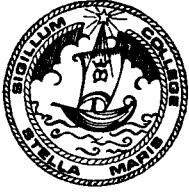


STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

1989

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Mrinalini Kumaraswamy



Stella Maris College
(Autonomous)

renewal

1989

November 1989

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The Lord is my shepherd ;

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures :

He leadeth me besides the still waters.

He restoreth my soul :

*He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.*

Psalm 23

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editorial

Renewal signifies hope for the future, even as it gives us the assurance of the seasons, the optimism of birth in death, and the promise of the rainbow God blessed Noah with. It serves to remind us that the future is born out of the past, that the present is a time span entirely of our making, that our world may be redeemed and rebuilt, yet.

For us in Stella Maris, the reality of autonomy makes the possibilities of renewal within reach. Can we move towards a liberal education? Can we find a place for youthful effervescence among the sorrows of a nation? Can we move towards a future where development and justice will become reality rather than wish-fulfillment? In our College Magazine 1989 we have tried to look at some of these issues: of youth, of social responsibility, of being a woman.

We acknowledge with gratitude our gift of life. We make a commitment that we will not violate this gift.

Editorial Board

Anitha Cherian

Janaki Mukund

Lakshmi Kamal

W. B. Prathima

Susan Alexander

Padma Prasad — *Faculty*

Susan Oommen — *Faculty*

Stella Maris College

College Day : Principal's Report :

1988 — 89

Respected Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Gnanam, our esteemed Chief Guest for the Day,

Rev. Sr. Lilly D'Souza, Vice President of the Board of Governors of this College, Rev. Father Chaplain,

All other members of the governing body,

Dear Parents, Friends and Benefactors of the College,

My Co-workers in this giant task of Higher Education,

Capable faculty members and generous members of the non-teaching staff, and sisters,

Happy students, proud prize winners, one and all.

This is the 41st Annual Day for Stella Maris and the 12th year of my stewardship in this great institution that has sent into society about 6000 graduates who have taken responsible roles in society as educated women of India. I stand before you with a deep sense of gratitude to God who has permitted and aided this college to carry on this noble task of educating the young women of India. Here is a brief report of our endeavours this year 1988-89.

The *Bhagvat Gita* says :

“Perform your duty with a detached spirit, because in the performance of duty man mounts to ‘highest Bliss’ and the *Gospel* says : “Having put the hand to the plough do not look back - march forward.” Perhaps this is what we, the Staff and Students have attempted to do this academic year.

Academic progress with the emphasis on all round development is the pivot of campus life. During the 2nd year of College Autonomy, we have not only strengthened the academic programmes drawn up but introduced 24 Special Courses under the new scheme as Inter-Disciplinary Orientations during the 2nd and 4th Semester, which were passed at the Academic Council Meeting on 8 October 1988. Our enthusiasm and excitement reached a climax as the 1st and 2nd year students started thinking seriously about the various options opened to them which were not available in their respective disciplines. To cite a few, a course on Food Micro Biology for Arts students or a course in Accounting for History Students was a real academic break-through. The overall objective of

these courses was to sensitize students to a deeper awareness of their potential to apply knowledge for creative and developmental purposes. We have introduced Women Studies and we have fortified it further by inaugurating a Women's Forum for the Staff called UJWALA. The useful and participatory methods of learning quite popular among Stella Marians seem to be Seminars, Symposiums, Workshops and Projects.

The Chemistry Department organised a Seminar "Bridging the Banks" as an awareness session on careers for chemistry students. This was followed by a survey on the much debated questions of job opportunities for Arts Students. No less a person than Mr. Vijayaraghavan, I.A.S., presided over and moderated this symposium, co-ordinated by the History Department. The Seminar on "Problems and Prospects of the Working Women" by the Economics Department, the seminar on "Mental Health and Alleviation of Poverty: A Myth or Reality" organized by Social Work Department discussed relevant current issues at length. The National Seminar on "The Mind of the Future" sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology left a memorable impact on all participants who witnessed an excellent Audio-visual presentation on "The Mechanical Mind" written and directed by Mr. David Thomas, the Director of our Computer Centre. Stella Maris seems to have become a pioneer in the field of Futures Studies, thanks to the dynamism of our Vice-Principal, Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip. We would like also to mention the workshops and projects undertaken by other departments. The workshop on clay modelling, advertising and the Art-Therapy of the Fine Arts Department is worth noting. Through the existing medium of colours, the budding artists brought to light the significance of the use of colours in the abstract and futuristic terms in their much applauded Exhibition, "Chroma".

The Departmental projects play a vital role in the learning and growth experience of students. Students bring out Journals, Bulletins, Graphic display, Posters etc., which draw a lot of attention and create lively interest. The Socio-Economic status of working women was surveyed and studied by the students of Economics with reference to the women workers in pharmaceuticals in Madras and coffee plantation at Kodai Hills.

The Sociology students as part of their curriculum undertook a study of the Fishing Community, hostel life, Narikuravars, working women and labour relations in industry.

Clubs of the various departments also extend curricular work into co-curricular activities wherein large numbers of interested students participate. Every club organises Quiz programmes, debates, even out door activities which keep the students busily engaged in meaningful processes.

The wild-life week and Environmental day were celebrated by the NCC unit in collaboration with the Zoology students. BLOSSOMS the Botany Club, MARPIALS the Zoology Club, ARTHASASHTRA, the Economics Club, the Zodiac Club of the Maths department, all have catered to a number of enthusiasts by organizing a Dog Show or Plant exhibition or a trip to the Planetarium or a Commotion meet of the Commerce Students—all have their own role to play.

Talking of curricular projects and innovations I am happy to mention the special attempt made by the English Department which arranged Teaching Practice to supplement seminars where the Post-graduate students taught foundation course undergraduates under the supervision of their lecturers. The Literary Journal of the English Department completes its fourteenth year, and Ankur, the Journal of Economics, its tenth year, followed by Kirthi Kalyan of the Hindi students. The English Department has also planned a student seminar on contemporary fiction.

A landmark in the annals of the Literature Department this year is the recognition of the Department for full-time Research leading to M. Phil and Ph. D. To Miss Gowri Nayak goes the credit of establishing a unique link between Indians and the Australian University of Woolegong in starting the part time, the only Course in Indian Arts as part of the Undergraduate Course in Creative Arts. This project became a reality thanks to the Indian Government which agreed to sponsor it for the first two years.

Stella Maris was the first to start a Post graduate Degree Course in Social Work to train the students in scientific methods of Social Work and this unique advantage has been an asset for our task of serving the less privileged in society. The department has completed three Training courses for House-Parents from Child-care Institutions in Tamilnadu, sponsored by the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development. The project of supervision and monitoring of centres allotted by the Ministry of Human Resources Development has so far covered 105 creches. Thus our qualified staff share their time and talents in the service of society outside the campus. We were also invited by USEFI to direct a two week Academic Workshop for the Professors from Florida International University. This work was entrusted to Dr. Mrs. Mary John of the Department of Social Work who handled it efficiently.

Our faculty members have also been recognised and appreciated for their efficient service and intellectual calibre. They are invited by local and outside research institutions and they serve on many academic bodies. Miss. Oretta Mendoza was selected for Training in Environmental Sciences at Sweden. Our Vice-Principal attended the Conference of Catholic Universities at Jakarta. We are also proud of our past students who do excellently well in various fields. Dr. Parimala, Research Fellow, TIFR, Bombay, a past student of the Department of Mathematics (1966-71) was awarded the National Bhatnagar Swarup Prize for

Mathematics for the year 1987 which she received from the Prime Minister. Supriya Dorai, our Literature Student cleared her IFS with distinction this year. Since 1972 more than 15 students have qualified for IAS, IES, IFS. In its constant endeavour to serve the needs of the developing country, Stella Maris combines intellectual ability with moral courage and social commitment in extending its services through the students to the society around. Value Education has found place in the Semester curricular work load and NSS, NCC and games participation have a place in the semester transcripts under the autonomous system.

Our NSS Units have enrolled 300 students who are engaged in health and medical services in 3 hospitals - Educational Services in 10 schools - service for the aged and destitute in 11 agencies scattered around Madras. They also participate in important rallies like the World Literacy Day, Gandhi Jayanthi Day, and Adams Rally against DRUGS. Besides they also organised the Mrs. Gandhi endowment lecture. The Inter collegiate seminar on Commitment to Democracy, Secularism and Socialism sponsored by the Directorate of Field Publicity was well attended by the NSS students.

The NCC Unit continues its success story with added colours and enthusiasm. The All India best cadet for 1988 is a Stella Marian, Neera Katpal. Bindu Kelluni was the proud flight Cadet who won the gold medal for Tamilnadu after 37 years as the best glider and she was privileged to glide down before the Prime Minister and present the bouquet on 27th January, R.D. Rally. Nickath was selected and sent on Youth Exchange to Canada and Lavanya for a tour in Japan. The cadets received excellent training in all the fields and I am unable to elaborate all their achievements in this Report.

Even though there is a decline of interest in Sports and games among the students in general, Stella Maris continues to emphasize the importance of Physical Education as much as Character formation. This year we have introduced gymnastics on a small scale and Kho-Kho as a group game has improved considerably. About twenty two of our students have the honour of wearing University colours this year and our student Shaheer Zaman is India's No. 2 in Tennis - Durga Das is our only Golf player, while Favitra Rao and Gayatri were in the team of 4 who won the gold in the All India Rowing at Calcutta. Our team has won the Inter Divisional Tournament in Cricket, Hockey and Ball Badminton. We are seriously considering ways and means of improving our athletics to get back the A.L. Mudaliar Trophy which has eluded us for the past 2 years. I should mention with pride that we have been awarded the Mylapore Academy Silver Cup for the Highest percentage of passes in the University Exams for the 3rd year in succession for 1988 April Results. There were 46 Rank Holders among our students; four of them received medals and awards at the University convocation. We are happy that our students secured University first rank in M.A. Economics, Fine Arts, B.A. History, Sociology, Social Work and B.Sc./Zoology and University second rank in

B.A. Economics, History, Fine Arts and Sociology. For want of time I am not mentioning 3rd, 4th and other ranks up to the 8th. Such a record of achievement is made possible because of the efficient and committed staff of this college. Here I would like to place on record our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mrs. Jayalakshmi, Head of the Tamil Department and our Controller of Examination who retires this year after 37 years of loyal and generous service and Dr. Mrs. Verghese of the Hindi Department who retires after 30 years of service in this college. They are our irreplaceable jewels and their examples will continue to be the guiding stars for our younger generation of lecturers. Our sincere gratitude to Mr. Appu, the attender who retires this year.

We express our sorrow at the loss of our former Professor A. Ramanathan who passed away on 23rd October. He was our U.G.C. Professor during 73-78. May his soul rest in peace. The college lost 2 young students Bindu and Anju under tragic circumstances. We miss their presence but console ourselves at the thought that they are decorating the Lord's garden. May their souls rest in peace.

We come to the last and most important task of expressing our gratitude. Our hearty thanks to the Officers of the Students union for their cheerful co-operation. There prevailed cordial relations and friendly atmosphere all through the year. We will remember you students for "Thyohar" whenever we celebrate India and all that is beautifully Indian. We are grateful for all the services and support we received from our staff, Teaching and Non-teaching. With the new UGC scales we hope and pray our commitment will be strengthened and our efficiency be improved. Further we thank our Vice-Chancellor and the very helpful University staff who have been a source of encouragement all through; the Education Department, the Regional Directorate and the staff for so patiently enduring the cumbersome task of accounting salaries and workload statements. This year our Seminars and projects were sponsored by banks and agencies. Our thanks to IOB, State Bank, Grindlays, Solidaire, Biscuits and the United Board for Christian Higher Education. Our giant Fund Raising project was a success thanks to Mr. Jesudoss, Mr. Nalli Kuppaswamy, MRF and all other agencies, staff and students. May God Bless them all.

Our special thanks on behalf of all our students go to the PTC officials, the Police Department, the MES and postal services, who contributed in no small way towards the smooth running of this college.

I thank you parents, the public, the friends and benefactors of the college. You have kept us marching ahead with your continuous support and timely encouragement. We need the all powerful hand of God and the unfailing light of the Star of the Sea to guide, protect and lead us so that we may serve this society and participate fully with generosity and dedication in the ever demanding task of Higher Education. □

Essay

Anita Cherian, MA English

What do you think has become of the young and old men ?
And what do you think has become of the women and children ?
They are alive and well some where,
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,
All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses.

Walt Whitman

Our generation may be overcome by the isolation and the hopelessness of our times. Our generation may be overcome by the fear that history has ignored us in the fulfilling of our "tryst with destiny." In Pandit Nehru's Centenary Year the media constantly reminds us of the terrible beauty of the years of our struggle for Independence. The student's struggle for democracy in China reinforces our guilt at our own passivity. We are left hoping for a high tide of feeling so overwhelming few can ignore it, an emotional pitch so strong no barrier will stay it, an ethos exciting as in 1789. I remember Matthew Arnold's version of the French Revolution: "(It) derives from the force, truth and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas it will probably long remain the most animating event in history." I also remember the common man's concluding version of this animating event-that it triggered off a massacre, the shame of which continues to linger. We in India need to remember that we have also paid the blood price mandatory for every struggle. Ours was a glorious struggle. To lose track of this heritage by the use of force and violence would be to deny our earlier sacrifices. Should that be, we would be confusing nightmare for faith.

"Then let men kill which cannot share.
Let blood and flesh be mud and mire.
Scheming, imagine, passion willed,
freedom a drug that's bought and sold."

e.e.cummings

Our revolutions henceforth, must be ideological, although we have pushed ideas and beliefs to the periphery of our lives.

Ideas of change and renewal are paradoxically linked to that of timelessness: "All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses." It is vital that we renew our belief in the primacy of life-that it is not cheap and easily expended, but precious and to be revered. Life, like a work of art, should have its right to exist untampered

with except by the hand of its creator. We must move toward the universal need for love and affection, the need for seeing honesty as an expression of courage and not one of stupidity, the need for social responsibility, the right to justice and recompense, the universal right to acceptable standards of living, and finally the freedom to think and believe in what one feels is right. In essence we should reaffirm our humanism.

Every year, in fact every moment of crisis in our lives, should renew our faith in our ideals. The instinctive ability of animals, even the orphaned young, should confirm our faith in ourselves, our ability to think and to create, even amidst aridity. The isolation and the hopelessness of our times must necessarily return us to that sense of history by which we may see the processes of life in better perspective. Life's experiences should confirm for us the truth that a silver lining lightens every cloud. It should also affirm the iridescent beauty of the wildflower amidst the rankest weeds. What is vital is our spaces in time to be rendered both meaningful and relevant. We must believe in our ability to create the myths and symbols which best represent our age. We must believe in our ability to dream. □

காலப் போக்கில்

பா. ஜயலக்ஷ்மி
தமிழ்த்துறை

‘புதியன புகுத்தலும், பழையன கழித்தலும் வழுவல்’ என்பது பழைய வாக்கு — நன்னூலார் வாய்மொழி ! வாழ்க்கை வசதிகள் பெருகிவரும் இற்றை நாளில், எல்லாத்துறைகளிலும், சிறிது சிறிதாகப் பழைமையைக் கைவிட்டுப் புதியவற்றைப் பூரிப்புடன் ஏற்றுள்ளோம், காலமாற்றத்திற்கு ஏற்ப, கொள்வனகொண்டு, தள்ளுவன தள்ளி, வாழ்க்கைப் பாதையில் பீடுநடை போடக் கற்றுக் கொண்டு விட்டோம். ஆனாலும், ஒன்று கவனிக்கப்படவேண்டும். பழைமை என்பதாலாயே புறக்கணித்தல் கூடாது, புதுமை என்பதாலாயே வரவேற்றலும் கூடாது. இரண்டிலும், நன்மையும் இருக்கலாம், தீமையும் இருக்கலாம் ஏற்பதிலும், கைவிடுவதிலும் ஆராய்ச்சி தேவை.

புதியன புகுத்தலும் இன்றிப் பழையன கழித்தலும் இன்றிப் பழைமையையும் புதுமையையும் இணைக்கும் வழியும் உண்டு. அதுவே, புதுப்பித்தல்—புதுமை ஆக்குதல். வாழ்க்கையின் அடிப்படைத் தேவைகளான உணவு, உடை, உறையுள் என்ற இம் முன்றையும் நோக்குவோம்; சில சமயங்களில், முதல் நாள் உணவு கூட, இல்லத் தலைவியின் நளபாகத்திறனால், புதிதாகச் சமைக்கப்படும் உணவைவிடச் சிறப்பாக அமையலாம். உடுத்தும் உடைகூட, பழையது ஆயினும், தையல் கலையில் வல்ல ஒருவர் கைவன்மையால், அதனை வெட்டியும் ஒட்டியும், புதுவடிவம் கொடுத்தும், புத்தாடையை விடப் பொலிவுறச் செய்யக்கூடும். புதுவீடு கட்டிப் புதுமனை புகுவிழா நடத்த இயலாவிடினும், பழைய வீட்டை இடித்துச் செப்பணிட்டு, நவீன முறையில் அமைக்கும்போது, புதிய வீட்டை விட ஏற்றம் பெற்று விளங்கக்கூடும். நம் கலைக் கூடமே — பழைய ‘cloisters’ சிதிலமான நிலையில், அதை இழக்க மனமின்றி, அதன் தொன்மைச் சிறப்புக் குறையாமல், பாதுகாக்கும் வகையில், புதுப்பிக்கப்பட்ட ‘Bonaventure’ கட்டடம், ஏனைய கட்டடங்களை விடப் பொலிவுடன், பெருமிதத்துடன் விளங்குவதைக் கண்ணாரக்கண்டு மகிழ்கின்றோம் அல்லவா?

உணவு, உடை, உறையுள்—இவற்றைப் புதுப்பித்தல் போல, காலத்திற்கேற்ப—நடை முறைக்கேற்ப நம்மை நாமே புதுப்பித்துக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். பழைய மரபுகளில் ஊறிப்போயிருந்தாலும், மாறவேண்டிய—மாற்றிக் கொள்ளவேண்டிய கால கட்டத்தில், மாற்றிக் கொள்ளத்தான் வேண்டும். நம் முன்னாள் முதல்வரும், பெருமதிப்பிற்குரிய வருமான சகோதரி ஜூலியட் ஐரீன், இருபது ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன் கண்ட கனவு, இன்று நனவாகியுள்ளது. இன்று, பெருமைமிகு ஸ்டெல்லா மாரிஸ், ‘தன்னாட்சி’க் கல்லூரியாக உருப்பெறும் ஏற்றம் பெற்றுள்ளது. பொருத்தமான, பொருளுடைய பாடதிட்டங்களை நாமே அமைத்துக் கொள்ளவும், தேர்வு முறைகளைப் புதுப்பித்துக் கொள்ளவும், மாணவர் திறனை வளர்க்கவும், ஆசிரிய மாணவ உறவு முறை வலுப்பெறவும், பட்டப் படிப்புத்தவிரச் சிறிது சிறிதாக மங்கிவரும் பண்புகள் மீண்டும் மலர வழி செய்யும் பண்பாட்டுக் கல்வி, (value oriented) தனதுறை அன்றியும், பிறவற்றுள் ஏதேனும் ஒன்றில் தேர்ச்சி பெறவும், (Inter-Disciplinary orientation) சேவை மனப்பான்மையை வளரச் செய்யும் கல்வி முறையும், (service oriented) இணைந்து, முழுமையான கல்வி பெறும்

வாய்ப்பும் ஏற்பட்டுள்ளது மகிழ்ச்சிகரமான செய்தி அல்லவா? இத்தகைய மாற்றங்கள் ஏற்பட்டுள்ள நிலையில், நம் இலட்சியத்தை அடையப் பல இடையூறுகள் தடைகற்களாகத் தோன்றும். அப்போதெல்லாம், நம் வள்ளுவப் பெருந்தகையின் வாக்கை மனத்தில் கொண்டு, புத்துணர்ச்சி பெறவேண்டும். அவ்வாக்கு.

“இடும்பைக் கிடும்பை படுப்பர் ; இடும்பைக்கு
இடும்பை படாஅ தவர்.”

என்பதே ஆசிரியர் மாணவர்—இரு திறத்தாரும் கடுமையாக உழைக்க வேண்டும். இதற்கு, நம்மை நாமே தயார் படுத்திக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். எண்ணம் செயலாகக் கருத்துப்பரிமாற்றம் தேவைப்படுகிறது. அப்போது, கருத்துப் பொலிவு பெறுகிறது; செயல், நிறைவு பெறுகிறது.

எதற்கும் தளராத மனவறுதி வேண்டும் ; மனத் தெளிவு வேண்டும் ; செய்யுமுன், ஆழ்ந்து சிந்திக்க வேண்டும் ; செயல்படும் திறம்வேண்டும் ; செயல்படுத்தும் திறன் வேண்டும். நாம் செய்யும் தொழிலைத் தெய்வமாக மதித்து, அதில் நம்மை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொள்ளவேண்டும். புதிய உற்சாகத்தோடும், புத்துணர்ச்சியோடும், புத்துணர்வோடும், புதுமனிதராகச் செயல்பட வேண்டும். இந்த ஆண்டின் பொருண் மொழியான ‘புதுப்பித்தலும், புதிதாக்கலும்’ என்பதைப் பொருளுடையதாக்க, ஈராயிரம் உள்ளங்களும் இணையவேண்டும். நாலாயிரம் கரங்களும் ஒன்று சேரட்டும். அப்போது, வெற்றி நம்பக்கம் என்பதில் சிறிதும் ஐயமில்லை.

“உழைப்பின் வாரா உறுதிகள் உள்வோ”

□

இன்ப துன்பங்கள் கலவையே வாழ்க்கை
இன்னாமை யினுமினிய காண்க என்றும் ;
‘நன்மையே எண்ணுக ; எண்ணித் துணிக ;
பின்னர் செயல்படுக ; —இவையே நல்லறம்,
இனியவே செய்க ; பேசுக ; இயலாவிடின்
அல்லன தவிர்க்க—இதுவே பேரறம்
இன்பத்துள் தலையாயது உள்ளத்தைப் பருத்துண்ணல் !
இன்றும் என்றும் இதுவே சீர்சால் நல்லறம்’

பா. ஜயலக்ஷ்மி

Liberal Education

Padma Malini, S. Faculty

A liberal education helps every child to develop his abilities to the fullest possible extent, discover and nurture talents, acquire learning skills that will help him to reach the peak performance level he is capable of in his adult life. A country that provides this kind of education to all children is a progressive one.

In a developing country committed to democracy, education becomes a powerful tool for economic progress and social transformation. It is absolutely essential for the political health of the country. Without universal education, democracy will be perverted to mobocracy where unscrupulous politicians can manipulate an ignorant population. Universal suffrage must go hand in hand with universal schooling. A good basic education must therefore inculcate political values and impart citizenship training. If a democracy evolves in the right direction what we will have is a meritocracy.

A universal education must be seen in conjunction with the democratic principle of equality and freedom. If all men are born equal then they are entitled to equal opportunities for education. If this principle of equality is meticulously applied, we must ensure that every child in the country gets the same quality and quantity of education. This implies that we must have a single track system where the curriculum is uniform throughout the country. Is this feasible or even desirable? Does this not conflict with the freedom to innovate or choose from different types? Does this not make the unrealistic assumption that ability is also equal? A multi-track system, scientifically planned, can help to cater to different needs and levels that we find in our society, while still keeping to the ideal that a liberal education must help develop a child's potential to the full. We must admit that the potential differs greatly, depending on many socio-economic factors. The ideal then must be to give free education to the disadvantaged, ensuring good quality remedial teaching if necessary, so that there is free upward mobility in society. At the same time, the system must foster talent in the merit group, urging them to excellence. However, if this is done without inculcating a spirit of service and social responsibility, we will only perpetuate social inequality.

Equality in education compels us to take up the challenge of providing compulsory primary education to millions of rural children and urban poor. What short term and long term steps can we take?

1. The most compelling need is to upgrade the existing state run schools or corporation schools.
2. Ensure cleaner surroundings and basic amenities.
3. Improve library facilities.

4. Provide audiovisual facilities, and train teachers in the use of these.
5. Improve extracurricular activities.
6. Ensure prompt supply of free text books and uniforms.

7. Since higher education is in English, and better jobs are available only to those who know this language, enough emphasis must be given to English language teaching while the medium of instruction can be in the mother tongue.

For action on the above points the government cannot deny funds. In fact resources available are often misused.

Building new primary schools in every village is a more formidable task. Is it the responsibility of only the government to see that primary education reaches all? What can the corporate sector do in this direction? What can the individual and the community contribute? Reservoirs of resources remain untapped. If a well known company lends its name to primary schools, (in rural areas), it feels obliged to maintain proper standards both in terms of facilities and teaching. Individuals can be given incentives in the form of tax deductions for contributions made for the setting up of specific primary schools. This kind of shared responsibility, with proper motivation based on good will, will certainly work for national integration.

A short term intensive literacy campaign can be planned using electronic media. Besides television, we can create a one-man school in every village. One man equipped with a television set and video programmes that impart basic education skills can spend three months in a village and move on to the next. This does not require a new building or a cadre of paid teachers. With minimum funds we can reach out to a larger population. If there can be "bare foot doctors" why not a team of such teachers?

While it is universally accepted that a sound school education is the basic right of every child, the conflicts and controversies begin when we come to higher education. Is there need for selection at this stage? What criteria must we apply for selection? It seems logical to say, that given limited resources, those who have proved more proficient at school must have access to higher education. This is so in all advanced countries. Yet we must ask the question whether we are educating the more intelligent at the expense of the less able who need more attention, better conditions and greater help? In a country where social environment impedes the progress of many, this becomes an important question. If education has to be a tool for social reform then the system must cater to the disadvantaged. But in providing room for such learners we must eliminate some of the more intelligent. We land ourselves in the sorry predicament where in order

to correct one injustice we perpetuate another. This problem can be alleviated to some extent by optimising the use of existing resources, by introducing evening college in more and more institutions. Expansion of the open university and distant education system, ensuring proper standards, is also necessary. There will surely be a great need to systematically plan remedial education for those who need it. If primary education is overhauled, less and less numbers will need remedial education.

What are the goals of higher education? The three most important are the following: impart an organised body of knowledge; develop intellectual skills, and enlarge the student's understanding of ideas and values. The emphasis in most educational institutions seems to be only on the first of these. The development of intellectual skills should begin by inculcating a questioning spirit. What we do now is to supply answers to typical questions. We treat the student as if he were a computer whose memory must be fed with information diskettes. The quality of higher education would vastly improve if we helped the student to discover information rather than feed him with it. Our curriculum as well as teaching strategy should be so designed that we help the student to develop logical as well as associative thinking, convergent as well as divergent thinking. This will aid his imaginative and creative powers. Education must sharpen one's sense of discrimination and discernment and help us to think new thoughts, innovate in every field. It should be more a problem solving exercise rather than a solution learning exercise. If education does achieve this, then learning becomes a life-long process and does not stop with school or college. True education transforms the quality of life and does not merely prepare us for a job.

Viewed in this light, the humanities have a significant role to play. They help to develop the various types of thinking mentioned above, and certainly help to grasp ideas and values. We will better understand life and its problems. The present tendency to divide knowledge into utilitarian and non-utilitarian is self-defeating. How many science graduates take up specialisation and research? The majority drift into occupations that have no co-relation with the sciences.

One word that has aroused a lot of ill-feeling and bitterness in the field of education is "elitism". Well-run private schools and colleges have been termed elitist. If merit candidates are rewarded with admission to a higher degree course it is termed elitism. Isn't it more appropriate to really question why our state run schools and colleges fall short in every respect? If these institutions are well run, then the question of elitism does not arise. The concept of "streaming" is viciously attacked because it is labelled elitist. A common syllabus and test both for the advanced learner and the disadvantaged learner is more of an injustice for it handicaps the disadvantaged learner. If grouped according to ability, special classes (or remedial teaching) can enable the slow learner to achieve a better level,



SR. UO. Kanchan. Nickhath

Flt. cdt. Bindu Kellunni



**UO : Sunita
Niranjana
Aparna
Teeta**

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I. D. O. EXHIBITS



while a more challenging syllabus for the advanced learner helps him to excel. This kind of programme helps us to achieve the goal of liberal education - to help every student achieve the best he or she is capable of.

We in Stella Maris have repeatedly examined our goals and objectives. Many of the ideas have already been put into practice. We emphasize the all round development of the students, help her acquire self-study skills, increase her sense of social responsibility by making value education and service projects an integral part of the academic programme. We have evolved a satisfactory system of "streaming" for English language teaching and introduced remedial teaching where necessary. We in Stella Maris hold aloft the flag of liberal education. □

I.D.O.

Someone seems to be lying down with her face in a mud pack. Is she in a beauty parlour? No, no—it's part of the course in Pharmaceutical and Indian Medicine.

Something gory and bloody but real and quite effective—that is how the students of Advertizing depict the life of a woman—wading through dowry problems, female infanticide, sex stereotypes.

Ugh—it stinks. Naturally, if you keep food for two days! But not if you do a course on Food Preservation and Food Microbiology in your IIInd Semester.

Shall I go to Kashmir or perhaps visit Kanya Kumari? In any case, how does one get there or anywhere? Ask some of them who did Tourism in Semester IV.

What's Sr. Principal holding in her hand—a human skeleton or rather a picture of it. A mistake? — Not really. That happens when you visit an exhibition put up by the students of Nutrition, Health and Hygiene, Semester II.

And so we have a whole new range of courses—like English for Competitive Purposes, Painting, Interior Decoration, Tamil for Competitive Purposes, Marketing and Management—to study in the under-graduate course.

Each student is permitted to opt for three courses; through a process of selection—interviews and admission tests—she is placed in any one of the three courses she has opted for. Some departments, however prefer to have students of other departments only, not their own.

The introduction of these courses is one of the most significant developments in the making of the curriculum, under Autonomy. The main idea is that when the student leaves College, she leaves with something more than a knowledge of just her major subject. "All these courses have a basic philosophy of arousing the student's intellectual curiosity and stimulating their physical, intellectual and technical skill", says the prospectus.

- * I.D.O. has been taken casually—as a relaxation from the Major subjects.
- * It has also been taken very seriously as a supplement to the Major subjects.

—Student feedback

Where did the idea come from? It was the second year of Autonomy; we had the freedom to actually 'tamper' with the syllabus. In her search for a comprehensive and creative syllabus, Sr. Principal collected the syllabi of various colleges, from India and all over the world. When she brought up the suggestion the staff responded very enthusiastically. A steering committee was formed to identify the available resources—in terms of staff qualifications and materials—and it was discovered that there was a possibility of at least a hundred and fifty courses to be presented to the students. This was narrowed down to twenty-four, two courses to be handled by each department; twelve courses to choose from for the IInd Semester; and twelve more for the IVth Semester.

As an experiment, I.D.O. has proved very effective; it has encouraged a lot of interaction between the departments; moreover, it has enabled students to identify and develop certain aspects of their personality—when else would a Zoology student find time for a course in Journalism, or a Fine Arts student for Human Genetics? In a broad sense, this is an academic effort to recognise and acknowledge the wholeness of life—Arts and Sciences; the material and the spiritual; the illusive and the real. □

Service Oriented Programme

The main objective of the Service Oriented Programme, carried out in Semester V (Approx. 54 hrs.) is to provide varied opportunities to students to be exposed to and involved in the realities of their social environment. It also aims at creating in the students, the ability to think and analyse the causes as well as factors contributing towards the creation of these realities or problems as the case may be. Analytical thinking and logical reasoning leading to constructive conclusions should be the outcome of the involvement by students.

Broad based suggestions have been made in order to widen the scope for involvement of students, both at the theory and practical level. Importance to present day problems and issues, has been given while choosing the areas of work. We identify some of these areas for you :

LABOUR WELFARE

The study of this class of people will enable students to understand the labour movement, labour laws and labour welfare measures. Socio-economic conditions can be studied for further improvement and implementation of measures.

HEALTH WELFARE

An important and vast area of work with tremendous scope for involvement and study. Various aspects under health programmes can be studied and students could involve themselves in practical work related to health problems and schemes.

ADULT EDUCATION / MASS LITERACY

Non-formal education activities and Mass Literacy projects can be organised, keeping in mind the needs of each target group. Various courses, specific functional literacy classes and vocation oriented education classes can be held. Different trainings can also be included under adult education activities.

WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

Development oriented studies and programmes can be conducted for and about women's groups, leading to communication with.

1. Tamilnadu Corporation for Development of Women and other Govt. Concerns.
2. Numerous institutions working in the field of development for women.
Tamilnadu Joint Action Council for Women
Central and State Social Welfare Boards
Womens Voluntary Service etc.
3. Women and legal rights.

WELFARE OF THE AGED

This is a sphere of activity which is gaining importance in the present day context. It is aimed at educating the public/adults/children on their responsibilities towards the aged.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Development of rural areas/villages, development strategies, and aspects connected with the same to be studied in depth.

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

The objective of this is to develop in students an ability to understand the community, identify the problems and learn to participate in the development and welfare of less privileged communities.

CITIZENSHIP

Every educated person has a responsibility towards the society which provides him/her with educational facilities. A responsible citizen is an asset in promoting law and order in society and in making his country a safe and happy place to live in. Every person should aspire to become the citizen of the world making the best contribution to the society, utilising his potentials to the fullest - A proper understanding of one's rights and duties and the rights and duties of others and the possibility of living in harmony are emphasised.

This programme, prerequisite to a bachelor's degree, forms an essential part of the curriculum in which every student necessarily participates. □

*O My brave Soul !
O farther, farther sail !
O daring joy, but safe !
 are they not all the seas of God ?
O farther, farther, farther sail !*

—WHITMAN

* * *

*I kiss my hand
To the Stars, levelly—as under
Straight waiting him out of it; and
Glow, glory in thunder*

—G. M. HOPKINS

* * *

And a poet said, "Speak to us of beauty".
And he answered :

Where shall you seek beauty, and how shall you find her
unless she herself be your way and your guide ?

From Our Library

Anitha Cherian, Shoba Vishwanath, M.A. English, Lakshmi Kamal, B.A. English

This may seem like a drop in the ocean, but we'd like to share with you some of those extraordinary books from our library.

* Levin, Bernard. **The Way We Live Now.** London: Jonathan Cape, 1984.

This collection of essays from Bernard Levin's weekly column in **The Times** comes as a reminder from Levin that the most extraordinary fact about the physical universe is that it is indestructible. What matters then, is not so much the newspaper columnist's deliberations on injustice or the totalitarian mind, as his apprehension of the way we live now, or as Levin puts it, "the way it seems to me we live".

Levin moves through an amazing range of subjects—from books to opera to free speech to murder to sensationalism—all contemporary. Through it all he suggests to the reader our unnatural inclination toward a "foul spring." Take his essay, "The ascent of man." Levin analyses protest as manifest in the protesters themselves: "ranters and ravers." He identifies their initial provocation as hatred of life as opposed to love for a cause. He interprets them in their violent and negative approach, as nihilists, bent on destroying society. Levin comments, "O Judgement! thou art fled to brutish beasts, And men have lost their reason! They had better get it back before it is too late. When I was a student of Sir Karl Popper's he once faced us, in a lecture, with a conundrum. Suppose, he said, that you could prove to a Nazi that Nazism was erroneous and wicked—really prove it, so that he was entirely convinced. Would you wish to do so, and would you think it worthwhile? Yes, we said, of course. 'But what,' said the sage, 'if the Nazi replies, 'I spit on your proof,' and shoots you?' We fell silent at the extraordinary paradox of a mind that rejects mind. We would not, I think, find it so extraordinary today."

To formative minds such as ours, **The Way We Live Now** offers excellent perspectives. We are left with thoughts that history builds not on single events, rather on attitudes and prejudices that temper daily life. It is indeed good for us to remember Santayana whom Levin quotes: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

* Peters, Thomas J and Waterman Jr., Robert H. **In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-run Companies.** New York: Harper & Row, 1982.

In the world of corporate management, the frequent question asked is, why do some companies fare excellently while others don't? The answer to this lies in **In Search of Excellence.** The book is an interesting study of the secrets behind

the success of the best companies of the US, supported with sound social and economic theory. The issues discussed are an epic compilation from various sources—structured interviews, press coverages and annual reports of the past 25 years of the best American companies. The lessons given are from excellent companies—a term which becomes synonymous with IBM, HP, Western Electric, Boeing, Mc Donald's, and many others, representing the cross section of the American industrial world of High Tech, Consumer Goods, Project Management, General, Service and Research based Industries.

The first part traces back the origins of today's managerial thinking to Elton Mayo and Chester Bernard, who as early as the 1930s insisted on breaking up the superior/subordinate, the corollary that orders are issued (the indifferent Boss) and automatically obeyed (the employee/salesman). Instead, it is "attention to the employees, not work conditions per se that has the dominant effect on productivity." This may well be the central message of the book—the importance of the average man, who, as someone remarked, is to be seen not as a pair of hands, but a source of ideas.

The corporate manager must realize the individual's need to express himself and allow a great deal of autonomy, even practical risk taking, often encouraged in the excellent companies. It is in view of this need for self-image that IBM, for eg. sets nominal quotas that 70-80% of its sales people are able to fulfill. There are also instances where stories, legends, and even fairy tales are allowed to develop around an organization. A lean corporate staff is preferable, as perhaps in Western Electric, where 54,000 employees have only about a 100 corporate managers at the headquarters. Not only do these steps increase the service standards, but also create the sense of commitment vital to any firm.

The second part of the book consists of the bulk of the theories of management. The third part is an elaboration of the various ideals already indicated in Part One.

The authors, in assessing American management, underline shortcomings and failures—the recent Japanese and West German invasion on the American scene, being a case in point. They also underline the discrepancy between theories taught at business school and actual situation.

The book makes us wonder about the chances for better relationship between corporate manager and employee in India. How do we reconcile business-heirs and political trade unions. We look into efforts made in this direction of bettering employer-employee communication. A regulated uniform has been encouraged in almost all big companies, in order to create a feeling of fellowship, possibly, to eliminate discrimination. Nearer at home, in Madras, we find corporate managers of Shaw Wallace or Shriram Chit Funds organizing meetings and discussions to keep in touch with the people. MRF is another case in point. Their use of the mass media has created an awareness of MRF as a household name—to the extent of making the tyre a LEGEND.

From the Indian point of view the message of the book seems all the more relevant. Our business schools are twice removed from reality. We continue to study the theories of a western situation, not always applicable to India, with its complex sociological, political and economic set up. Only a drastic change at the college level will alter Indian industrial management. We are still in a transitional period with a long way ahead for managerial perfection.

***The World of Rodin : 1840 - 1917** (Time-Life Library of Art)

ed. Hale, William K. Verona : Time Life Books, 1969

Auguste Rodin's figure, **The Thinker**, sits and broods atop **The Gates of Hell**. It was commissioned in the eighteen eighties, and designed as a Paris museum. It was inspired by Rodin's study of different idioms of self-expression. Some of his best works like **The Thinker**, **The Kiss**, **The Prodigal**, **Fugit Amor** and **Eternal Springtime** are all expanded versions of the characters who had peopled **The Gates**.

The Gates of Hell was conceived and executed by Rodin in the tradition set by Dante in **Inferno**, and Michael Angelo in **The Last Judgement**. In its design he is indebted to Michael Angelo's superhuman forms, especially that of Jeremiah on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and to the French sculptor Carpeaux's version of Ugolino. Rodin had been totally taken up with Dante's **Inferno**. So much so he explains his conceptualization of **The Thinker** : "Dante, thinking of the plan of his poem. When that idea did not materialize I conceived of another Thinker, a naked man seated upon a rock, his feet drawn under him, his fist against his teeth, he dreams. The fertile thought slowly elaborates itself within his brain. He is no longer dreamer, he is creator." The identity of Rodin's enigma is still unclear. When it was exhibited in 1889 Rodin entitled it the Poet. But which poet? Rodin had acknowledged the influence of Baudelaire's poetry on his work, just as he had Dante's. One wonders if the poet is Rodin's tribute to either of these men, or to the poet as creator, probably Rodin himself?

Rodin's sculpture owes much to the verse of Baudelaire, who had given expression to the melancholic moods of Romanticism. This was an age of disenchantment and of disillusionment. The materialistic world was empty, and haunted by evil. This was also the age of Paul Verlaine, and Arthur Rimbaud.

Rodin's figures, entrapped in bronze reveal a desperate urge to break free—like souls in anguish look towards death. **The Thinker** sits as if in judgement on himself and humanity, his body taut with the tension of thought. Deep in "tortured reverie" the Thinker is both embroiled in and yet distanced from the struggles of those struggling beneath and around him. Rodin's agonised theatre is a statement of his own belief that "hell is suffered not only by the dead, but by the living, that it is a bleak realm of false goals, lost dreams and unrealized passions." His words

echo the latent pessimism of Michael Angelo's **The Last Judgement** (the ironic subsiding of the euphoria which typified the Renaissance). Michael Angelo had said, "I live in sin, I live dying within myself and cry out to God 'Oh send that light so long foretold for all.'"

Michael Angelo's **The Last Judgement** was inspired by Dante's **Inferno**. Rodin was the disciple of Michael Angelo, the sculptor and painter, and of Dante the poet. Rodin's **The Gates of Hell** is a panoramic vision of the hell which is on earth. Rodin's interpretation of this Medieval and Renaissance concept, is decidedly modernist. In his scheme of things Rodin has shifted the Thinker to the centre of his cosmology. Michael Angelo's **The Last Judgement** had Christ as its focal figure. Rodin's sculpture reveals a vision that was unusual to his age. His focus is on the individual—the creative, thinking individual. Rodin does not look forward to the future certainty of damnation, he is concerned with the tension of the present moment, which is fraught with suffering. Awareness and endurance now become the key to survival. The Thinker and other figures which are a part of **The Gates** are essentially independent of one another—another reiteration of the fact that "man in his personal agonies must finally face them alone."

When Baudelaire wrote "I am more beautiful, oh mortal, than a dream in stone," he could have well been talking about Rodin's **Gates**. It is essential that the beauty of the human race which Rodin captures in clay and bronze, should not be limited to a "dream in stone." With **The Thinker** Rodin has created an archetypal figure for the twentieth century.

*Akbar, M. J. Nehru : **The Making of India**.
Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1988

Belonging to a generation that has had no direct contact with the freedom struggle, a generation that has become used to using 'politics' as a dirty word, it is hardly surprising that many of us look at the past with a lot of cynicism—there is a pleasure in breaking 'myths ! It is done, whether consciously or unconsciously. In our 'present', sentiments such as, 'what did Gandhi do?' 'His philosophy of non-violence and satyagraha was and is all wrong', 'Nehru has abused democracy by trying to establish a dynasty', are not uncommon.

M. J. Akbar's 'Nehru : The Making of India'—is a book that questions this kind of smug cynicism. Akbar says: "For me this book has been the fulcrum of a journey into my country's recent past, a search which had a personal significance, as I needed to know why the unity of India had been destroyed in the name of Islam. Through the prism of one man's life I discovered the illumination which enabled me to see the many dimensions of the philosophy of unity, as well as the nature of the struggle." And elsewhere he says: "It is important to understand the genesis." And as the title itself quite clearly indicates the book is about 'the making of India'.

The book begins with the very end of the Mughal era/the beginning of the British domination and covers the events till 1964. But the consciousness of the commentator sitting in the 1980's takes the book farther than 1964. In a sense the book is an examination of Indian nationalism—it begins with a splintered nation with a very low sense of national awareness, traces the growth of a national ethos, presents the bifurcating of the ethos and finally studies the attempt made by the post-partition country to believe in itself.

The book is about recent Indian history. But it is also a biography, one naturally gets to know a lot about Nehru. Nehru is definitely not a single dimensional personality, we see him as a picture of many things—Nehru, the son of one of the richest men in the country; Nehru who was educated in Harrow and later in Oxford and Cambridge (at that stage an 'extremist', Nehru who criticised his father's moderate politics); Nehru, who came under the influence of Gandhi's 'austere politics' and got to know the 'poor' India; Nehru, whom Gandhi nominated as his heir; Nehru, who even while admiring Gandhi retained his individuality and had the courage to think differently from his mentor; Nehru, who had no patience with communalism, whatever form it took; Nehru, whom Rabindranath Tagore called 'Rituraj'—the representative spirit of spring, its youth and triumphant joy; Nehru, who had the sense of humour and perspective necessary to lampoon himself under the pseudonym Chanakya; Nehru, who produced some of the most beautiful English prose; Nehru, the 'agnostic visionary of modern India'; who towards the end of his life was seen as the reincarnation of a yogi and as a modern avatar of Lord Krishna (an old lady called him as much and gifted him a golden crown); Nehru, the man who lived through a partition and still believed in unity; and Nehru, the idealist who defined idealism as the 'realism of tomorrow'—He was ultimately a man who was "greater than his deeds".

Many other leaders of the period are also a part of this book—Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Jinnah, Patel, Azad, Rajagopalachari and many more. One cannot assert that M.J. Akbar has been impartial in his treatment of all of them. But the very fact that he takes sides makes the book interesting reading.

The significance of the book, personally, has been in the sense of history in it. It has been said that "Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it". Nehru wrote in his last will and testament: "Though I have discarded much of past tradition and custom, and am anxious that India should rid herself of all shackles that bind and constrain her and divide her people, and suppress vast numbers of them, and prevent the free development of the body and the spirit; though I seek all this, yet I do not wish to cut myself from the past completely. I am proud of that great inheritance that has been, and is, ours, and I am conscious that I too, like all of us, am a link in that unbroken chain which goes back to the dawn of history in the immemorial past of India; that chain I would not break, for I treasure it and seek inspiration from it." Living as we do in a world where

communalism and secession are aspects of our everyday reality, this book with its 'secular interpretation of history' is very relevant to us because it reminds us of this inheritance. What we do with it lies in our hands".

*Banks, Olive, / **Faces of Feminism : A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement.** / Oxford : Blackwell, 1989

The claim that women were weaker than men was a powerful argument in opposition to the employment of women, especially, although not necessarily, in areas that were regarded as male preserves. Medicine is a particularly interesting case, and one where the battle was particularly hard fought, since it was argued not only that its study was physically and intellectually too difficult for women, but that its indecency was also a threat to the preservation of female purity.

People have reacted to Feminism in a variety of ways: scepticism, ridicule, acceptance, denial, indulgence and even admiration; and many books have been written to explain, to define, to persuade—a little bit defensive perhaps or quite openly aggressive. Olive Banks' **Faces of Feminism** could have been just another of those.

What makes this book slightly different is that the author steers clear of the kind of angry controversy that Feminism usually generates. One might call this work a dispassionately historical view of Feminism.

Banks begins with the various movements that have been linked directly or indirectly with Feminism—the French Revolution and Unitarianism which washed up a wave of freedom in all spheres; the Anti-slavery Movement which was identified with Feminism in its goal of breaking bonds of any kind; the Temperance Movement that saw alcoholism as the evil cause of women's problems. While its association with certain of these movements was quite favourable, the Feminist cause was severely hampered by its association with others, as for example, Communitarianism and the Oneida Movement both of which advocated "free love". Perhaps this was why Feminism came to be regarded as something that destroyed stable social patterns with no alternative to offer.

Another interesting feature is that Banks does not play up the heroism of any of those women who fought for equal rights—Anna Wheeler, Mary Wollstonecraft, Emily Davies, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Annie Besant. She does however provide very brief glimpses of their lives and of the reasons that could have

motivated them into the Movement. There is considerable squabbling between these women; we find each one advocating one aspect of Feminism and these aspects sometimes do clash. What happens then? Victoria Woodhull (a woman of "great beauty, intelligence and charm," editor and publisher of a pro-feminist weekly) publishes Elibabeth Tilton's love affair with Henry Ward Beecher, (both of them well-known "supporters of women's suffrage"), thus causing a scandal that is quite detrimental to the cause.

And this appears to be the essential problem regarding Feminism: that "it has seemed to stand for both sexual repression and free love, for independence and for protection for women, as identical with and essentially different from men." Banks judiciously refrains from trying to resolve the problem. Instead she links it up as a consequence of religious attitudes, of the rise of the bourgeoisie, of industrialisation and hence the separation of the home and the working world and finally, the cult of domesticity. □

O What a Bestial Day!

Lakshmi Subramanian, MA English

"All changed, changed utterly.
A terrible beauty is born"

said Yeats of the Irish uprising of Easter 1916. Would he have said the same of the present revolution in China?

Freedom and Democracy—the twin aspirations for which many a nation has had its share of sacrifice and bloodshed—are the cause of yet another revolution in China. Going by history, China has been for many years now, the seat of endless war and bloodshed. China has of course seen patterned ideological years under Mao Zedong, and in more recent times, Deng Xiopeng; but the present revolution and the massacre seem to destructure these very patternings. Tiananmen Square is probably the most cynical incident of the century. The suppression of "the first blooms of freedom" has resulted in the Government forfeiting the trust of its people. The bloodshed has created hate and terror, anticipating the unrest and the uncertainty that is to follow.

Repression, force, and violence seem to have become the order of the day. The greed for personal power seems to stretch man beyond the barriers of basic moral values and incites him thereby to destroy mind itself. "The desire to destroy mind wells up from a stream so deep and so dark that it can only be described as anti-life" (Bernard Levin). In the case of China, the clash seems between the will to power and the will to freedom. The students cried for freedom, democracy, cleansing, restructuring; the leaders stood by law and order, party rules and patriotism. Orwell had once said in 1984, "When you don't observe

party rules you are dead." In China, 4 June 1989 saw the patriots quelling the rebels. As Deng stated over the media, in praise of his soldiers, "facing a life-threatening situation, our troops never forgot the country's interest." Mao's cherished opinion, "Power flows from the barrel of the gun" seemed to be just the convenient commandment to turn to.

The tragedy of Tiananmen Square takes me to Levin's cry, "O Judgement; Thou art fled to Brutish Beasts. And men have lost their reason." The focus comes to rest on force and violence, frightening in Forster's interpretation: "It may be the ultimate reality on this earth, but it does not always get to the front." Force and violence, an essential part of man's make-up, maybe the ultimate reality—and when it does take control, it projects a sickening and terrifying picture: a grim saga of death and terror, thousands of men and women bleeding from wounds, more internal than external.

But, if we were to view from yet another perspective, we cannot help but not ignore another side to the revolution. Judging by the concept of a revolution and the ideal for which it is fought, we can almost say that the revolution in China was no revolution at all. We really are not questioning the ideals for which it was fought. But did the students involved really know what they were letting themselves in for? Could they have truly assessed the pros and the cons of such a revolution? Was their belief in the revolution really strong enough to withhold such a terrible blow? One wonders if the question of the will to power can be applied from this point of view? It does not seem totally impossible to imagine that personal power may have initiated an already aware student body to feed its hunger for power. But of course this is only hypothetical.

Ironically enough, when Soviet Union's Perestroika and Glasnost are being gladly welcomed by her people and the world over, at a time when Communist countries like Chile, Argentina, Hungary and Poland are privileged to witness the dawn of independence, China still continues to believe in closed endings. And ironically, the 1989 crushed rebellion coincides with the year of the bicentennial French bash, when we remind ourselves, one more time, of the storming of the Bastille and the dream reality of the humanitarian declaration of 1789. The insistence on force makes China's "Great leap forward," seem not so great and not so forward. And yet this revolution is most definitely a significant marker in the struggle for freedom. It may be only a phase in an ongoing struggle—as a revolutionary remarked, "It is not over yet, just you wait and see." So probably in the meantime the people can only hope and pray with Tagore:

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert of dead habits.

Into that Heaven of Freedom, my Father, let my country awake. □

இளந்தளிர்! இளவேனிலே! உனை நம்பியே....!

விஜயா ஆசீர், தமிழ்த்துறை

இளமைப் பருவம்—அதுதான் மன வளம் நிறைந்த உருவம். அப்பருவத்திலே, பார்க்கும் பார்வையிலே எதையும் ஆழ அறிந்து கொள்ளும் ஆர்வம் உண்டு. நெஞ்சிலே செயலாற்றும் திறனும் மிக உண்டு. அக்காவியக் கண்களின் துடிப்பை உணர்ந்த மானிடம், எப்பொறுப்பையும் தயக்கமின்றி அவர் கரத்தில் கொடுத்து, அவர் செயலாற்றும் வகையைப் பார்த்து மகிழும். பாவலர் பாராட்டும் பருவம் அது. ஆர்வலர் நெருங்கி அன்பு கொள்ள விரும்பும் பருவம் அது.

இப்பருவத்திலே உன்னை, உன்னை மட்டும் நம்பியே இந்நாட்டின் ஆக்கமிகு செயல்கள் காத்திருக்கின்றன. உன் சிரிப்பை வினாயச் செய்து இளமைப் பொறுப்பை யுணர்ந்து நீ பணியாற்ற வேண்டுமென்று விரும்புகின்ற உலகம் இவ்வுலகம்.

ஆனால் நீயோ இதனை மறந்து, நான் எதற்காகப் பிறந்தேன்? என்று சில வேளை உன்னிலே கேள்வி எழுப்புகியும், உன் கேள்வியிலே, நீ பதில் காணத் துடிக்கும் துடிப்பும் சேர்ந்தே உள்ளது. துன்பத்தில், வன்முறையில் வீழ்ந்து சுழலும் உன் நாட்டை இன்பத்தின் கரையைக் காணும்படி நீ செய்ய வேண்டும் என்ற எண்ணம் கூடவே அதில் அடங்கியிருக்கலாம். ஆனால் இவ்வஞ்சனையும், வன்முறையும் எளிதில் நீங்குமா? என எண்ணி உன் எண்ணங்களுக்குக்கூட ஓய்வு தந்து விடுகியும்.

நீரில்லாப் பொய்கையிலே நிலைத்திருவதில்லை மீன்; மலரில்லாப் பொழில் தனில் மறுகி விடும் பூவண்டு. இங்ஙனம் வறுமையினால் உயிரோடு போராடுகின்ற மானிடருக்கும் இரங்க எண்ணுகின்றது உன் மனம். ஆனால் எங்கோ, எங்கோ உன் ஆசைக் கெல்லாம் ஓர் ஒளிப்பிடத்தை உன் மனத்தில் உருவாக்கிக் கொள்கியும். இவர்களுக்கும் புதுவாழ்வு அளிக்க முடியுமா? என்பதே உன் கேள்வியாக இருந்து விடுகிறது.

வசந்தத்திலே, வளைய, வளைய, வலம் வரும் இளம் பருவத்திலே வேலை வாய்ப்பின்றி, உரு நலனும், மன நலனும் கெட்டுவிட்ட இந்நாட்டு மன்னராம் இளைஞருக்குப் புதிய வழிகளும் அரசு அமைத்துத் தருவது ஒருபுறமிருக்க, நீயும் பல புதிய எண்ணங்களைப் புதிய வார்ப்பிலே கொண்டு வர எண்ணுகின்றாய். ஆனால் ஏனோ, உன் கரங்களுக்கு மட்டும் கட்டுப்பாடு விதித்து விடுகின்றாய்.

வாழ்க்கையிலே சமத்துவமும், மனத்திலே சமத்துவமும் பிறக்க வாழ்வெல்லாம் பாடுபட வேண்டும் என்று கொதித்தெழுகின்றாய். வாழ்க்கையின் பாதையிலே இதையே எண்ணி நீ செயலாற்ற விழையும்போது, தகாத எதிர்பாராத மாறுதல்களின் குறுக்கீடு நேரிடுமோ என அஞ்சி, அஞ்சி ஒதுங்கி விடுகின்றாய்.

ஏன் இளைஞரே, ஏன் இந்தத் தயக்கம். தயங்கி நின்ற பழங்காலம் மறையட்டும். உன்னால் தான் வேண்டாத பழமையின் படிவம் மாறி புதிய வார்ப்பு உருவாக வேண்டும்.

“யாரோ என் உள்ளக் கதவைத் தட்டுகிறார்கள்.” “நான் ஆற்ற வேண்டிய கடமைக்காகக் காத்திருக்கின்றார்கள்”, என எண்ணி நாட்டுக்கும், வீட்டுக்கும், உனைச் சார்ந்த சுற்றுப்புறத்தார் நலனுக்காகவும் பாடுபட உறுதியாக எண்ணத்தில் வித்து உன்றி விடு.

இவையாவும் நலமாக அமைய வேண்டுமானால் மலர் மல்லியின் சொல்லெடுத்து, மணம் பரப்பும் சொற்களே நின் சொல்லாகட்டும். அதிலும் தீக்கடைக்கோல் பொறியின் கனல் தெறிக்கட்டும்.

கடமையே உன் உள் மனத்தின் தனி ஓசையாகட்டும். அடிவானிற்கப்பாலும் ஆற்றல்மிகு உன் கரம் செயலாற்றத் துடிக்கட்டும். மனப்பறவை நலம் நாடி மட்டுமே பறக்கட்டும்.

தேவீ போன்ற உன் சுறு, சுறுப்பைக் கண்டு கவலைகள் கண் துயிலட்டும். பொன்னான பொழுதெல்லாம் உன் இரு கண்களாகத் திகழட்டும்.

நாட்டின் அச்சாணியிலும், திருகாணி இளைஞர் என்பதை ‘‘நீ’’ மறந்துவிடாதே. வேண்டாத ஆசைகளை மட்டும் போதிமரத்தடியின் புத்தனைப்போல் ஒதுக்கி விடு. நாட்டுக்கும், உனக்கும், நலம் பயக்கும் புது ஆசைகளை மட்டும் புத்தொளியுடன் உள்ளத் திலே தேக்கி விடு.

நம்பிக்கையின் விடிவெள்ளி நடை பாதைக்கு விளக்காகட்டும். நீ விரும்பும் புது மாற்றங்களுக்கும், புதிய வார்ப்புகளுக்கும் இனிய தமிழ் கை கொடுக்கட்டும். நீ வாழும் வகையிலே வையகமே வாழட்டும்.

அப்பாலுக்கும், அப்பாலே உயர்ந்து செல்ல நீ எடுத்து வைக்கும் புதிய அடி, புதிய பாதை உருவாக்கித் தரும். வாழ்க இளமை! வளர்க அவர்தம் புதிய எண்ணத் தின் புதிய வார்ப்புகள் !

□

The Rising Generation

Kamala V, B.A., History

The Winter session of the 1988 Parliament in India witnessed an important legislative enactment. It dealt with the amending of the Constitution. The sixty second amendment of the Constitution saw the lowering of the voting age from twenty one to eighteen, thus granting franchise to an estimated fifty million additional Indian citizens.

Democratic parliamentary practices are relatively new concepts to India and it was the British who introduced it in stages from the dawn of the twentieth century. However, it was only when India gained freedom that our Socialist Republican Constitution adopted universal adult franchise and granted right to vote to all Indian citizens aged twenty-one and above. India also adopted the British parliamentary and Cabinet system of government.

Dr. Ambedkar who piloted free India's Constitution in the Constituent Assembly stressed a prudent approach in dealing with "democratic experiments." He forewarned that democracy was alien to India and that it must be nurtured carefully. This cautioned approach is well justified considering the fact that despite four decades of freedom the population remains largely illiterate and steeped in superstition and archaic practices.

Seen in the light of these facts, the sixty-second amendment of the Constitution provides much food for thought. Given that illiteracy in India hovers around sixty percent, the need to enfranchise an additional multitude of the untutored fails to register.

The enactment sparked off many debates in intellectual circles regarding the motives of the Government in passing this act. Some felt that it was a move to pull the carpet from under the Opposition's feet especially because the National Front had included this measure in their forty point programme. Others felt that since many of the states had already adopted eighteen as the voting age for municipal and civic elections, the extension of this practice to parliamentary elections was but a logical progression. Besides a Joint Parliamentary Committee had recommended this measure twenty years ago and it seemed a matter of time before it was adopted.

What took most people by surprise was the speed at which the Congress (I) mooted the Electoral Reform Bills and had them passed by parliament days before the close of the Winter session. This served to strengthen the belief that the enactment was indirectly aimed at the opposition and with an eye on the coming

elections. The other astonishing fact was the unanimous approval that the enactment met with in the ranks of all major political parties. This proves beyond doubt the vested interests involved.

The implications of the enactment are many and several questions are raised. Firstly, when the masses are largely ignorant and easy prey to propoganda and exploitation, and where political awareness in terms of "awareness of rights" is minimal, can the government be justified in extending the already voluminous electorate? Because in India at present we need to improve upon the intrinsic nature of the electorate rather than on the size. Secondly, in the electoral game where vested interests are involved, the question of morality arises. As Betrand Russell once wrote of governments "psychology will show them how to generate at will whatever passions and inhibitions they may find convenient; and crowd psychology will teach them how to produce the kind of collective insanity which will conceal from the populace the foolish sacrifices it is making for the profit of the rulers".

With the passing of this act there are many who feel that politics would enter the college campus in a big way and are therefore against the legislation. There are still others who point out that politics had entered colleges in a large way decades ago. However all this talk is centred around a rare species—the educated Indian youth.

For most part the masses are fed on a diet of regional chauvinism and sustained on glamour by the politicians. Their ignorance makes them vulnerable especially the impressionable age group between 18 and 21. In a country with democratic ideals, the "right to vote" has no meaning without the "awareness of rights". So in reality these legislative measures promise nothing positive for the illiterate youth.

The present Central Government might be one up against the Opposition in this score but it might have caught the tiger by the tail. True progress can only be achieved through educating the electorate and increasing the material wealth in the country through productivity. Electoral gimmicks are no answer to the country's problems. □

For Too Long Indeed

Padmini Pai M.A., Social Work

A woman is rinsing clothes
Rinsing them
Through centuries,
Spreading them to dry
Between earth and heaven, on a line of heat

Deprived of the sky, of air, and of light
A woman is kneading
Mounds of flour,
A woman is threshing a field with the
flail of the four winds.
A woman is fording the rivers of time
Wearing out her feet on the midday stones,
Through age after age, with a bundle of grass on her head.
A woman is pacing the earth
Since time immemorial, a woman's body
wanders amidst milling crowds...
her hands search for her face
her feet search for their place.

Prayers. Offerings. Pilgrims. They have wreathed flowers at every auspicious shrine. They have lit lamps. They have burned spices—and at the end of it all, a tiny girl has come into the world. The clouds of superstition demand death by strangling. The women folk feed the female child to the jackals and the carrion birds of the jungle. They wail :

Thus we drive you forth, O daughter
Come not back, but send a brother.

Today how do we react to the concept of women's development. Take the 4 September 87 case study of Roop Kanwar. This beautiful 18 year old girl burnt herself alive on the funeral pyre of her husband, bringing "fame" to her community, but shame to humanity. This incident in Rajasthan made the headlines. Reactions turned into voices into meetings into discussions into bills into acts—finally into law. Yet the law has failed. Simply so because it does not carry enough meaning to make the people, within the clutches of dogma, realize that their beliefs are without base.

From years of unwritten history the woman has been pushed into pre-cast moulds. It is made very clear to her from the outset that she belongs either to her father or her husband or her son—at varying stages of life. She is expected to attach or detach herself from emotional and geographical surroundings as and when the need arises. The irony is that she is brought up in her own home with the notion that she belongs elsewhere. Under these circumstances the girl child in the 5 lakh odd villages of India develops an identity through association alone—this identity, at the cost of her personality, her emotions, sometimes even her life. She falls into a pattern that excludes choice or alternatives.

80% of India lives in her villages. 80% of our women spend 80% of their lives collecting fuel and water. What does development—"the bringing into maturity"—mean to the rural woman? What does development mean to the urban woman who is a day labourer in the construction of high - rise buildings? What does development mean to the 2% women who occupy these buildings?

Economic development is only one of the many facets of women's development. But then is it of any use when man controls the woman's purse string. Economic independence indeed is a tangible step towards development. The problem of measuring the extent of female participation in gainful employment seems difficult. The majority of female workers are illiterate, undisturbed by equal employment opportunities and equal wages. Women in urban organised sectors are slowly feeling the rays of development on their burning backs. But does organisation alone mean development. What about the section of women who have to stoop and sell their bodies to fill their stomachs? Development to a rural woman's eye is not as green as her surroundings. But in her seasonal employment situation, even to take a step towards small scale gainful employment is a big step. Theoretically development indications are :

level of literacy

employment potential

key position in politics/profession

age of marriage

No. of career women

Do women find the time to rationalize? It is only when the mind surfaces above the routine that development may be actually experienced. Development, like happiness, is a state of mind. In our land where woman is worshipped as Shakti why should women's development even pose a problem. (That is not to suggest the alternative of a woman-dominated society—the result will be just as nauseating).

“Reconstructing a changing society is like replacing the wheels of a train while it is in motion rather than rebuilding a house on a new foundation.” The management of this delicate task must lie with the gate-keepers of the community. They must be approached on a one-to-one casework basis. This approach alone will solve the problem wherein each person would be confronted with outdated, irrelevant behavioural modes on logical ground work, and made to understand that times have changed, that changes have to be made, inevitably, growth, but surely. It is not that we are without hope. There has been at least one Lopamudra, one Gargi, one Indira Gandhi, one Mother Teresa, one Kiran Bedi.

God gave us life—to live. We will celebrate every single day. We will respect the worth and the dignity of the human person. If the awakened Stella Marian can take a small, yet sure step toward this process of women's development, we could reinforce the vital truth—the right to “Gender Justice”. □

A Brief Ride through W. Germany

Dr. Hannah John, Faculty

The calm and serene landscapes, the beautifully arrayed springtime bed of flowers, the romantic castles, breath taking cathedrals, the coasts of the North sea, the Baltic sea, the green riches of the forests, the sub-Alpine mountains and snow covered Alps make this highly industrialised country very attractive. In the North Sea the temperature seldom rises over 18°C during summer. During winter the sun plays hide and seek for 7 hours a day. The beautiful, pleasant summer has sunshine for 7 hours a day. It rains right through the year. Electricity never fails!

Think of the Federal Republic of Germany—there appear Frankfurt airport, Frankfurt sausages, Mercedes Benz, the highways, Hitler and the Berlin Wall. The outstanding contribution to music by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert and Brotzmann is greatly appreciated throughout the world. This land has more than 60,00,000 people i.e., 248 persons/km² (In India 207 persons/km²). About 4.4 million foreigners live in this country. During the 1980's the natality and mortality rates remained unbelievably the same. The average age for men is 70 years and women 77 years. Many old people live in the state or Church owned homes. According to the German constitution both sexes have equal rights. In spite of this rule, the training positions and career opportunities in certain professions show preferences towards men.

The studies in school and in the universities are free. After the completion of kindergarten, the children enter the schools at the age of six and they take 13 years to complete the school. All the young people in this country must opt for either military or civil service for about 8 months after their school education. About 50% of the students learn job oriented skills. At the university the students are expected to complete the 10 semesters to obtain 'Diploma'. A teacher in the university with a Ph.D. wanting to become a Professor must complete 'Habitus' (a second Ph. D.) within a particular age limit. 'Be instructive and not informative' is a method followed by the teachers in the German universities. Even at the age of 60 and above, many Housewives and Farmers who never had the opportunity to study in the university, register themselves for a number of good programmes in the universities. The Ruhr University at Bochum had 40,000 students in 1987 and this number rose up to 50,000 in 1989. It is a pleasure to work in the science laboratories and the work moves faster with the advanced techniques. The climate is very conducive to hard work.

The acid rains in the 1960s brought a great awakening in this country which resulted in restoring the forests and lakes to some extent. The Green party and the peace movement are the political wings which lay a great emphasis on environmental protection and protection of the animals. Almost all the universities carry

out research projects in soil ecology and on the influence of environmental abuse. About a quarter of the Federal Republic's land is forest. The law strictly demands that the forests must be properly and consistently managed. It is forbidden to use wood as fuel. The beneficial influence of the forest on the soil, air and climate is well understood by the people of this land. In India, the forests cover 11% of the land area. For economic reasons our forests are disappearing leading to the decline of water and environmental deterioration. Can man find great solace from the industrialised land? Our cautious approach should be the preservation of our tropical forests to preserve our environment. □

From France

Rohini Ramesh, B.A., Economics

'If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang his bell,
What would you buy?'

As a student of 'Alliance Francaise de Madras,' one of my most cherished dreams had been to visit France, the one country that has always held a strange fascination for me. My delight knew no bounds, when in connection with 'The Festivals of France in India', the French government offered to sponsor hundred Indians, well versed in the French language and culture on a fully paid 2 week trip to France. Candidates had to primarily fill in a questionnaire based on French civilisation and summarize in French, a famous French play on the basis of which 300 candidates were called for an interview. This interview was held at each Alliance Francaise Centre in the country, and a final hundred candidates were selected. The unique feature of the scholarship was that besides looking after food, accommodation, sightseeing expenses and medical insurance, the French government also bore the cost of the airfare to Paris and back.

The scholarship holders, or 'Boursiers' were to be sent in batches to different places in France, each trip having a unique theme, falling under two broad categories - art or sport. Along with six other Indians, from different parts of India, I was sent to the north of France on an art appreciation scholarship.

The actual programme or 'stage' commenced in the middle of June. A long plane journey and a painful jet-lag did not deter our enthusiasm, as we looked out of the aircraft to catch our first few glimpses of Paris - the city that had been on our minds for so long. Like most eager tourists on their first trip to Paris, we looked out of the landing plane, expecting to see the 'Eiffel tower' - only to find, that it is situated in the heart of town, while in the 'Charles De Gaulle' Roissy airport is far removed from the city! From the airport, unaided we arrived at the

place where we were to stay - the fact that our first journey in the country was made by ourselves - and safely, was only thanks to the efficiency of the Paris Metro, the RATP and the RER, the suburban equivalent of the metro. The place we stayed at in Paris, was called FIAP a special centre for young foreigners. At FIAP, we met other youngsters from different parts of the world who were to join us in our 'stage' - there were two Canadians, three Irish, three Italians and an American. We were assigned a very friendly and efficient chaperone - Madelaine, who being a professional French tourist guide, made our stay extremely pleasant and informative.

Our five days in Paris were most enjoyable and adventurous. We visited all the most famous tourist spots - the most striking being 'Notre Dame', an extremely beautiful church, its stained-glass windows and its medieval architecture giving it an air of peace, piety and calm. The 'Sacre Coeur' another church of the same kind too is immensely awe-inspiring.

Tourists like nothing better than to stroll along the banks of the famous 'Seine', which divides Paris into the left and right banks respectively. Most of the famous structures dating back to the revolution and before are located in the vicinity of the river - 'Les Invalides', of Napoleon, 'Tuileries' - the gardens of the famous palace of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette which in the revolution were burnt to the ground - the 'Louvre', the largest museum in the world, which has the originals of Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo, 'Musie d' orsay' inaugurated last year, which was formerly a station, now converted into a museum concentrating on impressionist paintings - 'The place de l'opera' or Opera house, known for its formidable architecture ... one can go on and on !

What was probably the most breath taking of all sights was the 'Eiffel tower' - this 320 m. monument, providing a magnificent view of the entire city, was built exactly a hundred years ago by Gustav Eiffel. To celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the tower, there is a huge cake, exactly 320 m. opposite the tower. When the tower was first constructed, it was something totally unprecedented - and for that reason it was the bete-noire of most Parisians - this initial dislike that the French took to the 'Tour Eiffel', which ironically, attracts today, millions of tourists every year, calls to mind Mitterand's construction of the 'pyramid' in the 'Louvre'. The Parisians, who are genuinely fond of the ancient atmosphere of the 'Louvre', react with bitter animosity to the pyramid, which, being a modern construction, they think is ugly, clashing too strikingly with its surroundings. Another totally unique construction is the 'Centre de George Pompidou' an extremely modern structure, named after George Pompidou one of the most beloved of French Presidents.

Paris is a sublime blend of the modern and the ancient - its very ambience is free and uninhibited. We had the good fortune to visit all these places of interest - conventional and otherwise, besides meeting several French people, dining in traditional French restaurants, taking long walks down legendary streets like Champs Elysee, 'Mont Parnasse' and Boulevard Saint Michel. The bicentenary celebrations added an extra charm to the city - with street musicians at every corner, young ladies and men dressed in costumes of the time of the revolution, and Orchestras being conducted in big open spaces. We spent much time, just imbibing the typically Parisian atmosphere.

When those five days came to an end, we were truly sorry to leave Paris - but were full of a Joie de vivre, longing to experience the essence of the trip - the two weeks in the north of France that still lay ahead. We were sent to a region called 'Picardie' to a small, picturesque village - 'Pont Sainte Maxence'. The theme of our scholarship was the study of art and architecture in the medieval ages in France. There, we stayed in an old abbey situated by the side of a medieval church. On the same grounds, there was an archeological site, half discovered - the Chateau of the medieval king, Philippe Le Bel. We were actually given a chance to excavate on the site. We were also taken in and around 'Pont Sainte Maxence' studying at each place, monuments, palaces and churches built in the Gothic and Roman styles, typical of the medieval period.

In that brief period of two weeks, we were given the chance, not only to learn a great deal about art and architecture, but also to live in close proximity with the French, to study their way of life, to watch the trifling details of their habits, to perceive the nuances in their language and speech, to taste typical French cuisine, and other delicacies like varieties of cheese and wine, and to gaze at the chicly dressed French men and women. The whole experience was almost an awakening - an insight into the life and mode of thinking of a different race of people. We were at once, exposed, in that brief period, to the French, American, Irish and Canadian way of life. For our part, never had we felt so proud of our country's wealth in terms of culture and traditions - never had we loved it so much, as when we described it to so many foreigners, who listened to our stories open-mouthed envying us our civilization !

Whenever I walk down memory lane, and reminisce over the glorious opportunity I was given, that wave of nostalgia never fails to overwhelm me. The whole trip has been, not only a great educational and cultural experience, but an eye-opener - it has brought out the best in me - enabled me to acquire more friends - and more knowledge. It has also given me pure, undiluted pleasure - "pleasure! the thing that keeps us wanting!" It has indeed, whetted my appetite to visit the country again - to long to be able to take in again, the aura of excellence that lingers around its every corner. □

With Gratitude



Mrs. Darley Varghese joined Stella Maris College in 1950. Her soft good looks belie her strong determination and will — a discovery made by even her most reluctant student. She has been involved in the teaching of Hindi and the study of its literature, almost to the exclusion of all else. Her immense and abiding faith in God and her total dedication to following His will, has left its mark on us, Stella Maris College has indeed been fortunate to know her and to continue its association with her through the Department of Value Education and its Scripture class.

The members of the Stella Maris family — the managements, the faculty, the staff and the students — wish them both peace and joy for their golden years. □

With Gratitude

The end of the academic year 1988—1989 saw the Department of Languages very much the poorer because of the retirement of two of its much loved and respected members; Prof. B. Jayalakshmi, Head of the Tamil Department and Dr. Darley Varghese, Head of the Hindi Department.



Mrs. B. Jayalakshmi joined the Stella Maris faculty in 1951 when the college was located in Mylapore. She has seen the college through its infancy and nursed the department of Tamil to its present state. A devotee of Tamil Literature and Language her great desire has been to impart a portion of this veneration to the students. Keenly interested in student affairs, Mrs. Jayalakshmi has served as Dean of Students from 1981 to 1985. Modest and unassuming, she truly is a “woman of many parts”. Though retired from the field of academics her intimate association with Stella Maris continues unsevered, in her position as Controller of Examinations.

Thiru N. Appu was employed as an Office Assistant at Stella Maris College from January 1967 to April 1989. During these 22 years he did his work simply, quietly and faithfully. In spite of often suffering from ill health, he was ever helpful and ready for service.

We wish him peace and happiness.



An Interview with the Principal, Dr. Sr. Helen Vincent, fmm.

*Anita Cherian, Janaki Mukund, and Susan Alexander
(student editors) met with Sr Helen on 21 July 1989. Here are some excerpts :*

Student editors : Sr. Helen, would you tell us what it feels like to be responsible for nearly 2000 students ?

Sr. Helen : It is a big responsibility—girls with different temperaments and backgrounds. It's a rough ocean. Look at the college emblem : a ship sailing in the ocean. It is not helpless. There is a star to guide it. The same star guides me. I trust in God.

SE : How do you feel every time a new batch enters college and an old one leaves ?

Sr. Helen : And once again I say, look at the sea. Waves come and go. We don't see the old waves going back. They come, and they touch the shore, and they disappear. With every batch of students I feel their freshness. This keeps me going.

SE : What do you expect from students under your charge ?

Sr. Helen : I expect a Stella Marian to be honest, courageous, committed, self-reliant, and self-supportive. I expect her to help others at any time, at any cost. I don't necessarily expect my girls to become IAS officers or executives or councillors. But whatever they are, whatever they do, I expect them to think for themselves, to discern what is right and wrong, and to say it. Sometimes there are disappointments! When my students become helpless in these situations, I become very upset. We have given them so much training. Why do they despair? Whatever the situation there is always some solution - a ray of hope.

SE : The youth of today—do you feel we require to change our attitude? What glaring shortcomings do you see in our approach to life ?

Sr. Helen : I wouldn't say it is attitude alone. I feel the youth of today is a different breed altogether. I feel they are getting more dissipated, distracted, and disturbed. Their interest is not sustained. They know everything, but they refuse to go deeply into any one thing. They are not able

to. They aren't paying attention to deeper values except may be in the case of love and friendship. They don't see the value in taking instructions or advice, or listening to their elders. Parents are hesitant to talk to them. No one questions them. So why should they be any different? That is the problem. Every student is so deep, and what we see of each one is so superficial. Sometimes I see that depth—I go back to them and call them and spend time with them. Then I feel much better.

SE : Do you see a positive aspect ?

Sr. Helen : There is so much potential. They have courage, they can be daring. If their energies can be channelised effectively, they will be motivated—like dynamite! See what has happened in China. They were willing to fight the political situation. See what is happening in Sri Lanka. What we need is strong will and strong action.

SE : In today's world everything is moving so fast. Is the problem that the older generation does not have the time to understand the younger generation and vice versa ?

Sr. Helen : Do you think the older generation does not have the time ? That should be their priority. They are not taking the time. Nobody is taking the time to do what they should do.

SE : You can make the time.

Sr Helen : If you want to, yes.

SE : Don't you feel that there is a lot of pressure on youth to do well and that's why they are the way they are ?

Sr. Helen : The expectations are too high, with very little guidance and almost no direction. The peer group pressure is also terrible. But like I said before, if they can be guided properly, and given the right direction, they will be serious.

SE : After nearly 2½ years of autonomy for the college, are you pleased with the changes you have seen ?

Sr. Helen : I feel I share rather a sense of achievement. I'm not alone, I have had so much support from my staff. I feel so pleased with the intelligent students with whom I can discuss and argue and clarify. It still takes time and may be some of their legitimate proposals have been brushed aside. I have been able to allow myself to be confronted in the open by students, so I know that

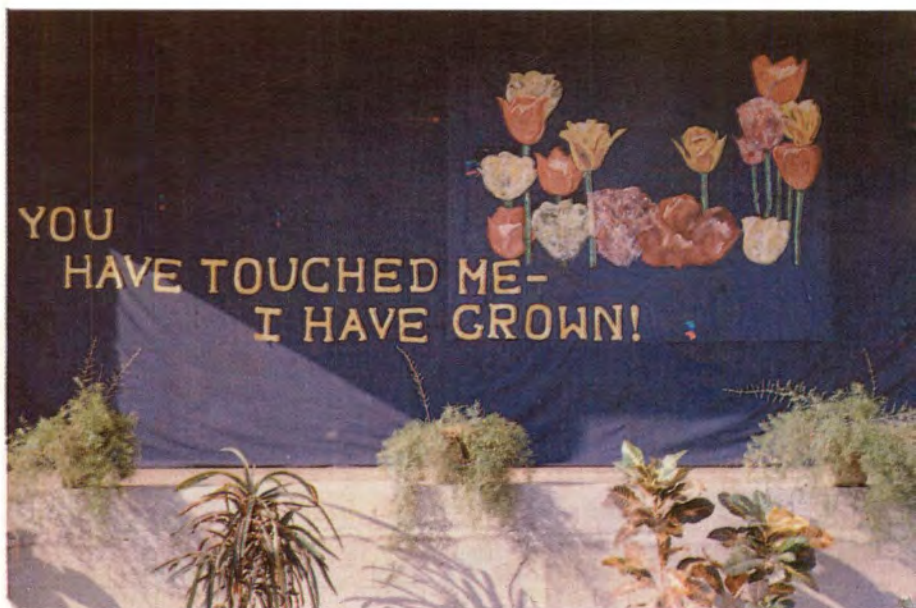


Susan, Janaki and Anitha Interview Sr. Helen





Campus Activity



autonomy is possible. Take the IDO and the Service Oriented Programmes—I was hesitant; Sr Christine was insistent. A familiar reaction was: "How do you expect people to come forward to take up this kind of activity?" Today you ask any student here—they are all very serious about their orientations. So I share this sense of achievement. This has also strengthened my hope and my vision. Anyway I will be retiring this year.

SE: After you retire, would you work in the same line?

Sr. Helen: You see, as a religious sister, I don't have any choice. Whatever they ask me to do, I will do. Left to myself, I would like to turn to a more quiet, spiritual life, with less involvement in other activities.

SE: What do you feel about the lowering of the vote age?

Sr. Helen: I am not very much in favour of this. They are increasing the number of votes when we do not receive personalised conveniences of franchise. It cannot be a plebiscite because we are powerless. You are increasing the voters, increasing the expenditure that is involved in exercising this right. Plus, what kind of education is our youth getting? Are they mature enough? You know how politics and politicians are and how easily youth can get carried away.

SE: In Stella Maris do you think we are mature enough?

Sr. Helen: I would say no, you are all not mature enough. But at least you are exposed to the training that we give you in leadership. All through the year we are preparing at one stage or the other so that you may know what kinds of leadership are needed.

SE: What are your reactions to the student revolution in China?

Sr. Helen: I feel very, very strongly—because their government had planned to bulldoze them. Whichever way you look at it, they were young, they were agitating. Was this the only way to suppress them? They have been wiped out—the youth. This is bound to have repercussions. Do they realize they have deprived themselves of the cream of youth?

SE: What are your interests outside college?

Sr. Helen: I love everything. I do not limit myself or my interests. Outside college I am on several committees—Arogya, the Society for Mental Health and Family Life, The Ecumenical Fellowship, the Association of Higher Studies, and now I have been asked to research and help with the history of this Institute. I am a lover of nature. I love birds and plants. I talk to plants.

I love beauty, and am a little bit of an artist myself. I paint and draw, I learned classical music in high school. I love animals. We have a dog Rambo. We go for night walks together. I love children. I love human beings. I like to pay attention to individuals. I know all my workers, their names, their families, I have sympathy.

SE : Who are the people who have influenced your way of thinking ?

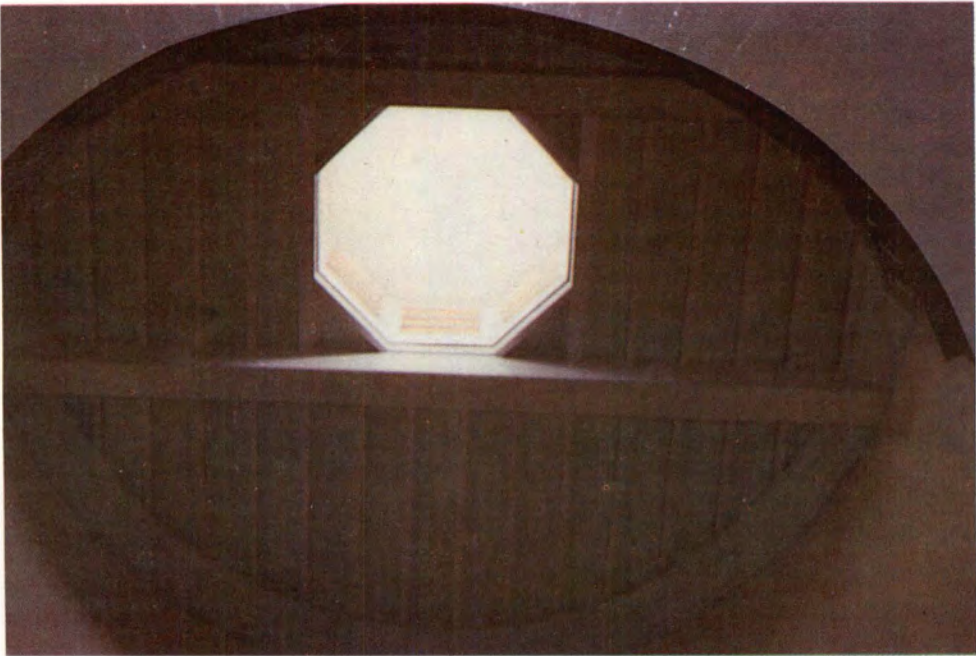
Sr. Helen : My parents, from whom I got much of my values and attitudes. I have to be worthy of them. My teachers, who recognised my worth, my generosity and my honesty. Mother Carla Rosa with her systematic and methodical ways. Gandhiji, whom I hero-worshipped. When he died, I fasted 13 days, and walked miles and miles. I once spoke about the man I admired the most—Nehru. I wasn't given a prize, because the principal differed with my principles. And above all Christ. I feel very strongly His goodness. The love of Christ urges me. I am a convert, and my faith is very much the stronger.

SE : What are the most important qualities a woman needs to face life ?

Sr. Helen : Today the problems and demands of life are very complicated and complex. A woman needs a lot of courage and a very deep faith in God. Faith in God gives courage. She must have faith in herself and in what she is doing. You can assert yourself if you are a strong woman. I am not a feminist. But I strongly feel that women power if given an opportunity can bring about the transformation of our society. But how much of money invested is used for women's welfare ? women's activities ? and how are we using it ? I encourage women with real calibre to go in for administration, because that is something which women can do excellently. I encourage them to go in for IAS.

SE : Do you miss teaching full-time ?

Sr. Helen : Yes, very much. I used to teach 20 hours happily ! And when I meet classes now and feel their eager responsiveness, I say, "Why, Lord, do I have to be glued to the chair ? of an administrator ?" □



—St. Bonaventure



Then...



... Now



Bonaventure

editors

Mr S. Sambandam, Chartered Engineer and Builder, who has worked on the renovation of century-old buildings such as Doveton House, W.C.C., and St. George's Cathedral, evaluated our 200 year old building, once the "Cloisters," now known as "Bonaventure." His efforts were directed at renovating the building, while maintaining intact its original spirit and appearance.

The problem was cracks which had developed in the roof. The causes were primarily :

- * differential expansion and contraction between the inner and outer periphery of the semi-circular edges. In all probability the factor responsible was the semi-shape, unfavourable to long term temperature effects.
- * wet rot, affecting rafters at the top contact surface.

The proposal was to save the building through proper rectification of wooden rafters and beams. In addition, the circular wooden staircase was to be supported with cantilever iron channels and with suitable ornamental supports at the landing ; windows, doors, and stretches of wall, exposed to weather and damaged extensively were to be replaced ; the worn out Hexagonal tiles were to be relaid ; the plastering had to be redone, with mortar of lime and cement. The only disconcerting factor was that the front portion of the building was to be finished without the portico.

The renovation was both heart-breaking and soul-stirring. It restored to us a building with the old charm, but without its quaintness, nevertheless an inheritance made intact.

An Experience in Space and Time

Nalini S, Jayshree V, M.A. Fine Arts

It was a bright, sunny morning when the two of us took a walk down memory lane to the old Fine Arts Department which is now called St. Bonaventure. It was no longer that old, dilapidated building of yesteryear but one that presented a fresh and new look as it stood brightly amidst the verdure : "the old clothed in new".

The layers of green unveiled in degrees the building until we finally stood in full view of the classical facade. We were overwhelmed by the grandeur of the facade with its large ionic columns and volutes deployed about a huge arched

doorway. Symmetry is established by means of an imaginary central axis. The balustrade demarcates the two-storeyed elevation and adds a rhythmical note to the whole.

The architectonic details occur as emphatic mouldings, projecting cornices and massive quoins that arrest the eye movement on either side of the facade. In spite of this geometric severity, the organic volutes of the ionic columns more than compensate, for they are repeated on a massive scale on the side and rear elevations too.

The sides of the building present interesting views with their curved profile. The rear has the "old world charm" with its red tiled faceted porch supported by columns. Views from all the four sides have the classical balance that is the hallmark of this structure. The balance is achieved through the distribution of solids and voids. This brick and masonry structure with its inherent stability made us feel at home. The true Roman arch which forms the system of construction in the building is the keynote of the entire building.

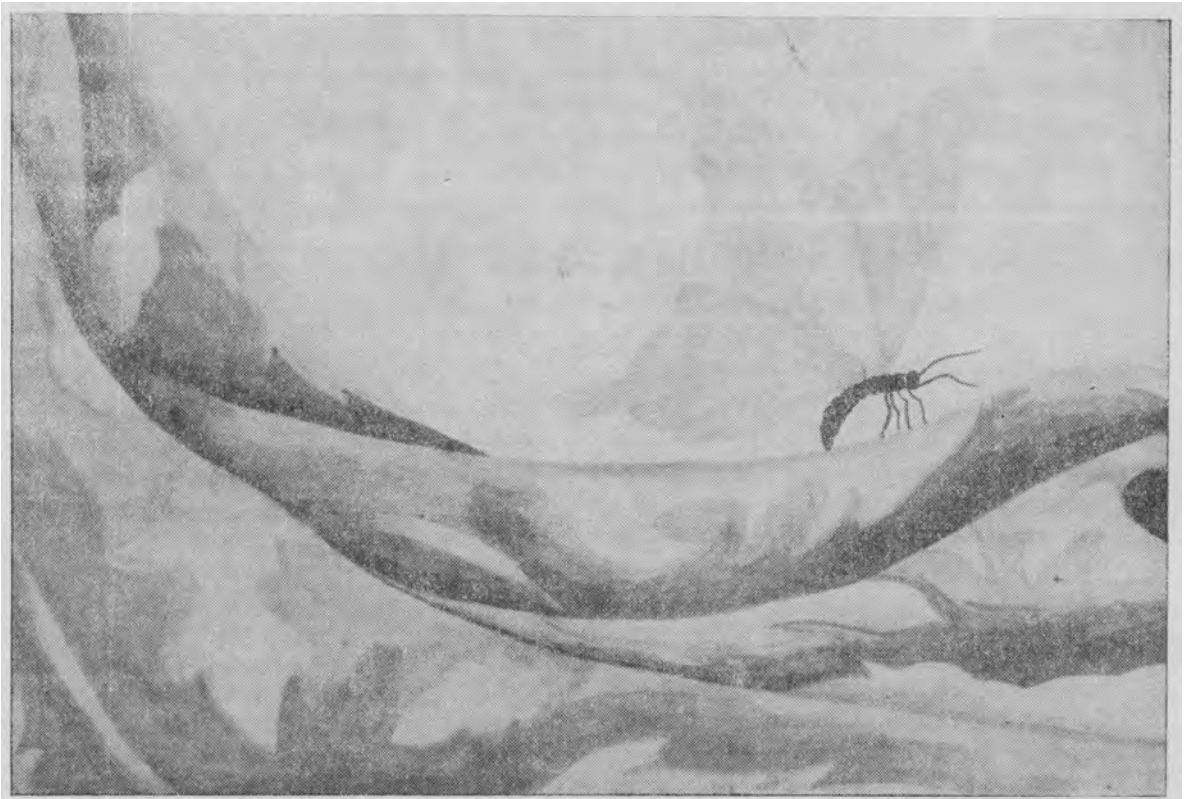
The emphatically demarcated entrance porch invited us to step into the circular hall which forms the powerful climax. Once inside, the cool interior space seemed to engulf us and made us an integral part of the interior. The impressive spiral staircase led our eyes upward onto the oculus from which soft light filters through. The curved walls of the circular hall are like two arms that encompass the elusive space that escapes into the clerestoried oculus. The spatial experience is heightened when one actually climbs up the wooden stairs punctuated by pretty pictures on the wall; the perfect pause being offered at the landing by the little figurine in the arched niche.

The stairs led us on to the secondary climax, viz. the major classrooms and prayer room entered by a common vestibule. The prayer room seems to be the last vestige of the monastic house that it formerly was. The classrooms are vaulted and very spacious. The organic shape creates an intimate atmosphere in spite of the large size thereby maintaining the rapport between the teacher and students. The walls are pierced by large windows which not only provide ample natural light and air but also offer refreshing views of the exterior which are essential for eye-rest and mind rest. The B.Com. students who currently occupy the building find the classrooms very comfortable and the atmosphere conducive to learning.

Once outside the major classrooms, our eye is immediately caught by the jewel-like blue and yellow stained glass right opposite the doorway. At this point we become aware of the atmospheric quality of light, light filtering through the stained glass and sidelights of the doorway opposite the main landing, and light coming through the main doorway on the ground floor.

Walking down the stairs constitutes the diminuendo of the sequence. The plan repeats itself on the groundfloor in the layout of the classrooms and N.C.C. room, the only difference lying in the fact that the latter is entered through the rear porch. The less important areas are tucked away between mysterious corridors and an equally mysterious staircase leads up to a minor classroom (occupied by the Computer science students) on the first floor. This classroom, in fact, can be entered from the outside by means of an incongruous spiral staircase. Ironically the trap door within the classroom seals off the 'mysterious' staircase, over which is placed the blackboard on an easel.

Our experiences of the building were coloured by alternating shades of open and closed, bright and dark, large and small areas which built up an interesting journey. The mood built itself and was sustained throughout. Once we stepped out into the bright sunlight we still carried with us the flavour of our spatial experience of the central hall which still remains the most powerful aspect of the building. □



கனவு பலிக்குது

B. S. கேத்ரின்
முதலாண்டு வணிகவியல்

எங்கும் புத்தொளி களிநடம் புரியுது
பழமைக் காரிருள் மெல்ல சரியுது,
குப்பையில் கோபுர சிற்பம் எழும்புது
கொத்தடி மைத்தொழில் அலறியே வீழுது

மேடுகள் பள்ளத் தாக்குகள் இணையுது
அன்பும் அறனும் நம்மைப் பிணைக்குது ;
உலகின் உயிர்கள் உன்னத மாகவே
புதுமை என்னும் மழைதலுல் நனையுது !

புதியதோர் பாரதம் பொங்கிப் பிறக்குது,
இளவுள்ளங்கள் உவகைப் புனலில் இறங்குது ;
கதிர்கள் அறுத்திடும் காலம் நெருங்குது
பலன்காண நமக்கொரு வாய்ப்பு மிருக்குது

உடல்வேர்த்து உழைத்துப் புவிவாழ இளைத்திட்ட
ஏழை உயிர்க்கொரு காலை விடியுது ;
புதுமை படைத்திட, பாதை வகுத்திட்ட
பாவலன் பாரதி கனவு பலிக்குது !

சொல் புதிது, சுவை புதிது!

கமித்ரா பிரசன்னா, பி. ஏ., ஆங்கில இலக்கியம், இரண்டாம் ஆண்டு

சொல்லில் உயர்ந்தவன், கவிச்சக்கரவர்த்தி, கம்ப நாட்டாழ்வான், என்றெல்லாம் போற்றப்படும் நம் சொல்லுக்கினிய கம்பன், தமிழ்ப் பெருஞ்சபையிலே வீற்றிருக்கும் நித்திய சூரியன், போர்த்தும் இருளிலே பிரகாசித்து நிற்கும் பால் நிலவு—இவன் கூறும் சொல் புதிது, இதன் சுவை புதிது, சொல்லின் பொருள் புதிது, பொருளின் மேன்மை புதிது, சுவையின் தாக்கம் புதிது, தாக்கத்தின் வீரியம் புதிது. இவையாவற்றின் சங்கமம் புதிது. கம்பனின் திறத்திற்குத்தான் இராமாயணத்தில் எத்தனை உதாரணங்கள் ! இவற்றுள் என் நெஞ்சைக் கவர்ந்தது ஒன்றுண்டு.

இராமனுக்கு விழா நடக்கப் போகின்றது; மும்மைசால் உலகுக்கெல்லாம் மூல மந்திரம், தம்மையே தமர்க்கு நல்கும் தனிப்பெரும் பதம், இம்மையே எழுமை நோய்க்கு மருந்தாம் இராமனுக்கு முடிசூட்டு விழா நடக்கப் போகின்றது; அறம் தழைத்தோங்க, வேதம் அருள் சுரந்து அறைந்த நீதித்திறம் தெரிந்து பிறந்த இராமனுக்கு முடிசூட்டு விழா; அயோத்தி மாநகரமே ஆர்பரிக்கின்றது. சோலைகளெல்லாம் பூக்களைச் சொரிந்து கொள்ள, பூமழை புனல் மழை புதுமென் சுண்ணத்தின் தூமழை தாளத்தின் தோயில் வெண் மழை பொன் மழை பாமழை என நகரமே குதூகலிக்க, ஆலைவாய்க் கரும்பின் தேனும், அரிதலைப் பாளைத்தேனும், சோலைவாய்க்கனியின் தேனும், மாலைவாய்

உருத்த தேனும் பொங்க, அந்த அயோத்தி நகரைக் கண்டு ஓர் உள்ளம் மட்டும் காழ்ப்புணர்ச்சி கொள்கிறது. ‘இராமனுக்கு முடிசூட்டு விழாவா? என் கூன் முதுகில் வில் உண்டைகளை எறிந்த இராமனுக்கு இவ் வாழ்வா?’ என மனத்தில் தோன்றிய பொறியானது காட்டுத் தீயென பரவி, மூவுலகத்திற்கும் இடுக்கண் மூட்டுபவளாகத் தோன்றுகிறாள்’ மந்தரை. கம்பன் இங்கு நமக்கு அறிமுகம் செய்து வைக்கின்றான் கைகேயியை. ஒரு கருத்தைச் சொல்லி, அதை மையமாக வைத்துப் பல நிகழ்ச்சிகளைப் பின்னி, அதே கருத்தை நிலைபெறச் செய்பவன் கம்பன். ஒரு கல்லிலே இரண்டு மாங்காய் என்பது போல், பொருட் சுவையோடு அருட் சுவையையும் கூட்டித் தருகின்றான். கம்பனின் கதா பாத்திரங்களுள் மிக முக்கியமானவள் கைகேயி. பூத நாயகன், நீர் சூழ்ந்த புவிக்கு நாயகன், சீதை நாயகன், வேத நாயகன், விதிக்கு நாயகனான இராமன் காட்டிற்குச் சென்று தருமத்தை நிலை நாட்ட, இராவணவதம் நிறைவேற விழிகோலுகின்றான் கைகேயி :

“ ஏய வரங்கள் இரண்டின் ஒன்றினால் என்
சேய் அரசாள்வது, சீதைகேள்வன் ஒன்றால்
போய் வனமாள்வது’ எனப் புகன்று நின்றாள்—
தீயவை யாவினும் சிறந்த தீயாள் ”

தன் வளர்ப்பு மகன் முடிசூட்போகின்றான் என்ற மகிழ்ச்சியில் திளைத்திருக்கும் கைகேயியை நோக்கி ‘எவன் பெற்ற மகனுக்கோ மனம் பொங்குகிறாயே? நின் மகன் பரதன், இராமன் முடிசூடிய பின், அவன் முன்னே அவந்தனாய் நிற்க நீ விரும்புவாயா?’ என வினவ,

“ விராவரும் புவிக்குளாம் வேதமே அன
இராமனைப் பயந்த ஏற்கு இடர் உண்டோ? ”

என்று கேட்ட ஆழ்ந்த பேரன்புடைய கைகேயி, மனம் மாறித் தசரதன் வரவிற்காக அல்ல கோலமாக கிடக்கவும், தசரதன் வந்தவுடன் இரண்டு வரங்கள் கேட்கவும் செய்கின்றாள். தவ்ப்புதல்வன் என்று இராமனைக் கூறும் கைகேயி, மயில்முறைக் குலத்துரிமையை மந்தரைக்குக் கோடிட்டுக் காட்டும் கைகேயி, மந்தரை கூறியதால் மனம் மாறியிருக்க முடியுமா? நம்மை சிந்திக்க வேண்டுகிறான் கம்பன். மந்தரை தீண்டுகிறாள்; ‘தீண்டலும் உணர்த்தனள் தெய்வக் கற்பினாள்’. தெய்வக் கற்பு என்று கைகேயின் கற்பை விவரிக்கிறான் கம்பன். தெய்வம் தவறு செய்யுமா? இராமனிடம் பேரன்பு கொண்ட கைகேயி சிறிது நேரத் தூண்டுதலில் மனம் மாறியிருப்பாளா? மாறுகின்றாள். இவ்வாறு மாறும்பொழுது, தெய்வத் தன்மை பொருந்திய இவளால் நல்லது நடக்கப் போகின்றது என்பது தெரிகிறது. அநீதி அழிய வேண்டும் என்றால், அறம் வெல்ல வேண்டும்; கொலைத் தொழில் அரக்கர்தம் கொடுமை தீர்க்க, அறம் வெல்ல, இராமன் காட்டிற்குச் செல்ல வேண்டும்; இது நடக்க, கைகேயி தீயளாக மாற வேண்டும். இதைக் கம்பன், தன் கவிக்கூற்றாகச் சொல்லுகின்றான். காரணத்தைக் கூறுகின்றான்— ‘அரக்கர் பாவமும் அல்லவர் இயற்றிய அறமும் தூரக்க நல்லருள் துறந்தனள் துமொழி மடமான்,’ என்று இயற்கையாய் இருந்த அருளைத் துறக்கின்றாள் என்கிறான். நல்ல நீர் இல்லாமை ஆற்றின் குற்றமன்று. ஆற்று நீரைக் கலக்கியவரின் குற்றமது. ஆக,

இது 'மதியின் பிழையன்று மகன் பிழையன்று, விதியின் பிழை'. இந்த நல்லருளை துறந்ததே ஒரு நாடகம்தான் என்பது கம்பனின் கருத்து. தன் மகன், தன் கணவன், தன் மங்கல நாண் என்று கைகேயி சுயநலம் பார்த்திருந்தால், இராமாவதாரம் நிறைவுற்றிருக்காது. 'மண்ணே கொள் நீ; மற்றையது ஒன்றும் மற,' என்பதைக் கேளாது, கணவன் இறந்தாலும் பரவாயில்லை, இராமன் காட்டிற்குச் செல்ல வேண்டும் என்று 'புகன்று நின்றாள்'. ஆரணியத்தில் உள்ள நல்லதையெல்லாம் செய்ய வேண்டும் இராமன்—ஆதலால் 'எழிரண்டாண்டில் வா'—தருமத்தை நிலைநாட்டி விட்டு வா, என்கிறாள்.

ஆதலால், இங்கு பார்க்கிறோம்—ஒரு நற்பயனுக்குத் தீயளாக நடிக்கின்றாள் கைகேயி. மன்னர் மன்னன், அறத்தின் மூர்த்தி, சொல்லில் செல்வன், தூமொழி மடமான், சிறந்த தீயாள்—இவை அனைத்தும் இராம காதையுள் வரும் பாத்திரப் பெயர்கள் என்றாலும் இவைகளிலே சிறந்து நிற்பது, சிந்திக்க வைப்பது, சத்தியத்திற்குச் சான்று கொடுப்பது, கைகேயின் வர்ணனையான சிறந்த தீயாளாகும். 'சிறந்த தீயாள்' என்பது சரியா? 'தீய தீயாள்', 'கொடிய தீயாள்' என்பவற்றை விடுத்து அது என்ன 'சிறந்த தீயாள்'? இதன் அர்த்தம்தான் என்ன? கம்பனே இதற்கு விளக்கம் கூறி விடுகின்றான் யுத்த காண்டத்தில். அக்கினிப் பரீட்சை முடிகிறது; அக்கினித் தேவன் இராமனிடம், 'நீயே பரம்பொருள்' என்று கூற, அவன் 'இல்லை' என்று மறுக்கிறான். இராமன் பரம்பொருளின் அவதாரம் என்பதை நிரூபிக்க, தசரதன் தேவலோகத்திலிருந்து அழைத்து வரப்படுகிறான். இராமன் தந்தையை வணங்கி நிற்கும்பொழுது, தசரதன் 'உனக்கு அமைந்த ஒன்று உரை', எனக்கூற இராமன்,

“ தீயனென்று நீ துறந்த என் தெய்வமும் மகனும்
தாயும் தம்பியுமாம் வரந் தருகவேனத் தாழ்ந்தான் ”.

இங்கு இராமன் கைகேயியைத் 'தெய்வம்' எனக் குறிப்பிடுகின்றான். தாயினும் சாலப் பரிவுடையது தெய்வம். தெய்வத்தின் செயலை விமரிசிக்க யாருக்குத் தகுதி உண்டு? தெய்வ காரியங்கள் விளக்கத்திற்கு அப்பாற்பட்டவை. தெய்வம் நல்லதும் செய்யும், தீமையும் செய்யும். தருமத்தை நிலைநாட்டத் தீயாளாக மாறும் கைகேயி இராவண வதத்திற்கு வழி கோலியதால், சிறந்த பயனால், சிறந்த தீயாள் ஆனாள். தெய்வம் சத்தியத்திற்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டது. அந்தச் சத்தியம் நிலைபெற வேண்டும் என்பதற்காகவே இரு வரங்கள் கேட்கின்றாள் கைகேயி. அறம் வென்றதனாலேயே, காப்பிய ஆரம்பத்திலேயே, 'தீயவையாவினும் சிறந்த தீயாள்' என்று அவள் செயலில் உள்ள சிறப்பை நமக்குக் கூறி விடுகின்றான் கம்பன்.

“ துரும்பாக மற்றவர் தூக்கி எறிந்தாலும், கரும்பாக இனித்திட்டாள் காகுத்தன் பார்வையிலே ” என்று கண்ணதாசன் விவரிக்கும் இந்த சிறந்த தீயாள் இருந்திரா விட்டால், ஓர் உயர்ந்த காப்பியமான இராமாயணம் நமக்குக் கிடைத்திருக்காது. அவதார நோக்கம் நிறைவேற, தான் பழி சுமந்த தியாகி அவள். அறம் வெல்ல வழி கோலிய இத்தகு தூயவளைச் 'சிறந்த தீயாள்' என்று வர்ணித்த கம்பனுக்குத்தான் எத்தகு தமிழ்ச்சுவை! இத்தமிழ்ச் சுவையைப் பாராட்ட வார்த்தைகள் தான் உண்டோ! சொல் புதிது கிடைப்பினும், சுவை புதிது கிட்டுமோ! சொற்பொருட் சுவை நிறைந்த தமிழ் எழுத, புதியவை படைக்க, கம்பனுக்கு நிகர் கம்பனே! □

பெண்ணே ! சற்று ! நில்

கவிஞர் உலகநாயகி
தமிழ்த்துறை

தென்னகத்துத் தமிழலகத் திங்களாக !
சீர்திருத்தப் புத்துலகத் திங்களாக
பொன்னான புலவர் குழுத் திங்களாக
புதுப் பாசறையின் திங்களாக சுடர்விட்ட

கம்பனும் வள்ளுவனும் ஏற்றம்
தந்த பெண்மை ! வளருது ! வளருது !
என்றே சொல்லிப் பூக்குது பூக்குது
புரட்சி என்ற கீதம் பாடிப்பாடி

புழுதியில் தள்ளிவிட்டார் ! பெண்மைதனை
தனக்கென்ற ஆளுமையைத் தன்னுள்ளே
உருவாக்கித் தான் என்பதை வெளிக்காட்டா
ஓவியமாம் ! பெண்மையைச் சுகத்தினிலே எவரே காத்தார் !

தென்றலெனும் மென்மையுளம் கொண்ட நங்கை
சீறுபுயல் ஆனகதை மதுரை கூறும் !
வென்றது காண் நேர்நேராய் நீதி அந்நாள் !
விடிந்திடுமா ! நீதிமுறை அதுபோல் இந்நாள் ?

இம் மந்திரம் தனை மறத் தமிழராய்ப்
பிறந்த மங்கை கானல் நீராய்க்
கேள்விதனை இனி
கேட்கமாட்டாள் !

வள்ளுவனும் கம்பனும் சொன்ன பெண்மை
பாரதியவன் கவிதையால் நடக்கக் கண்டாள்
ஆடலுக்கும் பாடலுக்கும் பெண்மை அல்ல
அன்புக்கும் ஆக்கத்திற்கும் பெண்மையே என்று

அன்று செப்பிய வேதநாயகர் கூற்றுக்கு
இணங்கிப் பெண்ணே ! நம் வாழ்வுதனை
இன்னும் புதுப்பிக்கலாம் ! எழுந்து வா !
இக் கூக்குரல் ! உனக்குத் தானே !

சமுதாய ஏட்டினிலே நடமாடும்
வங்கிகளாய் நாம் இருந்திடாமல்
சமத்துவம் கற்றுத் தந்த சமுதாயத்திற்குச்
சமயலறை உரிமைகளில் சரிபாதி தரலாம் !

புரட்சியில் பூத்த புது எண்ணங்கள்

கி. செளமியா

சமூகவியல் - மூன்றாமாண்டு

அலாரம் அடிக்கவும், அதை அணைத்துவிட்டுப் படுக்கையைவிட்டு எழுந்தேன். மெதுவாக நடந்து சென்று அந்தக் காலை வானத்தைப் பார்ப்பது என் வேலை. முதல் வேலையும் கூட. அன்று, முழுதும் விடியாமல் கிடந்த பொழுதாகையால் வானம் தெளிவாக இல்லை; என் மனமும் தெளிவாக இல்லை. மஞ்சூரியாவைவிட்டு பூஜிங்கில் இங்கு வந்து தங்கிய பதினாறு வருடங்களிலும் இல்லாத பீதி இன்று நிலவியது. நான் இரண்டு வயதாகும்போது பார்த்த மஞ்சூரியா நினைவிலிருந்து மறந்துவிட்டாலும் நெஞ்சிலிருந்து மறையவில்லை. கல்லூரிக்குச் செல்லவேண்டாம் என்ற நினைவு வந்தவுடன் நீடித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கும் புரட்சியின் நினைவும் கூடவே பிறந்தது.

சுதந்தரம் வேண்டும் என்று புரட்சி செய்கிறார்கள். 'டிமாக்கர்சி' என்பதோ எல்லோர் வாயிலேயும் சில காலமாக உதிர்ந்து கொண்டிருந்த வார்த்தை. வெறும் வார்த்தையானது கோஷமாக மாறி இரண்டு மாதங்களாகின்றன. புரட்சியில் என் நண்பன் டேவிட்லீ, என் தோழி ஷெசியாங்கும் பங்குகொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். ஆனால் புரட்சியில் பங்குகொள்ள எனக்கு விருப்பமில்லை. இருப்பதை வைத்து இயல்பாய் வாழப் பழகிவிட்டேன். 'விதி' என்று ஓரத்தில் உட்காரும் பெண் இல்லை யென்றாலும் வேறு வழி? என்று பதுங்கிக்கொண்டேன். எனக்கே, என் சுபாவம் வெட்கத்தை அளித்தாலும் 'புரட்சி' என்ற சொல் என்னுள் புரட்சியை ஏற்படுத்தவில்லை மாறாக, கல்லூரிக்குச் சென்று கற்கமுடியாத அறிவு வறட்சியை ஏற்படுத்தியது. மாணவர் சமுதாயம் சொல்லும் நியாயங்கள் புரிந்தாலும், போராட்டத்தால் அவர்கள் ஏற்படுத்தும் அநியாயம் ஒட்டாத ஓர் உணர்வை ஏற்படுத்தியது. யாரோ போகிறார்கள்? என் படிப்பை விணாக்குகிறார்கள் என்று பேசாது இருந்தேன்.

சிந்தனையில் மூழ்கியிருக்கும்போது, கதவுக்கு அப்பால் சந்தடி கேட்டது. வெளியே போகலாம் என்று முயலும்போது, கதவை வேகமாகத் திறந்துகொண்டு தந்தை நுழைந்தார். "டேவிட்லீ வந்திருக்கான்!".

இவ்வளவு அதிகாலையிலா "டேவிட்! என்ன?" என்று கேட்டுக்கொண்டே வெளிவந்தேன்.

"ஆர்மி ஏவிவிட்டுட்டாங்க மாணவர்கள்மேல், ஷெசியாங்கமேல் குண்டு பாய்ந்து விட்டது" என்றான். உணர்ச்சியில்லாமல் 'பட்டாம்பூச்சி' என்று நான் செல்லமாக அழைக்கும் ஷெசியாங்கை சுட்டுவிட்டார்களா? நம்ப முடியவில்லை. அப்படியே நின்று விட்டேன். காற்றுக்கும் அசையாத கற்சிலையாய்ச் சமைந்துவிட்டேன். கண்களில் கசிந்த நீர் கரையை உடைத்துக் கன்னங்களில் வழிந்தது. தந்தை என்னை அசைத்ததும். அப்படியே ஆடிப்போய் தரையில் உட்கார்ந்துவிட்டேன். தாயோ பயந்துபோய் அருகே வந்து "ஹாலிஓ, ஹாலிஓ" என்று உலுக்கவும் சுயநினைவு வந்தது.

யாரையும் சுட்டாது, இலக்கில்லாமல், இயந்திரத்தனமாய் "எங்கே?" என்று வினவினேன். "தியான்மன் சதுக்கத்தில்" என்ற பதில் யாரிடமிருந்து வந்தது என்பது கூட என் நினைவிலில்லை.

உடனடியாக, இரவு உடையைக் களைந்து, ஒரு மிடியை அணியும்போதுதான், அவ்வுடையில் ஷெசியாங் வாங்கிப் பரிசளித்த எளிய அழகிய ப்ரோச் இடது தோள்க் கருகே குத்தியிருந்தது கண்களில் பட்டது. அதைப் பிய்த்துப் பெட்டிக்குள் மூடும்போது கண்களில் மேலும் கண்ணீரையும், வாயிலிருந்து கேவலையும் வரவழைத்தது. வெளியே வந்தேன். “எங்கே கிளம்புகிறாய்?”—தாய். “பார்த்துவிட்டு வந்துவிடுகிறேன்”.

“உளறாதே. இப்போது உன்னை அனுப்ப முடியாது”. இது தந்தை. “வெளியில் பெரிய பிரளயமே வந்துள்ளது. அதில் என் உயிர்த் தோழி சிக்கிக்கொண்டு மாண்டு போயிருக்கிறாள். நான் போகாமல் இருக்க முடியாது”.

“பிரளயத்திலே நீயும் அடித்துக்கொண்டு போய்விடக்கூடாதே என்ற பயம், உன்னைப் பாதுகாக்க வேண்டும் என்ற பிரயத்தனம் தான் இது ஹாலினா”.

ஆனால் என் முடிவு அசைக்க முடியாததாகையால், அனுமதியுடன் புறப்பட்டேன். என் எண்ணங்களைப் புதுப்பிக்கும் கொல்லர் உலைக்குச் சென்றுகொண்டிருக்கிறேன் என்று எனக்குப் புரியவில்லை. அனாதையாகக் கிடத்தி வைக்கப்பட்டிருந்த அவளை (உண்மையென்றாலும், ஷெசியாங்கை அது என்று விளிக்க மனம் வரவில்லை) கண்டதும் மயங்கி விழுந்துவிட்டேன். கனவு போலிருந்த அந்த மயக்கத்தில், நானும், அவளும், லீயும் கழித்த நாட்கள் நினைவு வந்தன. ‘தங்கமீன்’ என்று அவள் என்னை அழைக்கும் குரலும் கேட்டது போலிருந்தது. நாங்கள் மூவரும் விவாதிக்கும் கட்டத்தில் அவள் குரல் மட்டும் அசரீரி போல் காதுகளில் ஒலித்துக்கொண்டேயிருந்தது.

கண் விழித்தபோது, முதலில் மின்னிய காட்சி சிவப்பு இரத்தம் தோய்ந்த அவள் ஆடைகளும், திறக்கமாட்டேன் என்று பிடிவாதமாக மூடியிருந்த அவள் விழிகளும் தான். பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான என் போன்ற மாணவ மாணவியர் இறந்து குவிந்து கிடந்த தியான்மன் சதுக்கமும், வருங்காலத் தூண்களான இளைஞர் சமுதாயத்தை அழித்த இராணுவத்தின் இரத்த வெறியும்: இராணுவத்தின் உள்ளேயே கருத்து வேறுபாட்டால் ஏற்பட்ட மோதல்களும் என்னுள் புதிய மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்தின. யாரோ போராடு கிறார்கள்? யாரோ மடிகிறார்கள்? என்ற பழைய சித்தாந்தம் போய் அடிப்பட்டுத் தொலைந்து போனபின்பு, யாருக்காகப் போராடி மடிகிறார்கள் என்ற அறிவார்த்தமான, ஆத்மார்த்தமான கேள்வி என்னுள் எழுந்தது.

நெருப்பைத் துணியால் மூடிவைக்க அது மறுபடியும் ஆர்த்து எழுவதுபோல, கொடுரமாக அடக்கப்பட்ட இந்த மாணவர் போராட்டம் மறுபடியும் துளிர்க்கும். ‘மால்’ சொன்ன துப்பாக்கியை தூக்கவில்லை, காந்தி கடைப்பிடித்த அஹிம்சை வழியில் போராடி யுள்ளார்கள். ஆக இதை அசைக்கலாமே ஒழிய, அடக்கி ஒடுக்க முடியாது. போராட்டம் மீண்டும் உயிர் பெறும்போது நான் இம் மண்ணில் இருப்பேன். சுடப்பட்டுச் சாவதற்காக அல்ல—சுதந்தரக் காற்றைச் சுவாசிப்பதற்காக. மற்றோருக்கு என் புதிய மாற்றம் புரிய நியாயமில்லை. ஆனால் என் பெற்றோருக்கு என் எண்ணங்கள் புதிப்பிக்கப்பட்டன என்பது புரியும். புதுப்பிக்கப்பட்ட எண்ணங்களால் நான் வளர்ச்சியடைவேன் என்பது எனக்குத் தெரிந்த உண்மை.

சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி

குளோரியா, எம்.ஏ., சமூக சேவை

ஒரு சமுதாயம், தன் தீமைகளையெல்லாம் அகற்றி, நல்வழியில் பயன் பெறுவதற்கு, வேறுபாடு இன்றிச் சமுதாயம் முழுவதும் நடைமுறை திட்டத்தில் இறங்கிச் செயல்படுவது 'சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி' என்று கூறலாம்.

ஒவ்வொரு மனிதனும், தன்னை வளப்படுத்திக் கொள்வதோடு. பரந்த மனப் பான்மையில் உடன் இருப்போரையும், உயர்த்துவதற்கான, வழிமுறைகளில் இறங்குவது ஒரு 'தனி மனிதன்' சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சிக்குப் பங்காற்றுவதாகக் கருதலாம்.

இதன் அடிப்படையில், காந்தியடிகள் பொருளாதாரத்தை ஐந்து வகையாக, வகைப்படுத்தினார். அவற்றை நம் வாழ்க்கைக்கு எடுத்துக் கொண்டால்,

- (அ) கொலைவாழ்க்கை — அடுத்தவன் உயிரைப் பறித்து வாழும் புலி போன்ற வாழ்க்கை.
- (ஆ) கொள்ளை வாழ்க்கை—பிறர் சம்பாதித்த பொருளை யாருக்கும் பயன்படாமல் செய்யும் குரங்கு போன்ற வாழ்க்கை
- (இ) கூட்டு வாழ்க்கை — மலரில் உள்ள தேனை உறிஞ்சும் தேனீ போன்ற வாழ்க்கை.
- (ஈ) பரவல் வாழ்க்கை — தேன் கூட்டில் உள்ள தேனைப் பகிர்ந்து கொடுக்கும் வாழ்க்கை.
- (உ) தாய்மை வாழ்க்கை — தாய், தன் இரத்தத்தைப் பாலாக்கி, அடுத்த உயிரை வாழ்வித்தல்.

இந்தத் 'தாய்மை வாழ்க்கை'யை எவன் வாழ்கிறானோ அவன்தான் 'மனிதன்'. இந்த மனிதனுக்கு இரண்டு முக்கிய கடமைகள், அவனைச் சிந்தித்துச் செயல்பட வைக்கிறது.

ஒன்று—குறிக்கோள்; மற்றொன்று — கொள்கை; ஆனால், பலருக்கு இன்று குறிக்கோளுக்கும், கொள்கைக்கும் வேறுபாடு தெரிவதில்லை. 'குறிக்கோள்' என்பது மனிதன் எதை அடைய வேண்டும் என்று நினைக்கிறானோ அதுதான் 'குறிக்கோள்'. கொள்கை என்பது 'மனிதன் தன் வாழ்க்கையில் நன்மையைக் கடைப்பிடிப்பது.

பலருக்கு இதன் வேறுபாடு தெரியாத காரணத்தால் வாழ்க்கை வெற்றியடைவதாக நினைத்து வெறி கொள்வதுஇவர்களுக்குத் தேவையில்லாத பணம், பதவி, குறிக்கோள்களாக இருக்கிறது.

எந்த வழியில் இந்தப் பணம், பதவி பெறுவது என்பதற்கு நேர்மையான கொள்கை இன்றிச் சமுதாயத்தின் வளர்ச்சியைக் குன்றச் செய்து, முழுமையாக இருளில் தள்ளி கொள்கிறது. இங்கே தான், 'தனி மனித விழிப்புணர்ச்சி'க்கு அவசியம் ஏற்படுகிறது. அதாவது, தன்னையே காப்பாற்றிக் கொள்வதற்காக, புதிய கொள்கையோடு, குறிக்கோளை அடைய, முயற்சியில் முழுமையாக ஒவ்வொருவரும் ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொள்வது தான் 'சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி'யாக உருவாகிறது. இவை இன்றைய சமுதாயத்திற்கு இன்றியமையாத ஒன்றாகத் திகழ்கிறது.

இதில் மாணவ—மாணவியர்களின் பங்கும் குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. இவர்கள் கற்கும் கல்வி சமூக செயலோடு இணைந்த ஒன்றாக இருக்க வேண்டும். உதாரணமாக 'நாட்டு நலப்பணித் திட்டம்' கல்லூரி மாணவர்களிடையே பெரிய மாற்றங்களைக் கொண்டு வந்துள்ளது. குறிப்பாக, கல்வியறிவு இல்லாதவர்களுக்குக் கல்வியைப் போதிப்பதும், சுகாதாரத்தைப் பற்றி அறியச் செய்வதும், சமூக செயலாகச் செய்து வருகின்றனர். இவை, பலவழிகளில் மக்களுக்கு விழிப்புணர்ச்சி ஏற்படுவதற்கு மூல காரணமாக இருக்கிறது. இத்தகைய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி, ஒரு மனிதனை—மனிதனாகவும், இலட்சியம் உள்ள ஒரு தலைவனாகவும் மாற்றச் செய்கிறது.

ஆக, 'சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி' என்பது ஒவ்வொரு தனி மனிதனும் விழிப்புணர்வு கொண்டு, சமுதாயத்தின் தீமைகளைக் களைய, முழுமையாக, நடைமுறை திட்டத்தில் இறங்கிச் செயல்படுவதே சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சியாகக் கருதலாம்.

இதில், ஒவ்வொரு தனி மனிதனுக்கும் முக்கிய கடமை உண்டென்றால் அதற்குச் சுயநலமில்லாத—சேவையுள்ளம் தேவை. சுருங்கக் கூறின் நம்மில் 'பொது நலம்' இன்றியமையாததொன்றாக இருக்க வேண்டும். இதுவே, சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சிக்கு அடிக்கல்லாக இருக்கும் என்பது அசைக்க முடியாத உண்மை.

ஆக, ஒவ்வொரு இளம் உள்ளத்திலும் 'பொது நலம்' என்னும் சுவாலை கொழுந்துவிட்டு எரியட்டும்! அப்பொழுதுதான் அங்கே ஒரு 'புரட்சி' ஏற்படும். அதுவே, உண்மையான சமுதாய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி! □

Rejuvenation*

Rasika, S. B.Sc., Botany

The rain drove down in great opaque sheets, reducing visibility to near zero. I peered through the wind-screen, trying to inch the car forward by the feeble gleam of the headlights. To drive along a treacherous hill road on a stormy night is no easy task even for the most experienced driver. For me, a virtual beginner, it was all but impossible. And then to crown it all, the engine spluttered and died, and no amount of coaxing would revive it. I gave up the job as hopeless, and settled back in my seat, trying to relax. I must have dozed off for a while, and when I woke up, there was a lull in the storm. I pushed myself up cautiously in the cramped space, conscious of aching muscles. A quick look under the bonnet in the light drizzle revealed nothing. I was stranded in the middle of nowhere, with dense forest all around, the only human being for miles.

It was then that I saw the light. It was only a faint, reddish glow visible through the trees, but it was enough to give me hope. Obviously there was someone else in this godforsaken place. I grabbed my handbag, locked the car, and set off towards this beacon. I followed it through the dripping vegetation, losing it sometimes behind a particularly large tree, till I came to a small clearing. Set in the middle was a tiny fairy-tale cottage with a sloping roof and smoking chimney, and through the window. I could see a cheerful log-fire burning. I knocked at the door, and a quavery voice bade me enter.

The inside of the cottage was as unexpected as the outside. There were a few scattered chairs with embroidered cushions. On the floor was a woollen rug. The wooden walls were bare, and a copper kettle hung over the fire. And in a corner of the room, on a rocking chair which creaked rhythmically, sat the quaintest old woman I had ever seen. She had a pink, wrinkled face, surrounded by a halo of silvery hair. A pair of deep blue eyes twinkled at me over gold-rimmed spectacles, and a delighted smile played on her lips. Her body was enveloped in a voluminous black shawl, and only her hands were visible—thin bony hands crippled with arthritis.

She surveyed me as I did her, and her smile grew wider.

“Do come in, my dear, and sit down. Draw your chair nearer to the fire. Are your clothes wet? We really must not allow you to catch pneumonia. That would be most unfortunate. Take off your shoes. That’s right. Are you comfortable now?”

* *Prize winning entry in the Short Story Competition*

I assured her I was, and thanked her for her kindness.

“Think nothing of it, child”, she said. “You can have no notion how pleased I am to see you. I despaired of ever seeing a young, beautiful girl like you again. I cannot move about much, you know, on account of my arthritis. It makes things quite difficult for me. Quite difficult”.

I replied that at her age it must indeed be tiresome.

“My age...Do you know how old I am?” She peered intently at me, her blue eyes gleaming, “Five hundred years old, my dear. Five whole centuries old”.

“I stared at her. I began to suspect that I had unwittingly wandered into the home of a lunatic. Perhaps this curious old woman was not quite all there. I would have to humour her, poor thing.

“Five hundred years,” she repeated meditatively, gazing into the fire. Then she turned abruptly towards me and said, “Why, I’ve forgotten to give you anything to drink. How remiss of me. There’s a cup on the mantelpiece. Do pour yourself some of the potion from that kettle, my dear. It’s a special recipe that only I possess, and very effective on stormy nights, believe me.”

The potion was indeed quite good, with a tangy herbal taste. As I sipped it, the old woman fell into a reverie. Outside, the wind started up once more, howling through the trees. Distant lightning, followed by thunder, and storm raged again. Inside, the flickering fire cast weird, dancing shadows over everything, creating a curious effect of unreality. And in the background was the monotonous creak of the rocking-chair.

“The last few years of the fifteenth century,” murmured the old woman. “That’s when it must have been. I remember it quite distinctly. I was gathering berries in the forest when I met the wise woman. It was she who gave me the recipe, and it has served me very well. I have been a Queen’s attendant, an actress... Oh! So many things. It has been an interesting life, on the whole”.

“Oh, you mean reincarnation,” I said. So the old woman was not quite insane, just slightly eccentric.

“No! No!” She denied emphatically, wagging her finger at me. “Not reincarnation, but Rejuvenation—the renewal of youth. Of life, if you like. That’s what I practice.”

I was taken aback. Suddenly, the atmosphere seemed to change. The old woman in her creaking chair took on a sinister aura in the reddish light of the fire. The frequent flashes of lightning and claps of thunder only enhanced the undercurrent of evil.

“It’s remarkable like the transmigration of souls, you know,” She continued. “Whenever you get tired of one body, or it grows too old to be of much use, all you have to do is exchange bodies with someone younger. Of course, the timing has to be just right, with the exact atmospheric conditions. And the other person must be in a suitable frame of mind. That’s where the potion does its work. It relaxes you, and makes you so peaceful, if you know what I mean. The exchange becomes quite easy.”

I wanted to scream, but found I couldn’t. A curious lassitude was stealing over my limbs, and I was finding it hard to think at all. The initial feeling of panic was ebbing away, leaving only resignation behind. I vaguely felt that the creak of the rocking chair was a countdown to my doom, but the thought aroused no reaction. The storm grew wilder.

“Ah, the storm’s reached its zenith, I think,” she said. “Just the right amount of thunder and lightning. The electrical and magnetic disturbances are absolutely essential to the process you know. I think we can start now.”

She got up from her chair and came towards me, her shawl flapping about her. Silhouetted against the flames, she looked for all the world like a gigantic vampire bat. A flash of lightning revealed her outstretched talon-like hands. I felt those hands coming to rest on my head in mockery of benediction. And then...Oblivion.

Dawn came, and the sounds of the forest stirring to a new day woke me up. In the window pane, I could see the reflection of an old woman with silvery hair and deep blue eyes—my reflection. And through the glass was visible the rain washed forest—brilliantly green. The smell of fresh earth pervaded the air. □

In the Courtyard Children Play

W. B. Prathima, B.A., English

In the courtyard children play.
They sound like the sun.
Trees whisper their shade to them.

In the house
creaking electric fans
slice the breaths of air.
The word weaponry of elders
cut and stab.

The refrigerator is capable
of freezing food, friends, etc.
while the stove boils
up and over.

In the courtyard children play
someone stands on
the threshold
saying—"stop playing like little kids,
come inside."
In the courtyard children played.
Once upon a time

Repeated Renewal

Glenice Raj, B.Sc., Zoology

A slight throb
Beating like the wings
Of a trapped butterfly
Ever so light
Beneath the skin
Tis a sign

The Air so clean and Fresh
Enters the dark abyss
And leaves
Expanding and contracting
A sign
Of life
I live

The Moulting

Rakhi Varma, B.Sc., Maths.

Slowly I evolved - Broke from
The protective eggshell of my childhood,
I grew, matured in deeds and thoughts,
My aims changed, my convictions grew
My beliefs took on forms anew.

I peeled the innocence of my skin,
I shed it layer by layer
And from the cocoon of time emerged
The new me - stronger, wiser, braver ;

I moulted slowly, painfully,
With every new revelation
And yet time slipped by on a whisper
And before my very eyes
The butterfly emerged
And flew to the sunny skies !

Upheaval

Susan Alexander, B.A., Economics

Mummy was in a bad temper for the most part of the morning. She had to throw away a nest that she had discovered at the back of the dining room loft, while engaged in one of her rare enough cleaning frenzies. Part of the fault lay in the fact that she felt guilty about it. The nest had been empty but it had also been somebody's prospective home.

We sat down to lunch—soggy pappads, squishy rice and a bitter gourd curry that tasted like a Bitter-gourd curry! Moods affected her cooking. When in a good mood, her cooking was inspired and when out of sorts, it was merely uninspiring! Even in the middle of a class, I could remember her gulab jamuns with relish and her unsuccessful attempts at idlis with equal horror. It didn't matter that they hadn't turned out well but we had to eat them, she being of the maxim that nothing should ever be wasted.

Partway through the meal, we had a visitor. The squirrel hopped onto the cupboard next to the window. It was a frisky young thing, impishly cute and very unselfconscious. It looked behind its swathe of tail in a rather furtive manner and shook itself down vigorously once or twice. Suddenly seeing us, it froze, staring at us with great eyes that were limpid pools of melting brown.

Within a trice, it was gone, bounding lithely across in a whirl of furry tail to the loft shelf, where it disappeared behind a musty and conveniently large box. I could see it darting across between the spaces in the row upon row of stacked cartons. It would appear for the brief flash of a second before disappearing again.

Suddenly, its progress halted. It had come to the place where the nest had been. The bushy tail swished—it was going around in circles. The kernel sized head reappeared and stared down inquisitively from its lofty perch. It was gone as soon as it came, in the same way as it had entered.

We forgot about the incident—it was minor enough. And the loft was bare as it had been before and wiped clean. A few days later, a cousin came to visit us for the day. He was all of five years old and to put it politely, was an inquisitive little monster. He had all the cherubic charm of a Botticelli angel which he used to full advantage to extract maximum pathos in potentially dangerous situations. He was the stuff that all privileged little boys are made of. Having tired of us after an hour of non stop prattle, he wandered out.

After a while, I heard him calling me. I went out to investigate. A little searching, unearthed him under the stair case, looking grubby and positively triumphant. With a chubby fore-finger, he pointed out of the window, at the tree trunk, a few yards away. There was a nest, cuddled protectively in one of the branches. As I watched, a perky little squirrel ran up the trunk, peered inside the nest and suddenly swivelled, staring with petrified eyes, as though sensing the presence of intruders. I drew my cousin away from the window.

I'd like to think that the squirrel was the same whose nest we'd booted out so unceremoniously, earlier on. I have a strong feeling it was beginning the process of reconstruction, of renewal—the life force of regeneration that goes on around us in the world everyday. How much of it do we notice or appreciate? □

Perspectives

The Hypodermic Syringe :

A hypo syringe is ideal to delve into the heart of things. It's sharp pointed edge and sleek body cuts through all barriers and enables to focus its activity. What's more, it's now available in throwaway packages and therefore can take a new approach each and every time. Through the principle of a hypodermic syringe we open ourselves to the marvels of modern medicine!

P. Revathi, B.Sc., Botany

The Frying Pan :

Man has discovered the existence of the most useful thing in the universe—fire. He is now able to cook his food (something he has been unable to do before). But what's this? Here comes Woman. What has she got with her? A funny shaped stone—the frying pan is born.

V. V. Priya, B.Sc., Maths.

The Whip :

“Give him 10 lashings,” said the King. This was music to my ears. I had been hanging on that nail for too long. I was beginning to feel rather lethargic. As I struck my target I felt my energy. But it was all over too fast. I am back on the nail now until the King sends for me.

R. Tanuja, B.Sc., Chemistry

The Vacuum Cleaner :

He's an optimist they say :
Confident of himself, he takes over the rooms,
Cocksurenness as a dandy, you may say;
'Sweeping' comments, he does make
Well, if you don't believe me, see for yourself
Here he comes—Step in, Mr er! Vacuum Cleaner!

P. Sumitra, B. A. English

They Don't Know What Renewal Means

Sheryl Paul Pereira, B.Com.

Raj lives in the Bombay slums,
Or may be those of Madras, Delhi,
What does he know of renewal, rebuilding,
His only right is misery.

Jania, one of Ethiopia's starving,
Cannot quite understand
Why, when some are entitled to mink coats,
Her only right is unyielding sand.

Jim, born in the ghetto,
Might soon find himself jailed, or dead,
He has never even heard of renewal,
His reality? Cocaine, an unsympathetic bed.

Gina swats flies in a market-place,
Some market-place, who knows where,
She has lost track of the number of rapes,
Forever is how long she's been there.

Each person born has the right
To begin life anew,
Each of us is born with the right
To rebuild, to renew.

Yet, we know of it and they don't,
Let's find a way to help them out,
Find a way to bridge the gap,
Tell them what renewal's all about.

Stranger

Anuradha Sahoo, B.A., Sociology

I sat there,
 under a lamp post,
Alone, crest fallen.
 Dark clouds surrounding,
 my mind.

Hopeless for tomorrow,
 afraid even to dream.

There I saw a shadow,
 A man was standing,
 Behind me.

I felt his soft hands,
 on my shoulder
A touch consoling.

He spoke softly,
 "Don't get disconsolate
I am here, forever, to help you."

 Something came back
A new strength ran in me
 ! was saved.

I turned back,
to thank the stranger,
but he was gone.

I waited for long,
but none was to come
cause - It was my own SHADOW
Participating in my struggle.

Born Free

Bama Subramaniam, B.Sc., Botany

Standing at the horizon
and staring at the starless sky
I feel the Evening breeze brush past me
and whisper my secrets; soft but clear
I gaze at the clouds float by
birds fly by flowers bloom on
and the Bees buzz off and

I watch my thoughts
Graze over the green meadows
and taste the honey and the snow dews
play with breeze; trot with lambs
and flirt with lovely butterflies
Suddenly;

A cool breeze shivers me and
and freezes my thoughts
I look around
But where is the mist
Where are the dews, where the honey
Where the buds and where the lambs
And where are my thoughts
where have they gone -
my born free companion.

And every time I search
I find them deep in my heart
Confided to the chambers
I see them in chains, chained in
to the strings of fantasies and
all but just dreams and
chained are my born free thoughts.

Yesterday's Tomorrow

V. Meenakshi, B.Sc., Botany

The trees were green
Standing on a carpet green
With the sun rays
Fluttering through
All of a sudden
Up came mushrooms
Of steel and aluminium
Expiring fire and smoke
Coating each blade of grass
Each leaf of the tree
Grey - Black -
It became difficult to breathe
All of a sudden
An opening in the sky
Something like a chimney
But like bird droppings and ashes
Or rays found their way in
And the heat was unbearable
Up went a silent prayer
Help! Is someone there?

The Tapestry of Tragedy

R. Kavitha B. A, History

There is an interesting story behind the 1921 archaeological survey on Harappan Civilization, conducted by Sir John Marshall. A Buddhist monk, who happening to tread upon the mound of Mohenjo-daro, apprehended the existence of some suppressed wonders beneath the earth's surface. The monk's intuition was proved right by Sir John. And so the world rediscovered the Harappan Civilization. But one chapter eluded the historians and the chroniclers—the story of the archetypal pair : the dancing girl Shara and the priest Laparha. This story goes back to around 2500 BC when the glorious Indus Valley Civilization was heading towards unprecedented disaster.

The citizens of the Indus Valley elected as their guardians, to the post of priesthood, the more enlightened among them. Jait, headpriest, and also father of Laparha, was one such luminary. He commanded great love and respect from his people, and also goodwill with his neighbours, the Sumerians and the Mesopotamians.

About this time the Sumerian King, a friend and ally of Jait, and father of the unborn Shara, visited the Delphi Oracle. The King was perturbed by the oracle :

Speak not and ask not anything. But listen. Your human race has been destined to toil and suffer and die—this being the punishment for a single misdeed done by your first parents, Adam and Eve. Your race cannot attain perfection in anything. The world in which you dwell will be ever made to remain the centre of vice. Therefore it has been destined that a catastrophe should occur every time one among you attains perfection. The past, present, and future of your race has already been designed in grotesque colours. Your wife will beget a daughter who will grow into an ideal woman and bring devastation upon the land should her shadow fall across an ideal man. Should that be, the two stars in the universe representing them both will collide and explode in Agni. However your race has the advantage of sixth sense by which you may avert the doom. Danger awaits in Sumeria and in the South. Come to me with Shara when she is twenty.

Shara was born a little later, and a desperate father in the anguish of his mind, through sheer error of miscalculation, sent her to the place she must most avoid—the Indus Valley. He put her under the care of his good friend Jait.

Years passed and Shara grew into an exquisite maiden. Shara had been living in Chanhu-daro learning dance, and Laparha, in the College of Priests, engaging himself in the study of requisites for statesmanship. Thus both never had an opportunity to know more about each other, although Shara knew that Jait had a worthy son, and Laparha on his part, knew that a Sumerian maiden had been brought up in Chanhu-daro under his father's care.

Meanwhile a ceremony was arranged in Audience Hall where Laparha would be nominated head priest, based on his capabilities and virtue, and Shara, arriving at Mohenjo-daro from Chanhu-daro, would give a performance as thanksgiving to Jait and his people—a gesture both of gratitude and farewell. Shara was to leave for Sumeria that very night.

Shara was on the stage dancing. Laparha saw her, and stunned by the resplendence of her countenance, forced himself to leave the hall. He could not explain what was happening to himself. Meanwhile Shara, whose heart too like Laparha's was plunged into a whirlpool of emotion, became oblivious of stage, performance, or audience. Jait, although ignorant of what really was happening came to Shara's rescue. He ordered the assembly to disperse. He consoled Shara and took her home. Although Jait was her guardian, she was a stranger to his home, her education being at Chanhu-daro. Now for the first time she went to his palatial home. Shara's journey was postponed to the next day.

Day was approaching. Shara's eyes filled with tears for the first time in her life. That was how Laparha found her - lost in thought, sitting before a bronze mirror. Laparha saw his reflection thrown up in the mirror, his eyes, reflecting Shara's face.

On board ship the next day, Shara looked in wonder at an exquisite pair of terracotta bangles presented to her by Laparha. Laparha had himself figured the bangles from the very site where he later raised the "Great Bath" in personal, though not public memory of his love (the pretext was a commemoration).

Now began a sequence of tragedy. Shara and her father went to Delphi as ordained. Shara was now in possession of the awful knowledge of her destiny. Her father was despondent. His kinsmen were betraying him. His wife was dying. Sorrow and poverty stared them in the face. Then the final anguish—Shara's terracotta bangles cracked! Shara made up her mind. She would kill herself, after allowing herself one last look at Laparha. Somehow she reached Mohenjo-daro. The splendid commemoration was going on. Shara's last wish fulfilled, she turned away—only to find Laparha seeking her out in the crowd.

The Indus Valley citizens stood spellbound as they watched their head-priest. Even then the sky fell out and there was a downpour of Agni. And so was razed to dust an entire civilization.

Clotho in heaven looked very satisfied as her designs were executed to perfection. □

The Eye

Chitra Arumugam, M.A. English

Von Haeglar read the letter for the tenth time that hour. True, the letter had been unexpected, but Von Haeglar had betrayed nothing as he slit it open. In the duskiess of an elephantine memory, he cast its contents through a wined consciousness. Even as he read, old times friezed old promises,

Shock and amazement sent a tenth tremble to his care-worn fingers and the letter nearly floated away; but he clutched and the wind swept into his hands, the eye of a second cyclone.

Oh, that one day, so long ago, that deep dark dusky day when the clouds across the sky breathed in the toned black of temple steps. Across a mind abed a thirty year in a nebulous world, the storm imprinted no deliverance. From a slow, rumbling menace, which, obstructed beneath the heavens, knew not a lair to curl its egotism in, it turned a night-shade and drowned death in the misery of untold hearts.

For Von Haeglar, the death of a family that night seared all dreams and left him lightning-worn and iced.

When he awoke, he found his head cradled in a frightened little stranger's lap. All his agony and yearning for solitude could not bring him to free his hand of the little child's clasp. More trusting eyes a cyclone had never bequeathed.

Thus began Von Haeglar's relationship with a little stranger, the very night he lost a family. In every action, the following thirty-nine springs, the man anticipated the child. Starting anew—what unalloyed skimping and saving. That day, when for the first time, the child in a new, blue uniform, had turned at the gate, smiled and waved—that day—had not his throat convulsed from the deadening bang of memories. The other day, when fever awoke the raging child, how frightened he had been made by the unmanly music of two wild heartbeats. That other day, when school friends had bullied and bruised, how gladly he had closed his arms around his crying child, and dropped a tear over a blue shoulder. And when the nights came, how quietly he had crept away to weep a sorrow into dissolution. How difficult to hide a burning heart beneath a shell the child had fostered.

Thirty-nine springs of forced forgetfulness. Thirty-nine springs of learning to renew. The contract with life and love. At its end, looking upon his child, none would have faulted Von Haeglar.

Yet the ways of children rarely become the ways of the world. When the bell went and the nation called, Von Haeglar could not keep his child back. Thirty-nine springs of love and affection marched out into a bleak-boned world, hardly a look thrown over squared shoulders. Someone, meaning it very kindly, told the tearless father that a cyclone covered every false footstep.

Not for nothing then, had white-haired Von Haeglar waited all these winters. His seventy-six years sat duskily on him. When the letter came, he was sure of its end. In a way, all the arrangements had been made. They would be buried together. Resolute he slit open the weary letter.

Dear Father,

I am dying. It may be months before this letter reaches you. By then, I will be another dream. I am mortally wounded. Shot while saving a youngster from line of fire. You, I know, will be as usual at the East window, your monocle to your eye. Dear Father, how I thank you. I have grown in and flown above a comfortable nest. Long years ago, I made you the eye of my life. Now as my eyes begin to dim, I trust this letter into tinier hands—hands I saved—hands that need other helping hands. My Father, I send them to you.

May the heavens whisper life and happiness your way. I thank you, over and over and over again.

Would you have had it any other way?

Your child.

Terry.

In Von Haeglar there remained just one question: at 76, can there be renewals. □

कागज

बी. हरिनी, B.Sc. Physics

कागज और इन्सान
दोनों में कोई अन्तर नहीं ।
कागज
जब कोरा होता है
अच्छा लगता है
लोग उसपर लिखकर
उसकी स्वच्छता नष्ट कर देते हैं ।
इन्सान
जब जन्म लेता है
मन का पाक होता है
वह तब कोरा कागज होता है
रेखाएँ समय की
करती हैं उसपर प्रभाव
लोग करते हैं नष्ट
उसके सारे भाव ।
हाँ, कागज और इन्सान
दोनों में कोई अन्तर नहीं ॥

कब मिटेगा, यह कलंक?

पेट्रिशिया वी. B.A. Economics

रह जाएगी कन्या,
कुआँरी,
जो घर की
भी दुलारी, अगर
न दे पाई
टी. वी., फ्रिज, स्कूटर, अलमारी
तो मारी जाएगी
बेचारी ।
किस तरह दूर करें,
यह बीमारी,
सोच - सोचकर मैं हारी ।
कर नहीं सकती
कार्यवाही
क्योंकि पोषणकर्ता है
स्वयं नारी ।

आइ एम सॉरी

रीना, B. A. History

अंग्रेजों को भारत छोड़े अरसा हो गया है। जाते जाते वे ऐसा शब्द छोड़े गए हैं जिसके प्रयोग से बड़ी से बड़ी गलती होने पर भी हम बच सकते हैं। यह शब्द है 'सॉरी'।

एक दिन मैं बस स्टैंड देर से गई इसलिए बस छूट गई। जल्दी-जल्द पैदल चलते हुए एक गली से गुजर रही थी कि ऊपर से किसी ने कूड़ा - कर्कट फेंक दिया। मैंने उस अचूक निशानेबाज को क्रोध भरी नजरों से देखा। उसने मुस्कुराकर कहा 'आइ एम सॉरी'। बस बात खत्म हो गई। अपने गुस्से को दबाकर वापस घर जाकर कपड़े बदलकर आई। जैसे-तैसे एक बस पर चढ़ गई। इस बस पर इतनी भोड़ थी और किसी ने मेरा पैर कुचल डाला। मुड़कर देखो तो एक लड़का फिल्मी अंदाज से बोला 'आइ एम सॉरी'।

कालेज पहुँची तो दूसरा घंटा बज चुका था। जब अनुमति माँगी तीं जवाब मिला 'आइ एम सॉरी, यू आर टू लेट'। समय काटने के लिए कैण्टीन गई और खाने को कुछ माँगा तो जवाब मिला 'आइ एम सॉरी' मिस अभी तैयार नहीं है'।

इसलिए दोस्तों, मेरी आपसे एक गुजारिश है कि आप भी अपनी गलतियों के लिए सॉरी का प्रयोग करना न भूलिए।

समय अमूल्य धन है ।

नीरजा एस. B. Com.

इस संसार में सबसे कीमती वस्तु शायद समय है, जिसे खरीदा नहीं जा सकता परन्तु उसका सदुपयोग करके लाभ पाया जा सकता है ।

समय को अमूल्य धन कहा जाता है क्योंकि समय किसी के लिए रुकता नहीं है । वक्त यदि छूट जाए तो दोबारा उसका मिलना असम्भव है । इससे कभी महत्त्वपूर्ण कार्यों पर विघ्न पड़ जाता है और कई बार तो इन कार्यों का महत्त्व ही नहीं रह जाता । यदि हम किसी कार्य को 'कल' के लिए टालते रहे, तो अंत में हमें अवश्य कठिनाई होगी और तभी हम उस बीते हुए समय का कीमत जान जाएंगे । परन्तु काफी देर हो चुकी होगी और हम उस बात पर पछताएंगे । लेकिन क्या बीत हुआ वक्त वापस आएगा ? समय को कीमत को प्रमुख मानकर संत कबीर कहते हैं—

काल करे सो आज कर, आज करे सो अब ।

पल में परलय होगी, बहुरि करेगा कब ॥

प्रकृति का हर एक नियम समय का पाबन्द है और यदि ऐसा न होता तो हमारा जीना मुश्किल हो जाता । सूर्य और चाँद का उदय-अस्त होना, ऋतुओं का बतलना इत्यादि समय पर न होता तो धरती एवं उसमें रहनेवालों को अनेक समस्याएँ दिखतीं और शायद हमारे अस्तित्व के लिए भी खतरा पैदा हो जाता ।

अतः समय की कीमत को पहचानते हुए हमें समय का सदुपयोग करना चाहिए । समय का पूरा लाभ उठाना चाहिए क्योंकि—

“समय अमूल्य धन है”

आतंकवाद

रीना, B.A. History

चारों तरफ़ अंधकार
ओर है मार काट
लोग खून के प्यासे
और फैला संत्रास
कितने निःसंतान
कितने विधवा और अनाथ
तुमने क्या दिया जीवन दान ?
फिर क्यों लेते हो प्राण?
कहाँ गया शांति प्रिय भारत
कहाँ है मुखमण्डल दोषितमान
बंद करो यह अत्याचार
बंद करो यह खून-खराबा
आतंकवादियों शांति से अब कुछ करो
जीना तो है
अब कुछ ही साल
दुनिया लूटोगे भी तो
क्या ले जाओगे अपने साथ ?

मजिल कहाँ ?

पेट्रिशिया बी. B. A. Economics

थोड़े दिनों पहले कानपुर में दहेज न देने के कारण, जब तीन बहनों ने खुद खुशी कर ली थी, तब हमने सोचा कि ऐसी दहेज-सम्बन्धी परम्परागत घटनाएँ उत्तर भारत में ही घट सकती हैं। लेकिन हमारा खयाल गलत साबित हुआ, जब कुछ दिनों पहले केरल के पालघाट शहर में चार बहनों ने फाँसी लगाकर अपने को खत्म कर लिया। ऐसा लगा कि उन्होंने इस क्षेत्र में नया रेकॉर्ड बनाया है।

आश्चर्य की बात तो यह है कि इस चार बहनों की मृत्यु के पीछे भी वही कारण था। उनका बाप एक गरीब पुलिस कान्सटेबल था जो इनके दहेज का प्रबन्ध न कर पाया।

जब इस संसार में अन्धे, लूले - लंगड़े और अन्य बोमारियों से पीड़ित लोग साहस के साथ जीवन बिताते हैं तो क्या स्वस्थ कन्याएँ जी नहीं सकती? क्या इन्हें जीने का हक नहीं? क्या मृत्यु के अतिरिक्त इन्हें और कोई मजिल नहीं मिलेगी?

बंद पिंजरे में उदास चिड़िया

रुबी, B.A. Sociology

ओ बंद पिंजरे की चिड़िया
तू इस कदर है क्यों उदास?
दर्द न जाने तेरा कोई,
कैसी गुजरी तेरे साथ।
जब दूसरे पक्षियों को उड़ते
देखती होगी आसपास,
तो बंध जाती होगी तेरे,
मन में उड़ने की आस।

सड़क

मालती डेविड, B.Sc. Botany

दिल्ली की भरी सड़कें, कारों की लम्बी कतारों से दबी-दबी, उम्र से भी लम्बी चौड़ी; जिन्हें शायद मैंने मंजिल तक पहुँचते देखा नहीं, बस दौड़ती फिरती रहती हैं, (जिसे ठहरते हुए देखा नहीं), आज हमारे निजी जीवन का दबाव व्यक्त करती हैं।

सड़क को बनाने के लिए कच्चे रास्तों पर बजरी का इस्तेमाल किया जाता है और वह अशक्त हो जाती है। धीरे-धीरे जैसे बजरी जमने लगती है वैसे ही मनुष्य के आदर्श भी जम जाते हैं। आज के कोलाहल मय जीवन का अभ्यस्त हो जाता है। अभ्यस्त होकर भी इस जीवन में प्रतिदिन दबाव और तनाव की गिरफ्त में रहता है। कारें-बसें भोंपू बजा अपना दर्द व्यक्त करती हैं। पर इन्सान क्या करे।

कुछ सालों बाद चक्कों के घर्षणा से सड़कें घिस जाती हैं। उसी प्रकार खुद के आदर्शों से लड़ता हुआ, आज का इन्सान भी विदीर्ण होता है। यह सड़के, सड़कें नहीं, इन्सान की घिस हो जाती है। अव्यक्त जीवन गाथा है।

सीधे रास्ते इन्सान के सुखद जीवन का एक पहलू प्रदर्शित करते हैं। कुछ रास्तों में उतार-चढ़ाव है जो दुखद हैं। कुछ रास्ते देखने में तो टेढ़े-मेढ़े लगते हैं परन्तु चलते-चलते खुद - व - खुद सीधे होने लगते हैं। कुछ रास्ते मुड़ते हैं जो महान इन्सानों के जीवन को व्यक्त करते हैं।

परन्तु हर एक सड़क को चौराहे पर मिलना पड़ता है। यह वही चौराहें हैं जिन्हें हम सामाजिक लफजों में मजबूरी, आकर्षण, मोह सांसारिक रिश्ते इत्यादि के नाम से जानते हैं।

अब केवल एक प्रश्न मन में उठता है । क्या इन रास्तों का कोई अंत है ?
नहीं । कुछ गन्दी कुछ अंधी गलियों की तरह ठहर जाती हैं । उनकी
कोई मंज़िल नहीं होती ।

ठीक इसी तरह कई लोग चलकर भी मंज़िल पर पहुँच नहीं पाते । क्योंकि
प्रकाशवान सडकों की कमी है । हर सडक दूसरी सडक पर आ खडी होती है ।
जिस तरह इन्सानी परिस्थितियों का कोई अन्त नहीं, सडकों का भी अन्त नहीं है ।
ये केवल पृथ्वी पर भागती-दौडती लकीरें हैं जो इन्सान को हर युग में प्रेरणा देती हैं ।

इन्सान हर किस्म के रास्तों को अपनाता है, फिर भी वह मंज़िल को देखने
के लिए स्वयं नहीं जीवित रहता ।

The mind of the future : A National Workshop on Future Studies

Dr. K. Sundari, Faculty

Through the centuries, Indian thinkers have been fascinated by the mind. Even as early as the sixth century B.C., Patanjali formulated a system of yoga, which is based on the premise that we all have reservoirs of the mind to draw upon of which we do not dream. Yoga formulated the methods of getting at our deeper functional levels when our physical body, active will and the understanding mind are brought under control. It is good to know that our ancient thinkers required us to realise the possibilities of the mind in solitude and silence, transforming the flashing and fading moments of intellectual vision into a steady light illuminated the long years of life.

The mind has hauled man out of the Neolithic caves and set him on the road to evolutionary development, through inventions like tools, weapons, the wheel, agriculture, coinage, science and technology. While mightier animals like the dinosaurs have faded out, man is still poised to leap into the future, because of his mind. This is what prompted us, to focus on the mind of the future, when the Department of Science and Technology (Technology Forecasting and Futures Studies Division) accorded Stella Maris the proud privilege of organizing a national workshop for the second time ! A Committee set to work on this venture, felt that one of the single most important factors to be focussed on, when drawing any scenario of the future, is the nature of intelligence in the future. This includes human intelligence, societal intelligence and artificial intelligence.

The eighth of February, 1989 dawned with a brilliant inaugural address by the renowned neurosurgeon, Dr. B. Ramamurthi. Raising questions whether knowledge of science, skills, memory, reasoning and logic or education contributed to the 'intelligence' of a person, Dr. Ramamurthi, proceeded to define intelligence as "the capacity to appreciate any particular situation and react in the most appropriate manner". This naturally changes with time and place. Intelligence would therefore imply the development of all the skills of the brain. Dr. Ramamurthi cautioned that technological advances while they increased physical comfort tended to dull the development of the mind. Technological advances thus cannot be considered as advances in intelligence in the human race ! The brain and body need constant challenges to keep themselves fit and trim, otherwise they tend to degenerate. Dr. Ramamurthi also highlighted the fact that advances in scientific knowledge and technology have not helped in interpersonal or societal relationships. Harmony in these areas have to be sought elsewhere. What is frightening is that violence and aggression have seeped into the human brain and therefore humanity should seek to eliminate these for the well being of future society. Dr. Ramamurthi was positive that the present brain that we possess has enormous potential with an adequate

structural base. Learning to use it better is the only way for man's bright future. Evolution has so far been from life to consciousness to self-awareness. This must now be extended to widened awareness leading to universal awareness and universal consciousness and it is at this stage that the full power of the brain will become manifest.

Delivering the presidential address, Dr. H. N. Mahabala, Head of the Department of Computer Science, I. I. T., Madras, pointed out that we have a long way to go to make computers 'think'. There was no need to worry about mischievous or uncontrollable computers which might rule the world because even these computers would require human beings to 'feed' them knowledge. One could always pull the plug or deny them knowledge to keep them under control! Dr. Mahabala highlighted some of the difficulties in Artificial Intelligence research. Whereas high speed and the large infallible memory of a computer have been very useful in tackling complex problems involving large amounts of calculations, their performance when it comes to problem solving situations even slightly off the specified problem has been very poor. Again, common sense is much more difficult to incorporate into computers as compared to specialized knowledge. Whereas computers can be made to choose an appropriate pump for an application, they cannot be made to do simple tasks such as recognizing pictures which a three-year old can do effortlessly! Interestingly it has been observed in human intelligence that one can learn only if one has a large enough knowledge base to start with. The more one knows, the more one can learn! All knowledge in one volume of an encyclopaedia is being hand-coded into a computer system, at the MCC Research Laboratory in Texas, U.S.A. with the aim to build a starter knowledge base. If all goes well, by 1994, this computer system will 'know' enough so that we can expect it to exhibit some common sense!

The inaugural session closed with a sparkling audio-visual extravaganza staged by about sixty five students of the college. Innovatively scripted and directed by Mr. David Thomas and ably assisted by Mrs. Chithra Krishnan, the play, "The Mechanical Mind" summarized the history of attempts by man to create computing devices and machines. Against a background of haunting music, the audience glimpsed the calculating Shylock with his abacus, the methods of indexing information on scrolls and storing them in a series of pots in ancient libraries; Pascal, Leibniz, Napier, Hollerith and others - people from different countries and different centuries, brought out on the stage a vivid portrayal of man's ability to use his mental capacities. The play went on to ponder on the uses of computers in India and about the thinking machines of the future concluding with a humorous insight into the scenario of the life style in the twenty first century!

Since science is proceeding to catapult man into the twenty first century, Dr. N. Venkatasubramanian, distinguished scientist from IDL Nitro Noble Research Institute, critically analysed science education. He pointed out that science

education in the years ahead would increasingly use high-tech tools in the class room and laboratory and would be concerned with social issues and would promote scientific literacy in a big way.

Rounding off an eventful first day, Dr. L. S. Ganesh (of Madras I.I.T.) emphasized that Technology Forecasting did not seek to indulge in prophecy. Technology Forecasting aims to identify probable futures using structured or statistically valid methodology using which the inter-relationships between technology and society are studied. It can be wielded as a tool for forging policy decisions to tackle out natural and socio-economic problems of the future.

A galaxy of learned faculty from Institute of Mathematical Science, I.I.T. Madras, and College of Engineering, Guindy, delineated at length the advancements made in the field of artificial intelligence, on the second day of the seminar. Knowledge is power. Therefore, a nation with a master computer technology will be in a position to lead in the future. Starting off on such a note, Dr. Srinivas Rao quickly sketched, from April 1982 when eight Japanese giants started on a venture to make machine intelligence 'mimic' human intelligence, to the current work on super-computers. Mrs. Latha Nagendran emphasized that the objective of artificial intelligence researchers has been to develop problem solving characteristics or 'thinking' capacity in man-made systems. Expert systems, thus represent an area of artificial intelligence where there has been a breakthrough and thus there are systems to carry out medical diagnosis, assist in the formulation of decisions in the fields of Defence, Finance and Chemical industry. Mrs. Latha not only explained the basic concepts underlying the development of Expert systems but also reviewed some of the engineering applications of these systems.

However fast or accurate expert systems may be, their knowledge base is still supplied by human beings. Raising the question that if a highly experienced expert left a hospital or a company what would be the possibility of replacing him, Mr. V. V. Giri described the attempts of AI workers to do just this, by developing the inference engine. Mr. Joseph Koshy took up the same line by illustrating with DOC, an expert system developed for aiding Medical diagnosis.

If computers can, not only 'think' but can also 'understand' language and even be able to 'speak': these possibilities in the future were critically appraised by several speakers in the post lunch session of the second day. Mrs. T. V. Geetha outlined what natural language processing was all about and the problems of building a realistic computer. That India has intelligent talent working on such current topics in AI, was revealed by Mr. Sreekanth, who spoke on a research program being carried out on voice input and natural language based query system. The second day thus opened out the new vistas unfolding into the future.

The industrial and educational sectors, with their vast reservoirs of human resources, required skilled utilisers of human and societal intelligence and so

experts from these fields were drawn upon to shed light on the third day of the seminar. Mr. George Neelankavil, General Manager, M.R.F. emphasized that human intelligence is the last great unexplored and unexploited resource in society. The gains that we can realise from understanding it and exploiting its potential could outdistance all that we have accomplished so far. We have learnt to develop and harness large resources of artificial intelligence. What we have to learn now is to take advantage of what goes on between the ears of the common man and prepare him for uncommon tasks in the society of the future.

Dr. (Mrs.) Kamlesh Chaudhury examined the need for revamping science and technology education. Education is a sub-system of society and if society is to improve and the societal intelligence of the new generation is to be honed into a finer awareness then there has to be a critical upheaval in the educational system. Mr. T. Madhavan Kutty, Vice-President, Best and Crompton, also emphasized that the quality of life in the future is going to be determined to a large extent by the present educational system. Hence there is an urgent need to see how we mould our young people as they are going to be the citizens of the twenty first century. Dr. S. C. Seth, Head, Technology Forecasting and Futures Studies Division of the Department of Science and Technology, vividly presented the ABC of Future Scan and Anticipatory Management. With practised ease and fluency, Dr. Seth enlightened students on the exciting possibilities in Futures Studies. The future was very much in the hands of the younger generation if only they equipped themselves appropriately !

The valedictory session of the seminar started with an audio-visual presentation by the Literature studies of Stella Maris. Entitled "The Second Renaissance" it unfolded a scenario of the future. Though boredom, monotony and lack of meaningful human pursuits could exist in the future, the play optimistically emphasized that man and his native intelligence would always rise to new challenges and therefore a second 'renaissance' could well usher in an undreamed of richness in the future.

Dr. J. Kothai Pillai, Vice-Chancellor, Mother Theresa Women's University, Kodaikanal delivering the Valedictory address pointed out the important role women can play in India in shaping the future.

Thus a meaningful three days rolled by for a group of participants who went their way pondering on questions : is the goal of man only to create for himself more creature comforts or is the path to destruction already paved with man's uncontrolled aggression or is man making a path for the future through altruism, love, peace and disarmament ?

Only time (or the next futurology seminar) can answer these questions ! □

Report of the Union Activities for the Year 1988-89

Suma Balachandran, B. A. Sociology

There is a saying that goes, "It is a bad plan that admits of no modification." In this respect our plan for the year has been an extremely good one, because it has readily admitted the numerous and various modifications that were needed.

The College reopened for the IInd and IIIrd Year Under-Graduates and IInd Year Postgraduates on the 21st of June '88. The new 'gang' of freshies joined the College on the 27th of June. At the Open Air Assembly held at the OAT, the Student's Union President Rajeswari presented the motto for the year: "Each difficult moment is an opportunity; Each hard day is a step towards growth; Let's face the Challenge."

The first hurdle for the New Union was the PTC Day Celebrations, which was held on the 29th of July—a day organized to express our gratitude for the Ladies' Specials.

The Independence Day Celebrations were held on the 12th of August. The theme chosen for the Day was 'PEACE AND ENVIRONMENT'. The Staff members also sang a few songs in praise of the country, thus proving that they were not far behind the students when it came to putting their heads together, and coming out with sweet results.

Workers' Day was celebrated on the 30th of August. The day was set apart as 'free Day' for all the workers of the College, as the students undertook their tasks, for the day.

After this came Teachers' Day—a day of dedication to those who impart knowledge to us.

Then, came the much awaited INTER-YEARS Competitions. This was held from September 26th to October 1st. As is the usual practice, the suggestions for the name of the Inter-Years came from among the students of the College. Names came pouring in and the Executive Council finally decided upon 'SUPER—NOVA 88' meaning, a star is born. It sure was a week when the unlimited talents of the Students were unleashed. The Inter-Years consisted of a great variety—English and Tamil Dramatics and Debate; Western and Indian Music and Dance. Then followed various other events like Quiz, Collage, Antakshari, Ad-Spoof, Salad-Carving, and a whole range of interesting events. On the whole, a combination of creativity, imagination, talent, reflection, co-operation





—Tyohar Bonfire '88

and a lot of team spirit. The spirit and involvement remained unparalleled. 'Which year is leading, and by how many points?' was a question asked by everyone, everywhere, everyday. The College was a hive of activity and everyone was all into the spirit of the competitions. Finally it was the Second Years who bagged the Shield, with a massive total of 625 points, closely followed by the Third Years with a total of 570 points.

On Childrens' Day, the Zodiac Club and the Blossoms Club organised an entertainment programme for the Children of Shanthi Bhavan.

Pongal Celebrations were held on the 13th of January 1989. There was a special assembly at the OAT. Members of the Tamil Club put up an entertainment programme.

25th of January 1989, was the day set apart for the grand events of the year—THYOHAR '89. This was a 'mini' festival of India on the Stella Maris Campus. The College was full of bright, colourfully clad Indian belles. It was a day when each of us got a little closer to the rich Indian culture and heritage. There were various competitions, organised—Indian Music, folk dance, Kolam, dress designing, Quiz on India and Photography. It was a day when we were all proud to be known as Indians, it was a day when India came alive on the Stella Maris campus.

As there was an overnight stay in the college on the 25th, the dawn of India's 39th Republic Day saw the Students of Stella Maris gathered at the OAT for the unfurling of the National Flag. The rising sun was welcomed by the National Anthem sung with great gusto. Thus ended the major event for the year—THYOHAR '89.

The various departmental and non-departmental Clubs had their activities and Club weeks, and with Union Day we came to the end of our activities for the year '88-'89. □

Games



Inter-Collegiate Tournaments : Stella Maris wins 4 of the 11 games.

Basket Ball
Cricket
Table Tennis
Shuttle Badminton

and is runner - up in 3 games :

Kho Kho
Volley Ball
Athletics

The Group championship goes to Stella Maris.

*

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*

Madras South Division was represented by 41 of our players :

Basket Ball

Joy Pramila II B.A.
Nagajyothi P. I B.A.
Haripriya R. I B.A.
Malarvizhi I B.A.

Hockey

Shirley Bernard III B.A.
T. N. Ambika I B.Com.
S. Padmavathy I B.Com.
Wendy Ann Thomas III B.A.

Volley Ball

Rachel Christy III B.A.
R. T. Sofana III B.Sc.
R. Renuka III B.A.
Rosemary D'Monte II B.Com.

Table Tennis

M. Nagalakshmi I B.A.
Geetha Subramaniam II B.A.
Manjula II B.A.

Tennis

Lorraine Burby II B.A.
Ramya II M.A.

Shuttle & Ball Badminton

Ranjini Punja II M A.
S. Indumathy II B.Sc.
R. T. Sofana III B.Sc.
E. Stella II B.Sc.

Cricket

Shimu Peters II B.A.
Durga Das II B.A.
Shalini III B.Com.
Lavanya II B.Sc.
Sandra F. III B.A.
Beena III B.A.
Prema III B.A.
Broiny III B.A.

Kho Kho

Amudha III B.A.
Jayashree III B.A.
Ranjana II B.A.
Chand Fatima II B.Sc.
Jothimani II B.Sc.

Athletics

Sugriema Annal III B.A.
Chand Fatima II B.Sc.
Rosemary D'Monte II B.Com.
R. T. Sofana III B.Sc.
Shimu Peters III B.A.

Handball

Rosemary D'Monte II B.Com.
Mary Thomas II B.Com.

University Colours were donned by 22 of our players.

Cricket

Shimu Peters II B.A.
Durga Das II B.A.
Lavanya II B.Sc.
Prema I B.A.
Sandra F. III B.A.

Kho Kho

Amudha III B.A.
Jayashree III B.A.
Sathiadevi III B.A.
Chand Fatima II B.Sc.

Hockey

Shirley Bernard I B.Com.
T. N. Ambika I B.Com.
S. Padmavathy I B.Com.

Basket Ball

P. Nagajothi I B.A.
Joy Pramila II B.A.

Rowing

Pavithra Rao II B.A.
Gayathri Acharya II B.A.
Mary Ann II B.A.
Saloni II B.A.

Table Tennis - M. Nagalakshmi I B.A.
Handball - Rosemary D'Monte II B.Com.
Tennis - Lorraine Burby II B.A.

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TAMIL NADU State was represented by

Cricket

Durga Das II B.A.
Shimu Peters II B.A.
Lavanya II B.Sc.
Wendy Ann Thomas III B.A.

Badminton

R. T. Sofana III B.Sc.
Stella II B.Sc.
Kalpagam II B.A.
Suzane II M.A.

Hockey

Shirley Bernard III B.A.
T. N. Ambika I B.Com.
S. Padmavathy I B.Com.
S. Rajeswari

Kho Kho

Marry Malar III B.A.
M. Amudha III B.A.
Chand Fatima II B.Sc.

Athletics - Sugiema Annal III B.A.

Team Participation and other Successes

- Sports Festival '88 by IIT Madras : Runners-up in Basket Ball
- All India Invitational Tournament : P. Nagajothi I B.A. wins 'Most Popular Player' Award.
- All India Philips Trinity Tournament, IIT, Madras: Runners-up in Volley Ball.
- 'Best Booster', Award goes to R. Renuka III B.A.
- 'Best Spiker' Award goes to Rosemary D'Monte II B.Com.
- Palm Tours and Travels Rolling Trophy in Cricket.
- Buck Memorial Trophy - Runners-up.

Individual Victories

- Durga Das III B.A. is selected for Indian Team Coaching ; she is chosen to represent Combined Universities. She is an outstanding golf player.
- Shaheen Zaman II B.A. is No. 1 Tennis Player in India ; she is selected to play for Federation Cup in Tokyo, for World University Team in June : she represented India in U.S. Open.

Faster

Stronger

Higher



Shraddhanjali



Anju Joseph was a genuine, sincere person, always ready with a smile and a kind word for everyone. She enjoyed the simple things in life: the company of her friends, a phone call from her parents, listening to Rudolph-the-red-nosed-reindeer-it sent her into ecstasy! She lived life to the hilt and enjoyed every moment of it. Deeply religious, she tried to live life as a true Christian, and died attempting to save her friends in distress.

To know Anju was to love the sunshine girl.

Shraddhanjali

He shall gather the lambs with his arm

—Isaiah



SINDHU

We remember with joy and sorrow, Sindhu, K. (1969-88), and Anju Joseph (1969-88), both of whom left us last year. May their souls rest in peace.

Sindhu was quiet, beautiful, intelligent, sensitive, serious. She was the kind of person every class needed—a quiet figure who had the understanding and the tact to get along perfectly well with every person in class. She was an excellent dancer always looking for that perfection of nritya in her life.

Sindhu was with us for a very short period. But each one of us will remember her in our own special way.

NCC Report 1988-89

Cdt. Vandana Menon

The NCC unit of Stella Maris continued its success story through the year 88-89, every cadet working hard to achieve her goal.

Major Events :

- 15 June Pre Republic Day Camp, Pondicherry.
21 cadets attend.
- 23 July Camp for beginners, Stella Maris College.
- Aug - Nov SU/O Nickhath goes on an exchange programme to Camrose Alberta Province, Canada.
- 7 Aug Capt. Nandini attends Adult Education Programme.
- 16 Aug Lt. Gita Samuel undergoes training at Women's Officers Training
to
16 Sept School, Gwalior, prior to promotion to rank of Captain.
- 1 - 12 Sep Capt. Rekha Baptiste attends the Military Hospital Camp at the
Officers' Training Academy, Madras.
- 3 - 16 Oct Pre-Republic Day Camp at Karaikudi.
12 cadets attend.
- 7 Oct Environment Awareness Day, Stella Maris.
- 3 - 16 Oct All India Vayu Sainik Camp, Kota.

* Flt. Cdt. Bindu bags the Gold medal in the open gliding
competition.

* Flt. Cdt. Tina ranks 6th in the girls gliding competition.
- 10 - 20 Oct Annual Training Camp at ICF, Perambur.
Camp. Adjutant : Lt. Gita Samuel
Cdt. Adjutant : SU/O Kanchan Anand
IInd Best Cadet : Cdt. Sarada Natarajan.

* Cdt. Sarada Natarajan bags Gold Medal for song, solo.
* Cdt. Maria Sunethra Doss bags gold medal for cross country.
- 12 Oct - U/O Lavanya Raman participates in a S-East Asian Invitation

- 3 Nov Programme, Japan.
- 19 - 30 Oct Basic Leadership Camp, Delhi.
 * Sgt. Kamini bags Gold medal for signals.
 Sgt. Rekha wins Silver medal for First Aid and Home Nursing.
- 27 - 31 Nov Cdt. Sudha Rajam takes part in a cycle expedition to Cheyyar.
- 16 - 30 Dec Pre-Republic Day Camp at Pallavaram, near Trichy. 6 cadets attend.
- 23 - 31 Dec International Youth Conference at Panchgani.
 U/O Suneeta, Flt/Cdt. Rati Chitnis, Cpt. Suzanne attend.
- Jan '89 Republic Day Camp at Delhi, Sgt. Nitu Katpal, POC Mini, Cpt. Jaya Pande, Flt/Cdt. Bindu, Sgt. Jasmin, Cpt. Sowmya attend.
 Sgt. Niru bags the gold medal for All India Best Cadet.
 Cpt. Jaya Pande & Cpt. Sowmya are selected for horse riding.
- 4 Feb Final Winners, 88-89, NCC Unit, Stella Maris.
- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Best Cadet | | Cpt. Sarada |
| Best Parade Commander | — | U/O Teeta Mathews |
| 1st place Signals | — | Cdt. Geraldine |
| 1st place First Aid | — | Cdt. Kavita |
| 1st place Home Nursing | — | Flt./Cpt. Madhu |
| 11nd Best Cadet | — | Cdt. Devi Menon |
| Best Overall Performance | — | Bravo Co. |
- 20 Feb NCC Day, Stella Maris. □

Soaring to Success

Flt. Cdt. Bindu Kellunni

Aviation?.....Months ago this would hardly have been something we would have talked about. Today our path seems to lead us to a career in this field, thanks to our college and N.C.C.

It all began with an orientation on the three wings of the N.C.C. i.e., Army, Navy and Air Wing; each sounded as tempting as the other. We, however, were enthusiastic about the Air Wing, as it offered gliding that seemed quite a challenge. Vacancies, we were informed were limited to three.

This gave rise to a spate of gruesome interviews where we were thoroughly grilled. Five interviews later, we managed to make it, along with Sonika Gupta, of B.Com. The comical aspect of our interview was, when asked "Why Air Wing?" eager to impress our Commanding Officer and Flying Instructor, we would say, "The experience is out of the ordinary," or, "we always cherished a desire to fly", to which, we were told point blank to "Jump off a cliff" for that "out of the ordinary experience" or "join the Madras Flying Club".

All geared up for the first stage we got into blue starched uniforms and began reporting for parades, which comprised of drill and theory class. Then began the countdown for selection of girls for gliding.

Initially I was not selected which was strange as there was no actual problem. Thanks to Miss Gita Samuel, it was emphasised that I too had been first tried before being rejected. That brought me into the exciting world of gliding at the Air Force Station (Tambaram). We were introduced to flying on an Arudhra Glider which is a tandem seater whose length is 30 ft. and span 60 ft. and weight 508 kgs.

The basic concept about a glider is that it does not possess an engine and is built in such a manner that the capacity of its gliding performance is excellent. The lack of an engine and external power is made up for by a "winch" which has a diesel engine and cable wire rolled on a drum. The winch is placed about 3000 ft. from the glider. The glider has the basic controls of an aircraft. After all vital checks, the glider is pulled up to a height of approximately 900-1000 ft. and the cable is then released and it parachutes down. The glider however is now a beautiful "sail plane" and very gently by manouevring the controls, a circuit is executed and a touch down culminates what we call "1 Launch".

To a glider pilot "Thermals" is an element that enables her to soar. This is hot air which rises and helps gain additional height. It would surprise you to

know that heights have been achieved, upto 17,000 ft. by our Instructor, Captain Moorthy, where an oxygen mask is very necessary and he remarks, "The silence can be terrifying".

Since we are not allowed to fly solo on the Arudhra, a trip to Coimbatore was inevitable. The team comprised of three boys and three girls accompanied by our Flying Instructor.

Coimbatore possesses a "Rohini" glider which is a side-by-side seater. Our 10 day schedule in July was very relaxed and we were also awarded our "Wings" which any aspiring Pilot would cherish.

Exciting? Well, that's what enticed us to Tambaram everyday through the rigorous training, unmindful of the sweltering heat. My steady progression in the skill of gliding finally booked me a seat in the "Open Competition", held at Kota, Rajasthan from 5th to 18th October. The camp there consisted chiefly of boys and it began in full gusto. For me, it was very, very special as I won the "gold" for the competition. □

A Celebration of Environmental Awareness

Cdt. Vandana Menon

The world is too much with us ; late and so on,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts way, sordid boon ;

—William Wordsworth

Nature is God's gift to man, but he in pursuit of materialistic wealth has abused this gift. Trees are everywhere being cut down in order to satisfy man's endless selfish needs. It is not the active minority but the silent majority that is at fault. The root cause of this problem is ignorance. In an attempt to start somewhere tackling this situation, the NCC Cadets of our college celebrated 7th October '88 as "Environmental Awareness Day."

It was a wet day, but that did not dampen our spirits. The celebration began at 8 o' clock in the morning with a procession which moved from the college gates to the open air theatre, led by three magnificent horses, followed by girls dressed in animal costumes, girls holding green leaves, flowers and dry twigs with banners which read : 'Your Future is in your hands' and 'Don't Axe me Down'. This was a picture of Nature in all her finery. A very colourful dance-drama followed this presentation. It depicted a sequence of Nature being ruined. But a note of hope was sounded with the song "We Are The World."

An exhibition was also held at which stuffed animals, posters on the preservation of trees, and leather exhibits were displayed. 'Balloon safari' - a documentary on wildlife was screened. We are grateful to the Forest Department for their help and cooperation.

One more eye is opened. A little more awareness is created. So is the challenge—Nature calls for protection. And we realise that Mother Nature will continue to protect us when we care for her. □

The National Service Scheme in Stella Maris

The 300 volunteers continued their commitment to serve through the various projects, devoting three hours of their time every week. These schemes cover the major areas of service, namely, Health and Medical Services, Educational Services, and Service of the Aged. The second and third fields hold out 10 projects each, spread all over the city and suburbs. Whether it is working with the less privileged corporation school children, or with the physically handicapped, or whether it is sharing their time and talents with the lonely and the needy, the aged and sick fellow beings, NSS gives its eyes and ears and hearts to become more sensitive to the needs and rights of human beings whom it is called to serve upon. The NSS is the welcome messenger of peace and goodwill to all those agencies and institutions which are working for the care and the rehabilitation of the underprivileged in society, namely, the handicapped, the aged, the socially and economically backward, the orphans, the destitutes, and the medically afflicted.

The volunteers also participated in the programmes organised by the University and other agencies; the World Literacy Day rally on 8—9—88, Gandhi Jayanti rally, 2—10—88, Prime Minister's rally at the Marina, 28—11—88, Adam's rally against Drug Abuse, 3—12—88, Christmas celebrations in the various projects, and the Woman's Day programmes and exhibitions. The NSS day celebrations in the College made a meaningful and lasting impression on the entire staff and students who were deeply moved by the sense of gratitude and appreciation expressed by the handicapped themselves through song and action. May the young be inspired more and more to take an active role towards human betterment. □

Hostel Report

Geetha Purushothaman, BA Fine Arts

Freshly painted walls, allotment of new rooms, warm old faces and may be a few new ones are greeted with a mixture of emotions. There is a shriek of joy upon spotting your close friend, a rueful grimace on finding your room number, the silent shedding of tears as bags are unpacked and new photographs from home slip out.

After the initial sense of homesickness has worn off, exuberant youthful energy emerges again as seniors prepare themselves to tackle the new arrivals—the freshies. The Seniors gather in front of their respective hostels to welcome the first years. There is a general sense of excitement among the former who try to conceal this by a friendly smile or a speculatively penetrating glance. On the other side of the fence stand the freshies—some with tentative, uncertain smiles, some with extreme nonchalance and still others with a “Don’t you get smart with me” attitude.

The ice is broken as the days of the Freshie Socials draws near. The Socials is preceded by an inaugural Mass where everybody gathers in the Chapel to pray together for the coming year. All the activities, beginning with the Mass, are organised by the newly elected hostel representatives helped by the students. Excitement, anxiety, merriment, and joy pervade the air on the night of the welcome Socials for the Freshies, as the lovely Freshie Queen and Cheerful Friendly Freshie are crowned by Sister Helen Vincent. This is followed by dinner and dancing.

The First Years expressed their gratitude through the Return Socials held two weeks later, when talents emerged and the quiet ones exposed their colourful side.

The students of the hostel go for a picnic every year. This year one of the saddest happenings in the history of the hostel took place during the excursion to the Beach. Anju Joseph was drowned while trying to rescue two other friends. The pain and anguish of that day will remain with us for years to come.

Christmas in the hostel is always celebrated before the girls leave for the holidays. Though the excitement this year was subdued, the enthusiasm and spirit prevailed. Mass in the evening was followed by carol-singing around the campus and a sumptuous dinner.

The month of February is generally a busy one when hostel activities are at their peak. Hostel Week is looked forward to by all the hostelites with eagerness and high expectations. It is a week of funfilled activity and healthy competition

between the two hostels—St. Joseph's and Our Ladies'. Cheering for their respective hostels rises to a crescendo and any on looker would be amazed by the novel cheers invented impromptu by the girls and the rate at which they sprung forth. The activities this year included sports, a baseball match, tug of war and quiz. The make-up competition this year was titled "Cindy Lauper wants to have fun". The singer would have been amused and pleased at the various interpretations of herself. Hostel sports was a riotous affair as a week of early morning practices bore fruit—athletes blossomed and the less athletic ones cheered them on. Hostel Week concluded with Hostel Day. The lazy ones who long for coffee served in bed have their desires fulfilled in the hostel on this day. Mass in the morning was celebrated by Father Joe Mannath who later regaled us during breakfast with amusing anecdotes.

Later on in the day, there was a Treasure Hunt when girls rushed around the campus in groups madly hunting for the treasure. In the evening, girls attired in their best entertained their visitors to tea, skits, songs and dances held in O-1. The various categories of prizes were distributed which included such encouraging ones as 'best kept room' and 'most outstanding student'.

The hostel activities for the year came to a close with prayers for the outgoing batch of students and the farewell party or kickoffs. The seniors are treated to dinner and entertainment on the terrace. The themes this year were 'Count Down' and 'Fisherman's Wharf'. As the songs were sung and gifts given out the seniors perhaps thought back to the day they had entered the hostel as freshies. How time flies !

As the stars grew brighter in the night sky, the music softened and voices grew sleepier. Heads rested comfortably on shoulders and the girls slowly trickled off to bed. A year of joy and laughter, pain and sorrow, hard work and co-operation drew to a close. □

University Exam Results

APRIL 1989

		Regd.	Pass	Percentage
Bran.	B.Com	55	54	98.18
B.A.	History	56	41	73.21
	Sociology	62	53	85.48
	Economics	61	51	83.60
	Fine Arts	34	28	82.35
	English	56	50	89.28
B.Sc.	Maths	62	53	85.48
	Physics	47	32	68.08
	Chemistry	37	23	62.16
	Botany	53	40	75.47
	Zoology	56	49	87.50

Semester Exam Results

APRIL 1989

M.A.	Economics	20	13	65.00
	English	18	15	83.33
	Fine Arts	10	9	90.00
	Social Work	24	19	79.16
M.Sc.	Maths	25	17	68.00

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I, Helen Vincent hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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