, and though she was so long after in trouble about it up at your borough-town there, der deyvil! old Meg was as true as steel!" Dominie Sampson once called her, a 'harlot, thief, witch, gipsy'. He was not far wrong. But men of dark lives—and women too for that matter—are faithful, and hell has its honour.

We have seen that Meg Merrilies had taken a resolve to restore Harry Bertram to his rights if he outlived the dangers that fate had in store for him. She nursed this resolve in her breast through all the ups and downs of her eventful life. She was convinced that the Ellangowan family would rise from its ashes—that the old fire which had burned down to a spark would kindle again. She believed herself to be the instrument fashioned by the Powers to bring about the happy consummation foretold in some old rhymes about the family :

"Dark shall be light,
And wrong done to right,
When Bertram's right and Bertram's might
Shall meet on Ellangowan's height."

She was suspected of having kidnapped Bertram and was long confined in jail. When at length she was liberated it was under sentence of banishment from the country, as 'a vagrant, common thief and disorderly person'. For many years she was wandering about in foreign lands. She returned to Scotland at about the same time when Harry Bertram, under the name of Brown, returned from the East. These long years of enforced separation from her land had only served to fix her purpose deeper in her mind;—I was doomed—still I kept my purpose in the cage and in the stocks—"I was banished—I kept it in an uncoland;—I was scourged—I was branded—my resolution lay deeper than scourge or red iron could reach—and now the hour is come!"

At Mump's Ha she heard for the first time that Godfrey Bertram was dead and that Slossin was in possession of the estate. Death pays all scores. The news of the lairds' death wiped out all traces of the grudge she once bore him. All that remained was sympathy for the family and indignation against the wretch who had bit the hand which had fed him.

It is unnecessary to recount all that she did to restore Harry Bertram to the seat of his fathers. It need only be said that but for her Harry Bertram would not have become the laird of Ellangowan. She alone could have thrust out Slossin from the

place where he had entrenched himself so securely. She alone possessed all the clues. It required all her knowledge of the past and all her whole-hearted devotion to the task to take the proper steps. Moreover she came back from banishment not as an ordinary gipsy woman but as a sovereign among them, and could command the whole gipsy organization to get things done.

For some months after her return she lived a strenuous life. The prophecy took such entire possession of her mind that the excitement of her imagination amounted almost to frenzy. 'Whether her spalings and fortune-tellings be true or no, for certain she believed in them herself'. She had a premonition that for the accomplishment of her task she must give up her own life. She was prepared for it because she knew it *must* be so. She seemed to be under the sway of a power greater than herself, and her figure had something of the terror and the dignity of a half-human prophet.

Her attachment to the place and to the family was in her a mighty and imperious instinct, and it appeared in all the truth and force of a great elemental passion. For its sake she gave up all her worldly possessions. For its sake she broke loose from ties of kindred and of tribe, and became an outcaste among outcastes. For its sake she made the final and supreme sacrifice of her life. Her words to Harry Bertram a few hours before her death are full of pathos: "Do you see that blackit and broken end of a sheeling?—there my kettle boiled for forty years—there I bore twelve buirdy sons and daughters—Where are they now?—Where are the leaves that were on that auld ash-tree at Martinmas!—the west wind has made it bare—and I'm stripped too—Do you see that saugh tree?—it's but a blackened rotten stump now—I've sat under it mony a bonnie summer afternoon, when it hung its gay garlands ower the poppling water—I've sat there, and" (elevating her voice) "I've held you on my knee, Henry Bertram, and sung ye sangs of the auld barons and their bloody wars—It will ne'er be green again, and Meg Merrilies will never sing sangs mair, be they blithe or sad. But ye'll no forget her?—and ye'll gar big up the auld wa's for her sake?—and let somebody live there that's ower gude to fear them of

another warld—For if ever the dead came back amang the living, I'll be seen in this glen mony a night after these crarèd bones are in the mould." It is the heart's last sad farewell to those it loved only too well!

"I am no good woman", she said once "—a' the country kens I am bad enough, and baith they and I may be sorry enough that I am nae better. But I can do what good women canna and daurna do—I can do what would freere the blood o' them that is bred in biggit wa's for naething but to bind bairns' heads, and to hap them in the cradle." Yes; she could do something which these good, dainty, fine ladies could not do. She could give up her life and ask for nothing in return except what a grateful memory gives to the departed.



Life passes, riches fly away, popularity is fickle, the senses decay, the world changes, friends die. One alone is true to us; One alone can be true; One alone can be all things to us; One alone can supply our need.

New min.

* * * *

Sympathy and self-control : with these two qualities one can do anything : but how seldom are they found in juxtaposition !

* * * *

A man of strong will will be only respected and feared, he will not be loved, unless he sheathes his iron hand in a velvet glove, and if the dictates of his brain be not softened by passing through the heart.

Poetry.

(P. Chandrasekaran Pillai, II. U. C.)

OF all the various forms of art poetry is the most intense and perfect expression of life. In the words of Shelley it is the "very image of life expressed in its eternal truth". In rich and animated prose, too, we get beautiful and picturesque descriptions of scenes and sentiments as sublime as any in poetry. In creative fiction we experience the same all-absorbing interest of plot, incident and character. Music is a most direct expression of beauty like poetry, the human soul is as it were transported into an ecstasy of joy. The artist's brush too can delineate character, describe scenes, depict emotions, and hold up ideals. What then constitutes the special interest and charm of poetry and what is it that distinguishes poetry from other species of art and literature?

Poetry has a peculiar expression and style. The poet makes a judicious and felicitous choice of words and expressions and so arranges them as to give "a numerosity which renders the verse smooth, flowing and harmonious, a significance which marks the passions and in many cases the sound an echo of the sense".

But neither mere versification, nor exquisiteness of language, nor cadence of rhythm can make poetry, "for it is not metres, but a metre-making arrangement that makes a poem a thought so passionate and alive that like the spirit of a plant or an animal it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing". It is the poetic message, thought or sentiment conveyed in the poem that is the very essence and spirit of poetry.

What is poetic message? It is some universal truth, philosophy, or sublime sentiment, which the majority of men either do not perceive or are unable to comprehend owing to their want of vision, their insufficient sense of beauty, and deficiency of love, but which to the poet are as the whisper of the mind and which he perceives, feels and communicates to his fellow beings in the most striking manner.

Poetry should be 'simple, sensuous and passionate', and should hold intellectual joy as its basis. The first condition ensures a "smooth and finished road on which the reader is to walk onward easily, with streams murmuring by his side and trees and flowers and human dwellings to make his journey as delightful as the object of it is desirable, precluding on the other hand every affectation and morbid peculiarity. To the great Indian Poet Tagore poesy is the bride of love, realising its mission in spiritual union with God. Says he, "I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of my song Thy feet which I could never aspire to reach".

"My song has put off her adornments. She has no pride of dress and decoration. Ornaments would mar our union. They would come between Thee and me: their jingling would drown Thy whispers." This is indeed the highest and noblest conception of poetic art. Combined with this quality of poetry is the emotional fervour of the poet, which is capable of rousing up the slumbering passions of the reader and awaken his feelings and affections. True poetry is the spontaneous outcome of a rich poetic imagination, by virtue of which the soul loves itself, and with a liberated intellect, conjures up new forms and shapes and brilliant visions, and explores into regions of profound happiness and peace. Hence it is that poetry is independent of all conditions and limitations. Emerson says, "Poets are liberating gods and poetry was all written before time was". Even the prison house is rendered populous, and dark dungeons brightly illumined, such is the power of this magic art. It may, therefore, with propriety be said that poetry "redeems from decay the visitations of divinity of man".

But wherein consists true poetic genius? He alone is the true poet who puts us in right relation to things, reconciles and harmonises the seeming discords of life, throws light upon the strange phenomena of life and death, and interprets to us the profound mysteries of this universe, thereby enabling us to see into the life of things to realise "discord blending into harmony, difference merging into unity". This world which is but a "play-house of infinite forms", "a solemn theatre of nature" appears to have a

deeper and spiritual significance to the poet. Poetry, therefore, reveals the faith and personality of a rich and noble soul, "it is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds; it is as it were the interpretation of a divine nature through our own." Emerson had a higher esteem of that poetry in which the sentiment expressed so predominates over the mind of the reader, that he loves his individuality, and seems as if listening to a dream which holds him spell-bound. Wordsworth conceives of poesy as the breath and spirit of all finer knowledge.

Poetry should appeal to and move our senses and therefore should have a "definiteness and articulation of imagery". I should "lift the veil from the hidden beauties of the world", and clothe them in colours that would make them more vivid, more realistic and delightful. In some cases it may even shed a halo of mystery upon objects which are familiar and common place. Thus the lilies of the field 'which are today and tomorrow are lost into the oven' become suddenly sublime when we are made to remember "that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these". Indeed in no other form of art do we get as beautiful, as lively, as delightful and as sublime descriptions of nature as in poetry. In its most sublime form poetry is but the report of the communion or conversation that poets had with nature. Nature had been to all poets the nurse, guide and the guardian of their hearts. It has been to them a source of inspiration and joy, "felt in the blood, and felt along the heart," and conveying tranquil restoration into their purer minds. But the true poet alone can make his personal feelings joyful to all men and he alone, as Tagore says, is legitimately entitled to poetic immortality. The sight of a lovely flower, the verdant wood, the sweet-scented meadows, the roaring cataracts does not awaken in a man of animal spirits any sense of aesthetic beauty.

It becomes necessary, therefore, for the proper understanding and appreciation of nature-poetry that the reader should "combine within himself a more than ordinary activity of the mind, a certain degree of excitement", and a spirit of detachment from one's own self; in short the reader should prepare himself

to look into the mirror wherein the poet has skilfully "turned the world to glass and shows us all things in the right series and procession". That inward vision which comes to the poet as a result of his contemplation of nature, enables him.

"To see a world in a grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower."

It is only in nature-poetry that we are made sensible of a living Presence,

"A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts
And rolls through all things."

and even the man who denies the existence of God is made conscious of a "dimly recognised being assuming so many forms." Poetry brings prominently before our notice the transient nature of all human glories and the immutability of nature. It discloses the inner message concealed in nature; the flower which is simply the unassuming common place of nature is full of "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears". Upon us, Indians, born in a rich and beautiful land kind nature hath lavished bounteously all her choicest gifts; and India with her rich paddy fields, her cool shady mango groves, her lofty peaks capped with eternal snow, her hilly chains covered with perennial forests, her boundless plains radiant with verdant vegetation, her deep ravines, her crystal springs and her long leisurely roaming rivers—yes, India majestic and sublime, has at all times kindled the sense of aesthetic beauty inherent in our poets; may we not draw inspiration from the master-poets of our country, the Rishis of yore, from the songs of Valmeeki, from the poetry of the great Kalidasa, the Indian Shakespeare, from the rich songs and beautiful verses of our beloved and revered poet Tagore. These songs do really cheer, inspire, and uplift our hearts.

Humanity also furnishes the poet with materials for his art. The passions, the aspirations, in short all universal elements, of the human heart, love, joy, religious rapture, find a most perfect expression in poetry. The distinguishing feature revealed in poetry is the broad human sympathy, the universal love of the poets—love which is the most divine thing in this imperfect

life, love which is not a mere sentiment but joy that is at the root of all creation. Poetry teaches man the best and noblest ideas of life, enabling him to realise the unity of life. Longfellow's outlook on life is worth attention.

"Life is real, life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal,"

and hence the advice to

"Work, work in the Living Present,
Heart within and God overhead."

Even death at the thought of which, all men shudder, is to the poet, and rightly so, but the preparation for a higher and nobler life. Says he:

"It is thou who drawest the veil of night upon the tired eyes of the day to renew its sight in a fresher gladness of awakening."

Again the poet truly realises that man's disappointments and failures are but just trials for the blessings in store for him.

"Day by day thou art making me worthy of thy full acceptance by refusing me ever and anon, saving me from perils of weak uncertain desire."

Of the various factors that contributed to the advancement of knowledge and culture poetry has played the most conspicuous part. It purifies, and ennobles the heart, broadens our outlook upon life, enlarges our understanding, and inspires us with noble and lofty ideals, thus exercising a power and charm over us which is unrivalled and unparalleled. Wonderful and manifold are the blessings which this magic art can confer upon every period of life; to the raw youth it gives experience, to troubled manhood it is a soothing balm and to weary old age it imparts youthful vigour; in short it gives priceless wealth, treasures more golden than gold.

All great poets were also distinguished patriots. Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, the Italian Poet Tasso, have each in his time embalmed the glories of their mother-land in immortal verses.

Their poetry was the expression of their patriotic fervour. Poets are thus the great 'natural voices', calling upon the living generation to emulate the example of the illustrious dead. Hence the vitality, the innermost worth of a race or nation, is to be sought in the poetry of the great national poets. No Englishman but feels a legitimate pride in reciting the well-known lines of Shakespeare.

"This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which served it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat offensive to a house
Against the envy of less happier lands.
This blessed spot, this realm, this England.
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings.
"This England never did, nor ever shall
Lie at the proud feet of a conqueror."

Do not these simple lines improve upon every Englishman, 'every mothers' 'son of them' a high and noble responsibility of being a watchful guardian of the liberty of his country? Do they penetrate deeper into their hearts than royal proclamation, enactment and promises of Government?

Our own Tagore, too,

"Seeks to lift his beloved native land into a heaven of higher and nobler life."

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow
domestic wall,
Where words come out from the depths of truth,
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,
Where the clear streams of reason has not lost its way into the dreary
desert sand of habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought
and action;
Into that heaven of freedom, my father let my country awake.

Who cannot help paying the highest tribute of respectful admiration, the most unstinted praise, to that self-sacrificing devotion of the poet to his native land.

"To thee my motherland, I dedicate my body; for thee I consecrate my life; for thee my eyes weep; and in thy praise my muse will sing."

Mental Culture.

(BY. V. K. Rama Menon, I. U. C.)

WHATEVER may be the achievement of our present education it cannot supersede the necessity of self improvement. Even the most liberal academic instruction leaves many gaps; leaves much to be done for real, moral and intellectual advancement. After we have finished the student career and entered some profession, the consideration is—How are we to commence and carry on a process of mental culture by our own unassisted efforts?

The first and foremost thing necessary is the conquest of our own selves; i. e. we must acquire so effectual a command over our inclinations and passions, that according to all reasonable expectation they may subserve the higher duties and purposes of life. This is the so called battle of life which is the struggle between passion and reason and in which myriads sink and perish. Habits of intemperance are easily acquired and many a one is likely to become their victim. But if we enter the true path of improvement all these difficulties can be resolutely trampled under foot; for all difficulties are so only in appearance.

Few difficulties are insuperable to the brave and prudent. It is interesting to note that when the mind is pregnant with lofty aspirations there is no room for thoughts of a grovelling tendency and therefore except at the outset little or no trouble will be felt. Vacancy of mind is dangerous; when the mind is not filled with something good and noble it must necessarily be occupied with something bad and debasing. It should be our business therefore to give ourselves such work as will keep our mental faculties in healthy exercise.

The cultivation of mind is to be pursued not less as a duty than as a pleasure, irrespective of all hopes of material advantages. The special line of study is of no consequence. What matters is that it should be pursued with sufficient earnestness. We hear much of genius—or natural tact or aptitude—not to be acquired by art. No doubt there are peculiar natural gifts which overleap every difficulty. But the world at large is not composed of geniuses, but of people with average mental endowments. The one thing which we have to look upon as the prime element of success is *perseverance*. All eminent people are much indebted to this habit; without it all their aims would have failed.

In conclusion, the most important thing for us is to ponder every hour upon means of improving our minds without the least discouragement and to leave the consequences in the hands the Almighty.

From the Banks of the Tiber

I. Michelangelo as a writer.

IT is said of Michelangelo, the genius who designed and built the cupola of St. Peter's, that he thought nothing of his sculptures, pictures, or buildings, but was very proud indeed of his poems. It was just another instance of a great man unable to judge himself fairly.

Nevertheless, as a writer, Michelangelo is remarkable, as a study of the Italian scholar G. Vitaletti shows. (*Lettere o Rime di Michelangelo*, Torino, Soc. E. S. Internazionale, 1925.) It is not in his verses, however, that his merits appear—they are artificial, contorted, the work of a Sisypheus. But his letters are a precious jewel of Italian literature; Michelangelo is essentially melancholy, yet his truly human and Christian character reveals itself on every page. His melancholy and his inclination for writing are in part a consequence of the fact that he received nothing but kicks and blows from his father and brothers, whenever they found him sculpturing, whereas they left him in peace if he were reading or writing.

What strikes the reader most in his letters is their deep religious note. Is one of his relatives ill? The first thing he is anxious about is that the sick man receives the last Sacraments. When his brother John Simon died, Michelangelo wrote to his nephew: "I should like very much to know how he died, whether he made his confession, received Communion, and all the rest ordered by the Church; because if this were the case, and I learn of it, I shall not feel so sad about him."

After the death of Urbino, a faithful servant of the family for 26 years and a friend of Michelangelo, he thanks God for having learned from Urbino's example to meet death not reluctantly but joyfully. When the last of his dear ones passed away, he wrote: "No hope remains to me now, but to see them again in heaven".

Farinelli the author of an excellent study on Michelangelo and Dante says: "Buonarroti was surely the most pious Italian of all his epoch. Faith was for him the center of all his sentiments. In the endless trials of life, Faith remained his only source of strength and consolation." As an old man of 82, the Master asked for prayers again and again and in his last illness, he ordered alms to be given to the poor. For the vanities of the world, he had nothing but contempt. When an elaborate feast was given in honour of the first-born son of his nephew Leonard, Michelangelo thought that very poor judgment was shown; we ought not to laugh when the whole world is weeping, and feasts should not be made on the birth of a child, but rather on the death of a man who has lived well."

When at an advanced age, he undertook to construct the dome of St. Peter's without compensation, he regarded the work as a meritorious action for eternal life, and his retirement to Florence, leaving the great work unfinished, seemed to him a great sin.

Such is Michelangelo as he appears in his letters. If, as we have seen, he was no artist in verse (taken in the strict sense) nevertheless in a large sense, he was a poet and one of the greatest the world has seen. His verses are the numerous wonders of religious art which he created; his lyrics are the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel; his Divine Comedy, which for him was a life-tragedy, is the Moses of the tomb of Julius II; but what writes his name forever in the heavens, and perpetuates his name for all time, is the dome of St. Peter's.

II. Call to Catholic Youth.

On December 31st of the present year, it will be just two-hundred years since St. Aloysius Gonzaga was solemnly canonized by Pope Benedict XIII. Designated as the patron of Studious Youth by the same Pope, and the object of the enthusiastic devotion of the young ever since his death, St. Aloysius has very special claims on the interest of Catholic young men.

Accordingly, in his address to the Cardinals on December 23rd last, the Holy Father alluded to the Centenary of the Saint's Canonization as one of the leading events which will mark the year 1926. "In the golden sunset of the Holy year", said he, "one can already discern the first dawn of another year which will be rich in divine blessings, since it joins the transports of the Seraph of Assisi to the lilies of the Angelic Gonzaga."

With the warm approval of His Holiness, and under the Presidency of His Eminence, Cardinal Pompili, the Vicar of Rome, a large Committee for the Celebration of this centenary was formed some time ago, and established its office at the Gregorian University, Via del Seminario 120, Rome (19). This Committee has already sent an invitation signed by the Cardinal President, to all bishops and to higher superiors of religious orders and congregations asking them to request their priests to promote the celebration and promising to prepare literature explanatory of the plan of action.

This plan is so constructed, that if followed out according to its spirit very lasting results may surely be expected from the Centenary Celebrations. It would be quite easy to limit efforts to splendid ceremonies which would have little effect toward the betterment of youth. The committee therefore, deeply conscious of this fact, has made *The Aloysian Program of Life* the central and all-important part of the celebration. This program when viewed in its entirety is that of the Apostolate of example, and of preparation for the Active Apostolate. To transfuse the manly, apostolic spirit of St. Aloysius into the heart of every Catholic youth is the highest and best result to be expected from the Centenary of the officially appointed Patron of youth.

The program in brief is a solemn promise to be True to the Faith, to defend the Church, to Study the Church in her doctrines and in her history, to guard Purity of Soul by Frequent Communion and Devotion to Our Lady, and to cultivate the Christian Virtues.

The details of the celebration are as follows:—

Novenas are to be held in the churches, and accompanied by conferences on St. Aloysius with special reference to the various clauses of the Promise, and practical instruction as to the concrete methods of reducing them to practice.

The signatures of such young men as have freely pledged themselves to strive for the ideals of the Program, will be forwarded to Rome. These signatures will be made on loose sheets, which are to be bound into books and, towards the end of July, to be sent to Rome. There they will first be presented to the Holy Father, and then, on the anniversary itself of the canonization, December 31, 1926, they will be deposited with imposing and appropriate ceremonies at the tomb of St. Aloysius in the Church of St. Ignatius at Rome.

Each nation will be represented by two or three national delegates, one of whom will pronounce in his mother-tongue, a very brief encomium of the Saint.

On the same day throughout the whole Catholic world, it is planned to have a General Communion of all young men, after which the Program will be solemnly recited aloud by all who signed it. In the afternoon, Aloysian "Academies" will be held wherever possible, in which the Program will be explained to the public by young men specially chosen for the purpose.

In this way, all the youth of the world can unite in a grand and yet solid and enduring demonstration in honor of their noble and saintly Model.

III. Rewards of Virtue.

In accordance with its old custom which goes back to 1820, the French Academy recently gave substantial sums to deserving individuals of humble and even saintly virtue.

Among them is a certain Mr. Bernard, an humble clerk in Lyons, who being without other means to exercise his charity, spends his leisure hours visiting the sick, distributing small alms

among them, shaving them and cutting their hair, and rendering them all sorts of menial services. This work he continues with unabated vigour in spite of his sixty years.

When but a little girl eight years old, Emilia Palletier began to care for her tiny sister who was helpless in a plaster cast. Some years later, she devoted herself to helping her sister-in-law. Then having become a clerk in a store, she was about to marry a good young man, when her brother died leaving two little children to his wife. Thereupon, out of love for these poor unfortunates, she refused to marry. Lately their mother has died and Emilia is now their sole support.

A poor cart-driver with seventeen children was another of those rewarded. He and his wife, still a vigorous woman of 36 years, little thought that their faithfulness to God's law would bring them a prize from the French Academy. Twenty-five thousand francs was the sum they received, but who would call it a full reward for all their generosity and fidelity?

Another extraordinary family, chosen for the bounty of the Academy was that of M. Fourier, who has fifteen children, all young and vigorous, whom he has raised and supported with no other resources than that of his labour as a farmer.



“That Rare Commodity”.

(By G. F. P.)

IT is one thing to be asked to write for a College Magazine and another to be ordered to write in a particular vein. For, I believe an article for the Press is not to be made to size as a pair of shoes. But the Editor of the Magazine seems to think otherwise, for he has been a bit too dictatorial in his injunction to me to be one of the purveyors of “that rare commodity” to the columns of his journal, viz. humour.

Had I not been blessed with a level head I should have turned giddy over this compliment. Full of scepticism about my own powers, I applied my eyes once again to his note, and read slowly, deliberately and attentively: “That *rare commodity*”.—Rare! isn’t it? Dear too, economically, the demand being great! Well, why yield up such a precious possession, if ever I have it, so readily? Why give it at all? No.....

* * * *

But, I regained my balance. The Editor was not joking, not he! Is he not a school-master himself used to examinations, tests, trials? And who knows if he was not subjecting me to a most severe ordeal? The Editor, clever man, he, at any rate, possesses a sense of humour. But he is unlike that learned gentleman who not possessing a sense of humour wanted to vindicate his character before the world by producing a most melancholic essay on the ‘saving sense’. These stray thoughts on the subject of ‘humour’ have been provoked no less by the article in question than by the Editorial fiat.

* * * *

The one fact that must have struck any casual observer of the humours among mankind is that no true humourist would admit that he has a sense of humour. If at all he did so, it must be only humourously. Humour, let it be understood, is not a deliberate, conscious act, it is something spontaneous and unpremeditated. It shows itself at some unguarded moment. Surprise is the very essence of humour. The humourist, like the poet, is born, not made, and his ‘ware’ for that reason is

considered 'rare', with an ever widening market for sale. For the world weary of calculating, plotting, scheming and wool-gathering, seeks relaxation and relief in refreshing springs of sparkling humour. Editors all the world over complain about the dearth of literary contributions in the lighter vein, and it is a well known fact that the handful of master humourists like Chesterton, Jerome, Barrie, Cobb, 'Twain' and Co., raise the most money with the pen. While it's a welcome thing to laugh oneself, it is doubly welcome to make others too laugh with you. And of the various devices for raising laughter, the humourists' is the most natural, the most dignified and the least affected. You may laugh at the buffoon, and the cynic may laugh at you, but the humourist alone makes this laughter a joint business between himself and yourself. Such a laughter is alone a hearty laughter, which is credited with the power to blow you up like a football.

* * * *

I should have very much desired to join in such laughs. But you know of human limitations, physical as well as physiological. Some people would admit that they would have been capable of producing rollicking humour and exhilarating mirth, had they been moulded differently and located at some place other than where they find themselves. India, they argue, has been famous for her spirituality and spirits, soul-force and souls, politics and parties—but not yet for its humour. If only we developed that desirable sense a solution can easily be found for many of our ills.

It would appear that climatic considerations have something to do with the humorous sense, as with the sporting spirit. The average European would die to follow the adventures of a Susanne Lenglen or Hellen Wills, of a Tilden or a Borotra, a Carpenter or a Dempsey, a Charlie Chaplain or a Gladys Cooper. He cannot be easy without looking into the latest *Tit-Bits*, or scrutinising the most topical cartoons by Partridge or Hill, or the frivolities of 'Poy'. The English nation grows mad over International Cricket or Inter-varsity Boat-Race, and suspends all other business to attend the contests. Sports, humour or comedy, in short, the lighter side of life, forms an unavoidable ingredient

of the 'Westerners' very constitution. (can it be that the Creator had followed a different formula in the mixing up of the Indian clay?)

The whole blame for this incongruity must be laid at the door of the merciless Torrid Sun, whose excessive heat has warmed up our constitutions, boiled our brains, fumed our energies, and rendered us unfit for anything less serious than heated agitations and fiery speeches on burning questions of the day.

* * * *

And humour is essentially a human quality. It is perhaps a strong point in favour of our being "created" and not "evolved" beings. For even the most dexterous of the Evolutionists had not humour enough to see, among other things, how man developed this particular sense out of the bestial frolics of his supposed arboreal ancestor. The monkey, no doubt, can grin, grimace and show teeth, but he is never known to smile, much less to laugh! Thus, an All-Humourous Creator (for all good emanates from him) has deliberately endowed man with this saving quality, which, like springs to a motor car gives resilience and buoyancy to life, and enables him to stand many a shock, and to skip over many a bump.

The Prince of Wales, touring abroad, was caught in an accident, and his special train capsized. The Railway Officials, who were accompanying him, rushed with bated breath to the Royal saloon, as a side shutter opened and the Heir-apparent's head shot out, his face all wreathed in smiles. "Thank you very much," he cried to the exasperated Railwayman, "thank you for introducing a new item into my programme."

The humourist is an optimist; he sees nothing amiss in creation. "God's in Heaven, All's right with the world."

A sense of humour enables a man to keep his head erect in the face of adverse criticisms. Lord Reading said the other day of Sir B. N. Sarma, that the latter's sense of humour enabled him to withstand the Parthian darts of newspapers.

While the English might die for humour, the Irish live for and in it. With the inhabitants of the Emerald Isle, humour is like the air they breathe—something unavoidable. An Irish Professor met a student who has been taking leave from class on account of a nasty cough. In reply to an inquiry the student sadly explained that his complaint was getting worse day by day. "Ah!", exclaimed the Professor in great exultation, "let it get worse and worse—and—and—*let it die!*"

When an Englishman and an Irishman meet they laugh over the doings of the Scotchman.

The 16-stone wife of Macgregor climbed up to the very top of the leaning tower of Piza, and waved to her husband admirably rested on *terra firma*. Mac looked up to the top of the Tower for the first time and shouted; "Jean! Jean! Get ye back! You are bending the building."

Many a joke attributed to a Scotchman is traceable to his excessive attachment to the land of gin and whisky, and to his incomparable business instincts. "A brave Scotsman was visiting the Niagra Falls in the company of an American friend. As they watched the great rush of water the latter said; "There is a story that if you throw a penny into the Falls it will bring you luck." "Is it so?" inquired the Scot—He considered a moment and then asked hopefully "Ha! ye a bit of string?"

* * * *

The term, 'humour', has been used by the early writers to denote any peculiar human trait or oddity. Thus, Ben Jonson wrote his "Every man in his Humour", and Goldsmith described the English as a nation of humourists. Both these writers were capable of humour in the sense we understand the term today, as their writings teem with gay and light matter that amuse while they instruct.

But the humour of three centuries ago had the germ of satire in it, and was wielded as an effective weapon of reform. As an instrument of didacticism humour is perhaps the most

serviceable to humanity as it is the most agreeable of chatishments—Nay, laughter of the non-Swiftian, non-cynical and non-personal type is often an unavoidable necessity.

* * * *

Thackeray defines humour as a combination of 'wit and love'. He adds: "I am sure, at any rate, that the best humour is that which contains most humanity, that which is flavoured throughout with tenderness and kindness."

A loving humour is a genial writer's habit of being; it is the kind gentle spirit's way of looking out on the world—that sweet friendliness which fills his heart and illumines his style.

A true humourist is essentially a philanthrope, a man incapable of 'treasons, stratagems and spoils'.

"When humour joins with rhythm and music and appears in song its influence is irresistible; its charities are countless; it stirs the feelings of love, peace, friendship, as scarce any moral agent can."

* * * *

If the question were asked as to what constituted the greatness of Shakespeare's achievements, I would unhesitatingly answer, "his creation of Falstaff." Many a contemporary of Shakespeare's has conceived single characters equalling in dignity, depth and artistic finish any of Shakespeare's heroes, and in single senses and poetic passages the other Elizabethans would bear comparison with the Bard of Avon. But none, before or after Shakespeare, has been able to picture anything capable of approaching the humorous creations of the master-dramatist—his fools, clowns and jesters.

The inimitable Falstaff, with his corpulence and buoyancy of spirits, his stock of Rabelaisian chuckles and "marvellous congregation of charms and vices" remains, to this day, the most loved impersonation of Shakesperean humour.

* * * *

His latest prototype and serious rival is the modern king of the Film-land, the Prince of clowns and the comic knight-errant,—Charlie Chaplin. This hero of the moving Pictures is known

to one-half of mankind, and his antics attract an audience of twelve-millions every day. He has been called the Dickens of the Film. Says A. G. G. in a character sketch; "It is no small claim to the gratitude of the world to have brought more innocent merriment into the whole company of mankind than any other man who lives or has lived and that claim is Charlie Cahplin's." Once, exhausted and nerve-strained after endless post war negotiations, Lloyd George retired to Dear Wales and asked to be administered, for a few nights in succession, mild doses of Charlie Chaplin's well-known film-production, "the Kid." And the Premier was soon back at No. 10, Downing Street.

* * * *

Of modern humourists, Chesterton is undoubtedly the most sensible and the most intellectual. He is in reality a philosopher under the guise of a humourist. He writes on any subject from Top-Hats to American Prohibition; crosses swords with the giants of literature and yet holds his own with a happy self-complacent smile. His essays are an inspiration and a joy, at the same time, and he who develops a liking for him can scarce give up his company. He is, in spite of his protests, the most paradoxical of Englishmen, and the most sincere in his convictions.

Chesterton was discoursing on the English habit of taking a heavy-breakfast, when, suddenly, he got a solution for the thorny problem of Shakesperean authorship. He held that "Bacon did write Shakespeare," but with the difference of a single capital letter; 'bacon did write Shakespeare'.

* * * *

And now I must come back to the school-master with a sense of humour—I believe a sense of humor is not only the most desirable quality in a pedagogue but even the most essential. For a teacher who lacks this saving grace is apt to do more harm than good to the children entrusted to his charge. Even as a weapon of punishment 'humour' is more potent in the class-room than the rod, and he who can wield the former is not only respected but even loved, whereas the tyrant of the rod is dreaded and avoided.

Humourists are the greatest benefactors of the world. For they help to dry our tears, to prolong our lives and to render existence itself a joy and not a burden.

“The Pegs of My Coat-Stand.”

(By M. G. Neelakandhan, I. U. C.)

“A brave deed?” said Captain Naik Lala, and Captain Naik has a Victoria Cross on his breast, “I will tell you of one I myself did.”

It was a cold dreary evening, and we were seated in a ring in our parlour beside a warm hearth-fire. The logs crackled in the grate and the rain pattered on the roof. Amongst us, a member of the happy group, sat Captain Naik himself, his long legs thrust forth close to the fire. Beside him was a round table and on it stood the Captain's best friend, in warm weather and cold, a glass and a bottle of his favourite beverage-brandy.

Captain Naik Lala, V. C. of the 41st. Sogras was just returned from ‘somewhere in France’ and was paying father a visit. He had been in the front many a time and knew what ‘Prussianism’ meant. He had seen great ‘Jack Johnsons’ bursting and making a crater in the ground as big as the Sleepy Hollow; he had escaped the poison gas by his gas-helmet and he had fought in the trenches. He is a bosom friend of father's and used to tell us stories of goblins and of fairies ere he went abroad; and now he had returned safe to tell us tales of ‘Boches and their ways’.

A crown that might well serve as a convex mirror when the khaki turban was off, a face that might have been handsome but for the scars and furrows which the enemy thought it fit to stamp it with, the alert and well-trimmed mustachios that served as a filter to the mouth which it concealed, the almost Herculean bust rebelling against the authority of a bright khaki regimental coat, with brass buttons, the pretty bronze cross with the words ‘For Valour’ inscribed on it, fixed to the left breast by a red sash, the leathern thong across the breast and the belt bearing a rifle, the khaki nickers reaching to the knees, a pair of bright stockings, leggings and well-polished black boots covering the

muscular legs and feet—add to these a well-built form that rose six feet six in the socks and an occasional cough that betrayed the presence of its master—and well, there is the portrait of the Captain as well as my feeble pen can paint it.

“Well”. continued the captain, “I will tell you of one I myself did.” He filled the glass with the sparkling liquor and quaffed it off at a single breath. “It was in that hell out there,” said he. “the ‘No-man’s land’ between the German and the British lines. We were in our trenches and next ones were occupied by the Shropshire Light Infantry. Sergeant Pearson—Plucky Pearson we used to call him,—was in charge of a platoon of his regiment. The Boches were giving us a long holiday, and we were tired of it. Beyond a few games of hide and seek, they had kept us totally inactive and to make matters worse, a heavy shower had fallen, and the water was knee-deep in the trenches. So we meant to attack and attack roundly. But we were not as sure of the enemy’s positions as we had hoped to be and that meant we did not know where to attack. So out we set, Pearson and myself, and crawling on our bellies and escaping the observation of the German sharp-shooters, by hiding ourselves in the grass, we had a good survey of the enemy’s position. We had just made a ‘right-about turn’ and were crawling back to our lines when we observed a pair of Germans returning from a similar errand. The recognition was mutual and there was no time to spare. Pearson was a plucky fellow enough, and with the agility of a tiger, he sprang upon one of the Germans and brought him to the ground. There was a brief scuffle; in another instant, the clasp-knife was unsheathed from the belt, the blade flashed and the German expired without a groan. Meanwhile, I had belaboured the other, and with the help of Pearson, who had now come to my assistance, I made short work of him. “Bravo!” said Pearson, “the world is rid of two such fellows at least and now we will play these chaps a trick. Strip your prisoner, Captain, of all his dress while I do the same with my good man here. And, to night, we will steal into the German lines in these fellow’s uniforms and have a better survey of their trenches, passing for real Boches. Meanwhile, between

you and me and the post," continued Pearson, "not a word of it to Roberts or Wilson." I hailed the prospect with delight, as Pearson could speak German as well as a Teuton. "Mum's the word," said I, as I drew my finger across my lips.

Here the narrative was interrupted by a long cough, which when paraphrased meant, 'More brandy, please.' We poured him out a glassful and draining it, the Captain resumed his tale.

"Well", said he, "with the pomp and grandeur of a gladiator returning with laurels from an amphitheatre we proceeded to our respective dug-outs with the German uniforms, as the trenches were still under water. I hung the helmet of the German on the upper peg of my coat-stand, the coat with the belt bearing a rifle hung loose from the next peg, from the third one dangled the German's knickers, as if from a scare-crow, and the stockings found their place on the lowest peg. The boots, I placed on the floor, just below the stockings."

"Fatigued much with the day's adventure, I laid myself down to rest and was perusing an Indian newspaper. My eyes involuntarily closed, the paper dropped from my hands, and in that reverie, that twilight between consciousness and unconsciousness, thoughts of various things, of 'sunken wrack and sumless treasures' flitted along the curtain of my memory. Of my far-off native land which I had left perhaps for ever, of the various hardships I had endured, and last though not the least of all, of that meteor of 'Prussianism', the Crown Prince of Germany, as I had seen him during his attack on the French position at Verdun. My mind sickened at the thought of this royal leader, and gradually I fell into a deep slumber. The call of a patrol recalled me to my senses and Heavens! as I opened my eyes, there stood before me with his back turned towards me the very firebrand of whom I had been thinking ere I fell asleep—the Crown Prince of Germany. 'If only I could capture this engine on which the mechanism of 'Prussianism' works', thought I, 'I would be doing my Emperor and motherland a signal service.' My hand involuntarily sought my rifle, and taking steady aim, I pulled the trigger but the rifle did not go off. The powder was damp."

Here, as children draw near the grandmother, as the ghost story approaches its climax, we all drew nearer the Captain, who with a serene look continued, "There was but one way left. I unsheathed my clasp-knife and never did tiger spring quicker on its victim than I on mine. One blow! and there was a rustle of dress, down rolled the German helmet, down fell the coat and knickers and lo! there stood not the Crown Prince—but don't burst alaughing children!—but *the pegs of my coat-stand*".

Here a merry peal of unwarranted childish laughter burst forth that shook the parlour for full fifteen minutes and through our tears we saw the glass once more filled and emptied. The Captain with an aspect not a whit the less serene, continued, "All was plain now. The helmet, the coat, the knickers, the stockings and boots arranged systematically on the pegs of my coat-stand, held out to my sleepy eyes, the living form of a German—and by the trigger! When I informed my friends of this simple mistake, Roberts and Wilson must laugh and laugh till the provisions ran short, and Pearson should needs remark that 'but for that attack of the Captain on the Crown Prince, he would never have won his *Victoria Cross*'".

"And Pearson?"

"And Pearson? Ah! you might well ask that. All his pluck didn't save him though. But he died a glorious death in saving a fellow-soldier from that nasty gas." Here the Captain flung off his coat and baring his sinewy right arm, revealed to us the letters 'P. P.' tattooed on the skin. "And here's to the memory of Plucky Pearson," shouted the Captain, as he raised the tumbler to his lips.



The Lyric Genius of Collins.

(By Mr. P. Ramanathan, M. A.)

OF the poets of eighteenth century England, the school boy and the general reader know a few names—Pope, Gay, Cowper, Gray, Blake and Burns. But little is heard of Collins in the school-boy anthologies and even the undergraduate may pass by in blissful ignorance of him, if the kindly University does not prescribe a few of his poems for detailed study. This general ignorance about the poet is due mainly to the small content of his poems, and the very high imaginative quality which the poet attains in the more magnificent of his odes. It is perhaps this poetic quality that has always made bookmakers and anthologists refrain from including Collins' poems in a school-boy's collection.

But Collins well repays study. Leaving apart his "Persian Eclogues", a juvenile effort, 'reconciling the taste of the time for pastorals with the inclination of the poet's own fancy towards the gorgeous East,' one should read his Odes—especially the Ode on the Passions, the Evening, the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands, the Elegy on Thomson, and the exquisite dirge on Cymbeline. In them all is evident the genius of the poet, the ancient Greek *vates*, that of the *maker* or *creator*. Poetry was his birth-right, as Hazlitt says, and he was content to *sing* from the depths of his soul, and not merely to *say*. Anything less from him cannot be expected. This fact of his genius attracted the notice of even the fastidious literary dictator, Dr. Johnson, who though oblivious to the merits of Gray, was yet sympathetic to Collins. His poetic quality does not lend itself to analysis; it cannot be analysed but only felt, felt in the heart and appreciated. Yet, an attempt shall be made here.

In the first place Collins had in him 'a note of pure lyric song, a pulse of inborn music, irresistible and indubitable.' In an age when men were content to teach, when their eyes caught only the sublunary aspects of things, and when they expressed themselves in verse as prosaically as they could, Collins was the first to burst asunder the trammels of reason and intellect, to give

free range to his fancy and imagination, and to give vent to the enthusiasm, the joy, and the bubbling sentiments of his heart. What men of his era saw with the mind's eye, he seized in his heart, and the heart made him restless unless he expressed himself. The predominance that he gave to his heart and its feelings it is that made him the lyric poet. Any one can realise this on reading his Ode to Evening.

Secondly, that which characterises Collins is 'an incomparable and infallible eye for landscape, a purity, fidelity and simple seeming subtlety of tone, unapproached until the more fiery but not more luminous advent of Burns'. Swinburne, whom I quote here, remarks that some of Collins' descriptions have the closest affinity to his great contemporary school of French landscape painters. The picture he gives us of evening, of day merging slowly into twilight, of the glorious sunset, of the birds that fly to their nests, of the religious gloom that surrounds ruined places mellowed by the hand of age—these are themes for a painter as for this poet. And one cannot exaggerate the importance of such scenes to a truly lyric poet. What the eye takes in, the mind registers; what the mind registers the hearts feels and sifts it with other feelings and passions, until the sentiment is so ebullient that it must needs find a lyric expression. Now a well-cultivated park is an object which fascinates the eye and pleases the mind, because of its well-ordered plan and regularly laid-out gardens. But it cannot rouse in us any enthusiastic feelings, even as a beautiful photograph of some rare and exquisite beauty is not half so charming as the real person herself. Collins possessed in himself this gift of selecting such landscape, the eye to perceive their peculiar moods, to feel them in his heart, and to utter them in exquisite diction.

Then let one rave some wild and heathy scene
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
 And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

Thirdly there is in him an 'artistic tenderness of conscience and scrupulous self-mastery of hand in which he so closely resembles Tennyson as once at least to provoke the same doubtful sense of jealous and admiring demur.' * It has often been contended that it is a sign of weakness in a poet if he should possess the conscience of an artist. But it should be remembered that the sentiments which a poet gives expression to are of a lofty and sublime order,—and however 'unpremeditated' his song, there are apt to be certain imperfections in the expression. The poet's calling is that of an artist: when the artist has done a picture, he adds to it a line here and a line there, touches up a shade now and then, to impart to it the peculiar significance he has in mind. So, too, the poet, when he has poured out his soul in free measures, he discovers here and there that his expression does not totally harmonize with his feelings, and therefore retouches it up: the more perfect the expression, the more lofty and sublime the thought. Hence every lyric poet has in him this 'artistic tenderness of conscience', and Collins possessed it to a refined and exquisite degree.

But we must not ignore the faults of Collins. He could not entirely escape the stilted and formal diction of his era, and some of his personifications especially in the earlier poems are so threadbare, that in spite of his power of song, he remains a child of his age. In the *Persian Eclogues* he employs a double artifice characteristic of his century. His shepherds are not only urban but also 'polite'. But gradually as he proceeds he sheds this cloak of artifice. Not until he composed the Ode written in the beginning of the year 1746 did he wholly escape the traditions of Dryden and Pope. Even the Ode to Simplicity containing such lines as "the honeyed store on Hybla's thynny shore". And in

* The allusion is to the second line of the *Ode to Evening*. The 1747 edition reads: 'May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine ear', and the 1748 edition has: 'May hope' chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear', a recast to the better, an example of the refined excess in conscience of Collins.

other pieces, 'he is still using the dialect of Dryden and Pope, but he is speaking it with an accent so masterly and undeniably his own'. It is in the Ode to Evening that he is far removed from the traditions and mannerisms of his own age, and strikes up an original power. In that rarer masterpiece, as Mr. Rhys observes, 'which is unapproached in austere grace by any other English poet, he threw away his "war-denouncing trumpet", threw away even the supports of rhyme and Dryden rhetoric, and attained his most perfect expression. In its stanzas the words, the rhythm, the music that is in the line, and the music that is behind the line, are so wrought as to recreate the thing expressed in the very medium expressing it. The transmutation there is one that the poets who seek to personify the elements, the emotions or the forces and the apparitions of Nature, have rarely achieved as Collins did'.

One should give a quiet evening to the study of this poem: do it deliberately little by little until the whole of it sinks into the mind gradually and softly. Then the music of the fall of an evening will become apparent. And 'the poet', in the words of Prof. Minto, 'who fixes a rare and evanescent mood in harmonious rhythm and imagery, thus making it a permanent possibility for the human race, cannot always build his new and delightful home for the imagination out of common materials, and the workmanship with which he adorns it may be curious and intricate. Such a pleasure-house is often built up by abstruse workings of the imagination, in regions far above the prosaic level, and the spirit must shake off its natural slothfulness before it can rise with the poet and enter into and take possession of the home that he has made for it'.



College Chronicle.

11—1—26.— College reopens after the Christmas holidays.

24—1—26.— The anniversary meeting of the Literary and Debating Society of the High School Department.

27—1—26.— Inter-school Foot-Ball Tournament. The St. Thomas' Team won the Second Cup—"the Jos. Memorial Cup".

6—2,—26.— Musical Concert in the College Hall of Master Manohar Bharve, the celebrated Indian Prodigy in Western and Eastern Music.

7—2—26.— Rao Bahadur, P. V. Seshu Ayyer visited the College for 'local inquiry' in connexion with the affiliation of the College in the Mathematics group of the B. A. course.

27—2—26.— The Anniversary Celebration of the College Literary Union. A detailed account of the function is published in another place.

8—3—26.— The third term closes for the Second University Class.

15—3—26.— Annual Examination for I and III University class begins.

19—3—26.— The College closes for the summer vacation.

22—3—26.— The Intermediate and the School Final (Cochin) Examination commences.



The College Union Annual Report.

On this most auspicious occasion of the annual celebration of our Society, we, the members of the Managing Committee, beg to place before you the following report of its work for the academic year 1925-26.

History:—With the opening of the College in the year 1919 the Society also was organised with a view to help the harmonious development of the intellectual, mental and moral faculties of its members and it has been, we are glad to observe, gradually progressing into a bigger and more useful institution. Since the raising of the College into the First Grade, at the commencement of the year under report, our Society may be said to have entered upon a new era of activities. Our strength has risen to the highly encouraging number of 360, our meetings have become more lively and attractive, and our powers of expression more definitely manifested by the institution of the College Magazine.

Management:—The Society, consisting of all the students of the three classes, is being worked by a Managing Committee composed of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, an assistant Secretary and nine other members (three from each class). The Treasurer is also the Clerk of the College.

Meetings:—Besides the Inaugural Session, we conducted 14 meetings in all—2 business, 6 ordinary and 6 special. In this connection we may be allowed to remark that we have been able to maintain in all our meetings an atmosphere of healthy rivalry and a happy *esprit de corps* among the members. The attendance at our meetings used to be fairly large and the subjects discussed were of varied interest and importance. That it has been our endeavour to avail ourselves of all possible opportunities to get down speakers from outside is sufficiently plain from the fact that we held as many as 6 Special Meetings during the year.

Competitions:— We are happy to remark that the usual literary competitions were held during the year in the several items of Essay writing, Elocution, and Extempore Speaking. Besides, there has been a very important addition this year, viz., the institution of two prizes—one for good conduct and another for religious study (special to Catholic Students); and we are sure that it will prove a potent factor towards the realisation of one of the highest aims of Education—the moulding of character. We take this opportunity of congratulating the successful competitors in the several items and of thanking the several gentlemen who have acted as judges for the competitions. The following are the names of our prize-winners:—

Bishop Menacherry Memorial Gold Medal—K. P. Kannan Nair (First class, First in the State and fourth in the Presidency, with Distinction in Mathematics Physics and Chemistry, Intermediate University Examination, 1925; State scholarship holder for Honours Course).

PRIZE—C. N. Poduval (Distinction in Ancient History and Logic, Intermediate Examination, 1925.)

GOOD CONDUCT—P. P. Radhakrishnan III. U. C.

Religious	{	III U. C. P. I. Netto	
		II U. C. K. T. Kuriakose	
Instruction—	{	I U. C. P. S. Abraham	
		III U. C. P. Raman Menon	
Essay Competition—	{	II U. C. R. Kothandaraman	
		I U. C. K. S. Ananthasubramanian	
Extempore	{	I Prize P. Govinda Menon	II U. C.
		II Prize M. P. George.	III U. C.
Speech—	{	III Prize V. K. Harihara Iyer	III U. C.
		I Prize K. Sankaranarayanan	I U. C.
Elocution—	{	II Prize M. G. Neelakandan	I U. C.
		III Prize P. S. Venkateswaran	II U. C.

&

C. N. Puduval III U. C.

Finance:— The total income for the year is Rs. 143-3-0 and the expenses amounted to Rs. 135 thus leaving a balance of Rs. 8-3-0.

Conclusion :— We should be failing in our duty if we close this short report of ours without expressing our sincerest thanks to all those gentlemen who have so readily and so ably presided over our meetings and entertained us with their enlightening and edifying lectures. Let us also express our extreme indebtedness to our permanent President and the Vice-President who have throughout rendered us vluable help, and given us timely advice in the conduct of our meetings and in the management of all the affairs connected with the Society. We beg also to place on record our deepest gratitude to our Principal, the Ex-officio President, for all his ready sympathy, and the kind-heartedness with which he has on many an occasion consented to preside over our meetings, both special and ordinary.

We are not unconscious of the fact that in spite of all the humble achievements detailed above, we are far from having realised our aims completely. Much remains yet to be done and we hope that at no distant date our Union would develop into that federation of several smaller Societies with varying aims and activities, by which alone we can achieve the intellectual, mental and moral elevation of our Young Men.

V. K. Harihara Iyer

St. Thomas' College, Trichur, }

27—2—1926. }

Secretary,

(for the Committee).



The Report of Anniversary Meeting 1926.

THE Anniversary celebration of our College Literary and Debating Society came off on Saturday 27th February. The Dewan of Cochin Rao Bahadur T. S. Narayana Ayyer Avl., M. A., & B. L., took the chair on the occasion. The meeting was conducted in the open air in the College quadrangle which was very richly and tastefully decorated by the energetic efforts of the students. A temporary stage had been also put up for the enacting of a farce which had been arranged for the evening. Thanks to the selfless efforts of the Secretary and the sympathetic help of our Ex-Officio President, the Principal, we were able to get down well-known public speakers, Mr. S. Sathyamurthy and Mr. Rama Varma Thampan, for the English and Malayalam Lectures respectively. There was present on the occasion a large and distinguished gathering including the entire elite of Trichur. Indeed, we have not had such a gathering in Trichur for the last many years. Supporting the President on the platform sat His Highness the Appan Thampuran of Cochin, Mr. Madhava Raja of Kollengode, and His Lordship Dr. Francis Vazhapilly, Bishop of Trichur.

The functions of the evening began at 5 o'clock with a welcome speech by the Principal who most enthusiastically and eloquently greeted the President, the Lecturers and the whole audience for their sympathetic co-operation with our endeavours. The Dewan then opened the proceedings for the evening with a short introductory speech wherein he expressed his pleasure in visiting the College on such a memorable occasion, which joy was all the greater since he could turn his memory back to a day 21 years back when he presided over a celebration of a similar nature in the St. Thomas' High School.

The Malayalam Lecture of Mr. Thampan was as Mr. Sathyamurthy remarked brilliant, humourous and brief. He spoke on the condition of University Education in the modern day, of the

keenness of the unemployment problem and of the necessity of students themselves solving it somehow or other. The whole speech was so delightful and effective that the audience regretted its brevity.

The Malayalam Lecture was followed by a declamation by a student of the Junior Intermediate class. The passage selected was the last speech of Faustus in Marlowe's play of that name. From the very nature of the piece selected one could not expect anything like perfection in the bringing out of the different emotions which find a play therein. But it is gratifying to note that the student exhibited remarkable histrionic talents and his attempt was quite successful.

Mr. Sathyamurthy then rose up amidst loud applause from the audience, many of whom had been attracted to the spot by the magic of his name. The Lecturer was quite in form and the beautiful way in which he presented his personal impressions of the West held the whole audience spell-bound for nearly more than an hour. The attractiveness of the lecture was enhanced by the Lecturer's side remarks on political and social problems in the East and West.

The English farce then commenced. The piece selected was a composition of Justice V. V. Sreenavasa Ayyengar of the Madras High Courtentitled "The Tragic Denouement." Within the short time at our disposal, we had attempted to give some training to our actors. The story itself was very humorous, picturing the hard situation of a briefless barrister one Mr. Atmaram Rao who is defrauded even of the little he earns, by his own folly. The students exceeded our expectations in the acting and the whole audience felt themselves entertained by witnessing it.

The meeting came to a close with the concluding speech by the Chairman and the vote of thanks which was ably proposed by the President of our Association Mr. Joseph Pettah.

College Boarding House Notes.

For the year 1925—'26.

8th June 1925. To-day the Boarding House reopened after the long mid-summer vacation. Old students returned from their respective native places in Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar. New admissions began. We were painfully surprised to learn that our most beloved and esteemed Rector, Rt. Rev. Mgr. Antony Puducherry had been called upon to undertake more onerous responsibilities in the cause of our faith. The magnanimity of his heart, the firmness of his will, the sweetness of his disposition, the filial love and the suavity of his manners had won the hearts of all of us. Alas! we learned that our Assistant Rector Rev. Fr. Jacob Arakal too had received orders of transfer. The thought that his ever cheerful countenance would soon be removed from us, grieved us much.

13th June:—A meeting of the members of the sodality of the B. V. M. was held under the presidentship of Rev. Fr. Arakal, the Director of the Sodality, to elect office bearers for the year 1925-'26. Mr. K. T. Kuriakose was elected Prefect, Mr. M. X. George, Secretary and messrs. K. A. Xavier, P. M. Joseph, P. K. George, and C. C. John, Councillors.

21st June:—The inaugural meeting of the Sodality was held in the spacious main hall with Rev. Fr. Director in the chair. Mr. K. T. Kuriakose, the Prefect, delivered a Speech in Malayalam on "The Sodality of the B. V. M. and the Catholics of Malabar" The Presidential speeches were very learned and interesting.

27th June:—A special meeting of the Sodality was held. Rev. Mgr. Antony Puducherry was also present. Rev. Fr. Arakal left the Boarding House for Irinjalakuda. He was taken in a special car. All the Boarders accompanied. The New Rector, Rev. Fr. Joseph Chirayath (Junior) was taken in the return Car. The new Rector took charge to-day.

3rd July:—"Malabar Christian National day" was celebrated with great eclat. A public meeting was held; Rev. Fr. John Palocaren M. A. (Edin) presided. It was an occasion when the public witnessed the oratorical talents of some of our budding orators.

6th July—The consecration day of the Bishop. The boarders wished His Lordship a happy and long life.

9th August—A public meeting was held under the presidency of Dr. Francis Vazhappilly, the Bishop, to give send-off addresses to Mgr. Antony and Rev. Fr. Arakal. Suitable presents were also offered to the Rectors.

24th August—Annual Retreat began. The preacher was Rev. Fr. Joseph Tharayil, a zealous missionary priest of the Diocese.

27th August—The Retreat is over. Rev. Fr. Coelho, S. J. Lecturer, St. Aloysius College, Mangalore, delivered a very interesting speech under the auspices of the Sodality.

8th December—Aspirants were admitted to the Sodality. A grand recreation day. Badminton and Foot-ball matches were played in honour of the newly admitted Sodalists.

23rd December. Boarding House was closed for the Xmas Vacation. There was a gathering of all the students in the hall, when, Rev. Fr. Rector gave them very valuable and timely instruction for the spending of the holidays with profit to their body and soul.

11th January 1926. Boarding House reopened after the vacation. Almost all the inmates returned to-day.

24th January—Rector's day was celebrated with great pomp and feeling. A suitable present was given to Fr. Rector. We wished him a happy and long life. Tournaments both Badminton and Foot ball were played and the winners were awarded suitable prizes. Rev. Fr. Joseph Chirayath, our new Rector is a young, zealous and energetic priest. His appointment has mitigated to a considerable extent our grief for the departure of the other Rector.

2nd February—The anniversary of the sodality of the B. V. M. was celebrated on a magnificent scale. A public meeting was held. Rt. Rev. Mgr. Antony Pudicherry, D. P. presided: M. R. Ry. T. L. George, Avl B. A & B. L, Chief Court Vakil, Trichur, addressed the meeting on "the place of Religion in modern Education". M. R. Ry A. C. Kuriakose, Avl, S. M. P. A. member, Travancore, delivered a speech in malayalam on "Students and moral Consciousness" Both the speeches were eloquent and full of useful instructions to young men. The president, in his usual felicitous style gave a most impressive address embodying advice and suggestions of value, for the conduct of catholic youth.

John V

