

# College with Long Tradition

Comilla Victoria College

E. Jager Kingbodonti

By Titash Chowdhury

Venus Publications,

Comilla, 1986

Taka 25/-

Every art is great if it is moralized, so goes the saying. And this saying may be put in other way round, such as every field of research has its own potential if it is touched and illuminated through 'high sincerity'. As Mathew Arnold would like to put it, Any sort of research worth its name calls for a certain amount of insight from the person who cares to accept the pains to make his journey meaningful. In our country popular apathy or make-believe are the watch-words and hardly there is any attempt to dive deep into the heart of things and bring out jewels from the bottom for the assimilation of treasures which one might call as cultural heritage.

Titash Chowdhury shouldered a task, rather a literary mission to look for a passage that is covered with shadows of uncertainty, doubts and darkness. There was no light because nobody did tread on it before him. No references were there because none else took the pains to record the course of events.

Comilla Victoria College established by Rai Bahadur Ananda Chandra Roy in 1899, is one of the most enduring educational institutions of the former India sub-continent. The author lacked in certain amount of information and backdrops that inspired Ananda Chandra Roy for the establishment of the esteemed institution. Any innovation, call it social or literary, leaves behind some sort of social questions that hold out their impact on it. Almost all the famous colleges such as Ananda Mohon College, Murari Chand College, Jagannath College, Brojomohon College, Carmichael College to name some of them, had their roots which sprang from Hindu aristocrats. And why? That should have been a relevant question to the author for his research proposition. Titash Chowdhury worked hard and that is beyond any doubt. His quest for the human souls that watered at the root of the bloom is commendable. He rightly stressed on the contributions of Akhtar Hameed Khan, the self-retired ICS who opted for working with common masses of this soil of Bangladesh. The total form of a living spirit—a spirit that emerges defying the dictates of time and circumstances and simply, rather in a manner of self-propelling, goes out to make a synthesis of works and action, is that of Akhtar Hameed Khan who is the exponent of Comilla Doctrine in agriculture and the architect of the grand human legend in this part of Asia through his love, toil, sweat and idealism. His teaching profession at Comilla Victoria College leaves

a lot of dazzling points for learning of the posterity. He is by himself an institution and, therefore, we shall consider it to be a privilege if any of his students volunteers to write a book on him. The author might do well if he turned his pen towards throwing more light on the personality of Akhtar Hameed Khan giving special emphasis on the aspects that brought him back to the people of Comilla again and again despite the fact that we have had a very little sense of gratitude! I would prefer to mention only two of his thousand and one great moments. He used to tell his students at all available chances giving reference to their origin "Be kind to your guardians." And to remember another occasion probably in 1953, when all the students of the College came out of their classes to participate in a procession under the call of a politician who became a Cabinet member of the former Government of East Pakistan. The town was under the clasp of the section 144. The students were being asked to violate it.



Shree Satyendranath Basu (1867-1931), the first principal of the college.

Mr. Khan came out of his room and asked the gentlemen politician to leave his students to him and said "What will be my reply to their guardians if any of them get injured?" Thereafter he collected all the students and exchanged his views with the students about the proposed violation of the section 144. The boys remained insistent. "Well, in that case, I shall lead the procession and told his friend Mr IA Khan, ICS and the then District Magistrate "Keep off your police force. My boys shall not do anything against the law and order. The procession will be a peaceful one." However, time has changed and things are taking new shapes. But a teacher like him is a point of dream.

Titash Chowdhury could also do well if he preferred to collect the glorious chapters created by professor jyojnemoy Basu who was called by his

## College

Contd. from page 10

unconsciously.

The cover design speaks of the sense of artistic acumen of Hashem Khan. By the way, we do not favour any move for a change in the name of the college. Past has its own voice. And one need not silence it. The founder could be honoured in ways more than one. A bad tendency always goes on the wrong tune!

## Siddiqur Rahman

dear students as "a moon" by name, a moon by appearance and a moon by behaviour pattern." We also remember the brilliant and able teachers such as Monindra Dev, T.D. (Tarapad Dev? who used to smile once a month), Bibhu Ranjan Guha, Ajit Nandi, Sudhir Sen and Aminul Islam (Now Principal, Lakshipur College) who by some way or other have established the spirit of idealism before the students for their day to day guidelines.

The point is personal and



Akhtar Hameed Khan

I would propose to mention it nevertheless with the lone intention that Titash Chowdhury dwelt upon the records of the Wall Magazines of the College and placed the name of one of such magazines published in 1955 and of which myself and Abdur Rahim (former CSP) were the joint editors. I simply wonder as to how he could manage to find out the copy of the wall magazine published 31 years back. And there rests his uncommon strive for research and investigations. Even a very flimsy point did not miss his attention.

Titash Chowdhury has done a splendid job, opened a world of beautiful surprises for those who belong to the present generation of students of the College and brought up an endearing nostalgia for those who are seeking comfortable scenes of their remote past in the College. The style is lucid and simple and any one once finding himself between the covers will be absorbed in the flow rather

Contd. on page 12