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X1. K. M. Chatterjee

X2. Motilal Nehru

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3. D. K. Karve as R.P. Panjha
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2.4. M. G. Ranade as K.T. Talwar
V2wM42, S.R. Gokhale V2wM50

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V2wM66

X6. P. S. Joffe Johnson

X7. V. Nagam Aiya

8. Keir Hardie in India

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9. Ram Mohan Roy

as Ram Mohan Roy

V2wL72

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18774

K. M. CHATTERJEE
AND
HIS TIMES.

Rare section

"There is no religion higher than Truth."

Rigveda.

NOLINI MOHUN CHATERJEE.

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K. M. CHATTERJEA.

DEDICATION.

To the Members of the Indian Rationalistic Society, Calcutta.

This little book, with its imperfections, which I wrote in four weeks at Shillong, I dedicate to you with deep gratitude and affectionate regards. You will not feel anxiety in regard to my salvation, if I put you in mind of the weighty reflection of Diogenes, that a man who wishes to be saved must have good friends or violent enemies, and he is best off who has both.

A FEW PRESS NOTICES

A book like this is useful as a beacon light to the present generation of Bengalees. Mr. N. Chatterjee has our congratulations on the success that has attended his efforts

The Indian Daily News

The author who has dedicated his production to the members of the Indian Rationalistic Society of Calcutta discusses the social and political evolution of India at the end of the nineteenth century and in doing so deals with the life history of Kishori Mohan Chatterjee, who was not only a profound scholar, but also a high souled Indian

The publication which is priced at only two rupees is brimful of interesting and instructive matter and should command a ready sale.

The New Empire

It is a very interesting book as it presents a conspectus of the current of affairs of the period. We may call it the inner history of India at the end of the nineteenth century. As regards the language of the book we must confess that it is rich and charming; powerful and nervous, fascinating and beautiful, full of fragrance and sweetness, and untarnished with lachrymose softness; the diction will appeal to the most fastidious taste. We hope the book will serve as the red tincture of the alchemist converting the baser metal of the nation into gold.

The Bengalee

PREFACE.

I have written the following pages perhaps on mournful note; but, in setting out in this way the problems and defects of the East, —and India is included in the East, I am by no means despondent. I do not doubt for a moment that the people of this country will remedy the defects and overcome the obstacles in their path. It is necessary, however, that the defects and obstacles should be clearly seen and realised.

I am much indebted to my friends (Mr. R. C. Maulik and Mr. R. Maulik for many excellent suggestions which I have adopted, I have also to thank my brother Captain R. Chaterjee for some materials and his kind offer to bear some portion of the cost of publishing this Life.

N. C.

VINCELLES-YONNE, FRANCE

June 1920.

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INTRODUCTION.

Man is either entirely domestic or he combines in himself the State and Domesticity. In the primitive and low stage of civilisation he looks for food and begets children ; when he has attained that he rests satisfied ; even his tribe does not interest him. As he rises in civilisation, his mental vision enlarges and he begins to think of the tribe, and that only in relation to the danger to which it may be exposed from its enemy. When the danger is passed, he forgets his tribe and resumes his domestic life. As he rises higher in civilisation he begins to cultivate his intellect ; his brain which is composed of cells, receives exercise by cultivation and expands. He then considers his tribe as a group of which he is a unit, and that his own well-being is dependant upon that of the tribe. And, in the course of mental evolution, he establishes for himself a State of which all the members of the tribe form a solid group. In weal or woe, he lives for the State ; his own domesticity is subordinated to the maintenance and welfare of the State. The State is an association, on the same soil, of the living with the dead and those who will be born. A man's life in civilisation is made up of his thoughts and actions

in regard to the State. His life at home, his relation to his family, in short his domesticity should not have any interest for the public, which is only concerned with what the man has thought and done for his posterity. I have not entered into this phase of his life. Kishori Mohun considered education as the panacea for all the evils from which humanity suffers. He wrote much on it. He would have the university education placed upon the model of Oxford and Cambridge. He would not make it cheap as it has been hitherto. Cheap education produces shoddy articles, and has failed to create men of character worthy of being rulers of the country. Primary and secondary education need not be costly; in fact, Primary education should be free and compulsory; for every child, male or female, must learn to read and write and cast up accounts. This is one of the duties incumbent upon civilisation. It may be onerous but it has to be discharged. He pleaded for the establishment of commercial, industrial, and technical education for the vast majority of boys, who as university men have failed of success in life. According to him the State should take up the Primary and Secondary education and control it, leaving the University education to those who would pay for it, at the same time keeping a strict superintendence over the University lest it should sink

below the high water mark of efficiency. The profession of law is fed to excess. The members of it scarcely make a decent living by it. They suffer from mental and physical dyspepsia. It were better therefore to give the boys or young men practical training in the workshop, which would teach them the dignity of manual labour and instil into their minds the idea of higher standard of living. They should learn that physical labour entails exhaustion of tissues which has to be repaired by nutritious food containing much protein. Is it not vexing to admit that there is not a single indigenous firm to manufacture bicycles which were first imported into this country 40 years ago. As regards the legal education, it was suggested to make it more costly and efficient in order that Indian Lawyers might be on an equal footing with the British Lawyers. This would enhance their self-respect and dignity. The physical deterioration and the poverty of the race called forth strong comments, and he wrote the article entitled Gammomania or marriage madness. He noticed the indignity and contumely bestowed upon the Indian travellers by rail when travelling in their native costume, that evoked some observation on the subject in an article on Drapery. The question of the girls, and women had not escaped his notice. He wished

for them a practical education that might best them to earn a livelihood and be independent of marriage at an early age. He was in favour of large schools for boys and girls in some hill stations with a view to the improvement of their body and mind: all this remained with him a pious wish. Nothing has been achieved up to now. Bad education, selfishness, and want of vigour and energy of mind and body have taken the sap out of the life of our race. There is left the voice, and, nothing else. The Chinese have a saying "he who is eloquent and has a sharp tongue may always leave half of a sentence unspoken; and he who has right on his side may confidently yield three lengths of his assertion." In writing this biography I have had three ideas before me. The first is to put in a compendious form the social and political history of that period; the second is to show the extent of the progress the country has since made, and the third is to show whether there has been a development or retrogression in the character in our countrymen and in the idea of the State.

There has been much loose talk and vague definition of culture and character. Culture is that condition of mind in which the race keeps to its own traditions for the preservation of its identity; but those traditions must not be opposed to

the freedom of reception, and development of ideas that are constantly changing or are in the process of rapid evolution. It must take into account the economic, scientific and political changes that are ever taking place in the world. And in view of these considerations some of the traditions must bend and undergo certain modifications to enable the race to survive with dignity and pride. Man is the highest animal, he has been endowed with the greatest of gifts—intellect and reason. He is capable of the highest development in all the departments of life. Should any tradition neglect or keep at arm's length any group of men, such tradition must yield place to natural laws which have not put up a barrier against the intercourse between man and man. All the religions of the world, except the Pauranic religion, proclaim the genus man as the creation of one God: where does then the question of touchability and un-touchability come in? God's law or Nature makes no difference between man and man in regard to heredity. Nature has not declared that one man is sacrosanct and another is profane: all that she has done, has been to establish the inexorable laws which govern the gametes of the male and the female, and the union of these gametes producing the zygote—the embryo, contains all the traits of the ancestors. Culture is a quality

which is neither heritable nor transmissible. It is acquired. The Culture of a race consists in its philosophy, its religion, its language and dress, its art and science and its mental and physical stamina. Many of these elements suffer changes in the process of development. No race can assert that its culture has been a constant quantity. Character is a quality of mind which is distinguished by energy and firmness. It is never unsteady and is impatient of vacillation in others. If it seizes hold of an idea, it remains firm by it and executes it. A man of character seldom makes a promise which he knows he cannot fulfil, or does not try to keep it; flabbiness of mind is the reverse of character and involves degeneracy of the man and his race. It arises from the inheritance derived from the enslaved mind of the male and female ancestors. Character springs from nourishing food and social freedom of men and women. Education is not the only remedy for this state of mind. Rousseau and the Encyclopedists wrote on education for their own people in Europe, where the men and women were socially free and had character. When Mill and Herbert Spencer thought and wrote on education, they were thinking and writing for their own virile race. Their thoughts and writings have not been assimilated and realised in Asia, except in Japan, but they have reposed in glowing phrases in the fine peroration of a glib tongue of the Easterner.

ERRATA.

Page	Line	
53	7	"impartinances", read "impertinences"
194	3	"Velein", read "Villein"
<i>ib.</i>	4	"ueife", read "neife"
<i>ib.</i>	5	'ueife' read "neife"
<i>ib.</i>	8	"Velein read "Villein"
195	4	"applications" read "appellations"
<i>ib.</i>	11	"As a" read Asia"
<i>ib.</i>	18	"Marriage" read "marriage"
196	8	"acting" read "changes"
205	4	"son" read "song"
206	18	"t'apprecedra" read "t'apprendra"
<i>ib.</i>	13	"thng" read "thing"