

LIFE AND EXPERIENCES
OF
A BENGALI CHEMIST

PRAFULLA CHANDRA RÂY

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To

The Youth of India

This volume is affectionately inscribed
in the hope that its perusal may
in some measure stimulate
them to activities.

“ nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice:”—*Othello*.

PREFACE

While a student at Edinburgh I found to my regret that every civilized country including Japan was adding to the world's stock of knowledge but that unhappy India was lagging behind. I dreamt a dream that, God willing, a time would come when she too would contribute her quota.

Half-a-century has since then rolled by. My dream I have now the gratification of finding fairly materialized. A new era has evidently dawned upon India. Her sons have taken kindly to the zealous pursuit of different branches of Science. May the torch thus kindled burn with greater brilliance from generation to generation!

The conditions and handicap under which this volume appears have been related in the concluding envoy of the book and need not be repeated here. In fact, I find to my dismay that this very year I have to tour some fifteen thousand miles across the length and breadth of this land in response to invitations from several Universities and organisations.

In these days of awakened national consciousness, the life story of a *Bengali* chemist smacks rather of narrow provincialism. As there are two or three chapters which relate exclusively to Bengal, I have been reluctantly compelled to substitute *Bengali* for *Indian*. It will be found, however, that most part of the subject matter is applicable to India as a whole. Even the economic condition of Bengal applies *mutatis mutandis* to almost any province in India.

A large mass of materials originally meant for this present volume has been left out, as it has already grown, I fear, to a disproportionate bulk. If circumstances prove favourable, a supplementary volume may come out later on. It is necessary to point out that the spellings of Indian names and places have been retained as given in the original sources. So dissimilarity is unavoidable.

I cannot conclude without expressing my deep debt of obligations to Mr. Hariprasad Bose who chivalrously took upon himself the task of revising the Manuscript and seeing it through the press ; indeed, it is not too much to say that but for his unremitting and ungrudging labour the volume could scarcely have appeared in its present form. I have also to express my sincere thanks to Mr. G. C. Sen, the Local Trade Intelligence Officer, who has always with his unfailing courtesy supplied me with information whenever required.

P. C. R.

October, 1932.
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY
CALCUTTA.

CONTENTS

PART I

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL.

CHAPTER I.		
Birth, Parental Home, Ancestry, Early environment	...	1
CHAPTER II.		
Absentee Landlords—The Deserted Village—Water Famine— Villages Breeding Grounds of Cholera and Malaria	...	13
CHAPTER III.		
Education in Village—Removal to Calcutta—Description of Calcutta Past and Present	19
CHAPTER IV.		
Education at Calcutta	26
CHAPTER V.		
Departure for Europe—Educational Career in England— “Essay on India”—Tour in the Highlands	50
CHAPTER VI.		
Returning Home—Professor at Presidency College	76
CHAPTER VII.		
Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works	92
CHAPTER VIII.		
New Chemical Laboratory—Mercurous Nitrite—History of Hindu Chemistry	112
CHAPTER IX.		
Reminiscences of Gokhale and Gandhi	123
CHAPTER X.		
Second visit to Europe—Partition of Bengal—Impetus to Scientific Study	129
CHAPTER XI.		
Intellectual Renaissance in Bengal	140
CHAPTER XII.		
Dawn of a New Era—Original Scientific Researches in Bengal —Indians Debarred from Higher Educational Service	152
CHAPTER XIII.		
Original Research—Research Scholars—Indian School of Chemistry	160

INDEX

INDEX

- Absentee landlords, 16 *et seq.*
 Academy of Sciences, 135.
 Acharyya, Prankrishna, 89, 226.
 Albert Hall, 43; meeting, 127-28.
 Albert School, congenial atmosphere, 39; influence of Brahma teachers on Ray, 42-44.
 Ali, Mohammed, 230.
 Allen, on Japan, 343, 353.
 America, shipping in, 354-355; co-operation in, 416-417; U. S. A. Government and unemployment in, 379-385; genesis of, 506.
American Chemical Journal, 119.
 Andrews, C. F., on floods, 247-249.
 Arabic literature, enrichment of, 144-145.
 Arrhenius, 69, 121, 172, 173.
 Asiatic Society of Bengal, 85, 117, 152, 158.
- Baker, on China, 316, 323-324.
 Balfour, Lord, 204.
 Banerji, Chandī Charan, 42.
 „ D. C., 340.
 „ K. M., 9, 38, 146.
 „ Moheschandra, 28.
 „ Prafulla Chandra, 34.
 „ S. C., 279.
 „ S. K., 207.
 „ Surendra Nath, 47, 123, 125, Partition and, 139; Ray on, 537-538.
- Bangiya Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.*, 360.
 Bankura under British rule, 412; decay of tanks and bunds, 414-417; cup of misery of, 419-421.
 Bardhan, Jogendra Chandra, 193.
- Barnard, Sir Charles, 73-74.
 Bayley, Sir Stuart, 77.
 Bengal, partition of, 138-139; intellectual renaissance in, 140-144, 145-151; early economic condition of, 395 *et seq.*; a creditor country, 428-432; economic conquest of, 440, *et seq.*; eclipse of, 471-473; annual economic drain of, 473-478; the underdog, 478-484; effect of caste system on, 519-521.
 Bengal Burma Navigation Co., 357.
 Bengal Chemical & Pharmaceutical Works, 92-111, 124, 162, 318, 332-333.
 Bengal Enamel Works Ltd., 345-347.
 Bengal Relief Committee, the, 239-249.
 Bengal trade, non-Bengalis in, 451-456; Marwaris and, 445.
Bengali brain and its misuse, 153.
 Bengali literature, poverty on the scientific side, 87, modern, 145-146.
 Bengali merchant princes, 20-21; 464-465.
 Bengalis, failure of the 440 *et seq.* due to ineptitude, 440-447; due to lack of versatility and adaptability, 447-451; due to lack of industrious habits, 456-459; due to want of enterprise and initiative, 459-466; opinions on, 488-497.
 Bentley, Dr., 237-238.
 Berthelot, M., 114; correspondence with Rây, 115-116; encouragement from, 117-118; on *History of Hindu Chemistry*, 119; Rây with, 135-136; Rây on, 136-137; funeral, 137.

- Bessemer, 277, 330.
 Betelnut trade, 447-448.
 Beveridge, quoted, 398.
 Bhaduri, Chandra Bhusan, 83, 95, 96, 102; for the new chemical laboratory of the Presidency College, 113; 182, 317-318.
 Bhaduri, Kulabhusan, 96, 102.
 Bhatnagar, Prof. S. S., 161, on Physical Chemistry, 186-188, 194.
 Bhattacharyya, D. N., 345-346.
 Bhattacharyya, Dwijendra Nath, 345.
 Bhattacharyya, Kali Krishna, 41.
 Biri manufacture and the Bengalis, 459-461.
 Birla, G. D., 279, 527-529.
 Bodhkhana, Ray Chaudhuris of, 2.
 Bombay's share in the economic drain of Bengal, 478-483.
 Bose, Amulya Charan, 77; and Bengal Chemical, 101-103; and indigenous drugs, 104; 108, 109; death, 110.
 Bose, Ananda Mohan, 123, 125; on Educational service, 155-158; Ray on, 538.
 Bose, D. M., 207.
 Bose, Jagadis Chandra, 53, 79, 80, 129, 131; epoch-making researches, 152-153; his achievements, 154; 226; Mrs. Bose, 80.
 Bose, Jogendra Nath, 86.
 „ Panchanan, 250.
 „ Prafulla Kumar, 193.
 „ Raj Narain, 30, 86, 142.
 „ Raj Shekhar, 111; on the failure of the Bengalis, 493-497.
 „ Satyananda, 231.
 „ Satyendra Nath, 167, 196.
 „ Subhas Chandra, 238-239, 241.
 Brahma Samaj, influence on Ray, 30-31; 39; tenets of, 42; *Brahma-bandhu Sabha*, 85; movement, 146-147.
 Bright, John, and Rây's essay, 64; 266, 537.
 Burke, on "Plassey drain", 232-233.
 Butler, Dr., 176, 177.
 Calcutta, past and present, 20-23; Ray removed to, 26; its changing population, 469-471.
 Calcutta Pottery Works, the, 321, its history, 337-342.
 Calcutta University, the jubilee, 163; 173; College of Science, 196, 197; Fuller affair, 198-199; Government and Science College, 200-206, 207.
 Cambridge University, Ray's visit to, 176-177; Ray at the Congress of the Universities, 204-206.
 Capitalism *cum* Industrialism, 390-391.
 Carey, William, 145, 503.
 Carlyle, on student life at Edinburgh, 57-58; 209; on Cromwell, 222; on true university, 301; quoted, 529-530.
 Carnegie, Andrew, on graduates and business, 272-273, 276, 333-334; his career, 277; advice to youngmen, 477-478; 504, 524.
 Caste-system, its baneful effect on Hindu society, 502 *et seq.*; responsible for the misfortune in Bengal, 519-521; stumbling block in the growth of Indian nationality, 513; inter-marriage and fusion of races impossible, 519.
 Chakravarti, Gopal Chandra, 193.
 Charka, gospel of, 361 *et seq.*; spinning and weaving, their decline, 362-365; and agriculture, 375-376; lament of a spinner, 377-378.
 Chatterji, Aditya Kumar, 42.
 Chemical manufacture and modern industry, 327-329.

- Chemical Research in Bengal, 160-161, 166-167, 168, 169-173, 182-183, 191-195.
- Chemical Service Committee, Ray's note of dissent, 319.
- China, porcelain manufactory, 319-321; Baker on, 323-324; machinery and unemployment in, 385-386; modern, 516.
- Chinese, carpenters, 456-457; in the shoe-trade of Calcutta, 458-459.
- Chowdhury, Prof. Niren, 242.
- Clairvoyance and Ray, 76-77.
- Clerkdom and failure of the Bengalis, 466-469; merchant's clerk, 467, 469.
- Cloth trade of Dacca, and the Bengalis, 440-441.
- Cohen, 132.
- Colebrooke, 361; on charka, 362; on early sugar industry in Bengal, 400; quoted, 412.
- Coleridge, his bitter experience, 210.
- College graduates in business, 333-336.
- Collège de France*, 135.
- Congress of the Universities of the Empire at London, Ray delegate to, 173; 174-176; at Cambridge, 204-206.
- Cordier, M. Palmyer, 136.
- Croft, Sir Alfred, 74, 75, 77, 80-81, 112, 154.
- Crookes, 1, 172.
- Crum Brown, Prof., 59, 60, 68, 73, 131, 132, 195.
- Cumming, Sir John, 111.
- Cunningham, the young Irish professor, 161-163.
- Curzon, Lord, and the partition of Bengal, 138-139; on parliamentary eloquence, 269.
- Dan, Mahendra Nath, 42.
- Darjeeling, Ray at, 77, 169.
- Das, B. M., on the failure of the Bengalis, 489-491.
- Das, C. R., 231-233, 241; Ray's letter to Mrs. Das, 232-233.
- Das, S. R., 53.
- Das, Satyaranjan, 53.
- Das Gupta, J. M., 241.
- Das Gupta, Kshitis, 250, 253-254.
- Das Gupta, Satis, 241, 250, 253.
- Datta, Akshay Kumar, 30, 146.
- " Dr. B. B., 207.
- " Madhusudan, 1, 143-144.
- " P. N., 71.
- " Rashik Lal, 167, 182, 185.
- " Srinath, 39.
- Davy-Faraday Research Laboratory, Ray worked at, 131.
- Deb, Giris Chandra, 29.
- Deb, S., 338-340.
- Deodhar, G. K., 123.
- Deoghar, Ray at, 86-87.
- Dewar, Sir James, 131-132.
- Dey, Biman Behari, 171, 179.
- " Kanailal, 105.
- " Maniklal, 167, 182.
- " Rajendra Lal, 182, 193.
- " Tincory, 174.
- Dhar, Nil Ratan, 167, 171; and physical chemistry, 173-174; 182, 185.
- Dittmar, Prof., 69.
- Dixon, 132.
- Dobbin, Leonard, 60.
- Durham University, and Ray, 120.
- East India Company, 4, 78; and Bengal marine, 349, 413; and Investments from Bengal, 430-431.
- Eden Hostel, Ray and the brilliant group of students at, 167.
- Edinburgh, 56-58; life at, 56, 67, 68, 71; the Royal Society, 131-132.
- Edinburgh University, 59-61, 67; Chemical Society, Ray elected Vice-President, 68; Doctorate for

- Ray, 71; excursions, 93-94; tercentenary, 538-539.
- Education, insane craze for University, 259, *et seq*; aim of, 303; and mother-tongue, 289-91.
- Education Department, Bengal, 74, 79; Ray and, 80-82; Indians and higher service, 78-79; "Reorganisation scheme" and Late A. M. Bose's speech, 155-58.
- Elliott, Sir Charles, 81, 112.
- Emerson, quoted, 84, 144, 185, 210, 283-284, 310.
- Erdman, 132.
- Essay and Discourses*, 225.
- Essay on India*, 61-67.
- Expert knowledge *vs.* business, 329-333.
- Faridpur, food deficit in Bengal, 421; agricultural wealth of, 422; economic condition of, 423-425.
- Ferdandes, F. V., 182.
- Fischer Emil, 134.
- Fishmongers' Company, Ray at the banquet, 178.
- Ford, Henry, on mechanisation, 380-381.
- Foreign Degree, glamour of, 310, grave wastage, 311; and prestige, 315; and Indian University alumni, 312-314.
- Frankland, 132.
- Franklin, Benjamin, Ray's special favourite, 30; his life and scheme, 211-212.
- Fraser, Thomas, 60.
- Fuller, Sir B., 162, 198-199.
- Fusion of races and Hindu society, 517-529.
- G. C. Ray and Bros., Ray as book-seller, 535.
- Gandhi, Mahatma, in loin cloth, 56; Ray meets, 126-127; first appearance on the Calcutta platform and Ray, the Albert Hall meeting, 127-128, his method, 222-223; 361; machinery and, 387-388, 392, and mill-owner, 480; Rabindranath on, 531.
- Ganesh Prasad, 207.
- Ganguly, Atul Chandra, 160-161.
- Gay-Lussac, 134, 165.
- Ghosh, Atul Chandra, 161.
- Ghosh, Jnanendra Chandra, 167, 173, 182, 185, 196; Ghosh's Law, 197.
- Ghosh, Jyotish Chandra, 235.
- "Kunja Lal, 235.
- "Lal Mohon, 537.
- "P. N., 207.
- "Ram Gopal, 20-21, 146.
- "Rash Behari, 205-206; Ghose deed of gift, 196; second endowment, 203.
- "Sisir Kumar, 1, 86.
- Gibson, Dr. John, 60.
- Gilchrist Scholarship, and Ray, 48-49.
- Gokhale, G. K., 123; Ray on 123-126; on Ray, 124; as fellow-passenger, 126, 127; 203; as speaker, 538.
- Goswami, Kshetramohan, 9.
- Guha, Bires Chandra, 194.
- Guha, Prafulla Chandra, 182-183.
- Gwynn, G. T., the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, 242, 250.
- Haldane, quoted, 217, 541-542; a parallel case, 230.
- Hankin, on America, 268, 277.
- Hardy, Mrs., on modern civilisation, 391-392.
- Hare School, 26, 28-29; relation with teachers, 41-42.
- Hartog Commission, Interim report on education, 262-263.

- Hazlitt, quoted, 497.
 Healy, T. M., 537.
 Helmholtz, 516, 539.
 Heredity and environment,
 Eugenics, and Ray, 531-536.
 Hindu Orthodoxy, revival of, fatal
 to the progress of India, 529-531.
 Hindu society, Ray on, 31, 148-149;
 caste system and, 502 *et seq*;
 hereditary untouchables, 507; non-
 co-operation with vengeance, 510;
 exclusiveness and blindness of the
 backward communities, 520-521.
History of Hindu Chemistry, 34,
 119; appreciations of, 119-122; 329.
 Second volume, 163-164.
 Holland, Sir Thomas, 113.
 Hukumchand, Sir S., 278, 332.
 Hunter, W. W., on Bengal "the
 milch cow", 428, 431, 432.
- Iddesleigh, Lord, 61, 539.
 India, Government of, and Science
 College and, 199-206; caste-ridden,
 502, 508-511, 513.
 Indian Association for the Cultiva-
 tion of Science, and Dr. Sircar, 77,
 149.
 Indian Chemical Society, its genesis,
 188, 192; Ray and, 194-195.
 Indian Medical Congress, stall for
 the Bengal Chemical at, 105.
 Indian National Congress, 125;
 resolution on Education Service,
 155; Ray, ten minutes' president
 of, 230.
 Indian School of Chemistry, evolu-
 tion of, 169-70, 185-188; fresh
 recruits, 192-194.
 Indian shipping, 355-356, 358; indi-
 genous ship-building, 359-360.
 Indian University alumni, 313-315.
 Indigenous Banking, and the
 Bengalis, 441-444.
- Indigenous drugs, and Bengal
 Chemical, 104-105; Bose and Kar
 for, 104.
 Industry, war and, 316-319; modern,
 327-329; chemistry and, 325-327;
 and state, 342-344; Melchelt on,
 331.
 Industry precedes Technology, 316
et seq; case of China, 319-324.
 Institute of Science at Bangalore,
 198, 200-202.
 Insurance Companies, drain of
 Bengal's wealth by, 483-487.
 Investments, 430-431.
 Irrigation, and the Mahomedan
 rulers, 418-419; excavation of
 tanks, 14-16; and Bankura, 414.
- James, H. R., on Ray, 180-181; Ray
 on, 183-184; 185.
 Jack, quoted, 448.
 Japan, national government of, for
 infant industries, 342-344; mer-
 cantile marine, 352-354; social
 changes in, 511-512.
 Jennings, Mr., 185.
Journal des Savants, Berthelot's
 article, 117-118; on *History of
 Hindu Chemistry*, 119-120.
 Jute Industry, 401-402; effect of
 jute cultivation, 403-405.
- Kabibhusan, Pandit Navakanta, 118.
 Kar, R. G., 104.
 Kelly, Dr. and Mrs., Ray with at
 Edinburgh, 67-68.
Khadi Pratisthan, 376.
 Khaira endowment, 203-204.
 Khulna, 76; Famine and Ray, 234-
 235.
Knowledge, on Ray, 119.
- Labour-saving devices, 384-387.
 Lafont, Father, 149.

- Lahiri, Ramtanu, 2, 24.
 „ Prasanna Kumar, 47.
 Laski, H., quoted, 229, 299-301.
 Lavoisier, 134, 218.
 Laws of health, Ray on, 37.
 Lèvi, Sylvain, Ray with, 135-136;
 on Ray, 164.
 Lippman, Von, 122.
 London, Ray at, 53-54, 131, 173-179;
 Lord Mayor's banquet, 179.
 London Chemical Society, 122; Ray
 read a paper before, 173-174; 195,
 317.
London Times, on Bright's letter to
 Ray, 64.
 Lorenz, Prof. Richard, 134.
- Macaulay, his peroration, 78;
 famous minute, 142, 292; 209-210;
 quoted, 264-265.
 Macdonald, Ramsay, on Railways
 and Famine in India, 407-408;
 427; early life, 269, 284-285.
 Machine, driving men out of work,
 381-384; curses of, 385-386; Gandhi
 and, 387-388; superior tools and
 starvation, 393.
Maidan, walk, 167; club, 224, 226.
 Maitra, Heramba Chandra, 86, 89,
 226.
 Maitra, Pramatha Nath, 426.
Makers of Modern Chemistry,
 extracts from, 165-166.
Manchester Guardian, the, the
 special correspondent on the flood
 relief-work of 1922, 242-247; on
 the eclipse of Bengal, 471-473.
 Manning, Miss E. A., 54.
 Manual work held in contempt, a
 great national danger, 282-288.
 Maritime Activity, and awakening
 of political consciousness, 513-517.
 Marshall, Hugh, 61; how became
 famous, 70.
 Martin, 158-159.
- Marwaris, 90, 463-464; and Bengal
 trade, 444-446, 474, 476, 477; sepa-
 rated from the Bengalis and their
 social outlook, 519-520; misdirected
 charities, 521-522, 527-529.
 Masaryk, 287, 295; outlook on edu-
 cation, 302-303; 306, 504.
 Mass Production of graduates, 259-
 263.
 Mechanisation, Ford on, 381; mecha-
 nical civilisation and China, 385;
 and U. S. A. 389-390.
 Medium of instruction, 289, 290;
 bilingualism, 295-299.
 Melchett, Lord, on modern industry,
 327, 331, 334; 518.
 Mercantile marine in Bengal, past
 and present, 347-358.
 Mercurous Nitrite, discovery of, 113-
 114; first paper, 152.
 Meston Award, and drain of the
 wealth of Bengal, 435-439.
 Metropolitan Institution, 46-48.
 Meyer, Victor, 114.
 Meyerhofer, 132.
 Mitra, Digambar, 9, 10, 19.
 „ Peary Chand, 21, 146.
 „ Prafulla Chandra, 180, 196,
 242.
 „ Rajendra Lal, 19, 146.
 „ S. K., 207.
 „ Susil Kumar, 194.
 „ Yadav Chandra, 95, 102.
- Monahan, F. J., 296.
 Monroe, on China, 386.
 Modern civilisation, Howard on,
 388; the underworld, 389.
 Mossian, 136; 137.
 Muir, Sir W., 62; on Ray, 63; 73.
 Mukherji, Asutosh, 154-155; letter
 to Ray and the Science College,
 179-180; 196; his desperate efforts
 to secure grant, 198-199, 203.
 Mukherji, Janendra Nath, 167; in
 Colloid Chemistry, 172; 173, 182,
 185, 194, 196.

- Mukherji, Jogesh Chandra, on the failure of the Bengalis, 491-493.
- Mukherji, Sir R. N., 278.
- Muslim Pirs, 3.
- Mussolini, on state schools, 281-282; life, 286-287; on University, 301.
- Mysore Convocation Address, by Ray, 307-309.
- Nandy, Manindra, 196; in "Pottery Works", 337, 340.
- Nature*, 119; on Ray's paper, 174; on the Indian School of Chemistry, 185-186; on Ray's life-work, 225; on Berthelot's funeral, 137.
- Nature Club, 89.
- Nature Study, Ray in, 87-89.
- Neogi, Panchanan, 160.
- Newmann, Cardinal, 300-301.
- Nitrite, Ray's paper on, read before Lond. Chemical Society, 173-174.
- Non-Bengali immigrants in Bengal, 463.
- North Bengal Flood, the, 208, 238; Bengal Relief Committee's Work, 239-242.
- Organic Chemistry, Ray on, 171-172.
- Ostwald, 69, 172.
- Over-production and consequent unemployment, 379-381.
- Pakrasi, Ayodhyanath, 30.
- Pal, Bholanath, 29.
- „ Bhutnath, of Butto Kristo Paul & Co., 93, 106.
- Palit, Tarak Nath, 199, 205-206.
- Palit Trust Deed, 196.
- Paris, Ray at, 134-137.
- Pasteur, quoted, 70; 538-539.
- Peasantry, of Bengal, 403, 425; ruinous craze of the, 405-406; indebtedness of the, 407.
- Pedler, Sir Alexander, 47, 77, 78, 83-84, 112-113, 129-130.
- Perkin, 132.
- Physical Chemistry, pioneers of, 69; Dhar, Mukherji, Ghosh in, 172-173; Bhatnagar on the researches of, 186-188.
- Plassey Drain, 432-435.
- Playfair, Lord, 73, 195.
- Primer of Zoology* in Bengali, 89.
- Presidency College, 47, 77; Ray at, 80; new chemical laboratory, 112-113; brilliant group of students, 167; chemical research at, 160-173, 182-183; retirement from, 188; 304, 317-318.
- Porcelain manufactory, 319-321.
- Prohibition of sea-voyage—its repercussion on Hindu India, 513, 517.
- Public Service Commission, recommendations of, 79, 81.
- Quasi-political Activity, Ray in, 227-233.
- Railway embankments and floods, 236-238; Bentley on, 237.
- Rakshit, Jitendra Nath, 167-170.
- Raman, C. V., 202, 207.
- Ramsay, William, 131, 132, 174, 184.
- Raruli, 1, 10; village school, 19.
- Rây, Ananda Lal, grandfather, 6; his sradh ceremony, 25.
- Rây, B. B., 207.
- Rây Chowburis of Bodhkana, 2.
- Rây, D. N., 50-51.
- Rây, Haris Chandra, father, 1, 2; intellectual equipment, 8-9; fond of music, 9; acquaintances, 9; his income, 10-11; loan office, 11; for widow-remarriage movement, 24-25; cordial relation with his sons, 27-28; pecuniary embarrassment, 45-46; his death, 109.

Rây, J. N., 193.

Rây, Jatin, 241.

Rây, Manik Lal, the great-grandfather, wealth, 6-7; culture, 9.

Rây, Prafulla Chandra,—

Early life and education :—

Birth, 1; family history, 2-4; mother, 8, 46, 49, 76; ancestral house, 8, 11-12; village school, 19; his first impressions of Calcutta, and his removal, 19-20, 26; relation with his father, 27-28; his intellectual equipment, 27-28; faith and Brahmo Samaj, 30-31.

Hare School, 26, 28-29; the teachers, 41-42; attack of dysentery and eventful year of his life, 31-38; passion for study and learning new languages, 33-38, 305.

Albert School, 39; influence of Brahmo teachers, 42-44; his love of English literature and Krishna Behari Sen, 44.

Metropolitan Institution, 46-48; external student at the Presidency College, 47; blow-pipe incident, 48; Gilchrist scholarship, 48-49.

Departure for Europe, 50-54; at London, 53-54; "Indian robe" incident, 55, 68.

Edinburgh, life at, 56-57, 67, 68, 71.

Edinburgh University, 59-61; Essay competition, 61; his *Essay on India*, 61-67; *London Times* and Bright's letter to, 64; Thesis for doctorate, Hope prize, 68; elected Vice-President of Chemical Society, 68; Doctorate in Inorganic Chemistry, 71; teaching and laboratory work, 70-71; tercentenary, 538-539.

Tour in the Highlands, 71-73.

Home coming, 75; meets mother, 76; dream at Edinburgh, Clairvoyance, 76-77.

Hospitable roof of Dr. and Mrs. Bose, 80.

Career as Professor :—

Appointment at the Presidency College, 80; making of a teacher, 82-84; way of his lecturing, 83, 304, 305.

Research on food-stuffs, a paper published, 84-85.

Insomnia and change at Deoghar, 85-87.

Nature Study and Nature Club, 87-89; wrote *Primer of Zoology* in Bengali, 89.

Pharmaceutical preparations and the Bengal Chemical Works, 92-111; purchase of Sodepur Acid Works, 102.

Death of his father, 109.

The new chemical laboratory, 112-113;

Discovery of mercurous nitrite, 113-114; analysis of minerals, 113.

Researches in the history of Hindu Chemistry, 115, 118-119; correspondence with Berthelot and the article in *Journal des Savants*, 115-118.

History of Hindu Chemistry and its appreciations, 119-122.

Hony. D.Sc. of Durham University, 120-121.

Meeting with Gokhale, 123-126; with Gandhi, 124; responsible for Gandhi's first appearance on a Calcutta platform, the Albert Hall Meeting, 127-128.

Second visit to Europe, 129-131; at Davy-Faraday Research Laboratory, 131; visit to research laboratories of Europe,

- 131-137; dinner at the Royal Society, Edinburgh, 131-132.
- Return to Calcutta, 137; "Partition" and awakening of Bengal, 138-139.
- "Reorganisation Scheme" and in the proper grade, 158; offered Principalship of Rajshahi College, his refusal, 158-159.
- Cunningham incident, 161-163.
- Second volume of *History of Hindu Chemistry*, 163-164.
- Chemical research in Bengal, 160-161, 167-173; the brilliant group of students, 166-167.
- Delegate to the First Congress of the Universities of Empire at London, 173-174, 175-176; paper on ammonium nitrite, read before the Chemical Society; Ramsay, Veley, Roscoe and *Nature* on the paper, 173-174; visit to Cambridge and Sheffield Universities, 176-178; anniversary of the Royal Society and other functions, 178-179; Asutosh Mukherji's letter, 179-180; "at home" on his return, 180-181.
- Indian School of Chemistry, slow evolution, 169-170; *Nature* on, 185-186; Dr. Watson and his pupils, 191-192; fresh recruits, 192-194.
- Indian Chemical Society, formed, 194-195.
- Retirement from the Presidency College, 188-191.
- University College of Science, 196; poor equipment and Asutosh's efforts, 196-197, 203; Ghose, Palit and Khaira endowments; Government's attitude, 198-203.
- Rây on the "State and the University" at 3rd Congress of the Universities, 204-206; 207.
- Quasi-political activity, 228-233.
- Social Service Activity:—
- Khulna Famine and Relief Work, 234-235. 2
- Bengal Relief Committee and the North Bengal Flood of 1922; 236-242; *Manchester Guardian* and Andrews on, 242-249.
- The Sankat Tran Samity*, and the recent floods, 249-254.
- His daily routine, 213-216.
- Active period of his life, 223-226.
- Maidan Club, 167, 224, 226.
- Men he has seen and heard, 537-539.
- Industrial enterprises:—
- Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, 92, *et seq.*
- Sodepur Sulphuric Works, 102.
- Calcutta Pottery Works, 337-342.
- Bengal Enamel Works, 345-347.
- Bangiya Steam Navigation Co., 360.
- G. C. Ray & Bros., Publishers and Book-sellers, 535.
- Rây, P. K., 50.
- Rây, Priyadarajan, 192-193.
- Rây, Ram Mohan, 55, 78; spirited letter to Lord Amherst, 140-141, 294; maker of modern Bengal, 142; 150, 532.
- Rây, Tarapasanna, 149.
- Reorganisation scheme and the education service, 155, 158.
- Research scholarships, 160, 184-185; scholars, 160-161, 167-171, 173, recognition abroad, 182-183.
- Richardson, D. L., 2, 29.
- River-borne trade in Bengal, 397-398.
- Roscoe, 114, 174.
- Rosebery, Lord, 175, 537.

- Rowlatt Act, agitation, 230-232.
 Royal Institute of Science, Bombay, 202-203.
 Royal Society, Ray attends the 250th anniversary, 179.
 Rungpur, economic condition, 426-427.
- Saha, Megh Nad, 167, 182, 196;
 Saha's equation, 197-198; on Bangalore Institute, 201-202; and floods, 242, 249.
Samachar Darpan, 9; lament of the spinner, 377-378.
Sankat Tran Samity, the, and recent floods, 249-255.
 Sanyal, Rambrahma, 89.
 Sarkar, Bipin Behari, 89.
 „ Nalini Ranjan, 279.
 „ Nilratan, 89, 104, 123, 169, 226.
 „ Peary Charan, 28.
 „ Pulin Behari, 167, 193.
 Sarvadhikary, D., 50; delegate to the Congress of Universities of the Empire, 173, 175-176.
 Sarvadhikary, Suresh Prasad, 104.
 Sastri, Rt. Hon. Srinivas, 125.
 Scheele, quoted, 114.
 Schelenz, Herman, 121.
 Scindia Steam Navigation Co., 351, 353, 355.
 Seal, B. N., 163.
 Secondary Education, defects in, 289.
 Sen, Baikuntha Nath, 337, 342.
 „ Hemendra Kumar, 170-171, 194.
 „ Hemendra Nath, 337, 342.
 „ Indra Narayan, 241.
 „ Jatindra Nath, 160.
 Sen, Keshab Chandra, 19, 30, influence on Ray, 31; 39, 43; Ray on, 538.
 Sen, Krishna Behari, 35, 39-41, 43; his influence on Ray, 44.
- Sen, Mon Mohan, 194.
 „ N. R., 207.
 „ Nagendra Nath, 235.
 „ Narendra Nath, 43, 127.
 „ Pares Nath, 226.
 „ Ramdas, 34.
 Sharp, Sir Henry, 198, and Science College, 199.
 Sheffield University, Ray's visit to, 177-178.
 Sinha, Col. N. P. & Lord, 53.
 „ Satishchandra, 107-108.
 Singh, B. K., 192.
 Sircar, Mahendra Lal, 77, 149; on *History of Hindu Chemistry*, 120.
 Smith, Alexander, 60-61.
 Smithells, 132.
 Social Service Activity, Ray in, 234-250.
 Spencer, Herbert, and books, 217, 518; quoted, 303.
 Sugar Industry in Bengal, 399-401, 482; Colebrooke and Westland on, 399-400.
 Sukkur Barrage Scheme, 415.
 Sulphuric Acid Works, Sodepur, 95-96; purchase by Ray, 102; 109-111.
 "Sunset Law", 5, 21, 414.
 Sutcliffe, James, 29.
- Tagore, Devendra Nath, 9, 30, 142.
 „ Jatindra Mohan, 9.
 „ Rabindra Nath, 33; on Gandhi & Hindu Society, 531.
 „ Sourindra Mohan, 9.
 Tanks, excavation of, 14-16.
 Tata Iron Works, 318, 328-329; and protection, 480-482.
 Tata, J. N., 198, 328, 525.
 Tawney, Charles H., 74, 80, 112.

- Technische Hochschule, Ray's visit to, 132, 332.
- Technology before Industry, 316, case of China, 319, 322-324; in India, 329, 331-333; 335.
- Thenard, 134, 164.
- Thomson, Sir Joseph, 175.
- Thrope, Sir Edward, 225.
- Time, use and misuse of, 208 *et seq.*
- Travers, 110-111, 131.
- Troost, President M., 135-136.
- Trusts and Dumping, 325-327.
- University, the true functions of a, 299-309.
- University College of Science, 196 *et seq.*
- University education, insane craze for, 259 *et seq.*; a handicap to success in business, 271-282.
- University graduates *v.* self-taught men, 264-271.
- Van't Hoff, 69; Ray with, 132-133; 173.
- Veley, V. H., 174.
- Vernacular, neglect of, 292-294.
- Vidyabagis, Mohanlal, 24.
- Vidyasagar, Iswar Chandra, 9, 46; for modern Bengali literature, 145-146.
- Village life, early, 409-411.
- Volhard, 114.
- Waldie & Co., D., 94-95.
- Walker, James, 60, 68, 132.
- Watson, Prof., 182, his pupils, 191.
- West, M., on bilingualism, 292, 295-296.
- Western civilisation and our ruin, 370-374.
- Westland, quoted, 14-15; on sugar industry of Bengal, 399.
- Whiteman's Burden, 254, 416.
- Willcocks, W., on Bankura, 417-418.
- Windsor Palace, reception at, 179.
- Wynne, Prof., 195.
- Young, Captain of S. S. *California*, 50-52.
- Zeitschrift für anorganische, 134.
- Zurich polytechnic, Ray's visit to, 134.