



# Reactions And Reconcilement

**PART-2**

*Principal Abu Hena*

# **REACTIONS AND RECONCILEMENT**

**PART II**

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**(AN ACCOUNT OF MY ELEVEN-YEAR WORK  
AT DACCA UNIVERSITY,  
FROM OCTOBER 1953 TO JUNE, 1964)**

**PRINCIPAL ABU HENA**



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Principal Abu Hena**

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## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

In the name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

Soon after the BCBS got Principal Abu Hena's 'Reactions and Reconciliation' re-printed, I was after 'Murad Bhai' (Morad Waiz, the author's son) for the script of second part of his account of academic work at Dhaka University. The account of Mr. Hena's working life in education had the first phase in government Colleges from 1992 to 1953 and the second one from 1953 to 1964 at Dhaka University with an interval of only ten days. The author mentions about this volume, hitherto unpublished, in the preface of his first volume, wherefrom I learnt the existence of this one. I was continuously pursuing Morad Bhai, Mamun and Selim, his younger brothers, to trace and locate the script of this volume. It was difficult to locate this writing by the heirs of the author and I am grateful to them for tracing after prolonged search and handing it over to me for publication.

Today, we are at our wit's end, for happenings in Dhaka University, once called the "Oxford" of the East. This writing of Principal Abu Hena encompassing his activities at Dhaka University from 1953 to 1964, portrays very clearly the gradual de-generation in the attitude and aptitude of the students towards politicization of Union activities. He also describes vividly the selfish ends for ascendancy in University postings on the part of teachers. From a simple demonstration of protest by students through non-attendance in convocation of 1962 under Dr. Mahumud Hussain as Vice Chancellor, we are aware how rowdysm and terrorism got started, there in Dhaka University from early 1966 through NSF under the patronization of the then- government. We are really proud of Dhaka University students for their part they played in the liberation movement of 1971, but it's a harrowing tale of strong - arm tactics, terrorism and killing in the campus repeated in cyclic order and in the similar way right after achieving the liberation, which continues unabated till to day. Only the Almighty Allah knows when and how we are going to get rid of this problem.

Mr. Abu Hena, describes very clearly the attitude and the approach to life to achieve gainful ends on the part of many heroes whose hymns are sung to day loud and thunder - like. I think, both the volumes of 'Reactions and reconciliation' is a

must - read for thoughtful people specially the University teachers, the people considered to be the conscience - keepers of the Nation. To quote the author himself, "We all feel that we are doing educational work which however, has now been replaced by the magnificent facade of the 'Palace of Lucifera' concealing corrupt but painted things at the back. We are face to face with a crisis that must be ended soon with saner and cleaner conditions, with sounder educational principals and practices that have seeds of natural growth and development, with less interested and less political motivation, with men of character and wisdom at all levels."

At a juncture like this, when we, all the Bangladeshi's are in a deep rooted crisis of student rowdysm or terrorism whatever one may call it, culminating in series of killings resembling feudal warfare, Bangladesh Co-operative Book Society is very proud to present this book for thought-provoking of it's readers. It is extremely painful to see the happenings in all of our Universities, Dhaka, Chittagong, Islamic, Jahangirnagar, Agricultural, Khulna, Shahjalal and above all the recent one in BUET, hitherto unknown in that campus right from Pakistan - days. Even if there is soul-searching by a single individual reader of this book, the BCBS will consider that it has served causes of the Nation.

Let Allah gives us strength to win over this serious-most problem so as to place Bangladesh with honour and dignity in the Committee of Nations.

26th May, 1998  
Chittagong

Munawwar Ahmad  
Chairman  
Bangladesh Co-operative  
Book Society Ltd.  
Dhaka-Chittagong.

## PREFACE

I was requested by 'Munawwar', a friend of my younger brother 'Hasan' to write a preface of this book on behalf of my late father, Principal Abu Hena. Since the reprinting of the first volume of 'Reactions and Reconciliation' he was pursuing to trace the manuscript of this volume of my father's writing hitherto unpublished. After considerable search, it was traced and I am very happy to hand it over to Bangladesh Co-operative Book Society for publication.

In the back drop of terrorism, arson, violence, gun battle, hall capturing, murder of students, police raid in different halls, Provost and teachers being humiliated by students in many Universities all over Bangladesh, I feel this is the opportune moment to publish the second part of my father Late Principal Abu Hena's book "Reactions and Reconciliation." Principal Abu Hena, the renowned educationist and eminent scholar of Bengal later East Pakistan and Bangladesh, narrates his experiences of Dhaka University. This volume encompasses the period from 1953-1964.

Principal Abu Hena joined the Dhaka University in November 1953 and worked in various capacities; Inspector of colleges, Provost S.M. Hall, Registrar, Supernumerary teacher of English Department, Honorary Treasurer etc. Often he performed duties as Acting Vice Chancellor.

He loved his pupils and dedicated his life for the cause of students. For tensions in the campus he therefore thought the teachers as ultimately responsible. Till the day of his death in 1975 he worked with full vigor, dedication and honesty.

Myself and all my brothers and sister are quite confident that all his former pupils, and present students, will love to go through this historic and eventful episode which is actually a "prophecy coming true."

25th May, 1998  
Dhaka.

MORAD WAIZ  
SON OF THE LATE AUTHOR

## **Introduction**

On the 8th April, 1965, I left off having brought this narrative up to the end of my career in Government Service. I looked around to find out if it would be possible to have it printed and published as the first major instalment of what I had set about to write. With effect from 1st May, 1965, I had before me a three-month remunerative script-examination job which I could finish early in August and then resume my story. A contact with some of the printing and publishing concerns brought home to my mind that my work had no commercial value and that to have it see the light of day the cost was to be borne by me; the prospect of sale among the reading public here were practically nil. Not that I had any illusion about the worth of my memoirs or about straightforward deals in the book trade and the world of notices and reviews but certainly I have had to give serious consideration to the financial implications of the production of the book. Meanwhile the Vietnam Crisis had been dominating the diplomatic and political scene the world over with the USA pursuing a determined and relentless course, and China and North Vietnam meeting out a continuous and consistent rebuff to vociferous peace proffers from all and sundry. Within our country bitter reactions followed the U.S.-sponsored postponement by two months of the scheduled meeting in the 3rd week of July of the Aid-to-Pakistan consortium. By the time I was to have taken up the thread of my account there was an announcement in the Pakistan Observer



on the 9th August, 1965, of the setting-up of a Revolutionary Council along with that of the Sada-i-Kashmir (Voice of Kashmir) Radio Station in India—held Kashmir. But The Statesman of the same date mention's on the following headlines :

**Mass Intrusion in Kashmir : Armed men from Pakistan clash with-troops : Cabinet Committee meets : Cease-fire line crossed at several points by Extensive Infiltration etc.**

Since the 9th August day after day, step by step, the Security Forces of Kashmir, consisting of Several Army Divisions went on beating, killing, imprisoning the "armed raiders" for a week and then in addition to all these entered upon a new career of crossing the Cease-fire line into Azad Kashmir Territory and capturing, after invasion, of several posts there including the recapture of the two Kargil posts and the annexation of many in Tithwal, Uri, Uri-poonch Bulge, leading to Haji Pir Pass by the 31st August. The exultation in the Lok Sabha and all over India was tumultuous over the invasion and conquest of territory beyond the Cease-Fire line. Chavan, the Indian Defence Minister, put the number of "raiders" at a few hundred; they were given to hit and run policy, they had no supplies; they were being mopped up etc. The number then gradually went up to a little over three thousand. The capture, occupation and consolidation of several posts in Azad Kashmir were being made to bar further intrusions. Success by the Indian Armed Forces was so phenomenal that President Radhakrishnan visited on the 27th August Kashmir and congratulated the Army. On the 29th August the world was told that the number of Pak raiders killed so far was 978 including six officers. Against wild allegations, against triumphant conquests Pakistan remained calm and unperturbed.

President Ayub moved about and attended to his normal peace-time duties including attendance at a Scientists' Conference till the 31st August. In his first-of-the month broadcast to the nation on September 1, he made a clear and systematic exposition of the Kashmir Dispute, India's usurpation of Kashmir in contravention of the directives of the United Nations Organisation in regard to the holding of a plebiscite and the present uprising of the people of Kashmir and of the freedom-fighters namely, the Mujahids. All the while the people of Pakistan resignedly bore the agonising humiliation of India's unchecked chauvinism. On the 2nd September, however, the Mujahid supported by Pak Army made a counter-attack in the Bimbor Sector of Kashmir and captured two posts against Indian attacks with 28 planes and numerous tanks. The Mujahids didn't have any air support; even so, they destroyed Indian aircrafts. Lal Bahadur Shastri, India's Priminister, said "The whole strategy of defence against Pakistan will be considered in a much wider context". This strategy he executed in the small hours of Monday, the 6th September, by an invasion of West-Pakistan with a lightning three-pronged attack on Lahore by Indian Army and Air Force using tanks, armoured divisions and artillery. Simultaneously Railway trains were bombed. PIA planes from East Pakistan bound for Calcutta and Karachi were forbidden to overfly India and sent back. The same night the Indian Hitler in Shastri had air blitzkrieg carried out both in East and West Pakistan by indiscriminate bombing of Dacca, Jessore, Chittagong, Rangpur (East Pakistan) and Rawalpindi and Karachi. Even hospitals were not spared. Innocent civilians were killed. On the sixth September India explained that it didn't have any motive of territorial conquest; its attack was made in self-defence and just to avoid the opening of another

front by Pakistan towards Amritsar. She should have added that it was peaceful and non-violent. And the air raids have continued unabated over Sarghoda, Kohat and many other places without military targets. As President Ayub stated in his broadcast to the nation on the 6th afternoon India had thrust an undeclared war on Pakistan which was plunged into a state of emergency. Not only Sailkot was next attacked with unlimited armaments and 'fighters' and 'bombers' but another thrust was made into Hyderabad-Sind Sector from Rajasthan. For about three weeks now Sialkot and Lahore are being battered with the outrageous intention of territorial conquest. God's infinite mercy and the heroic sacrifices of our defence services have so far saved us from a humiliating surrender. Our defence is reminiscent of that of Stalingrad in the Second World War.

India's invasion of Pakistan was launched against the fervent appeal of the United Nations' Secretary General, U. Thant, made on the 4th September and the unanimous resolution of the Security Council adopted on the 6th. This last deputed Mr U. Thant to Pakistan and India to make an on-the-spot study, arrange for an immediate cease-fire and report back in 3 days. U. Thant has come and gone back. His reports are now being considered in meetings of the Security Council—the first such meeting was held on the 18th September and the second one on the following day. Meanwhile a new dimension has been added to the global peace by China's ultimatum to India to dismantle its military Posts and Installations on the Sikkim Border and well into Chinese territory. Nations hostile to Pakistan at first interpreted this ultimatum as a collusion between China and Pakistan and a mere pretext for opening another front for India. But when the ultimatum's 72-hour deadline was about to expire yesterday India in its response

owned up its alleged build-up and prayed for an extension of time which has been conceded by 3 more days to end at midnight of 22nd September. We in Pakistan are involved in a life-and-death struggle against the implacable hatred of a relentless enemy having a vast territory and unlimited military strength—one who has been hostile to us from long before the inauguration of Pakistan. I had the melancholy privilege of reading about the horrors of the First World War as a school and college student and of going through the privations of the Second World War in my manhood. And now in my old age in the dear little territory which is our beloved homeland I find myself plunged in the acutest tension of mind with the dismal prospect of being called upon and make many sacrifices along with our dear countrymen. And yet there is no flagging. I resumed my labour of love yesterday, the 19th September, 1965.

Shortly after the above was written the Security Council's decision was available demanding cease fire from the belligerent countries by 1 pm, EPST of 22nd September and deciding to consider steps that could be taken to assist settlement of the political problem underlying the Kashmir Conflict.

The language of the second part being outrageously vague and implying a reversion of the dispute to the stalemate of 17 years ago with the strident voice of India still asserting Kashmir to be an integral part of India, there has been a wave of righteous indignation all over Pakistan. Mr Bhutto, Pakistan's Foreign Minister flew to New York yesterday and requested an emergency meeting of the Security Council for a clarification of the ambiguous part of its decision. It is gathered that within three hours of the deadline of the cease-fire on 22nd September the Security Council is meeting to consider

the point raised. The outcome and subsequent developments are being awaited with bated breath.

Mr Bhutto attended the Security Council Emergency Meeting and pointed out that a solution of the Kashmir dispute could no longer be deferred or toyed with without disastrous consequences to world peace. When he did receive solemn assurances from the President of the current month, Mr Goldberg, of USA and other members he communicated Pakistan's acceptance of Cease-Fire at five minutes past one p.m. on the 22nd September.

President Ayub in addressing the nation at 4-30 p.m. (EPST) announced that he had just issued orders for a Cease-Fire with effect from 4 a.m. (EPST) of 23rd September. In the interest of international peace he had done so and the world should appreciate how Pakistan stood for peace and how Pakistan could defend itself against the brutal and massive onslaught of the enemy—an attack in the course of which India had put in 600 tanks in addition to other armaments to batter Sialkot alone, where one of the fiercest battles recorded in the history of the world was fought. He added that the struggle over Kashmir was not yet over and called upon the nation to be vigilant for ever. In the course of his speech he paid glorious tributes to the defence services of the country and also to the help and support received from China, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia. He ended in a peroration about the unique solidarity that the Pakistani nation as a whole, both from the East and the West wings, had displayed in this hour of trial.

President L.B.J. Johnson of USA is reported in the Pakistan Press to have talked to President Ayub over the phone and read out to him from the public statement he had just made :-

**"We hope that both nations, Pakistan and India in the spirit of the Security Council resolution will move forward to peaceful settlement of their outstanding differences. The job of the United Nations has just begun. We will fully support it, every step of the way by our actions and our words"—22nd September, 1965.**

# C O N T E N T S

		<b>Page</b>
Chapter-I	Dacca University	1-98
Chapter-II	Provost, SM Hall	99-200
Chapter-III	Dacca University	201-255

## **Chapter I**

### **Dacca University**

26th October, 1953 to July, 1956

#### **Inspector of Colleges**

12. In ten days since superannuation from Government Service I joined Dacca University on the 26th October, 1953, as Inspector of Colleges. With the establishment of Pakistan this University which had so long been exclusively teaching and residential, became an affiliating body as well for all the colleges, government and non-government, of Degree and Intermediate standard, situated in the province of East Pakistan. When the Rajshahi University was set up a short while earlier, the colleges situated in Rajshahi Division passed under that body. Their number was sixteen, as far as I remember, while those under Dacca were about fifty covering a farflung area from Jamalpur on the north to Barisal on the south, from Sylhet on the north-east to Satkania on the south-east, from Chittagong on the east to Manikganj on the west. From 1947 to 1952 the University of Dacca made only ad hoc arrangements of inspection by senior university teachers only in cases which called for an unavoidable look. A year and a half before I joined the first Inspector was appointed but the arrangement proving very unsatisfactory had to be cancelled.

Dr Syed Muazzam Hossain was still the Vice-Chancellor but exactly after fourteen days he was succeeded by Dr W A Jenkins who after having spent a lifetime in Bengal had gone back to England at the partition of the country. Both have



received notices in these pages. Dr Jenkins joined on the 9th November on a three year tenure at the end of which he left. My work as Inspector practically synchronised with his as Vice-Chancellor.

In the ground floor of the Registrar's Building a small, dark, damp room which was just a longish strip of space without any appreciable width and with poor furniture was allotted to the Inspector of Colleges. His two office assistants, one of the 'upper division' and the other of the 'lower', shared a portion of the big adjoining room where other clerks of the Registrar worked. The two-storied building of the Registrar originally was a residential part of the defunct Jagannath Hall. It was designed and constructed for the accommodation of students with narrow corridors outside the rooms which were mostly small and unsuitable for use by a large establishment such as the Registrar's. Besides half the building went to the Controller of Examinations. The whole length of the corridor outside the ground floor rooms was cluttered up with the bicycles of students calling for payment of fees and dues. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. the workers in these rooms were subjected to the visitation and the consequential noise of these vehicles and their riders. In ten/twelve years since then not only have many additions and alterations been made to the then existing two-storied building for expansion of floor space but also another storey constructed. The Inspector and the Dy Registrar have moved to the top floor; decent lavatories on the first and 2nd floors have re-inforced amenities. But the affliction of the ground floor inmates from the nuisance alluded to continue. In three/four months from my assumption of office Dr Jenkins gave me the adjacent comparatively spacious room for my use as well as an extension of a phone connexion from the Examination Controller's Room and in one year I had an independent connexion of my own. And I had the content with primitive lavatory arrangements. But so had the Registrar to

be. According to the reorganisation carried out on the eve of my assumption of office the Inspector of Colleges was given the independent status of the head of a department with the right of correspondence and contact with others inside and outside. He was an ex officio member of the Court, the Academic Council and the Faculty of Arts.

In the short two-week gap between the departure of Dr Hossain and the arrival of Dr Jenkins I discovered with dismay a frightful mess in office records, in inspection reports or rather lack of them. What was still more disconcerting was that the temporary affiliation of 33 colleges out of about 50 as already stated had expired. These couldn't present candidates at the ensuing Intermediate and Degree Exams in the first quarter of 1954 without a renewal of their affiliation which called for inspection and recommendations being put up before the Academic Council. The first such meeting under Dr Jenkins held on the 8th December was much too crowded with business items to take up consideration of this item; the second one held on the 16th could spare only a brief hearing to me about this unsatisfactory state of affairs and on my insistence left the matter to the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor who gave verbal orders to me to assist the pending cases getting round the hurdle as an expediency.

A typical case of one of the many problems I would have to encounter and handle came my way on the afternoon of the very day I took over charge. Roy Bahadur Ranadaprasad Saha, an industrial and commercial magnate as well as a philanthropist, one who hardly requires any introduction in East Pakistan, called along with Khan Bahadur Aulad Hossain (now dead) of Manikganj. Ranada Babu was financing two colleges : Debendra College, Manikganj, and Kumidini College—exclusively girls'—at Tangail, Mymensingh. Both had temporary

affiliation and required renewal but there was internal trouble at Kumudini College. Incidentally it may be noted that the former bore his father's name, the later of his mother. He said he was a man of liberal views who didn't countenance casteism or communalism in any of the institutions he supported. The Kumudini College was almost wholly residential with free board and accommodation for 125 girls—the total roll strength. And he was bearing the total cost of running the institution affiliated to the IA and BA standard. At present the hostel had two cooks, one Hindu and another Muslim. But the Hindu girls were being instigated by some Hindu communalists of Tangail to decline food being cooked by the Muslim. I was requested to assist him in this difficulty. I felt it was a ticklishly intriguing situation which very often led to serious communal complications in Bengal, East and West. However I would look into the matter I assured him.

Having lived a stationary life in teaching and administrative duties for over thirtyone years I had my misgivings about the suitability of a roving career in inspection. But it so happened that right from the beginning of this job challenging duties of great diversity calling forth the best within me of physical endurance and stamina, of academic grasp and acumen, of intellectual and moral leadership for the affiliated colleges, of sociability and fellowship with their teachers, of sympathy for their problems, of the spirit of whatever service I could render in the solution of these came my way in regular, uninterrupted succession for two years and ten months. Generally I planned and executed regional tours in the interior with poor and difficult communication but occasionally I had to sally forth for a look at widely separated places for handling emergencies, for instance in Kumudini College, Tangail, Madanmohon College, Sylhet, the Women's College at the same place, Sunamganj

College, Srikail College in an inaccessible spot in the district of Comilla, Chandpur College, Rajendra College, Faridpur and so on. Dhanbari, Bhuapur, Paschimgaon, Satkania, Latif Islamic Intermediate College (Barisal), Chakhar, Habiganj, St Gregory's at Dacca, Night Colleges in the city and one at Chittagong presented academic problems in addition to financial difficulties in the majority of them. Gopalganj, Ramdia, Madaripur, Karatia, in fact most of the private colleges in the mufassil badly needed leadership, sympathy and inspiration. Political disturbances and local factions at Kumudini, Debendra, Chandpur, Barisal and Faridpur colleges demanded tact, firmness and impartiality. In the course of the six week's time available in 1953 I inspected four colleges only but during the year, 1954, I inspected 40 colleges including some that called for a second visit. The Government Colleges under Dacca University at that time were only six in number while the number of non-Govt colleges was 42 or more. The former presented just a few problems pertaining mostly to accommodation and partially to some inadequacies in the teaching staff of 2/3 subjects. The latter in the majority of cases had chronic and recurring financial difficulties, poor or inadequate buildings, poor furniture, library and laboratory equipment, inadequate number of teachers (some of whom lacking minimum academic qualification) with poor pay and without much prospect of an increase along with the connected evil of frequent changes and gaps in the staff position. Colleges situated in the remote interior, for instance, at Bhuapur, Dhanbari, Srikail, Ramdia, Satkania had insuperable difficulties in recruiting and also retaining teachers (when some were available). In most of them qualified teachers in English, Physics and Chemistry and Commerce subjects were not available. Big private colleges like Brojomohon at Barisal and Victoria at Comilla were frightfully

crowded; the latter had no space within; indiscipline was a concomitant factor. Anandamohon College, Mymensingh had fairly sufficient accommodation for work and residence but poor roll strength. As I went on inspecting I discovered that in addition to the problems just outlined there was one which in many cases wouldn't lend itself to solution. This was the constitution and composition of Governing Bodies and their rights, duties and responsibilities. In this matter the Govt. colleges didn't come in; they had more or less fixed patterns according to Govt. rules and regulations and very limited duties to perform. But in other cases the Governing Bodies were the appointing authorities of all employees from the Principal to class IV employees and were responsible for fulfilling conditions of affiliation laid down by the university in regard to all academic matters and also those laid down by the government in regard to the grant of aid by it, recurring and non-recurring. Academic control and grant-in-aid control had thus a dual complexion. The University Inspection also implied the indispensable requirement of financial viability of each. The then existing ordinance of the university included just a paragraph on Governing Bodies today that a Governing Body shall consist of not less than seven members and not more than fifteen of whom one will be the District Magistrate or his nominee, the Principal of the college concerned and one representative of the staff. It shall elect a President from among its own members; the Principal shall be the Secretary. On all other points these ordinances were silent. But the Government now, particularly after the imposition of Secn 92 in May, 1954, under Governor Iskander Mirza called for its full control on the composition of the Governing Bodies. And soon enough the Government transferred from the university the authority of issuing formal orders of affiliation to the Chancellor. This implied the prepa-

ration of all proceedings by the university and then their submission for the signature of the Chancellor's Secretary (i.e. the Secretary of the Education Deptt). It was agreed by the University and the Government that the composition must conform to a uniform pattern worked out by both. Difficulties cropped up here. Big colleges like the Brojomohon College and the Victoria College, smaller ones like Madan Mohon College, Sylhet, Srikail College, Haraganga College etc produced deeds and documents or made claims based on some written papers and tacit understandings to support that they were not liable to acceptance of the pattern sought to be imposed. Litigation in the Law Courts was threatened. An examination of these deeds and papers by the Law Deptt of the Government was barren by conflicting opinion and procrastination. The opposition by vested interests of the colleges concerned was persistent and unyielding. As I had fairly intimate relations with the Education Directorate and the Education Department I was commissioned to carry on negotiations with the Government to arrive at an agreed determination of a uniform pattern of Governing Bodies. Colleges founded by Christian Missions and not accepting government grants-in-aid, for instance Natre Dame and Holy Cross at Dacca wouldn't admit any imposition. They were, however, amenable to observation by the university. My negotiation discussion with the Director of Public Instruction and the Education Secretary spread over seven engagements in course of 1954 towards the end of which the final draft prepared by me on the basis of these deliberations was approved. And the final draft was then written into university ordinances and piloted through the Academic Council and the Executive Council for the eventual approval by the DU Court. This was a tremendous job which I pursued with great tenacity and I believe I may look back upon it with some satis-

faction. Although when the Dacca University Court's turn came early in the year 1955 we had a shocking experience at the Court Meeting in which an unscrupulous group of politicians—elected representatives of Registered Graduates, caught us unawares and by a snap vote thread out these ordinances, we circumvented it by nominal redrafting and bypassed the Court by direct approval by the Chancellor. Similarly earlier we had exposed the hollowness of the claims on behalf of the trustees, founders, donors of some of the colleges by proving that their benefactions had been extinct long ago and had no present value but at the same time conceding to them three elected representatives, one under each category, wherever such a representative was available after their exodus to India. In the 1957 volume of the Dacca University Calendar, Vol 1, Chapter XLII, these ordinances on the Governing Bodies of Colleges cover ten pages. Undoubtedly the election of the representative element in the Governing Body causes some conflict but we outlined practically foolproof methods of holding these elections. Thus the hurdle about the constitution and composition of the Employing and Management Authority of the non-Govt colleges was successfully tackled. In each case the Presidentship went to the District Magistrate or his nominee i.e. the sub-divisional officer in a sub-divisional town.

We evolved a workable and fruitful machinery hitherto non-existent of accomplishing the work of affiliation or otherwise. This was the formation of a Standing Committee on Affiliation with three elected representatives of the Academic Council limited to a Dean, a Provost and a senior teacher. The Vice-Chancellor as Chairman and the Inspector as Secretary, Ex Officio made it a committee of five. Regarding syllabi requirements of the afflicted colleges I represented them on the Faculty of Arts whose recommendations would go indepen-

dently to the Academic Council which met once a month on a fixed date. I had therefore to return in time to the station after inspecting as many colleges as I could in the course of two or three weeks and get the Inspection Reports ready for deliberations and recommendations by the Standing Committee on Affiliation to send them up for approval for the Academic Council meeting to follow. In the same way I overtook the work of the Faculty of Arts.

My Inspection reports were full of the required facts plus a statement of income, expenditure, reserve fund etc and then a summary of my conclusions and recommendations. This made the work of the Vice-Chancellor and the committee members easy to grasp and handle. In the committee all hard and severe comments came from Dr Jenkin's who, unfortunately, applied his knowledge of school inspection to my work in the colleges. Secondly, he didn't want to lower academic standards by the running of understuffed, ill-equipped, financially handicapped institutions. He was prone to ignore or dilute my recommendations little realising that I too was equally severe and also zealous in the maintaining of excellent academic standards. But there was a difference. I was ever willing to see, learn and judge the actual conditions in which each institution was working, to view its problems sympathetically in the light of the possibility of their future solutions, its potentialities of progress and development and whether there was a vital urge for its working and continued existence in the Governing Body, the teaching staff and among the guardians and patrons and whether there was a need of such a college in such a locality. My recommendations for affiliation were also subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions within the limit proposed. When the Vice-Chancellor perceived that I was unsparing about two/three colleges functioning in wretched conditions he mod-



erated his comments and very largely went by my recommendations—the leading example being that of Dhanbari College situated in the native village of the late Nawab Bahadur Nawab Ali Choudhury, grandfather of Mohammad Ali of Bogra then living and soon succeeding to the gadi of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. It had practically no staff, no financial strength, no buildings. I brought together the members of the Governing Body, gave them a reasonable time for correction, contacted and warned the Nawab Bahadur's son Nawabzada Hasan Ali Choudhury, an absentee landlord and Chief Patron but I failed. I had to ask for disaffiliation. Just then Mohammad Ali (he was my pupil at Islamic College, Calcutta, it may be remembered) took some interest in the matter to cause embarrassment to our chief, Dr Jenkins. He allowed the emergency to blow over and then put through my recommendation. I might at once record here the cases of Srikail College and Latif Islamic Intermediate College at Barisal. The latter was slightly better than Dhanbari but judged as a whole too wretched to continue. The former had splendid buildings, required furniture and laboratory equipment but the founders Messrs Kamini Kumar Datta and N B Datta of Comilla had no interest in its functioning, no money to spare. On account of the inaccessibility of the place just 4/5 teachers were available when I inspected and the roll-strength was very poor. I couldn't support its continuance for Science and Degree standard. But I have stayed far from the point I was making. The introduction and effective working of the Standing Committee on Affiliation made Academic Council's job nominal and the Executive Council couldn't interfere. During term-time in 1954 I had eight meetings of the Affiliation Committee through which I piloted all my cases. I attended and actively participated in nine meetings of the Faculty of Arts and six of the Academic Council.

Over the threatened boycott of food cooked by a Muslim cook in the hostels of Kumudini College, Tangail, and the strict attitude of Roy Bahadur Ranadaprasad Saha, not to give into communalism an unpleasant situation developed. I had to hurry to the place at the shortest notice in the middle of November, 1953. But before I undertook the journey I had to take Chobera inoculation as there was an outbreak of cholera in Tangail. A trip to Tangail in those days was very trying a five-hour railway train move to Myrtiensingh first, and then a sixty-one-mile-long bus journey in course of which two rivers had to be crossed by a ferry. Having halted for a night at Mymensingh town I took one of the morning buses which took six hours to cover the distance. Barring the botheration of ferrying twice the road was excellent otherwise and a trip should take not more than three hours to complete. But there were several roadside bus stations in two of which the stoppage was unpardonably long—the driving crew did simply disappear. The particular bus in which I was travelling was a typically rotten mufassil transport which wouldn't start except by massive physical force and the driver appeared to be a hardened rogue. It was a quarter to three when I reached the Tangail DAK BUNGALOW. I declined entertainment offer by the college authorities and managed with bread and butter that I carried. I inspected the college, met the Principal and staff, later the members of the Governing Body and held discussions. This I did from 4 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. The cost in salaries of the entire staff and that of food of all the girls was exclusively borne by the founder. Roughly speaking it was four thousand plus four thousand. Bamboo walls and tin roofs over mud floors constituted the residential structures which contained dormitories for the inmates who had to do manual duties in keeping the floors clean. The kitchens had pucca floors and there were tables and benches in the dining place. The Muslim girls were only half a dozen

while all others, 115 of them, were Hindus. Half a dozen were day scholars. Hindu girls of Tangail proper were also residential since board and lodging were free. There were arrangements for girls to play in their courtyard and join community singing. There were two teachers in residence to look after the girls, one of them being one of my pupils at Chittgong College. The other a Muslim lady appeared to be a keen scholar in English. She is now very well-known at Dacca as the efficient Principal of the Central Women's College here. Of course many grievances were ventilated to me but it was absolutely clear that things were in proper shape. The Principal, Mrs Hameed, had her M A degree in English from Aligarh University and although she had a third class she had her schooling in European schools and appeared to be very decent. She looked like a Parsee lady. Naturally enough I recommended that her third class be condoned by the university. The college had teaching arrangements only for IA and BA courses but the provision made was quite satisfactory. I invited the guardians to meet me on the following day and discuss their problems. I received many deputations, the leading being two, one Hindu, another Muslim. The former was adamant that the Hindu girls couldn't possibly eat food cooked by a Muslim while the Muslim demanded that the arrangement must not be dispensed with. And this was exactly what was demanded by the Founder. I allowed both sides to let out their steam upto lunch time and then asked them to meet me in a final session in the afternoon when I dismissed the Muslims after a few minutes pointing out to them it was not the university's business to consider who cooked whose food but whether building and teaching staff and the library justified affiliation. It continued existence of the college was threatened I wouldn't recommend affiliation which was pending. To the Hindu group I pointed out that they meet not interfere in the internal hostel arrange-

ments made by the Roy Bahadur. If they had objections based on orthodoxy they should withdraw their girls forthwith from the hostels and get them to be day scholars. They were not competent to speak on behalf of girls coming from places other than Tangail proper. Finally I gave them time enough to deliberate and give their final reply to the issue in question whether they desired a renewal of affiliation or its cancellation. There was no other issue before the university. It was an academic body and not one of political administration with communal wranglings. By ten in the evening the answer came that they desired a renewal of affiliation and nothing else. My first inspection was fruitful in having solved this communal tangle.

Early in December, 1953, I had to rush to Sylhet to scrutinize the state of running of two private colleges functioning there; No 1, Madan Mohon College, No. 2, Women's College. Although I had been at Sylhet till 15th October, '53, I had no occasion to have a look. First one had satisfactory buildings for day scholars but poor finances. Many of the teachers were local lawyers doing part-time teaching duties. But the governing body met me and two of the rich members announced immediate lavish grants to keep the college going. I appreciated that the poor students of the town proper had the benefit of their education in the college; they couldn't afford the cost of transport expenses to the far off M.C. College. I recommended the renewal of temporary affiliation and gave guidance towards improvement in the near future. This they followed sincerely. Second one had a small roll strength, unsatisfactory accommodation and marginal means to carry on. Here too poor girls of the locality, girls observing purdah were receiving education. What overwhelmed me was the spirit behind the functioning of this small place—the spirit of selfless devotion of the Principal Girindra Babu and some of the teachers, mostly women, and

the earnestness of the students to learn and to profit. I knew Girindra Babu very well. He had retired as Vice-Principal of M.C. College on the eve of my arrival there leaving behind him the reputation of a very good teacher of great integrity of character. He was rearing this baby of a college with parental care and wholetimes services and prudent, economical management. I was so pleased that when I found a tutorial class in English from which the teacher was absent I went in and corrected the papers of the girls. I needn't add that I recommended the renewal of temporary affiliation. It gives me great pleasure to learn eleven years later that this Women's College has its own habitation now and is functioning successfully.

Rajendra College, Faridpur, had added B.Sc. classes to its IA, ISc and BA classes without authority from the University and desired to present some candidates for the B.Sc. Examination of 1954. An intriguing situation having thus arisen I had to hurry there on the eve of the cold weather recess of 1953. I took good care to have Dr Zernike, Professor of Chemistry, Dacca University, to accompany me to report on the technical aspect of B.Sc. teaching although as Principal I knew the basic requirements of B.Sc. syllabi and the laboratories. Unlike Comilla and Barisal, Faridpur was not an attractive centre of college students whose number varied from 500 to 600 in those days. Besides B.Sc. studies were not accessible within easy reach. Undoubtedly it was an old college. Although its buildings were not adequate, it had a spacious campus. It had just constructed a B.Sc. Annexe and minimum equipment was already available. A very seasoned Professor of Chemistry was the leading inspiration behind the addition. Other young teachers in Physics and Chemistry were also available. Babu Abanmohun Chakravarty, about 50 years old, one who had spent the entire period of his service here was the Principal. He

took a first in Philosophy of Calcutta University and joined this college as lecturer immediately afterwards. He was very seasoned, capable both as a teacher and an administrator. But above all it was the then District Magistrate, Mr Altaf Gauhar, CSP, who gave his strong support to the addition and to other improvements of the college. He arranged for our accommodation at the Circuit House and also entertained us at a very decent lunch. We made a thorough inspection; my report was full and comprehensive while that of Dr Zernike was sectional and ad hoc. The Vice-Chancellor was satisfied and accepted my recommendation for affiliation to the B.Sc. standard. Mr Gauhar, though young, was cultured, knowledgeable, of scintillating personality. He made an abiding impression on my mind. It is no wonder that he has had a meteoric career since; at the moment of writing, September, 1965, he is a key man in the Central Govt of Pakistan and fills the position of Secretary to the Information Department. Little did I realise then that in a little over a year and a half from December, 1953, Rajendra College, Faridpur, would be thrown into a whirlpool of disorder by the bungling of one of the successors of Mr Gauhar. In August, 1955, the then District Magistrate of Faridpur suspended in exercise of his autocratic powers the Principal, Mr Chakravarty and I had to serve on the Inquiry Commission constituted by the Government and help straightening things out. What a difference between sanity and insanity in administration.

Another place of bitter antagonism and hostile factions has been Chandpur. In the monsoon of 1955, slightly earlier than the debacle at Rajendra College, Faridpur, the College at Chandpur registered a crisis in which I had to join another Governmental Inquiry. But on the 2nd January, 1954, I held my first inspection of this college. I discovered then with

immense pleasure how private donations and individual initiative could build on a questionable beginning and uncertain, unstable financial position. Mr. Mohammad Azimuddin, first class MA in Arabic of Calcutta University, who years ago had been one of my pupils at Rajshahi College (a native of the district of Rajshahi) became the Principal of Chandpur College at its infancy. In January, 1954, I found that the Intermediate College there had a brand new, two-storied, massive, redbrick building of its own in which there were some modern lavatories with flushing arrangements, and a telephone in the Principal's Room. Very few Government institutions in those days had such a commodious place. Alongside this building was going up another building for Science Laboratory. I found also that these two stood on the northern side of a big football field and nationally I thought that it was that of the college giving it a very attractive site. But I was soon undeceived; I heard that a big faction of the local people wouldn't allow the College to have anything to do with it. It would be appropriated to the use of private ownership. Chandpur is a big centre of trade and commerce. Azimuddin had the gift to collect substantial donations from the merchants, buy strips of land on a large open space and build upon them. Nothing less than a lakh and a half was already spent on the buildings. He had the aesthetic sense of growing lovely gardens in front and at the back of the buildings, but the small, quarrelsome people didn't have the vision and the good sense of seeing into the future of such a centre of learning and culture. Already jealousy was brewing and there were black sheep among the teaching staff who did feed the meanmindedness of the local people. But things which came to a head in eighteen months were not yet visible. I gave a good report and recommended permanent affiliation in Intermediate Arts. Warring political parties, especially those belonging to the

Awami League were eager to capture the college students so that they might subserve their ends. But the Principal had a separate political affiliation and declined to be pliant. Student disorder was fomented and strikes and demonstrations and complainant against the authorities became so loud and insistent that the then Education Minister constituted early in August, 1955 an Inquiry Committee consisting of the ADPI, Mr Abdul Hakim and myself to inquire and report immediately. Just then the province was visited by one of the worst floods in recent times. The railway train from Dacca to Narayanganj, a distance of ten miles took four hours to get there; we missed the corresponding steamer for Chandpur and had to spend about half a day on board the next steamer. We shall never forget our experiences at the Narayanganj railway station which was under knee-deep water and had the waded through with our trousers tucked up to the thigh while human excreta were floating about. Chandpur itself was also submerged but yet only in parts. We conducted a thorough probe into the allegations against the Principal, financial and administrative, and found them chiefly, if not wholly, baseless and malicious. On the 8th August, 1955, we were at our job from 9.30 a.m. to 10.15 p.m. with half an hour's break for lunch. Things were comparatively quiet when we were looking into administrative and financial records, books and accounts but this three-hour job was preceded and followed by soulkilling, slogan-shouting demonstrations. Deputations at the Dak Bungalow supported by rumbustious crowds mostly of students continued till 10-15 p.m. (as just stated) when I dismissed them for a late dinner and retirement. MLA's of Awami League persuasion were there; some of them quieter and of opposite schools of opinion were also there; these included the unfortunate Deputy Speaker of later years of the Legislative Assembly fatally wounded in the



Chamber while a riot was going on inside. We found that the Principal had the backing of a particular party which was less turbulent than others and that he by his alignment with local politics had given offence to some of his bitter opponents. In our joint and unanimous report we had to state that the Principal Mr Azimuddin was very efficient and the allegations against him were baseless. He should be allowed to continue undisturbed but he should be warned against getting mixed up with politics. We didn't know then that the Minister himself was interested in the case. He didn't like our recommendations. He pursued his bent in other ways. Azimuddin was tough and took the matter further up but eventually he had to go. He got the appointment of the Controller of Exams, Rajshahi University. In this capacity he continued till recently when he was cut off by death in the prime of his life.

But I have traversed the chronological sequence. On my way back from Chandpur College's first inspection early in January, 1954, I broke journey at Munshiganj Steamer Ghat and proceeded to have a look at Haraganga College, Munshiganj which is just a few miles off from Narayanganj down the river—a typically rural subdivisional headquarters in the district of Dacca. Communication during the monsoon months is easy by river craft but at other times one has to walk a long distance over sands and over culverts across small streams to the village proper, which is congested and dingy in a swampy region—its only attraction being an old fort on high grounds and the college itself.

On a little open space detached from the town stand the two-storied college and three-storied hostel buildings, a separate Assembly Hall building with a swimming pool thrown in in front of the Hostel building. I found the college building strong-built and in good shape but the hostel one in a poor state of

maintenance; elaborate repairs to the Assembly Hall building were going on. Twelve to fifteen years before the birth of Pakistan the College sprang into existence by the outright cash contribution of one lakh of rupees by Mr A.T. Ganguli in addition to the cost of lands. Haraganga were the names of the benefactors' parents. No further endowment towards maintenance was made and Mr Ganguli migrated to India on partition. There was, however, an unregistered document in which provision was embodied for the representation of the benefactor on the Governing Body. After partition one or two relatives of Mr A T Ganguli and a corresponding number of Hindu gentlemen of the locality along with some Muslim Muktears were keeping up a stronghold on the affairs of the college. These were meddling busybodies who didn't have the means of giving financial help to the lean purse of the institution. No Principal could stick to his job on account of interference in his day to day administration and also in having a contented staff against poor salaries and emoluments. But my first inspection filled me with unstinted admiration for the princely gift of Mr Ganguli and what it did in establishing a first grade private college in an out of the way place. At once it filled me with the deepest regret that the Director of Public Instruction and the Education Department functioning 20 miles away from Munshiganj didn't take the slightest interest in rescuing from its post-partition slough such a well-laid educational foundation. In this case as in many others of similar nature I tried to use my personal influence with the DPI to prod him into active assistance. I am afraid I failed to get him interested. Although by 1965 most of the colleges are bursting at the seams with Government grants, Munshiganj continues to be neglected and principal after principal are falling preys to local, pettifogging politics. During my continuance as Inspector I once secured the services of a very competent Principal for this college in Mr Ahmadullah but he

too was the victim of a mean conspiracy. The latter didn't suffer. He went abroad, improved his academic qualifications and was straightaway appointed as the Principal of the Govt. College of Social Welfare at Dacca.

As already hinted I had a full chart for 1954. I next turned to Narsingdi College, at Narsingdi, say 35 miles off from Dacca on the direct railway line from Dacca to Bhairab and under the Narayanganj subdivision. Narsingdi is a jute and cereals market place where there are well-to-do tradesmen. There was a good High School for girls which went into liquidation and the structures of which were utilized for the establishment of a private college upto the I.A. standard. This was done on the strength of small donations and monthly subscription from the tradesmen by the year 1950—say 2/3 years before I took up the inspection work. Pioneering work was done by a very quiet, cultured graduate businessman of the place; he turned out to be one of my friends and contemporaries at Baker Hostel, Calcutta. His conception was given a dynamic force by another cultured Circle Officer whose name was Mr Mohabbat Ali Khan and who was indefatigable in collecting funds. They secured the services of Mr Kalipada Sengupta as the first Principal of the college, another quiet scholar of character and tenacity of purpose. Being told that this was a poor institution which didn't deserve affiliation I went to the place on the evening of 20th January, 1954, stopped at the Dak Bungalow for the night so that I might have a fairly close look on the following day. It started raining from the small hours of the morning and continued till noon. The kutcha roads of the village became full of mud-paste; little pools of water were formed; the January cold became intense; we walked in slush and water (without shoes) to the two-mile off temporary habitation of the college which looked like the interior of a family residence of

bamboo walls and tin roofs. I found the place clean and orderly; there was a neat little library, and the class rooms where lectures were going on by half a dozen teachers, were sufficient for IA and I.Com Syllabi—the whole place breathing in an atmosphere of discipline and team work. I felt that this was entirely due to Kalipada Babu's sober, temperate, abstemious habits. His office records were also in proper order decent. Looking at the English section of his little library I came upon *The Angel Pavement* which I hadn't read before and which I borrowed immediately for a week or two. We then went back to the Dak Bungalow and thereafter to the new site where the college building would go up for which about a lakh of rupees had been collected. It was within view of the Narsingdi railway station. Levelling of the site for the main building had been made; a long kutchra structure on the eastern side where some teachers and students were in residence had been constructed; the earth required for levelling the site was dug out of the middle portion of the area; the excavation made constituted a pretty little pond. I was convinced that the work was going on in right earnest although the job of collection of monthly subscriptions was irksome. I could see into its future development and I recommended its temporary affiliation. During the next two years I paid two more visits, had the satisfaction of seeing the huge one-storied building completed, the college shifted and Mr Sen occupying the room of the Principal. But local politics raised its head again and not long afterwards Kalipada had to leave but soon enough he was appointed as a Lecturer in Logic and Philosophy at Govt College, Cooch Bihar. I cherish affectionate memories of this gentleman. It gives me great pleasure to note that Narsingdi College is now a first grade college in which the roll-strength is about a thousand. Three thousand in 1969.

After a halt of three days at headquarters I entered upon a fifteen day tour of inspection of eight colleges in Mymensingh. I began at the north-west end of the district at Karatia and finished off at Netrakona in the north-east covering the period from 25th January to 7th February, 1954. By this time I had not only the benefit of the company of my orderly but also that of a stenographer. The former was first class as orderly but also a rogue being prone to Shirking and Kleptomania; he wore his uniform with a distinction; the latter actually was my second office assistant who knew shorthand. He was inspired to do intensive practice and ere long proved fairly capable. Eventually I got him appointed as the Inspector's stenographer. This was a big lift for him and he is continuing since in that capacity. I had now firsthand experience of conditions of travelling in East Pakistan, both in the season when rivers and waterways dry up as well as in the monsoon months.

Karatia is just about five miles off from Tangail which I have already described; it is a typical village with tall coconut trees and luxuriant growth of vegetation all around. The five-mile road from Tangail had several breaches caused by the monsoon. I had to get off the Ekka at these places to cross them. From the residence here of the famous Zamindar, Chand Mian Saheb (his full name being Mr Wajed Ali Khan Panni) Karatia has not only historic importance but is redolent of the many brave acts of munificence and charity of Chand Mian Saheb who, it is said, was a model of simplicity and at once an intrepid fighter courting imprisonment during the Gandhian Non-Cooperation along with our friend, Mr Ebrahim Khan, who began as the Headmaster of the Zamindar's High English School and the first Principal of the Saadat College which was founded by Chand Mian Saheb after his release from the jail. I was taken straight to the Zamindar's house where I was accommodated in utmost comfort and entertained with stan-

darised food, a blend of the Western and Muslim style. The two-storied structure in the front of the residential area was all-timber, a finished piece of architecture. The ground floor like the first floor had each a complete set of bed, drawing, dining rooms. What was breath-taking was its water-supply installation and flushing arrangements. It was also wired but the generating plant was out of order at this moment. Across a stream stood the campus and buildings of the Saadat College (Saadat being the name of the father of Chand Miah Saheb) open on three sides and commanding a view of the vast expanse of rice fields in front. I was charmed at the buildings and the adjuncts. The college buildings, all brick and mortar, had been symmetrically constructed in blocks and projections; the hostels in the rear were kutcha-pucca-furniture and fittings were decent; the library had been in neat order and furnished with reading tables for the students. Principal Ebrahim Khan had succeeded in securing substantial government grants for the construction of the buildings and for their equipment. Science teaching was limited to I.Sc. only. Even so I found the Laboratory lacking in water-supply and gas. My advice in this direction was carried out by the time I made the second inspection. It was an ideal place for the prosecution of higher studies in quiet, serene atmosphere and in a rural set-up. Mr T. Hussain, Principal, was one of the distinguished students of Islamia College, Calcutta. In him there was a perfect blend of sweetness and light and he enjoyed the love and respect of the college as a whole. He contributed articles on Economics, which was his own subject, in Bengali language to journals and periodicals, and music was his hobby. Mr Khurram Khan Panni, son of Chand Mian Saheb and the present Zamindar was young and unassuming and an intimate friend of the Principal. Culture and sweetness had soaked into his blood and bones. So they were pulling on very nicely.

But to my agony I found that such a worthy centre had crippling financial difficulties in its day to day existence. Its situation in an out of the way village with difficult communication was neither attractive to students nor to teachers. Poor rates of emoluments to teachers kept them away; vacancies existed for months together. Even if there was a big roll strength, it could never meet recurring expenses by itself. Grants from the Zamindar had dried up and Government grants were too small to be of any effective service. From my first visit onward I led deputations to the DPI and the Education Secretary for securing larger grants but the response was half-hearted, inadequate. Principal Hussain had been receiving offers of higher pay elsewhere but I inspired him to stay on in the spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion and he has stayed on since having repulsed the lure of gain from far and near. He has since left for a far more lucrative job.

Communication with Tangail now via Karatia by a high road straight from Dacca has made access to these places easy in fact it is a drive of three hours only. The educational institutions are having larger and larger grants for conduct and development. Saadat College, I am told, cannot take in all students willing to join and its financial struggle is a thing of the past. I feel exceedingly happy.

In getting to my next college I had to return to Tangail in an Ekka, board a bus to Mymensingh, alight there from after 10/12 miles and branch off into what was called a road though actually it was a number of mounds of loose earth separated from each other by flood water clefts. Principal Ebrahim Khan had provided his own ranshackle jeep to cover this part of the journey of another 10 miles into his own native villave, Bhuapur, where he had funded an Intermediate Arts College in recent times. Up and down went the jeep, swaying from side to

side and making us cling to a perilous perch — altogether a bone-shaking, never-shattering experience. It landed us near his own home at oundown; we had left Karatia just after breakfast. Bhuapur is situated deep in the interior of Mymensingh district in a totally water-logged area of rice and jute fields. My second visit was made in mid-monsoon when an endless number of swirling streams criss-cross each other. Then from a particular point on the Mymensingh-Tangail road we took a boat at 5 p.m. and touched Bhuapur river ghat near about one in the morning and we went famishing without food and drink. I felt the place was in a nebulous region. My first visit coincided with the period of electioneering campaign for the historic general election of March, 1954, the first ever since the partition. I found Mr Khurram Panni keeping late hours when I was at Karatia and here I found Mr Ebrahim Khan absent; he was summoned away elsewhere by urgent election work. But his nephew was there at home to look after my comforts:

The name Bhuapur has an ugly meaning—a place all hallow. The college there had earned another notoriety in University circles in having for its Principal one who was a fraud in his academic attainments but who concealed his fraud for sometimes eventually to disappear from the scene. It was thought that the college too was a hoax. My firsthand experience is summed up here. The number of students on the rolls in the two Intermediate classes was approximately  $75 + 75 = 150$ . The classes were being held in a big structure recently made for the college at the west-end of a fairly big football field. It had a high pucca plinth and floor but a thatched top and two contiguous rooms for holding the big classes. At the east-end of the open space stood two kutchha structures of the High School, which were no longer needed by the school, it having had new buildings and structures of its own in the contiguous



area. In one structure the Principal and his office worked; in another small classes were held. The five teachers had their seats in the Principal's Room. But the northern part of the field was ear-marked for the college building. Nearby stood brick-kilns for the construction work which would be taken up immediately and completed in a year's time. At one end of the northern strip of the land stood the Principal's family quarters. Four teachers lived in a bachelors' mess while the other was living with a relative. An ex-Army man was available to work as Physical Instructor who gave a demonstration of PT exercises by the students. Financially the college was having a hand-to-mouth existence. But shopkeepers and small tradesman saw me several times in course of the day. They and some old men assembled in the big lecture hall in the evening to hear students' recitation and speeches. They were prepared to make sacrifices in the future exactly as they were doing now to keep the college going. It was very hard for them to send their wards to Mymensingh or even Karatia for college education. It was clear that they were vitally interested. I told them that the construction of the building for which considerable raw material had been collected was a 'must' before my second inspection. One of the teachers happened to be a former pupil of mine. His enthusiasm inspired me to meet an English class. I felt that the Principal and the lecturers formed a 'green isle' of enlightenment in an otherwise drab environment of getting and spending. But above all Mr Kitabuddin Ahmad, the Principal, has since been to me one of the most unforgettable characters I have ever met. A second class MA in Philosophy of Calcutta University Mr Ahmad was in his middle age — a man of indefatigable energy. Despite the tremendous difficulties in the way of movements from Bhuapur, his mobility was inconceivable. Now he is in my office at Dacca University, tomorrow he is at

Tangail and Karatia, the day after back in his own seat at Bhuapur. When streams were fordable he would wade across; when pathways were dry he was constantly on his bicycle saddle. When I met him first he appeared to me to be a peasant in simple clothes and bearing. When he arrived at Karatia Zamindar's house with his bicycle in hand and his trousers tucked up to escort me to Bhuapur he looked slightly clownish. Absolutely indifferent to his dress and food he was working all the time to keep the college alive and active. He had made himself a part of the people among whom he lived. A self-less, self-sacrificing, devoted educationist of intrepid nature and self-reliant character. That was the impression he made in my mind. He was a Professor at Karatia earlier under Mr Ebrahim Khan who had persuaded him to come over to Bhuapur. He could have a teacher's job at Rajendra College in his own native district of Faridpur. Yet another discovery was in my store. Although there was some disparity in their respective age Mrs Kitabuddin was a gifted, inspiring lady. She was a graduate and did social work among the village women in addition to rearing her own children and doing her own domestic work. Bhuapur didn't turn out to be 'hollow'. It had a year's affiliation after my first inspection. This was extended to three years after my second, where I found one one-storied building just completed, the college library shifted there and the teachers decently accommodated. From newspapers I find the name of another Principal there. I still cherish the warmest memories of Kitabuddin's inimitable personality.

We had to get back to the arterial Tangail-Mymensingh Road, board a bus again towards Mymensingh, cover a further distance 10 to 15 miles and again to get off to cover another eight miles by a branch road to reach Dhanbari. As far as I remember the name of this bus station is Ghatal. It was past

lunch time; we had carried with us some food which we ate at the local Sub-Registrar's kutchra outhouse and rested for a while. A buffalo cart soon arrived from Dhanbari for our transport, a deputy-naib accompanying it on his bi-cycle. Being frightened by the idea of a cart travel I borrowed the Sub-Registrar's bicycle—he was an obliging gentleman — and joined the deputy-naib for a cycle trip. The Ghatal-end of the road was too bad for a cycle ride. We walked up 2 to 3 miles when road conditions became better to permit cycling. But there was bad luck; the Sub-Registrar's cycle which looked being new broke down. Gallantly enough the Naib offered his own old vehicle and directed that I should go straight ahead for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles and then branch off into the right path for  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile to get to the Zamindar's place. The 31st January sun was setting; I forged ahead for a mile but it then became too dark to ride and into the unknown. Again I started walking. There was no difficulty in fixing up my destination as everybody know the place well enough and I got there by 7.30 p.m. I didn't gain much since all others, the steno, the orderly, the Naib arrived in an hour.

The whole place was deserted and somnolent at that time. I saw first a long building on the north of the main gate—it was the kutchery—and a group of buildings on the south—these belonged to the High School. Crossing the main gate I viewed a fairly big garden with lovely flowers and at the eastern margin of the garden another long bulding which was the Baithak-Khana beyond which stood the inner residential and family quarters. In the Baithak Khana sat a lonely soul in dim light. He was Mr Mazher Bhuiyan, the Principal of Dhanbari College waiting for my arrival. In this building there was a dining room at one end and a bedroom at the other; in between there were two rooms which were literally cluttered up with cushion and upholstered chairs, ordinary chairs, tables, carpets etc leaving

little elbow space for free movements. Neither Nawabzada Hasan Ali Choudhury nor any member of his family was resident there; they were all at Dacca but the staff had instructions to look after my comforts. I was tired and after a spare dinner retired early. I spent the whole of next day and also night there. The structure in which the college was functioning was situated in the rear of the High School buildings and was worse than a cowshed. A few aimless students were loitering about. Out of six teachers three were non-existent. Mr Bhuiyan was doing both English and Bengali. There were no accounts of income and expenditure, or of any reserve fund. There were a part of the Zamindar's estates and under the control of the Naib who was absent. Mr Bhuiyan tried to blanket the deficiencies by organising a Tea Party on the afternoon of the 1st February, in which sentimental speeches were made. But I was too depressed to receive animation. I met a collection of local gentry in the evening and explained to them that affiliation under existing conditions couldn't be expected. Already I had discouraged 'Entertainment' and asked for the provision of food simpler than what I normally took. Later I heard from my steno that they had rich dishes to eat. Three teachers about the expensive establishment left behind by the late Nawab Bahadur Nawab Ali Choudhury arrested my attention. No 1, a rich library of old books, histories, Imperial Gazetters, etc occupied the bulk of space in the Kutchery Buildings. These would be assets to any library, especially to an educational foundation. On inquiry whether they could be made over to the college I had a clear 'no'. No. 2: When I was shown round the inside residential buildings and rooms I was fascinated, naturally enough, to find at least three suites of accommodation, each complete with drawing, dining, bedrooms in tip-top condition as if under occupation or about to receive occupants—

lounches with costly furniture, dining rooms with cutlery and table-ware laid on, bedrooms with linen and cover spread over. Attached to the Nawabzada's lounge was a small private library with some of the latest books published. No. 3, the family graves with a mausoleum over the Nawab Bahadur's; these were contiguous to the garden already spoken of and having a compound of its own. The Nawab Bahadur also left a legacy for a round-the-clock recitation of the Holy Quran by four Hafez-i-Quoran—a six hour job for each. I found this arrangement in working order. About the fate of this college I have already given my opinion.

On the 2nd February I journeyed to the town of Mymensingh where I stopped at the Circuit House for three days, inspected the two govt Teachers' Training Colleges, one for men the other for women, Nasirabad Islamic Intermediate College and Ananda Mohon College. I journeyed to Netrakona on the 5th February and inspected the local college for a half-day and the day following.

In Mymensingh town the problem institution was the Nasirabad Islamic Intermediate one which in addition to its own syllabi had added the Intermediate Arts Course, General. Maulavi Reazuddin Ahmed, the Principal, looked like a typical 'Maulavi' in dress and bearing. What justification had he to start the I.A. course in a place where functioned the big Anandamohon College with elaborate arrangements for teaching IA and ISc, BA and BSc courses? He thought that Mymensingh required another provision for the Madrasha boys in particular and also for the overflow from the A.M. College in which, he added, special care was never taken of individual students and he was making provision for such care. Mr. Nurul Amin, the then Chief Minister was interested in it and he had a number of friends and supporters who were eager to share

the financial responsibilities. An inspection showed that additional space, additional staff within the Madrasah campus and just outside of it had already been made available. He secured from me a list of books for replenishing the existing library. Accounts were found to be in proper order. It looked being viable; it had also the potentialities for development. The Maulavi Saheb had admirable stamina and tenacity, great diligence and sociability. It was impossible for me to veto his proposals and resolutions. Eleven years have passed since then but his college has been thriving. He has also been chiefly instrumental in inaugurating a sister institution under the name of "Mominunnessa Girls' College" which is also thriving.

The two Teachers' Training Colleges being Government institutions were adequately staffed and equipped. Their habitation was a breathtaking experience occupying as they did the palaces of Maharaja Sashikanta Acharyya including immense space and superb gardens and terraces in the campus. Within they had marble floors and museum pieces of decorative adjuncts. Resident students had luxurious accommodation; the only disadvantage or rather incongruous adjuncts were the dining halls which were placed at an inconvenient corner and not spacious. The men's college had Mr SNQ Zulfaqar Ali as Principal who moved in U-circles, was a collector of the latest books in English literature; his college literary therefore had a special lure for me. His Vice-Principal Mr Mohammad Fazlur Rahman happened to be a distinguished scholar in English and very well-read. Mr. Ali compelled me to give a talk on Modern Trends in English. Without any earlier preparation I could only speak about what I was recently reading of T.S. Eliot, Shaw, Spencer and some others. I had just time enough for a hurried glance at the big Ananda Mohon College and was impressed with with its buildings for academic work and stu-

cents' residence. But there was an atmosphere of neglect, listlessness, old age among teachers, all Hindus who were discontented. The Science section was antiquated in equipment and also understaffed; for years the laboratories were not replenished. The same applied to its big library. It appeared to me that the book cases and almirahs were never opened or used. The Principal, A K Lahiri, had been cultivating my acquaintance at Dacca a little too much. Everymonth he was there to attend meetings of the Academic Council of which he was a member. Altogether a very shrewd and garrulous gentleman. My second and closer inspection about which I propose to write in due course showed him up.

There was an immediate need for the inspection of Netrakona College and I had to hurry there. The college had been started a year or two ago in a questionable building not its own and the university declined to consider its affiliation. Its young Principal, Mr Ahmadullah, had seen me twice in my Dacca Office and requested a visit. Mr. S.M. Usman, CSP, SDO of Netrakona, had just met me in the Mymensingh Circuit House and invited me to be his guest. This subdivisional town of Mymensingh was not far off but its railway link caused exasperating boredom and took not less than six hours to cover. One has to take the Bhairab Branch first, get off at Gouripur junction only 4 stations off and then take another branch line to Natrakona; in this branch line trains moved by word of mouth and also by a glimpse of an incoming train. A further branch line to some mills complicated matters. None was sure when he could get a train or hit his destination. Mr Usman being a bachelor we were all comfortably accommodated in his bungalow where we were most hospitably entertained. The new college building with two wings and a lovely little campus of its own was situated by the side of the road that led to the SDO's

bungalow in the town proper. Finishing touches were just being given to the structures; furniture and belongings were moving in. Mr Ahmadullah and Mr Usman, both impressively radiant and friendly, were working in complete concert and their aesthetic sense in the construction of the buildings and in arranging rooms and the library compelled admiration; a sufficiently prima facie case for temporary affiliation was existent. It called for a second inspection which I held later on.

At midnight Mr Usman left for a village in the interior; either it was the Chief Minister, Nurul Amin's own home or a neighbouring one where a big meeting was scheduled to be held next morning for the most important election campaigning. Mr Amin and many of his colleagues and followers were attending. The General Elections of March, 1954, were just a month away and the forces of the Government and those of the Muslim League were mobilising and marshalling their strength against the United Front of Messrs A.K. Fazlul Huq and H.S. Shahid Suhrawardy. After a total eclipse since March, 1943, Mr Fuzlul Huq's name was hardly remembered. But during the present campaign he had been undertaking a province-wide tour without any rest and arousing the enthusiasm of the masses on a scale which could be compared to a certain degree with that which was seen recently in 1964 and 1965 by the election campaigning of Miss Fatima Jinnah. Before I moved to Netrakona and during my halt at Mymensingh Circuit House I had a unique opportunity of hearing shouts and slogans from a crowded rally in the river bank to give ovation to Mr Fuzlul Huq and to listen to his speech. There was a bustle everywhere when Mr Huq arrived and proceeded straight to the river bank to address a mammoth meeting. His speech over the microphone delivered in Bengali was clearly audible at the Circuit House. He began by saying that he had come to the place not



only to finish Mr Amin but also to perform his Janaza or burial and he continued in that strain. It is matter of common knowledge how Mr Nurul Amin not only lost his own seat but that all the other 34 seats (as far as I remember) created in his own district were lost to the opposition.

Dr Jenkins on assumption of his duties early in November '54 applied himself keenly and assiduously to put the whole house of his university in order. It was full of tumult, indiscipline, disorder. By the 21st February, 1952, the Bengali-Urdu controversy reached a crisis resulting in some students being killed. The whole body of students had since been in a state of rebellion and retribution. Between the then Vice-Chancellor and many of his colleagues (Heads of Departments and Provosts) there was hardly any identity of interested and uniformity of activities. The normal schedule of work was generally abnormal. But Dr Jenkins on his arrival altered these conditions. The Registrar's offices were made to accept and carry out the Vice-Chancellor's directives. A fixed time-table in the work of the Executive Council, Academic Council prefixed by meetings and recommendations of the different faculties was scrupulously followed. Work by standing committees became the rule. Court meetings also were regularised. The conduct of university exams was brought up to a laid-down programme. Increasing discretion and responsibility was given to the Heads of Departments; close relationship with the Provosts of different halls was established. The Hall Unions were given a new lease of life and Dr Jenkins made it a point to attend personally their important functions. A Super Hall Union known as Dacca University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) consisting of representatives from each hall was brought into being under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor himself. He had thus a direct touch with the pulsating life and aspirations of the stu-

dent leaders—the first function of DUCSU was held on the 16th February, 1954, a milestone in ordered corporate existence. In less than a week i.e. on the 21st February, 1954, the students of Dacca University and those of the constituent and affiliated colleges of the city took out a four-mile long procession in absolute peace and orderliness (the exact words in my diary being used) in commemoration of the language martyrs, paid their homage in the burial-ground and then held a mammoth meeting. This was a noble revenge on those who had bungled.

From the 3rd week of February upto the 15th of next month I looked into conditions in the local Dacca College (on old site and hired buildings), St Gregory's (old site), later Natre Dame College in new buildings at Motijheel, Jagannath College, Quaid-i-Azam College and gave them advice and guidance in regard to the removal of their existing deficiencies.

The General Elections were held on 8th and 9th March leading to the total rout of the Muslim League and the resounding victory of the United Front.

On the 22nd March I went out on a tour of Barisal where from I returned on the 30th afternoon having inspected Fazlul Huq College, Chakhar, Latif Islamic Intermediate College and Brojomohon College, Barisal. These called for immediate attention, especially, the first two.

Within a short time of his being the Chief Minister of Bengal in 1937 Mr Fuzlul Huq saw to the establishment of Lady Brabourne College at Calcutta and the college bearing his own name at his own native village, Chakhar. Meanwhile this college had earned a notoriety about its wretchedness. Several attempts had been made to abolish it altogether or converted to some other use. Although Mr Huq was in the wilderness these attempts were thwarted. His relations, one of them being

a University Lecturer, pressed me hard to hold an inspection so that its threatened disaffiliation might be avoided and a renewal obtained. A journey to Chakhar in the dry season I was told, could be conveniently undertaken and performed by a sixteen-mile long kutchra road, journey on a tricycle rickshaw while my stuff could be carried there by a circuitous river route. Having made half a day's halt at Barisal town Mr Huq's relative and I took a rickshaw on the morning of 24th March, 1954, and when we were still in the outskirts of the town the vehicle started making creaking noise. A repair was carried out and we covered about eight miles in it in course of which we ferried over two rivers. Then came the crisis a tyre and tube of one of the rear wheels having burst with no prospect of replacement and repair in sight. It was then past ten in the March sun. One of my friends gave me an old umbrella when I was boarding the rickshaw at Barisal and this proved to be a boon. For 2/3 miles I walked with courage and determination and then showed signs of fatigue under the blazing sun and stuffy conditions. It was a different proposition with my companion who was a young, sturdy bachelor. I trudged on with my endurance gradually failing. I thought I wouldn't be able to do the remaining two miles when lo! the southfacing, two-storied, Chakhar College Building Swam into my ken. It did cut across the whole landscape, a noble piece of modern architecture which acted like a coramine injection to my fainting heart. In slow and measured steps I moved towards this rare sight till by a quarter to two in the afternoon I reached journey's end. Just across the tidal streamlet which flows past the college, the family graveyard of Mr Huq and the Madrasah, was situated the Guest House where I was to stop and where I received a warm welcome from the college staff, the Headmaster of the local High School, Mr Nuruzzaman (one of our Islamic College

students), the relatives of Mr Huq and above all another young deputy magistrate (also of Calcutta Islamia) who was conducting the University Intermediate Examination at Chakhar College Centre. Plenty of DABS were available; one or two soothed and refreshed me; the exhaustion and the stresses of this eventful journey became a thing of the past. A lunch of varied menu to which many friend present had been invited followed. I had been to Chakhar on two more subsequent occasions on the same job and on all these occasions I met hospitality which was hearty, lavish, spontaneously free and natural from the cousin of Mr Huq and his family:

In the afternoon I went round and had a glance at the college building, the Muslim and Hindu Hostels. The former lived in several flimsy structures situated on water-logged and insanitary sites; the bathing places and the latrines were respectively repulsive and abominable but they were contiguous to the college; the Hindu students lived some distance away from the college but they had better sites and structures although their number was very small. The whole of the next day was spent in having a fairly close look at the state of affairs of the college itself. It is impossible to speak too highly of the College Building, its spacious halls, lecture and laboratory rooms. I wished very much I had some such halls at Chittagong College. On the plea that the Intermediate Examination was going on classes were suspended. But it was evident that this could be conducted at a corner of the ground or top floor. At the inception of the college only Intermediate Science teaching had been provided for but it was abandoned soon afterwards. The Laboratory fittings and furniture constituted godowns under lock and key. Not a bad collection of books existed in the library but there was no sign of its being opened or used; it had a musty smell about it. It was difficult to ascertain the roll

strength; it must have been around 150 in the Intermediate and 50 in the Degree classes. How many of these attended a day was elusive. Half a dozen well-fed teachers were available; there was no sign of the others. An inexperienced, insufficiently qualified, neurotic young man was acting as the Principal in the absence of the permanent incumbent who, it appeared to me, was not returning. The Assistants in the office of the Principal were not maintaining the required records; the financial records were in a mess. On my insistence that I must have a statement of income and expenditure including grants-in-aid, donations, subscriptions and the payment of salaries to the staff the acting boss, the Headmaster of the High School and another member of the Governing Body started working under high pressure and succeeded in submitting them to me at Barisal town after a day and a half. I felt the deepest pang in my mind that a magnificent piece of work should touch such a lowwater mark for lack of support, farsight and the will to live. I was determined to tend it back to life with all the help and sympathy of which I was capable. The relatives of Mr Fuzlul Huq were scanning the skies for his advent into power as a result of the successful elections concluded on the 10th of the month.

The outcome of the General Election of March, 1954, is now a matter of history. During my troublesome journey to Chakhar on the 24th March wherever I met clusters of people whether at the ferry ghats or roadside shopping centres and villages I received eager inquiries whether "Huq Saheb" was coming soon afterwards; his arrival to his native place was being keenly awaited. Their love and affection for the hero of the hour as for all time were unparalleled. On the 3rd April, 1954, he announced his Skeleton Cabinet with Messrs Azizul Huq (Nanna Mian), Abu Hossain Sarkar and Ashrafuddin

Ahmed as his colleagues. When these were being sworn-in in the forenoon there was a small student demonstration in front of the Government House against what according to them was questionable inclusion and exclusion of the United Front stalwarts. About a month and a half later, to be exact on the 15th May, ten more ministers were sworn-in. This was done on that fateful day when fierce rioting was going on in the Adamjee Jute Mill at Narayanganj. In another fortnight, i.e. on the 30th May Section 92 was imposed and Major-General Iskander Mirza was sworn-in as Governor of East Pakistan. On the same day Mr F Huq and five of his colleagues had returned from Karachi. On the following day pre-censorship was imposed on all East-Bengal papers. It was also rumoured that Mr Huq was put under house-arrest and Messrs Ataur Rahman and Mujibur Rahman had been taken into custody. On the 6th June, The Statesman published an interview with the Governor who stated that ruthless action would be taken against the lawbreakers and that martial law enforced when required. The General Election of 1954 therefore led practically to a still-born ministry.

My finding on inspection was that if the college could be made financially viable and a capable Principal appointed other difficulties would solve themselves and I recommended breathing time to rally if possible.

The return trip from Chakhar to Barisal was smooth and completed in two hours and a half, the tricycle rickshaw which had let us down so badly during the outward journey having been thoroughly repaired meanwhile. I inspected the big Brojomohon College in the town on two consecutive days. My Chittagong friend, Mr. E F McInerny, about whom I have already written in some details was now the Principal. It was a full-fledged Degree College with Arts and Science plus

Intermediate Commerce courses of instruction and with crowded roll strength, not less than 1000 students at that time. In between lecture hours the main buildings were choking with noisy, patently undisciplined students. What disconcerted me was the deplorable condition of these buildings, cracks and fissures obviously caused by the heavy monsoon looked menacing. These called for immediate and indispensable repairs. An outright grant of one lakh rupees each to five colleges, of which this college was one, had been given by the Government for rehabilitation and I expressed my concern why attention hadn't been paid to the repairing of these buildings. An examination of the accounts of this ad hoc grant showed that most of the other structures e.g. the laboratories, the hostels including one for girls, had first been repaired; all the pathways in the campus metalled, the swimming tank re-excavated and reshaped, the hostels were wired with the result that the amount had been exhausted. It appeared to me that the money was well spent but priorities had been slightly ill-distributed. The office establishment was a little too numerous and expensive — all the assistants were Hindus. In the allotment of residential structures and their adjuncts the Muslim students didn't appear to have a fair deal. The staff position was unsatisfactory, the student-teacher ratio being thoroughly disproportionate. Of the teachers more than 90% were Hindus. Mr McInerny was a little too close with Babu Sarab Kumar Datta, the sole representative of the original donor's family. Sarab Babu was maintaining a dominant sway by over Mr McInerny. But I found that the contribution of the Datta family towards the founding of the college was just a token of educational enterprise in regard to establishment of a High School which was subsequently raised to the status of a college with the name of Brojomohon College. The entire campus on which the college

was later built and all the structures within were financed by grants from the Government of the province. However in all fairness it must be stated that Mr McInerny's administration was so far proving effective and successful judged as a whole in the context of the crisis through which the college was passing before he had taken over. In December, 1954, in the course of an extensive tour in the districts of Faridpur and Barisal I spent another day in having a second look at the college when I was pleased to find that one of the main buildings had been repaired and the library accommodation expanded. But Sarab Babu's hold didn't show any sign of loosening.

Undoubtedly I inspected the Latif Islamic Intermediate College of Barisal. I found that the classes were suspended on some plea. The office records were maintained in proper order, however, although the whole arrangement appeared to be wretched. When I returned to the place at the end of the year I could see through the spoof that it was and had to report accordingly. I have touched upon this in my introductory remarks.

We had now less than a month's time before the Summer vacation to attend to normal duties. During this short period I inspected Imperial Saltmullah College and Holy Cross College at Dacca and the Brindaban College at Habiganj, a sub-divisional town in the district of Sylhet. The first came under Night College in rented rooms of a High School with part-time teachers working in other colleges during day time. One of them had been doing three such jobs. The students enrolled bore no relation with those who attended. The part-time teachers were being paid at Rs 75/- a month only. Dr Jenkins was altogether opposed to the functioning of these questionable institutions. He desired to extend the normal day time two-year course to three years, to limit enrolment only to those who had



full-time occupation during the day, to curb the employment of those who had full-time teaching jobs and to ensure higher and better emoluments to those who had comparatively more free time and energy to spare. He aroused criticism and opposition to the extent that he failed to get the ordinances passed. I supported the 2nd and 3rd conditions and got the Principals of Night Colleges to accept them with willingness and cooperation. Experience did show that there were many full-time employee-students eager to improve their qualifications by fruitful occupation in the evening. In my opinion there was no justification for extending by one year the normal two-year course. Undoubtedly the percentage of passes among the students of Night Colleges is less satisfactory than those of full-time, day scholars but there should be no bar to efforts and striving. Salimullah College has now a building of its own; it has shed its 'Imperial' addition and doing fairly well. Holy Cross is a purely missionary college for the exclusive education of girls. During my time it was a very small place admitting a severely limited number of students in the Intermediate and Degree Arts classes only. But the Principal and the staff took individual care, worked hard themselves and got the students to do the same. They have gone on maintaining high distinction in the University Examinations. There is an ill-advised criticism that facilities for prayers and worship are not given to the students here. The Roman Catholic religion and mission are too rigid to permit relaxation in this respect.

Let me give a separate paragraph to Brindaban College, Habiganj. The original donation which brought the college into being dried up long ago. During my time its finances were a chronic headache to the Principal who had to exert himself to the utmost in collecting subscriptions and paying the salaries of staff. On occasions he would borrow from friends and tide

over the difficulties of the first week of the month. Although the roll-strength was sufficient for the accommodation available, it is stupid to think that income from students' fees can meet even a small portion of a college's expenditure. Financially it was a problem college and academically too since it was unwilling to discontinue its B.Com course of studies which automatically implied the existence of teachers competent to do justice to Taxation Laws, Accountancy, Costing etc. I had to take with me, an Associate Inspector in the person of Mr M. Safiullah, the University's Reader in Commerce. On arrival we were attracted by the pretty site in which the college was situated; its one-storied building though small was neat and picturesque too. An extension of academic accommodation had just been completed; there was just required space for residential buildings. The Principal and the staff appeared to be a well-knit body who were pulling their weight in a spirit of sacrifice and hard work; the students were keen on learning. Mr Muzammil Huq, second class BA Honours and MA in English, the Principal of the college for several years at that time, was unassuming but tough, brainy and tenacious; he exerted a pervasive influence over the students and the public and wouldn't accept any defeat. This was the impression I formed of him in 1954 and I was absolutely right in my judgment. He has stuck to his post since without being lured away and his college is now a well-known college in East Pakistan. Safiullah and I gave him elaborate guidance in the re-arrangement of conditions which he promptly carried out. He soon fixed up a Commerce Museum on the lines of that at M.C. College, Sylhet. Safiullah, however, in his inspection note made some adverse comments in regard to B. Com affiliation which had been held up for another six months after which I revisited the place and succeeded in conceding it. Habiganj is another rural seat of higher education which I cherish and commend.

From the end of April to the 11th June, 1955. the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Jenkins, had been away on a holiday. He resumed on the 12th June to be confronted with a near-martial-law regime of Major General Iskander Mirza. For a week or two I found the Vice-Chancellor glum, if not shaky too, following his interviews with the Chancellor who had no patience with indisciplinary and leftist trends in the university and the colleges. Dr Jenkin's high seriousness of purpose, his unremitting vigilance, his resourcefulness and quick decisions, above all his stout championship of the University's cause in this hour of trial spared it from what looked like an imminent encroachment. A smooth sailing followed and the normal schedule of academic work proceeded on an even keel as will be clear from these notes.

In the beginning of the new session the Government had me to serve on the Jagannath College Screening Committee although my hands were full with the composition, powers, duties etc of the Governing Bodies of Colleges, the introduction of the new procedure for the submission of all cases of affiliation to the Chancellor.

For one month with effect from the 4th August, 1954, we had all been the victims of disastrous floods in the province. We donated a day's salary to the flood relief funds.

On the last two days of June I inspected the Tolaram College at Narayanganj and in July Haji Asmat College, Bhairab, the Nawab Faizunnessa I.I. College, Comilla, Chaumohani College, Noakhali and Comilla Victoria College.

Tolaram College, Narayanganj gave a headache. From early in the morning till 10 a.m. it was allowed to function in some small rooms of a private High School of dilapidated structures. It was an Intermediate Arts and Commerce College. Its teach-

ing staff were part-timers, most of them attending from Dacca at irregular hours. The big classes were held in a wretched godown-like structure. But a lot of Intermediate students were on the rolls; their instruction was of a questionable character. Babu Khagendranath Chakravarty was a well-known man of Narayanganj. It was he who was running the college as Principal and Chief Patron. His main job was that of the Manager of the Town Cooperative Bank. But this college had been there since a short time before the Partition. Its existing conditions called for unhesitating disaffiliation but he was loud and valuable in protesting that he had lakhs at his disposal to effect all-round improvement in buildings, staff and equipment—the only difficulty being the non-availability of a suitable site for construction. A couple of lakhs would be available for the asking from Tolaram Babu's descendants who were thriving Marwari businessmen of Narayanganj and Madaripur. Mr Chakravarty looked being a classic character and I couldn't accept his many professions which appeared to be empty. I declined to be wheedled into invisible grants and non-existent sites and asked for tangible proofs in both directions. Yet I felt the new of a college at Narayanganj which has a unique commercial importance in the life of East Bengal. He was intelligent enough to see and understand that I would not allow existing state of affairs and continue. He effected desirable improvements in securing a purely temporary affiliation and then started energetically about collecting funds and acquiring lands for construction. A lakh of rupees was soon available from the chief donors and luckily enough Mr SM Usman formerly SDO of Netrakona, took over as SDO of Narayanganj College. He made prompt arrangements for the acquisition of the land on which Tolaram College with its buildings and adjuncts and open space stand today. In ten months since

July, 1954. Dr Mumtazuddin, then DPI, and I inspected the new site and springing structures and in another six months I could hold my third inspection of the college shifted to the new site and several permanent teachers appointed. In 1956 the college was formally inaugurated by Mr Abu Hossain Sarkar, the Chief Minister of East Pakistan. What appeared to be a cruel deal of the Inspector at the end of June, 1954, and was interpreted and circulated as such in Dacca and Narayanganj circles turned out to be a great academic blessing for Narayanganj as a whole. Tolaram College is now a first grade BA, B.Com, B.Sc. college for a thousand men and women students. And Mr Khagendranath Chakravarty continues to be its Principal according to my recommendation which was made on the completion of the buildings on the present site. I feel proud whenever I drive past this institution.

Haji Asmat College, Bhairab, had letter but half-built accommodation, depended on month-to-month collection of subscriptions from the local businessmen and was a place of political exploitation by rival groups. I succeeded in freeing the place from unhealthy political interference and securing another substantial donation from the founder, the Haji Saheb, so that the second inspection was marked by the completion of the building and the appointment of a bonafide teacher as its Principal.

Nawab Faizunnesa Islamic Intermediate College was another problem college. The Zamindars of Paschimgaon which is a village 3 to 4 miles off from Laksham railway junction and situated on the Noakhali branch line were the founders. Their family members though no more wealthy landlords take a live interest in the college. When I took up the inspection job it had added without any authority general Arts classes in addition to the Islamic classes and was in trouble. The Vice-Chancellor, Dr

Jenkins, had seen to two rival High Schools there when years and years ago he had been an Inspector of Schools and there was an unhealthy competition between them. He cautioned me against undesirable conditions on the eve of my visit. I found that the Principal was a very unreliable man. Qualified teachers couldn't stick to their jobs on account of the Principal's fishy ways, poor salaries, lack of accommodation etc. The Madrasah and the College sections were frightfully mixed up. Books and accounts were in a mess although fairly good grants-in-aid were available from the Govt. A new, one-storied structure to accommodate the college section was nearing completion on an ad hoc government grant of thirty thousand rupees. I took infinite pains in introducing systematised accounts, proper arrangement in the library and physical separation of the two sections. Between my first and second inspection the patrons and the members of the Governing Body frequently called at my Dacca office and followed my guidance. The slippery head of the institution had to leave soon afterwards.

I moved on to the next important Degree College at Choumohani, a business centre within hailing distance of the Noakhali District Headquarters at Maijdi. This last was unsuitable even for civil administration on account of the appalling erosion of the surrounding rivers and KHALS. Now another college is functioning at Maijdi. Though the personal influence of the Principal, Mr T. Hussain, Chaumohani College, was another lucky institution among five to receive recently one lakh of rupees as grant from the Government. He was a cultured man of ideas and leadership. In an otherwise heavily water-logged area he had built up a very decent place together with a Science Annexe and the Principal's residence. In the third week of July when I visited it, it was mid-monsoon; the college struc-

ture and buildings looked being situated on a small island with swiftly flowing streams all about and rich Aus rice crops beyond—a scene of rare charm in East Pakistan. The teaching staff were an ideally cooperative team under their capable leader. I felt happy at what I saw and gave my full support to the institution.

On my way back to Dacca I broke journey at Comilla and inspected the Victoria College which has ever been one of the biggest institutions of the province. It was then under the capable principalship of Mr Akter Hameed Khan (formerly of the ICS) who doesn't require any introduction. This college was also the recipient of one lakh of rupees which was spent in having a new wing added for academic work and a commodious Assembly Hall. In the heart of Comilla town surrounded by ponds, slums, residential houses the College functioned on a small plot of land with hardly any room for expansion—the whole area being cluttered up with jerry structures, some of which were very old and musty. The sanitary arrangements were poorest; crowd and congestion were unspeakable. During the working hours there was a sense of suffocation. The roll strength was about two thousand at that time. The Hindus of the place founded the college in a congested locality and went on adding structures to it as studies expanded into practically all subjects of Intermediate and Degree, Arts and Science courses. Old Dacca and all the district towns show how they love to huddle together and how they went on ruling the roost. The Principal's office and the teaching staff were packed with Hindus. Govt. grants from British times were inadequate and this college like many another wouldn't agree to reduction of income from student fees. This place provided a sharp contrast to the campus and buildings of Anandamohon College, Mymensingh and those of Brojomohon College, Barisal. It

enjoyed permanent affiliation in most of the subjects. I looked into the position of two or three new subjects recently introduced and calling for affiliation. We took a long time in effecting a compromise between the terms of gift instruments and deeds and the conditions of the Government and the Dacca University in regard to the constitution of the Governing Body of Comilla Victoria College. Barring hostels constructed on a new site, all other places of students residence were functioning in widely scattered localities of the town in rented houses which were not suitable for the purpose. As a result of the recommendations of the Education Commission of Pakistan of 1960 physical separation of the Intermediate and Degree Sections of this college has been effected, it is reported.

The Eden College for girls at Dacca affiliated to the Arts Degree standard is a Government institution. Like its men's counterpart, the Dacca College, it functioned in requisitioned buildings at Bakshibazar. These were inadequate and unsatisfactory from the standpoint of accommodation. But there was some open space within, which ensured privacy and free movement for girls. The Intermediate Arts and Science classes were crammed with girls and needed expansion. There were many men teachers; women teachers were trickling in. The students had no common room, no tiffin room. Further there was an imperative need for provision of B.Sc. teaching which didn't simply exist in the city. With regard to expansion in the directions just noted I submitted a full report to the Vice-Chancellor who took up the matter with the Government after making a personal inspection. Additional structures for classes, laboratories, rest and relaxation, were made in the course of one year and although these were not satisfactory (the contractors appeared to have made a good profit) they met the crying needs to a great extent. Laboratory equipment arrived dur-



ing the summer vacation of 1955 when accompanied by Professors of Physics and Chemistry and the DPI I held a close inspection, gave directions for placement of apparatuses and the starting of 1st yr. B.Sc. classes from 1955-'56 session. In 1965 conditions have been transformed; there has been a physical separation of the Intermediate College from the Degree one; the former works in the old place whereas the latter in an immense campus of its own near the Dacca New Market with impressive modern buildings for work as well as for the residence of girls who in the course of eighteen years have made an unparalleled progress in higher education in East Pakistan. Besides Eden College there are other girls' colleges in the city where they are giving a very good account of themselves. And at the University in each faculty they look being larger and certainly brighter and more capable than the men in many subjects.

Early in September, 1954, we took the initiative of bringing together the Heads of all Colleges in a conference with the Heads of all Departments and the Deans under the Vice-Chancellor. This was the first time since the colleges became affiliated to Dacca University that the Principals had the opportunity of coming into the closest touch with the Alma Mater, discussing their problems, academic, administrative and their own conditions of employment (non-Govt colleges). The prominent among them had places as members of the faculties and the Academic Council. Provision was also made soon afterwards for an elective seat on the Executive Council by the Principals of non-Govt colleges. They had their representation in many committees of courses so that their views on syllabuses were duly considered. The Vice-Chancellor also made arrangements for a social get-together. Early January 1955, that is today within four months we had the second such con-

ference. Although the Intermediate Colleges have now been placed under the Secondary Education Board the Principals of Degree Colleges have been meeting ever since as during my time as Inspector. I inaugurated a sort of free association and partnership among the university and the affiliated colleges and I am of the deepest conviction that this association has been one of great educational value, slightly short of residential pursuit in teaching, learning and research branches. At the present moment East Pakistan has got four Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education. Although the title of 'Intermediate' has been retained, in reality it has been wiped out. A Board is now purely an Examining Body which conducts SSC (Secondary School Certificate) and HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate) Exams upto classes X, and XI and XII respectively. It has a numerous hierarchy of bureaucratic functionaries in addition to the Chairman who has an equality of status and emoluments with the Director of Public Instruction. You come across an Inspector of Colleges (although in principle there is no college under it — the former Intermediate section goes under classes XI and XII of the higher secondary school stage), a controller of Exams, his Deputy and his Assistant, a Secretary, Asstt. Secretary, Financial Secretary and so forth besides a vast office personnel in each. The Board does no teaching work; it has no pretension to the pursuit and promotion of studies for informing the mind or developing the body. There is a competition among them for the earlier publication of exam results after boosting the percentage of successes by 'grace' marks. The academic participation of the constituent elements is nominal. Things are managed from the top floor. All this has been done in the name of the raising of the educational standard at the secondary stage. The Intermediate classes of a college were, it is asserted, a drag to higher education; they

depressed the standard and therefore called for a demotion and a levelling down. And above all this is the practice. It is argued, in all the progressive countries of the modern world. This talk of improving the educational standard by the abolition of Intermediate classes and joining them on to schools is outrageously unrealistic in a country where the High Schools (barring just a handful) are wretched in staff, equipment, accommodation and other requirements. By downgrading the former 2nd grade colleges you have made conditions worse. You have taken away from the milieu an atmosphere of a superior kind. The references to the practice in European countries is a fashionable cliché and are made in stupid divorce from the care and the money and the heritage that go into the education of the children and the boys and the adolescent of those countries from the nursery to plus 16 stage. What is the stuff of which we and our children and our fellow human beings are made? Of school going children in the province of East Pakistan how many are there in the missionary schools, in the public schools or cadet colleges? And what is the percentage of those who flock to the deplorably maintained schools that dot the country? The performance of students in the SSC, HSC Examinations and naturally enough at the subsequent Degree Exams after the introduction of the recommendations of the Education Commission is a damnable commentary on the steps that have been taken in raising our educational standards. Duly qualified teachers for schools are not available; their salaries continues to be poor and yet it is expected that following the addition of two more classes to the secondary stage there will be an all-round improvement in the schools.

I had a full time in attending to other duties of which I have given an indication in my introductory remarks. But I never neglected the inspection job. In September, 1954, I turned to

Asheque Mahmud College, Jamalpur, and Gurudayal College, Kishoreganj, both in the district of Mymensingh. Both originated as their names signify in individual benefactions; the former had a gift of several acres of rice fields in addition to cash whereas the latter chiefly in cash coming from a rich man in fish business—Kishoreganj abounding with such business men being situated in fishery fields. At Jamalpur the income from rice crop was not sufficient to keep the college going. As things stood it had sufficient structures, though not pucca, for purely Arts work upto the Degree level. Through Govt grant made ad hoc a pucca building for I.Sc. Laboratory was half built—the college authorities having failed to contribute its own portion on a fifty-fifty basis. There were two leading factions within the college and without. The donors wanted to dominate in staff appointments but the other party wanted to have their own way. The Principal at that time appeared to be very competent but his efficiency was perhaps responsible for his unpopularity. He wouldn't descend to dirty tricks. I tried to persuade them to see reason but as the next inspection showed they didn't. Meanwhile they had changed the Principal. Temporary affiliation however continued. At Kishoreganj I spent two very happy days. My own intimate friend and former colleague, Mr Zahurul Islam, on his retirement from Govt. Service had taken over charge of this college. He was a native of the place. The college and hostel buildings were situated just across a small river flowing on the south of the town proper. With substantial Government grants several blocks of hostel buildings having an inner quadrangle were found in a completed state but there were very few candidates for residence. Work in the construction of the new buildings to replace the old jerry structures was proceeding apace. It had just been possible to shift the Principal's Room, the Staff Room, the Library

etc to one of the new buildings going up. I wished very much that the college buildings were constructed first in a place where day scholars from poor families were the preponderating element. Under such an experienced, scholarly principal conditions appeared to be very satisfactory and it would have been to the advantage of the people and the place to retain his services for years to come. In a sub-divisional town the Governing Body is generally composed of pettyfogging lawyers and leaders who would love to have a pliant head. My friend had an undercurrent of dissatisfaction although he didn't make an open avowal. Soon enough he was appointed as Inspector of colleges at Rajshahi University on very attractive terms. The staff position was quite good excepting in English, a subject in which there has ever been a dearth of suitable men. Two qualified young teachers in Philosophy were musicians who brought the teachers and the students together in social contact. I participated in such a get-together organised on the occasion.

A journey to Jamalpur first and then to Kishoreganj was tedious and full of discomfort. But the return trip from Kishoreganj to Dacca via Bhairab junction was easy and smooth. Let me make it clear, however, that the difficulties of communication on those of halt and food in the places I visited never scared me. I carried in a big box pots and pans, tea things, basic foodstuffs sufficient for meals for a couple of days for all three of us, myself, the steno and the orderly who was a fairly good cook as well. These proved to be most handy at all odd places and difficult situations. In fact these had a challenge for me, which I met cheerfully. One such adventure was looking me in the face. This was a journey to Srikail for the inspection of the college there. Nobody knew where it was situated and how to approach it. Nobody ever thought about it since the partition. I doubt very much if it was ever inspected

under the Calcutta University. Since I took over a year ago I asked for particulars about the college and the staff on occasions. There were unsatisfactory replies after long intervals. When greater and greater pressure was put by me the Principal concealed himself under a total black-out. In none of his replies he had indicated the route to the place. Principal K.N. Chakravarty of Narayanganj College was good enough to furnish this to me — a fifty mile launch trip from Narayanganj over the Sitalakhya, the Meghna and another branch river would take me into Ramchandrapur, a big market-place, deep in the interior of Comilla district, and then another eleven mile long boat trip to Srikail. He further arranged with a Ramchandrapur acquaintance of his for a night's halt there. On the 6th November, 1954, being accompanied by my orderly, Nurul Huq, I boarded a launch at Narayanganj at 12 noon on my memorable trip. It was a public transport owned by an individual. A small room upstairs was considered first class with two benches for seats. All acquaintances on the route were men of importance and must have their accommodation in that class. It became crowded soon enough and miscellaneous talk in loud voice resulting twice in fight and quarrel held the stage. At one of the early landing ghats there was a border shelling between the crew and the waiting passengers who couldn't board. A very respectable looking, moneyed passenger, who as it appeared later was the owner of another launch plying on the same route but whose launch wasn't operating on that date, felt slighted and resented it vehemently and wouldn't be appeared. A tea-boy having been slapped by a passenger led to an unseemly scene. At 2 pm I was eager to have the snack of a lunch from my tiffin carrier and this I did in an unenviable posture. But on both sides of this small stream lay half-ripe rice crops of rich growth and compelling

charm; at small distances could be seen villages with inhabitants in leisurely relaxation or bathing and washing. Some of these villages looked clean and of substance whereas some others were rather poor and slovenly. We expected to arrive at Ramchandrapur at 5 pm but actually we did so after 6 pm when the sun had already set and the darkness of the night was rapidly setting upon us. Against my schedule a boat from Srikail was in the morning to take me to Srikail the same evening. I was weary and I declined to proceed. Khagen Babu's Ramchandrapur friend had sent his own men to take me this place where I proceeded and where I was received cordially by Suraj Mian, the manager of the business firm of a merchant but it was a ware house, a clerks' office and their community sleeping and feeding place, all rolled into one. When I wanted to have a look into my portion of the building I was shown into a common bed-room and I was frightened. Suraj Mian was a graduate with very pleasant manners. He assured me that I would be accommodated in a DAK BANGALOW but I must have some refreshment first. I could then listen to bustling orders for a cook and foodstuff to cook with. This frightened me still more over the time of preparation and I entreated him to make absolutely simple arrangements. Next I was taken to the so called Dak Bangalow which was actually a two-room union office in which one room was used as office and the other as the sleeping room of two top class school students who were living there with their books and belongings. They were ordered out but I protested and offered a solution. There was an empty kutchra structure nearby. I would gladly occupy it, I said, and I did so and after a wash I fell asleep; I was roused at about 11 pm and taken to Suraj Mian's Gadi where I had to eat Pilau and fowl curry at that unearthly hour. I persuaded him not to worry in the least about my morning requirements but to get me in

touch with the boatmen who had come from Srikail. Luckily the boat was brought very near the kutchra structure where I spent the night. Early next morning my orderly arranged for my bath and breakfast and we did start before 8 am. Earlier I had been assured that after two days I would have no difficulty in availing myself of a launch to Narayanganj although it was a HAT DAY. Now began one of the most trying boat trips I had so far had, worse than those to Bhuapur and later to Ramdia. Mostly it was upstream all the way over narrow, meandering water courses with cascades flowing down swiftly and heavily — an uphill job for the boatmen, four of them, to keep the craft steady, especially in negotiating bends. For two miles near Ramchandrapur there were open space and fields around wider expanses of water but beyond we had to get on to (water) gullies as it were winding in and out of hamlets on both sides where could be seen slovenly houses and human beings in loin cloths. The water in these places was filthiest. The people lived principally on fish and fish trade; the drying of small fish was another main occupation—the smell of which led to the rising of the gorge. The circuitous route to Srikail covering 11 or 12 miles took five hours and a half to cover; we got there at 1.30 pm. The boatmen were strong, sinewy, skilful; they were in the pay of the Datta family. They said that they were happy and contented; they had plenty to eat but practically nothing to cover their bodies; all textile material was beyond their means and unlike many others of their kin they were not migrating to West Bengal. The tedium of the journey weighed heavily upon me and I dozed off and on although I was trying hard to do some reading. While approaching Srikail the countryside became opener and pleasanter with rice fields about and some better-looking villages and people. We had now a full view of the steeple over the three-storied college building. The word



steeple had a correct application in as much as the building was a temple dedicated to the goddess of learning and the property was a religious trust. The steeple could be seen for miles around; in fact when I returned I saw it from the outer part of Ramchandrapur which was only 6 or 7 miles as the crow flies. The stream on which we were plying went round on three sides of the college campus the beauty of which was very much enhanced by the stream's moatlike behaviour. On the south lay the village proper and on landing we had to enter from the south through an imposing iron gate. Inside there was an exquisitely beautiful scene. The main three-storied south-facing building had a lovely little swimming pool in front and flanked on the west by another three-storied building known as the Guest House and on the east by hostels and teachers' quarters. At the north-west corner stood the Principal's family quarters and there were paved ways and grassy plots all about. It looked like a miniature Murarichand College but the two main buildings had superior masonry work without the curse of Sylhet rainfall. The founders and the proprietors were the members of the famous Datta family of Comilla. Of the two brothers, NB Datta and KK Datta, the former was a captain of the Army Medical Corps and the most illustrious founder of the Bengal Immunity Co. of Calcutta, the latter a reputed Advocate of Comilla. Kaminikumar Datta came to see me in my office at Dacca sometime after my inspection and later still became one of the Central Ministers of Pakistan. Capt Datta put into execution his cherished dream of a college in his own native place. I was told he brought from Calcutta the required building material and also skilled masons. The Guest House was cluttered up with costly Calcutta furniture. I gathered from the boatmen during my journey that no member of the family was visiting the place, not even Mr Kaminikumar Datta although

the whole neighbourhood eagerly looked for them. One manager was looking after the trust property which is supposed to run the college. During my visit he too was absent.

The High School and the College had plenty of accommodation to share between the two. The attached Science Laboratory had even a gas plant installation; it was properly equipped. Only one science teacher was available; he was looking after both Physics and Chemistry. The gas plant was not in working order; there was no mechanic to keep it going; no steam coal was available either. The question of the availability of Laboratory Assistants didn't arise. When I met the Mathematics Lecturer I had the surprise of my life. Between the years 1922 to 1926 he was the Librarian of Rajshahi College, Mr IN Bagchi, who it appeared had been a rolling stone meanwhile and eventually deposited himself here. But he was a first class man in Mathematics. Sudhansu Babu, the Principal, was a qualified teacher of English. Three more teachers were available on the Arts side. The college had affiliation in IA and ISc and BA courses of studies before the partition when Capt Datta sent teachers from Calcutta. After partition it was still sending up candidates, at any rate some at least, for these exams. None had passed the latest BA exam; a handful did in IA but none in ISc The college was sitting. I met 20 to 25 students in the Intermediate classes, less than half a dozen in the degree classes. The registers of attendance showed higher enrolment. Talking to students I discovered that most of them came from villages near and far and that awfully bad communication was responsible for their irregularity in attendance. Talking to the Principal and to the five or six available teachers I found that they were in the pay of the manager of the estate the income of which was not known to them. There was no Governing Body functioning. Whoever was available as teacher

under the pressure of unemployment left the job ere long. Although the Principal disavowed it, he looked like preparing himself to leave. He said that he had never expected that I would be coming along for inspection and that therefore he had started supplying some statistics. But when he understood that I meant business he refrained from giving incorrect statements. I was deeply stirred by the original purpose, and by what looked like a magnificent achievement which had now run to irritable waste. The mutability in human affairs cannot fail to touch sensitive minds. I desired to meet some local people and at the end of one day and a half some of them were collected—Hindus and Muslims all of whom had no suggestion to make. It was the business of the 'Babus' i.e. of the Datta family. I pondered long before submitting my report recommending for the time being the retentions of the IA course and the forthwith abolition of ISc and BA courses.

Having returned to Ramchandrapur in the forenoon of 9th November I was stuck up there for about 24 hours as no launch would ply before forenoon next day. This time I had better luck regarding accommodation. A vacant family quarters attached to a Nawab's kutchery (under the Court of Wards) was available. I rested and relaxed there. Suraj Mian would take no denial; he provided the principal meals. I went round and had a look at the mammoth 'HAT' of the place. All consumers' articles were available, chiefly handloom lungi, sari, napkins of coarse quality and bellmetal utensils. On the 10th November at 5-45 pm I completed my five day sally to Srikail.

During the second half of 1954, the political situation in the country entered upon phases of instability and muddle which were not easy to understand by the lay citizens pursuing their bread-winning avocations. In fact the beginning in this direction was made by the assassination of Liaquat Ali

Khan. Gradually it became worse and worse and eventually leading to the October Revolution of 1958. In August, 1954, the Prime Minister and the Governor General paid visits to East Pakistan; towards the end of October, the Consembly was dissolved and a care-taker govt formed. In the middle of November there was a public arrival of the Governor-General at Dacca. Conditions became unseemly. Like millions of other men I lost all interest in the affairs of the country and clung tenaciously and desperately energetical to my own duties. The students also were stated with barren squabbles and the confrontation between a party and another party. Towards the end of November, the Dacca University held a successful convocation in the midst of impressive academic ceremonies and department. In the same month I was tempted into a folly which I had never made before nor repeated ever since. There was a mid-term vacancy on the Executive Council (now the Syndicate) to be filled up by election by the members of the Dacca University Court. I offered myself as a candidate. Such an election involved all the procedure of a democratic free choice spread over four months and ended with the counting of votes on the 19th March, 1955, with complications to be slightly sketched in due course.

In 9 days since my inspection of Srikail College I responded to the urge of seeing more. Sunamganj College in the district of Sylhet was in very bad shape. I went out on tour of Sylhet on the 19th November and after having inspected Sunamganj College, Sunamganj, the Women's College and Madanmohon College at Sylhet returned to the station on the 26th.

Since I have already given a fairly clear picture of the last two I shall content myself here with a brief reference to Sunamganj—which is a subdivisional town in the midst of a vast lake of water in the monsoon on the fringe of the hills of

Assam on one side and the distantmost horizon of Mymensingh on the other. I had to perform the first half of the journey by railway train to Chhatak of cement factory fame and then the other half by launch down the Chhatak river. This involved three-fourths of one day. I had the pleasure of travelling by a respectable looking, reasonably comfortable launch. Towards the end of the journey I had lovely views of the Assam hills just across the river. The SDO and some of his colleagues at that time were my former pupils, some others including the Headmaster of the Govt. school turned out to be former friends and acquaintances. Naturally I had a grand reception and hearty send-off plus a society dinner in the organisation of which the leading members of the bar also played an active part. The college there was second grade, non-Govt., and functioned in a structure one-half of which could be used for work, the other half demanded immediate demolition on account of risks to life and property. What was still more disconcerting was that the I.Sc. laboratory with inadequate equipment was accommodated in the condemned part. The whole structure occupied a longish strip of land with no space for the slighted extension. Its finances didn't permit any improvement. The staff position was unsatisfactory; teachers joined only to leave. But numerous students were available eager to make the best of a bad bargain. Some of the I.Sc. students were found occupied in serious practical work neither the sub-divisional authorities nor the people were willing to accept its non-existence. All of them made earnest promises to arrange for land acquisition and better buildings and there was no reason to disbelieve them. Communication with Sylhet and the outside world in such water-logged interior being very difficult there was sufficient justification for the existence of a college here. I indicated the ways in which improvement should be made, and

then left. Undoubtedly I recommended its continuance. I also made some canvassing in the university in respect of sending qualified young men to it as teachers. I didn't have time enough to make a second visit but now I find that it is a first grade college and has fairly capable students in the Degree classes who gave a good account of themselves in the 1965 BA Exam in English.

On the 9th December, 1954, I went out on an inspection tour in the districts of Faridpur and Barisal from which I returned to the station on the 22nd—a long, rambling difficult travel. I started with Q.A. College, Gopalganj and ended up with the two colleges (already mentioned) in the district town of Barisal. Movements in the interior of East Pakistan have now been made to easier and faster by the inauguration of a fleet of launches, helicopters, DAKOTA air buses, sokker friendships and a network of high roads. It is now possible to have a drive to Chittagong, Khulna, Jessore, Rajshahi by all-weather roads. But during 1954 one's life was on one's lips to get to Gopalganj, Ramdia, Madaripur, thence to Barisal and to Chakhar. None from the university ever conceived of visiting Ramdia, its location being unknown. To get to Gopalganj I had first to travel to Barisal by the Dacca-Barisal steamer, change into Barisal-Khulna steamer wherefrom I had to disembark at 1.30 in the morning after a journey of twelve hours from Barisal, board a country boat and cover another slow trip of two hours to reach Gopalganj ghat at 3.30 a.m. Ramdia was altogether a different proposition. It was at the farthest end of Faridpur towards Nadia but its only communication was via Gopalganj in a country boat the size of which must be big or small according to navigable water-courses and streams. Some distance away from Gopalganj is a vast, treeless marsh 50 miles by 50 miles where grows abundance of rice and fish. One has to cross this

marsh to reach Ramdia. In December the otherwise lake-like marsh has only meandering water-channels which can be negotiated by people who had firsthand and long acquaintance with the area. Although our boatmen knew the place, one Professor of Q.A. College, who was a native of Ramdia area was good enough to accompany us and to guide us along mazy lanes of water. We left Gopalganj between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and had an exhaustingly slow journey of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours. It was 7 p.m. when we landed at the Ramdia ghat. This vast area is sparsely populated, dotted with hamlets here and there and bordered by bigger villages of farmers who were overwhelmingly scheduled caste Hindus. Reports of Hindu-Muslim killings in this area received bold headlines in India newspapers a few years ago. But it passes my comprehension how the overwhelmingly large, sturdy Hindu peasants of the place could be oppressed or killed by a handful of Muslims living there. On my way back from Ramdia I had to spend a day and a half plus a night's stopover in the riverside village of Boltoli to get to Madaripur, a sub-divisional town in the district of Faridpur but nearer to Barisal. We thrust ourselves as guests on the Headmaster of the Boltoli High School, predominantly if not exclusively of scheduled caste Hindus.

I found the Quaid-i-Azam College at Gopalganj full of students, about half of whom were scheduled caste Hindus. A number of students of both the communities were living in hostels having poor structures and without bare amenities. The college preparing students for Inter Arts and Degree Arts was functioning in equally poor and congested structures. Its financial condition was bad; Govt grants were unsatisfactory; the public didn't include thriving business men; other moneyed interests to donate were non-existent. The Governing Body was indifferent. An innocent-looking upcountry Muslim Principal

had no influence or leadership to govern. Changes in the teaching staff were very frequent. The only redeeming feature was that the students were keen and diligent in their studies. In academic and corporate activities they gave a good account of themselves in my contact with them. They hurriedly organised a literary function and gave a demonstration of physical feats. I felt happy and gave them inspiring words. On my return to Dacca I recommended satisfactory Govt grants to keep the institution going. Ten years afterwards now I hear that the authorities of the college are making arrangements for providing science teaching.

Ramdia College and campus were a discovery. A big, strong, one-storied, southfacing building of satisfactory dimensions accommodated the Sreekrishna College, Ramdia; in front stood a small swimming pool, on the western bank stood a range of four family quarters for members of the teaching staff; further west existed the residential quarters of the Principal with good privacy. Only six or seven teachers were needed for the Intermediate Arts College that it was. Roll strength was poor; most of the teachers were Third Class MA's and came from the Scheduled Castes of the locality; others of higher qualifications were not simply available on account of its isolation from urban areas. Income from tuition fees was negligible; monthly subscriptions from the farmers and peasants around depended upon a vigorous collection drive from the college authorities; Government grants were meagre and fitful. The Mahasabha zealots of Calcutta urged by the self-sacrifice and love of learning of a local Hindu leader and supported by a substantial donation from the Birlas had borne the initial cost of the buildings and campus. Their objective was the reformation and re-convesion of the scheduled castes. Since partition they were urging them ineffectively to migrate to Hindustan. The



college was in a dying state but for the arrival on the scene some little while ago of Mr Akhtarul Huq, as its Principal. A young MA in Philosophy of Calcutta University he had six to eight years' teaching experience. Simplest in dress (in fact he donned a black sherwani on loose trousers) and very temperate in habits, of few words and worthy selflessness Mr Huq gave a remarkable example of his organising and constructive skill. He breathed life into a lifeless anatomy, stabilised its uncertain finances into meeting the running cost, attracted students from the neighbourhood including some from among the Muslims who were few and far between. What was still more heroic was that he had vacated his own residence for half a dozen of Muslim students who were to appear at the ensuing IA Exam in 1955. Mr Akhtarul Huq was worshipped as a deity by everybody. I found the history lecturer full of enthusiasm, the English lecturer sweet and cultured and I didn't have the slightest hesitation in recommending that their Third class degrees be condoned and they permitted to continue—when I urged Mr Huq to stay on yet a while I gathered that he had many domestic difficulties which he couldn't combat living in such a remote, isolated corner of the province. A few months ago one of my sons had been deputed by Government to collect statistics about Gopalganj and Ramdia Colleges. From him I heard how Ramdia was an hour's trip from Gopalganj by a small motor launch and how Faridpur and Madaripur were being connected by road and launch services. Ramdia College is thriving now.

Supported by the jute and petroleum magnates of the locality Madaripur Sir Nazimuddin College had a strong financial position but its buildings and structure were flimsy on an unsatisfactory site. No Principal did stick to his job. The same was applicable to other teachers. I felt unhappy at these con-

ditions but the question of discontinuance didn't arise. I am not quite sure if the defects set forth here have been removed. Students flock to BM College, Barisal.

From Madaripur it took me twenty hours to travel to Barisal by steamer. I had left Fuzlul Huq College, Barisal, in a very unsatisfactory state and I was anxious to put it on its feet and I found a very strong ally and supporter now in Mr Hussain Haider, CSP, District Magistrate, who was such an intimate friend of mine at Sylhet. I took him into confidence, put him in complete possession of its killing financial weakness and the lack of a capable Principal. Perhaps Mr. A.K. Fuzlul Huq had already spoken to him but I didn't know. Obviously he was one of his admirers. He had the vision and the insight to see into the future of the college. He sent urgent messages to all his subdividional staff and thana staff on the way to Chakhar and requisitioned their services for the morrow when he took me and my staff into the most comfortable launch of the District Magistrate and made a journey of conquest to Chakhar. He collected the SDO of Patuakhali on the way and arrived at the destination in full official strength and power. Being President of the Governing Body of the College, he held an emergency meeting and adopted a number of resolutions to overhaul and streamline a grounded machinery. In consultation with the SDO of Patuakhali (the latter was a member of the G.B.) he decided to place immediately at the disposal of the college a sum of rupees eight thousand which they had collected for some other purpose to help it tide over its present financial difficulties and finalised the appointment of a Principal from among the applications pending after earlier advertisement. These arrangements were entirely satisfactory from the standpoint of the university. It is interesting to note that this young SDO was Mr Burhanuddin Ahmed, CSP, a distinguished alum-

nus of Dacca University. He is now the Secretary of the Education Deptt of the Govt of East Pakistan.

On my way back I peeped into Brojomohom College once again. I found it as it was in the month of March. But I saw through the fraud that Latif Islamic Intermediate College was and had it disaffiliated.

The year 1955 opened with a conference of Principals and Heads of University Departments. Ties between the university and affiliated colleges became closer, and better understanding was fostered. The Vice-Chancellor held a Garden Party on the occasion and the Governor of the province, Mr Justice Shahabuddin, not only participated in it but also made personal acquaintance with the university and college Heads. The year closed with another such gathering held on the eve of the convocation in the month of December when Mr Justice Amiruddin was the Governor. In the post-convocation Garden Party he mixed freely and with considerable sweetness with the guests. In solemnity, grandeur, orderliness this year's Degree-conferring function had been one of the best. The Vice-Chancellor's address made a welcome departure from the stereotyped pattern and brought out in clear outline the university's problems and requirements; it was full of purpose and pointed to the path of future development. A convocation now in recent times is in unfathomable burial. Early in January Dr Jenkins collected material and statistics from me about the institutions under me and worked upon a scheme of reorganisation of higher education. Our work in course of the year continued uninterrupted despite stirring changes in the political field early in June when Prime Minister Mohammad Ali (of Bogra) announced during his visit to Dacca his decision to revoke Section 92A. Swift action followed; on the 6th June, Mr A.K. Fuzlul Huq's nominee, Mr Abu Hussain Sarkar, formed, as

Chief Minister, his cabinet when he and Messrs Ashrafuddin Choudhury, Abdus Salam Khan, Hashemuddin Khan and Syed Azizul Huq were sworn-in. Governor Shahabuddin having been bypassed in this change tendered his resignation. On the 21st June the East Bengal Legislative Assembly held its election of representatives to the assembly. These didn't affect us in the academic field. I inspected 34 (thirty four) colleges including fifteen that I hadn't inspected before. No college in my jurisdiction remained uninspected. I attended five meetings of the Faculty of Arts and seven of the Academic Council. I organised eight meetings of the Standing Committee on Affiliation and got through all arrears accumulated prior to my assumption of office. This was despite the very depressing discomfiture that was inflicted upon us by the Dacca University Court annual meeting held at the end of February when politician-members threw out the ordinances that the university had framed and passed after long, patient labour on the composition, powers, duties and responsibilities of the affiliated colleges. These were indispensable and urgent but as every one knows other considerations weigh with the politicians. Step by step they dug their own graves on the composition of the court which is now no more an elective body. I had fuller and far more comprehensive knowledge about these politician-members of the D.U. Court in March, 1955, and for months on end subsequently over my candidature for election from the court to the Executive Committee. I have already alluded to this folly of mine. Its upshot may briefly indicated here. They had put up a candidate of their own and pushed him with an electioneering campaign the vigour of which it is impossible for me to describe. On the 19th March, 1955, the counting of votes was held in the office of the Registrar, D.U. The Vice-Chancellor himself was the Returning Officer and present in the adjoining room for giving decisions on disputed points. The counting was

made by 3 scrutineers, Professor Atwar Hossain, Head of the Deptt. of Commerce, Professor Gholam Jilani, Head of the Deptt of Philosophy and Prof Q.M. Hussain, Head of the Deptt of Statistics. The politician-candidate was represented by himself and two agents one of whom was a lawyer. I was my own representative. Each and every ballot-paper which they shrewdly guessed to have been cast in my favour was hotly contested on all conceivable grounds from signature and date to designation and serial number. Scrutineers' references to the Returning Officer received immediate disposal but it was a long, tedious operation of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hrs at the end of which there was a tie between myself and my opponent, each having secured 53 votes. According to the university ordinances lots were drawn by the Vice-Chancellor himself, in which my opponent and his agents participated. In sheer disgust I didn't; instead I began walking up and down in the ground floor pathways. After sometime one of the agents of my opponent came downstairs and congratulated me on my success in the lots. But on the 24th March the university and I received an injunction from the 3rd Munsiff, Dacca not to function according to the results of the election pending a hearing of the case in which the wildest allegations were made against the fairplay and honesty of the scrutineers and the Returning Officer. The case dragged on for a year and a half and although the university and I won eventually the injunction agst the university and me was vacated on 18/2/56 and the case dismissed in August, '56, the success had hardly any significance in view of the cost of the litigation and frequent attendance at court and in view of the shortness of the unexpired portion of the by-election term. I had my first and last lesson about elections. The year 1955 had another disastrous visitation of floods which caused a month-long affliction to the majority of people within the Municipal limits and also outside. Three commissions of Inquiry and

Report were constituted by the Govt. in course of the year about troubles in Chandpur, Rajendra (Faridpur) and BM Colleges. In each I was appointed to represent the university. About the first I have already written. In the 2nd the DPI and I had to do the job. The third was presided over by Mr G.F. Madani, then Commissioner, Dacca Division with the DPI and myself as members. In the 2nd and 3rd our recommendations were unanimous and accepted in full.

Of the 15 colleges that I inspected for the first time in 1955 as many as seven were in Chittagong, the remaining eight being Ghafargaon, Dacca Islamic Intermediate, Feni, Brahmanbaria, Notre Dame (Dacca) Debendra at Manikganj, Saltmullah (Dacca), Dacca College.

Ghafargaon had financial handicaps. Dacca I.I. proposed justifiably the opening of general Arts course which was recommended. Feni College had an enigmatic Principal who professed to be ill in bed. Its laboratory equipment and fittings were inadequate. The place was full of intrigues. Brahmanbaria College despite its cramped space, financial inadequacy aspired after the addition of Degree classes. This was not encouraged. Financial irregularities committed by the Principal were detected. Recommendations to make good the loss incurred were approved by the university. Notre Dame, Dacca, formerly named St Gregory's had new buildings on a new site in Motijheel and received the university's blessings and approval for expansion into a full-fledged Degree College. It has since become one of the leading colleges in Dacca, especially for Eng. medium students. Debendra College, Manikganj, financed mainly by Roy Bahadur Ranadaprasad Saha was giving a headache to us on two counts; 1) various allegations against the Principal advanced by a capable lawyer and politician of Manikganj and supported by some disgruntled teachers 2) poor

college and hostel accommodation. A thorough probe into the first resulted in a comprehensive report which the Vice-Chancellor thought couldn't have been drawn up better by him if he had conducted it. The second defect could be ignored in view of the fact that the patron was having buildings constructed directly under his supervision to replace the old jerry structures. Communication between Dacca and Manikganj in those days involved considerable hardship. I had to make the outward trip in a launch which was worse than that of Ramchandrapur. At the moment of writing the Dacca-Aricha arterial road goes past Manikganj which is therefore within easy reach. Despite the support that the university had given to the then Principal against the trend and spirit of my findings he couldn't continue with his not-above-the-board transactions for long and had to leave in humiliation. Salimullah College (at that time known as Imperial Salimullah College) was an Intermediate Night College with all the defects of a Night College which the university desired to remove. It functioned in very unsatisfactory rented rooms of a High School. But it had a solid reserve fund under Mr Banerjee who runs a firm of Chartered Accountants. The university requirements with regard to enrolment of students and payment of salaries to part-timers were soon fulfilled. Later it bought the buildings in which it was a tenant. It is a thriving, degree college now. Dacca College which I inspected in December, 1955, had now its commodious new buildings on its present site and campus off New Market and had elaborate arrangements for all academic and extra academic purposes. Satkania College, situated in a village in a remote corner of Chittagong district, a few miles off the road to Cox's Bazar involved a railway journey to Hathhazari, then a crossing of the river Sankhya and afterwards a stretch of road of yawning bricks plus another of

mud—together a harrowing experience. After crossing the Sankhya river I boarded a taxi cab without a steering wheel, without brakes and with an engine that worked more with dexterous physical force than internal combustion. But the inauguration and working of a college here was another example of individual initiative, private enterprise and cooperative efforts. The initiative was that of Mr M Chowdhury who was a very successful and solvent legal practitioner (a Mukhtar) of Chittagong (Satkania was his native village) of attractive address and great sociability; private enterprise had its epitome in Mr Ahmed Kabir Chowdhury, prosperous businessman and an MLA who had given substantial donations towards the construction of buildings and in financing the project in other ways; cooperative efforts flowed from the people as well as the staff, mostly local recruits who did the teaching more out of love than out of gainful employment. Mr Chowdhury who was the founder-secretary had donated several acres of rice-fields for college and hostel buildings to go up. During my first visit these were being erected but during my second one the lectures were being delivered here and I also occupied a room in the attached hostel. My support to the Intermediate College here was prompt and spontaneous. On my way back from Satkania and in the middle of the 28-mile railway line from Hathhazari to Chittagong I broke journey at Patiya (a famous thana area in the district) and covered a five-mile distance by kutchra road in a ramshackle taxi to Kanungopara where Sir Asutosh College is situated. This place became famous as the birth place of ten-eleven Datta brothers of whom Mr B.B. Datta became an institution as the Controller of Examinations of Calcutta University under Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. The college was started here by them in the thirties and earned some notoriety in pre-partition days as a seat of indiscipline and subversive activities. As



Principal of Chittagong College for six and half years at a stretch I just heard about the existence of the college and personally had deep-seated prejudice against it. My direct acquaintance with it now came as a revelation. It began in kutchra-pucca structures and went on expanding block by block into a very big institution where now there were a thousand students on the rolls receiving instruction upto the Degree stage with Science teaching upto the Intermediate standard. Residential arrangements for 200 students existed on the campus and although these were not buildings, they were maintained under clean and sanitary conditions. One or two of the superior type of hostel structures was set apart for the Muslim students showing the Principal's fair treatment to the latter. For about 20 years, that is today from the very inauguration of the college, Mr M.L. Nag had been the Principal of the college. A first class MA in Maths of Cal. University he had built it up from the humblest beginnings to its present dimensions with singleminded devotion and rare constructive skill. He appeared to be well-informed in every subject including English and had his eye on every detail of the organisation. The library and the laboratories were his works. He had the leadership to rope in competent teachers. Many of them happening to be ex-students of the college. It goes without saying that excepting one or two they were all Hindus, old and young. No work was too mean for him. he did masonry work with skill. On my arrival he accommodated me on the first floor of a large two-storied new building to which finishing touches were just being given. It was the Science Laboratory Annexe constructed with the express purpose of making provision for B.Sc. teaching. He had had it constructed under his own supervision and at a cost of rupees thirty thousand only. A contractor would have charged at least sixty thousand. My inspection was one of

discovery. I spent two happy days there in course of which I had to address a well-organised 'welcome' meeting after listening to speeches and to musical entertainment which included an item of violine at the hands of Mr Ansukumar Hor, Lecturer in Bengali. The students organised their own musical entertainment on the following day. I was refreshed by seeing what I saw and by hearing what I heard. On returning to Chittagong I made another sortie to Nazirhat, a railway journey of 26 miles having branched off from the common junction at Sholashahar, one proceeding towards Hathazari, the other to the terminus at Nazirhat. The SDO, Sadder North, who was the President of the Governing Body accompanied me. The college was functioning in clean, kutchia structures in the midst of the village; it had qualified teachers on the staff but no library; what it had under that name was merely an apology. The timber merchants of Nazirhat were fitfully financing the institution. Subscriptions from them succeeded in near completion of an ambitiously projected building outside the village on a big campus. Its financial handicaps were overwhelming. I recommended only temporary affiliation with conditions laid down. I understand that the Nazirhat College is in good shape now.

The Calcutta Commercial Institute of the Govt of undivided Bengal went to W. Bengal on partition. A Govt College of Commerce with provision for instruction upto the B.Com. standard and retaining the old syllabus of the Institute of Commerce, which corresponded to Intermediate standard was started soon after partition at Chittagong by the East Bengal Govt. under the Principalship of our friend and colleague, Prof Abdus Samad. Its paralysing handicaps was one of accommodation. It functioned in a cramped and rented flat in front of the Chittagong Post Office since then. In 1955 Professor Abdus Subhan Khan Choudhury (noticed several times in course of

this narrative) was its Principal. The need and importance of Commerce graduates trainees in the development of our state was receiving greater attention now, especially by the U.S. Inter-College programme under Dr Hampton. Professor Blarings was stationed at the college under that programme which was willing to grant typewriters and other equipment provided there was suitable space available for placing and utilizing them. On the 21st February I inspected the college; on the 22nd I was joined by Dr Hampton and Dr M Ahmed, DPI. The existing habitation was utterly unsatisfactory. We went out and after strenuous attempts selected another suite of rooms in the Sadarghat Commercial area for which the owner exacted a very heavy price although it just provided minimum requirements. In September 1955 I inspected the college once again in the new place and was in a position to recommend B.Com. affiliation. Ten years have elapsed since then and the Govt College of Commerce at Chittagong is now a premier institution in the province with its own buildings and campus at Agrabad. Another institution at Chittagong College was causing a headache to the university. Some of our enterprising friends there with a good deal of business acumen started without any authority from the university a Night College which sat in the rooms of the Kazem Ali High School in the immediate neighbourhood of Chittagong College. The Vice-Chancellor was dead set against mushroom institutions, especially against night colleges. The sponsors now were eager to regularise their irregularity and present candidates for Intermediate exams. When they approached me I declined to take any notice before they should satisfy me about accommodation and fittings, teaching staff and adequate financial strength. This was in the beginning of 1955. They sensed danger, made a contract with the Kazem Ali School to pay satisfactory monthly rent and also

to erect a first floor on the one-storied building at their own cost and took up the work in right earnest. In September the first floor was ready with furniture; teachers and substantial reserve fund were available; an inspection and recommendation for affiliation followed. Since then this college has gone on expanding in every respect on a new site with the Victoria Islamic Hostel as its nucleus and adding to it day classes in addition to night classes with a tremendous roll strength and under the name "Chittagong City College" upto the Degree standard. This college with several thousand students on the rolls is functioning in the Sudderghat area. I understand that a Law College is functioning in their buildings. The Chittagong City College has since been playing a prominent part in the Inter-College Sports organised at Dacca by the Dacca University and our former pupil Mr Rezaul Karim, has been its Principal for quite a long time now.

1955 was the year in which we had to serve on three Inquiry commissions over three colleges under disturbed conditions: Chandpur, Faridpur, Barisal. About the first I have already said a lot. About the second it may be stated outright that the District Magistrate of Faridpur in his capacity as President of the Governing Body had suspended the Principal of Rajendra College in a huff over the veriest trifles occurring in its day-to-day administration. The DPI and I after having held a full investigation recommended immediate reinstatement and the Govt. approved our report in full. But the third, Brojomohan College, Barisal, presented a formidable front. Trouble having brewed there for five or six months came to a head in October, 1955, when the D.M. suspended Mr Mc Inerny, the Principal of the college and made ad hoc arrangements for running it. In brief outline the case may be stated as follows. On the eve of the summer vacation of the college, the

Annual Exam of the junior Inter and Degree students was scheduled to be held. Although the students had prayed for its postponement till after the holiday, the exam was held on the scheduled first day when there was a scandal in the shape of the questions having leaked out from the local press which had printed them. The leakage was admitted and a fresh exam with new questions was ordered. There was a renewed petition for postponement which was not heeded. No inquiry into the bungling was ordered either but hurried sets of questions were set instead and dictated. This aggravated the situation and the students walked out in protest and organised a successful boycott. Violent demonstrations followed; police had to intervene. The Principal chased the students with a bottle of "কদুর তেল" pumpkin oil to apply on the heads to cool their brains after having applied some on his own head. Many funny and ridiculous situations developed leading to the abandonment of the exam. When the college re-opened in July the students prayed for the holding of the exam. But instead of holding one he promoted people whom he liked and detained those he didn't like. This created a split among the favoured and the non-favoured. In the next place he expelled half a dozen without having framed any charge against them and without calling for any explanation. A period of uncertainty about what action he was going to take followed and there was exasperation among the affected. The students struck; violent and ugly scenes were enacted from day to day. The DM's advice in resolving the tangle was not accepted by the Principal. His written requests were turned down. People other than the students joined the fray. Widespread and serious disturbances were the outcome. The D.M. eventually suspended the Principal and informed the Govt who constituted the Inquiry Commission with Mr Madani, the Commissioner of Dacca Division, as its chairman. He, the

DPI, and I left for Barisal, on the evening of 30th October, 1955, arrived at Barisal the following forenoon, stopped at the Circuit House and proceeded forthwith to hear witnesses. On the first day we continued till 9 p.m., on the second till 8 p.m., on the 3rd we shifted to the college and held on-the-spot inquiries and examined all records. In the Circuit House the scenes were reminiscent of a camp under an emergency—guardians, advocates, lawyers appeared and gave evidence. Mr. McInerny himself was examined. He was frank and admitted having used কদুর তেল pumpkin oil and offering the same to students. He had expelled students on personal recognition without calling for explanation. He didn't have any Punishment Book. He made no records of students expelled. The provisions of the Bengal Education Code in this regard were not consulted by him. The expelled students appeared before us; they were all students of the Intermediate First year classes and looked much too young and immature for any thinking or deliberation. None of them smacked of being a trouble-maker earlier. Most of the prominent citizens spoke against the maladroitness and high handedness of the Principal, his eccentricities, his tangible leaning towards the Hindus, his closet relationship with Babu Sarab Kumar Datta. Some of the people supported Mr McInerny. I took notes of evidence given; these amounted to an enormous heap. We dispersed on the 3rd November, the DPI and I proceeding to Chakhar, Mr Madani on a tour of the interior. Having returned to Dacca we held discussions and charted a course of action—the job of actual drafting of the report fell to me and the DPI frequently coming over to my room gave his counsel and guidance. When the draft was ready we met together and finalised the report in the 3rd week of December. We had to go into details, record the irregularities of Mr McInerny and point out how the DM had no alternative other

than to remove the Principal temporarily from the troubled scene. We had also to take cognizance of the fact how despite the university's repeated requests the Governing Body of B.M. College was not properly constituted. We recommended that it should be constituted with the least possible delay and that the whole case of Mr McInerny should be considered by that body which was the only appointing and action-taking authority. Our report was approved in full by the Govt.

Notable of the social functions during 1955 were those in connexion with the visit of Sir Dudley Stamp, of the Iranian Goodwill Mission, of the Californian students, of a Turkish Professor and of Sir Robert Wood. Besides there were Old Boys' Dinner, Staff Club Dinner, staging of a drama by women students.

### **1956 :**

In 1956 I worked as Inspector till September as Registrar for 3 months and as Provost SMH from July onwards. To recall 1956 and to write about it in general terms as well as in personal, after nearly ten years, many things get blurred and unimportant respectively; its chequered political story of many excitements lies buried in the past exactly as two stalwarts of the east wing of that period are resting in their graves near the Dacca High Court buildings. But early in March, 1956 Mr. A.K. Fulzul Huq, the 'traitor' of 1954, became the Governor of East Pakistan, and in September, Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In January the former along with Iskandar Mirza, the G-G, was the recipient of LL.D. honorary degree from the Dacca University; in December the latter delivered his world famous speech at S.M. Hall, D.U. in defence of Pakistan's membership of the Baghdad Treaty Organisation. Political squabbles begun earlier still went on unfolding themselves to a tragic end in 1958 when the curtain was rung down

upon them for a cleaner, healthier, progressive future. And although the September, 1965, Indian attack on our country has caused a temporary set back to its upward march, the nation has rediscovered itself in its strength and solidarity and is looking ahead with confidence towards a freer and fuller existence. Towards the end of 1956 the Dacca University decided to confer another LL.D. degree on Mr Chou En Lai—the earliest evidence of a leaning towards friendliness with China, which has been such a painful thorn in recent times to India and USA's flesh. In November the three-year term of Dr. Jenkins having come to an end, it had a new Vice-Chancellor. But Dr Jenkins had been working, as hinted earlier, on a scheme of reorganising the university. An Inquiry Commission with Mr Justice Fazle Akbar of Dacca High Court as Chairman, and with Mr Syed Moazzamuddin Hussain (Ex-Minister, Undivided Bengal), Mr Madani, Commissioner, Dacca Division and Dr Jenkins as members had been collecting material, recording evidence and examining the details of the functioning of the University from the beginning of 1956 for making recommendations to the Government for the introduction of essential reforms. The Fazle Akbar Committee Report was available before Dr Jenkins left in November. Dr Osman Ghani, Professor and Head of the Deptt. of Soil Science and Provost, SM Hall, left D.U., in April to take up his new assignment as Agricultural Commissioner, Govt of East Pakistan, for a term of three years. In June, Dr Mumtazuddin Ahmed, DPI, who used to play an important role in the affairs of the university, joined the Govt. of Pakistan as Educational Adviser. He was succeeded by the ADPI Mr Abdul Hakim. Mr Enayetur Rahman, the Treasurer, another Key-man, joined the Central Govt. as Election Commissioner in July. He was succeeded by Mr Syed Azizul Huq (Nanna Mian) in September. During the first four months of 1956 I inspected ten colleges in addition to other



duties. Nine of them had a second look necessitated by unsatisfactory conditions existing during the first; two of these, one at Satkania (Chittagong) and the other at Gopalganj (Faridpur) were undertaken in great hardship on account of difficult communication. The Govt College of Physical Education at Gouripur, Mymensingh, was inspected for the first time early in February at the insistence of its Principal Dr William Johnson, who was also the Director of Physical Education in the province and had to pay divided attention to both. How this college came to have university recognition calls for a separate paragraph. The injunction against the Dacca University and myself regarding my election to a seat on the Executive Council imposed in March 1955 was vacated by the 4th Sub Judge of Dacca on the 19th February, 1956 and thereafter I was able to attend meetings and participate in the deliberations of that body. In March, 1956, the annual session of the DU court and a special session requisitioned by 35 politician-members were held on four days, 4th and 5th, 11th and 12th—there being altogether five sessions some of which sat upto nine in the evening. These members had a manifest singleminded objective which was to establish the undisputed sovereignty of the Court over the Executive Council and other bodies in all university affairs, administrative and academic inclusive of the veriest trifles in day to day transactions. There were tirades against the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and the Treasurer who were practically lynched from session to session. Noise and vituperation witnessed there couldn't be exceeded by a frenzied mob. On the 14th March I gave my evidence before the Dacca University Inquiry Commission and stressed the following points. 1. Affiliation should be part of a Teaching University and not of an exclusively affiliating machinery. 2. Existing educational facilities in the university shouldn't be curtailed just so long as alternative arrangements in technical and vocational courses

are not made to absorb candidates seeking admission into colleges and universities and such arrangements called for the provision of technical education in the province from 3rd April to 3rd July I shouldered two additional loads of duties: those of Head Examinership at the Matriculation Exam, and of the Registrar of Dacca University, who had been on leave from the 19th April to 3rd July. On the 12th July I took over the duties of the Provost, Salimullah Muslim Hall and continued in that capacity till 30th June, 1959. For three months at the initial stage, i.e. till 30th September, 1956. I had to do, in addition, the duties of the Inspector of Colleges. The political troubles that led to the prorogation of the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly on the 13th August began on the 22nd May when the Government took over the Registrar's buildings and stationed armed pickets in and around them to guard the contiguous Assembly Buildings against apprehended violence there on the opening of the Assembly session on that day; section 144 had been simultaneously imposed. As Registrar my occupation and that of the entire staff was gone early that morning. The Vice-Chancellor being away at Darjeeling I handled this ugly situation caused by the arbitrary and peremptory action of the executive authorities with tact and firmness. The Zaberdist Speaker of the Assembly of those days hit back with adjourning the Assembly sine die on the ground of breach of privilege. Our buildings were restored to us next day. But the inevitable corollary followed when the Legislative Assembly scheduled to meet on the 13th August was prorogued. On the 26th August the first demonstration of hunger-marchers gave a terrific jolt to civic life; on the 27th the General Strike called by the Awami League paralysed it; on the 31st August Abu Hussain Sarkar Ministry resigned. On the 3rd and 4th September there were renewed demonstrations by hunger-marchers and reported Police firings and killings. Radio news on the 4th evening included an item

that Mr Ataur Rahman Khan had been called upon to form a new ministry; he was actually sworn-in on the 6th. On the 8th Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Choudhury of Nizam-i-Islam Party resigned. There was a panorama of political chaos and upheaval all these days. It must however be categorically stated here that the university remained absolutely peaceful during the entire period. Academic, athletic and corporate activities went on in full swing. In fact at SM hall a Book Exhibition, most efficiently organised, had a successful run of three days from the 29th to 31st August. To name just a few others in my Hall I would refer to our Night School anniversary function on the 10th September. Q. Azam Death Anniversary on the 11th. Freshers' Reception on the 17th, Aquatic Sports on the 30th. Governor's Cup final match on the 1st October, etc. These are unmistakable evidences of Jenkins's successful regime in the university. The students remained unaffected by all internal politics; only when England and France bungled over the Suez Canal early in November they lost their balance, particularly on the 4th November when there were widespread disturbances and demonstrations in course of which the British Information Service centre at Dacca functioning in a rambling, timber structure was burnt to ashes. But Sir Anthony Eden, the then Prime Minister of UK had to pay dearly for it.

About events and developments within the university noticed in the foregoing paragraph a brief commentary from my personal point of view will, I think, give a clearer perspective. My aim is to keep down bias as far as it is humanly possible to do so—my absorption having always been in my own peculiar duties and never to permitting myself to be nosy about what goes on in spheres outside my own or to butt into them. Such a course has the advantage of being forthright and the disadvantage of being foolish about how things move in the environs.

The administration in the university is carried on by the Vice-Chancellor and his secretariat known as the offices of the Registrar. The Heads of Departments, the Provosts, the Deans, the different faculties and committees feed the channels which are harnessed for power and action subject to the approval of the Executive Council. Such an approval has in all complex cases to be conditioned by a majority vote. From the salaried staff the vote in support of the Vice-Chancellor's decisions is generally pliant and despite wheels within wheels may be depended upon. The Ex Officio public officials on the EC may use when necessary, backstage pressure to advance the Govt. policy but in the meetings generally they support the V.C. The elected element being in the minority contents itself with strident criticism. The V-C's personal power and the Registrar's subtle management secure the approval of the EC in the decisions taken or recommendations made. Thus the very constitution of the university includes scope for managing things and getting them passed as in the political field. Undoubtedly the fiction and the ideal are that in an autonomous academic body all affairs should be above board and conducted in the spirit of truth, fairplay and justice and for the promotion of learning, research, knowledge. But all human institutions fall short of the ideal. The personal element in the highest executive lends its hue to his work; it has also to be processed through the machinery through which it has to work. To keep the vast organisation going prompt decisions have got to be made; these are generally based on records and files and notings from the secretariat; to examine the latter microscopically and to rise above them are not always possible with the result that many defects, many partialities occur. In a society in which individual and group interests predominate the desired unity of aim, purpose and striving is at a discount; the motto is to

speed a particular individual or a particular party; the logical corollary follows : unhealthy and undesirable competitions among individuals and among groups. From its inauguration till the moment of writing the Dacca University has been having a full measure of such activities. In all fairness I must add that the same is true of Calcutta, Aligarh and other places. Cacuses rule; they rise and fall but still they thrive. The bulk of the clientele are passive—circumstances compel them to be passive—and take things in the same posture. Dr Jenkins's first aim was to get the students interested in their own work to wean them away from their obsession in the earlier period. He did succeed in this direction. His second aim was to get all staff to put their shoulder to the wheel. He succeeded in this as well. But in all day to day transactions he depended chiefly on his secretariat where the "Secretary-General" shaped things in his own way and drew around him all aspirants of preferment and patronage so that he was a power to reckon with. In all above-the-normal affairs and in policymaking Dr Jenkins had his own way which was a mixture of personal likes and dislikes, bureaucratic highhandedness and soft leanings, progression and retrogression. His streamlining of the administration by quick disposal of papers before him, his elegant bearing and habitual detachment compelled admiration while his old world predilections and bias antagonised many. Outside the Registrar's group there was another in Science Faculty, which had a popular leader in a Professor who was treated with deference by the Vice-Chancellor. The members of the group however didn't speed as well as they expected and this rankled in their minds. There was another group of twenty (underspeaking teachers) who were a superior, stand-offish race. Some of them had special favour. A still smaller unit of half a dozen Europeans basked in the sunshine of the chief. Some of those

actions which caused heartburnings and widespread grievance may be listed below. 1. The appointment of Mr J.S. Turner, formerly a Reader in English after the departure of Miss Stock, one who didn't stick to his job, straightaway as a Professor of English on the then maximum pay of Rs 1500/- a month. 2. The creation of a post of Deputy Controller of Exams and immediate appointment of an outsider on a monthly salary of Rs 500/- a month and then after a very short interval he was appointed as the Controller of Exams while the post of the Dy Controller was not filled. 3. Introduction of junior lectureship which had been abolished after an unsuccessful experiment (this was a retrograde movement) 4. None among the East Pakistan Readers was fit enough to be promoted as a Professor although no European was available for years. 5. The giving of contract to a particular firm with irregular procedure of making advances for the construction of a member of residential quarters.

Let us now try to understand the behaviour of the Dacca University Court meeting which spread over five sessions in the month of March, 1956 for 25 years before the Partition the politicians within and without the university ruled the organisation. The tradition was still alive; it was quite prominent during Mr. S.M. Hussain's regime. But from the time that Dr Jenkins had taken over in November 1953 it had an inflective part to play for two years and four months. The March 1956 sessions showed a wind of change. Should a European boss with a number of failings continue beyond October, 1956, when his term would be over and should be a member of the party of the 35 politicians be inducted? Shouldn't the Registrar's group wielding Enormous power be superseded by another group submerged now? Shouldn't power and patronage be at the disposal of the Court's three elected representa-

tives on the Executive Committee? The politician-members had another deep-seated animus against the university. One of their influential members had been vindictively penalised a few years ago (not during Jenkin's time) by the cancellation of his Law examination. Reportedly the member was unruly in the examination hall for which his examination was cancelled. His friends however treated his remissness as minor and technical and the punishment inflicted unjust and arbitrary. They demanded an unconditional withdrawal of the order and also a declaration of his success in the examination. A full realisation of the depth of this grievance (as well as vague information about the case) came to me later. He was designedly put up as a rival when I ran in the Court election. His defeat when upheld by the Law Court fed their smouldering fire of animosity. He was a fiery soul and had been pursuing his enemy, the university, for a long time without physical rest and sufficient nourishment. So did it appear to me when on 7/7/57 I was informed of his sudden death from internal haemorrhage following chronic peptic ulcer. He was elected by DU Court to EC on 27/6/57. He was cut off in the prime of life. May his soul rest in peace. His friends in the Executive Council took the initiative of reopening his case after his death and having him declared to have passed the LL.B Examination being placed in first class. It may be added that his scripts in that exam were never examined these being cancelled at the initial stage. This group had many other grievances against the conduct of affairs in the offices of the Registrar inclusive of the payment of fees to university lawyers (permanent retainers or ad hoc appointees). They came prepared with details collected from university budget estimates or annual statements of income and expenditure or particulars supplied to them by men working in the university. The prominent members of the group had

intimate personal relations with those members of the staff who were not aligned with the Registrar and thought that non-official backing of their cases in the deliberation and executive bodies of the university would advance their material interests.

On the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor the Executive Council in its meeting, dated, the 25th February, '56, appointed me to act as Registrar during the latter's absence in U.K. from the 19th April. Contrary to normal practice and courtesy I received no briefing from the Registrar when he left on the 18th; there was no formal making over of charge either. In ten days the Vice-Chancellor also left for Darjeeling for a five-week holiday. Careful reading of records since my work at the undivided Bengal's secretariat in 1942 enabled me to handle without much difficulty the varied and heavy duties of the Registrar who had not only the University Press under his control but also the over-all supervision of the Controller of Exams. But one particular branch, that of buildings, works and fittings, gave me a day to day headache. A trained overseer (licentiate in subordinate engineering) designated as Steward ran this department. It appeared to me he had unfettered discretion of incurring expenditure from unlimited and unspecified budget allocations, the Registrar having had only to initial his numerous requisitions pouring in every day. On a restricted scale the electrical overseer followed suit. The well-defined procedure of expenditure in Govt offices was totally absent. The requisition slips for the buying of stores or making of repairs were mostly sketchy and irregular; the files in support of works going on and expenses being incurred were beyond comprehension. And yet the official was indispensable and unquestioningly popular with Authority. I had to deal with him with infinite patience and in getting him to furnish budget heads, approved estimates and tenders, sums already spent



and the balance in hand or the excess expenditure. When these were complied with I passed those I was competent to, obtained the Treasurer's approval where the same was called for and wrote out clear notes supported by 'flagged' papers for the Vice-Chancellor's orders. There was no scolding, no shouting but inescapable pressure to systemise drawals and to own up and explain excess expenditure and to seek for additional grants. There was no scope for the Registrar to take exception in retrospect on his return but on the contrary the transactions secured the fullest approval of the Vice-Chancellor. The Steward was hated, it must be noted, by all departmental heads who depended on his services and also by all teachers who occupied staff quarters that required repairs. The mention of 'staff quarters' reminds me of the indescribable hardship that the teachers of the period, in contrast with the enviable provision that has been made now, had to suffer from lack of accommodation or the absolutely limited facilities existent then. The Heads of Deptts had some sort of shelter, however unsatisfactory, but an overwhelming majority of other teachers had none. The handful of Azimpur flats that were placed by Govt at the disposal of the university in place of the lovely bungalows of the university that the Govt had swallowed up went to assiduous seekers not necessarily according to strict principles of allotment. Conditions didn't permit adherence to principles. The Registrar had an Accommodation Committee for advice and distribution if and when there was one available. I had to preside over two such committee meetings in which I found that many people had been in the waiting list for six years and I felt that there was hardly anything doing to remove hardship. Young teachers joining the university on an initial salary of Rs 300/- and more, who had no relations and friends to provide shelter were in a desperate state; they had to spend

all their income in securing accommodation and no balance to buy food and clothing with—a poverty stricken race. Some of the occupants of available flats would quarrel like village women over minor inconveniences as neighbours and come up the Registrar with formal complaints; some called upon to vacate on legitimate grounds wouldn't vacate. Many teachers depended upon the Registrar's offices in regard to leave, leave salaries, preparation of papers for foreign exchange, resumption of duties after expiry of leave abroad, the issue of cheques in payment of examination remuneration and so many other things. I met them with a smile and respect and helped them with all conceivable promptitude. Heads of Departments of the Science Faculty needed prompt sanctions in their Laboratory grants and they had the same on a ring or on a personal discussion. They were happy and I too that the unpardonable delay caused by the clerks and accountants could thus be avoided. A complex situation that defies ordinary intelligence and couldn't be given out without public controversy had arisen in the office of the Controller of Exams. One packing case of exam scripts from a Mufassil centre had been lost in transit. It was found impossible to trace it. Marks of all other papers were ready for publication which couldn't be delayed any further. Having taken the Controller and the Asstt Controller into the closest confidence I prepared a full statement of the case and on the basis of my long experience in a tangle of this nature made a concrete suggestion that the average of the other paper in the subject should be awarded and the tabulation completed. I arranged for an express delivery of this statement to the Vice-Chancellor at Darjeeling and requested approval or otherwise by wire. Promptest acceptance being available the examination results were published without the slightest delay or leak. I have already touched upon the

highhanded and irregular occupation of the Registrar's Buildings in the month of May. For us it was a humiliating experience; the Establishment Staff stared and waited. I made up my mind quickly and asked for Govt orders about the unauthorised occupation conceding that the Government had undoubtedly powers of occupation in an emergency. The District magistrate and the Police authorities thought their supreme authority wouldn't be questioned and they didn't want to commit themselves to formal orders nor did they have the authority to issue such orders. The former being cornered negotiated with the Chief Secretary who talked to me over the phone and showed his impatience with my demand. I told him outright that I didn't initiate the talk but since he did so, he must let me have formal orders so that I and my staff would go home after suspending work in the face of an emergency. I scored and my staff were fully satisfied. I sent up a report to the Vice-Chancellor. When my officiating period came to an end and long, long afterwards I received unsolicited commendation and loving tributes from the authorities, the teaching staff and the entire staff of the Registrar and the Controller of Exams.

The story of my translation into Provostship in ten days after I made over charge to the pucca Registrar calls for a brief mention. The Provost of SM Hall having left in April, 1956, the post was vacant. The Vice-Chancellor, contrary to the usual practice, desired to have direct recruitment from outsiders instead of from the teaching staff. He had also advertised the post. I was not interested and naturally I was either innocent or may be I had vague notions. On his return from Darjeeling after five weeks the Vice-Chancellor asked me to send up the files of a number of professors and he had them. On the 30th June, two teachers (who were also statutory officers) of the university called at my residence as I was about to leave for my

day's duties and suggested that I should accept the position. When I pointed out to them about the advertisement for a direct recruit they told me how there was no suitable candidate (the Vice-Chancellor had been dealing with this through his private secretary) and that some one from the existing staff, teaching, was going to be appointed. I apologised and brushed them aside. Meanwhile these two who were personally and deeply interested in the Provostship of SM Hall were very busy and active about the appointment soon to be made. Neither their motives nor the odds against their own suitability were known to me. But I learnt these later and gradually year after year when recorded facts and their own conduct made things clear to me. It was correct that the advertisement didn't yield the desired result. The Vice-Chancellor had therefore asked for the files of a number of professors. It appeared that he was considering the appointment of a Urdu-speaking Professor three or four of whom had personalities more outstanding than those of the natives of East Pakistan. When this leaning of the Vice-Chancellor was smelt the two gentlemen took steps to have him warned against such an unwise course. And in this they were right. But an alternative selection from among East Pakistanis was likely to pass to one who belonged to an opposite camp attached to the Science Faculty. And this they were out to defeat. The Fazle Akbar Committee had adverse comments to make about one of these gentlemen, if not about both. Both were shrewd enough to guess that if I could be roped in I would be above controversy and they had a member of the Executive Committee friendly to them and to Dr Jenkins to suggest my name. I knew nothing about these manoeuvrings but very shortly the V-C asked me in confidence if I were willing. I was forthright and said I was not. I added "If you, Sir, want me to accept I have no alternative". A rapid development

followed and I was appointed in a meeting of the Executive Council on the 7th July. There was a linked appointment of another Provost for another hall which was not yet ready for such an appointment. But that story is beyond my scope and would be irrelevant and tedious to tell.

Let me at this stage get back to my inspection work and insert a paragraph about the Govt. College of Physical Education which I inspected in February, 1956, and about which I proposed earlier to add an elucidation. In undivided Bengal a College of Physical Education with Mr Buchanon as Principal who was also the Director of Physical Education training imparted a year's training in physical education after graduation and after elaborate tests granted a Diploma in Physical Education to the trainees who were appointed as Physical Instructors of colleges. Since Partition no such arrangement was made in East Pakistan with the result that the colleges went without trained physical instructors. The Government realised this mistake and with American aid in funds and technical skill in Dr William Johnson started such a college and such a branch of activity in the Education Directorate. No provision had however been made for the award of a Diploma. When trainees were about to complete a year's course the omission was acutely perceived and help was sought from the university. Dr Johnson was not only an expert but also very scholarly and very cultured—a remarkably persuasive personality. He had been working on an elaborately worked out scheme of theoretical knowledge and practical achievements on lines being tried out in Europe and US. He had recruited suitably trained staff for the job and admitted trainees in the beginning of the academic session 1955-56. The work was begun in Dacca in cramped space but when he found that his projected course would be futile without sufficient space in physical tests approximately those required for mili-

tary recruitment he had the place of instruction removed to Gouripur (Mymensingh) where a part of the absentee Hindu Zamindar's house and kutchery and immense fields for outdoor exercises were available. In a contiguous area, some distance away from the Gouripur market-place houses were hired where the trainees had their residential accommodation. Accompanied by the Director of Physical Education, Dacca University, I held an inspection from morning till late evening on the 4th February, 56, in course of which I attended theoretical classes and field work, examined equipment. I went into the residence of students and witnessed their cultural recreation in music and literature. I found everything in excellent shape. As the course would be completed in April I examined the scheme of final exam framed by Dr Johnson and supported it subject to the addition of External Examiners from Dacca University, the Dacca and Jagannath colleges and asked him to go ahead and assured him that I would work for the inauguration of a Board at the university with a view to awarding diplomas. A full report of what I had seen together with my recommendations for the institution of a diploma was submitted. Dr Jenkins was satisfied. He pointed out, however, that a Board couldn't be brought into being under the existing statutes and ordinances and he suggested that the university must henceforward have a faculty of Education independent of the Faculty of Arts to which the award of B.T. was so long tagged, and that Physical Education must be a part of that independent faculty. I took up the work with the same earnestness and tenacity with which I had taken up work in connection with the composition and powers of Governing Bodies of Colleges. But here unlike as in that of Governing Bodies there was no difference of opinion, no barriers to face from officials or non-officials. I got statutes and ordinances drafted for a Faculty of Education and those of its subdivision the physical

side and had them passed by the Academic and Executive Councils. On the 23rd September, 1956, I had the first Dean of the Faculty elected. He was Mr Osman Ghani who continues to be the Principal of Teachers' Training College, Dacca. He was retired since I saw to it that the successful graduates from the Govt. College of Physical Education were awarded the newly initiated diploma. The establishment of a separate Faculty of Education inclusive of the physical section was the result of quiet efforts and action and has since led to expansion in Teachers' Training Centres and to the turning out of trained Physical Instructors.

After I had taken over as Provost SM Hall on the 12th July, '56, I inspected four more colleges by the 30th September when the job went to my successor.

Although I entered upon my inspection career with considerable diffidence about my own suitability and that of the work to my temperament and thirty-one-year-long earlier habits. I plunged into it and swam through with zest, loving interest and unwearied energy; the thought of switching on to another job never crossed my mind. It is true I was cut off from actual teaching work, from my colleagues, from the campus which was my own or the society in which I moved. It is also true that the day-to-day problems of handling teachers and students, of planning work and executing it were now things of the past. In a sense I had a coastal voyage to cover or ply in backwaters. But I came to know the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions of East Pakistan far better than many a native of the areas. I got into firsthand touch with the college work and personnel (especially of private, non-govt establishments) of these places, their history, growth or otherwise, their requirements, their good-points and bad. How to get to the interior, where to bestow myself and feed myself were challenging experiences. Contact with ordinary people or middle class, with moneyed people who

could be tapped for giving donations extended my earlier narrower spheres of work; the circle of my acquaintances inclusive of cross-sections of the population became incomparably larger. Many personal prejudices were removed. Most of those I met were hospitable and responsive to love and sympathy. They were eager to learn from me as I was eager to learn from them. I had moments of pure joy from cultural functions, literary and musical, against the trying ordeals of intrigues, noise and demonstration in some places. If I had to negotiate filthy waters and fishy smell in some places, I had the exhilaration of dropping from the air into rivers with the biplane in which I was flying from Dacca to Chandpur and from Chandpur to Faridpur. If I was caught in a storm during my steamer trip from Barisal to Chandpur, I saw scenes of rare charm in rich rice crops and luxuriant coconut plantations on both sides of the river during my journey from Barisal to Gopalganj. When I had to make a tedious railway or boat journey I was absorbed in the books and periodicals I carried. Promises of future development in struggling colleges drew me to them for the second and third time. Everywhere in the interior there were seeds germinating for a better growth and I feel happy and proud that many of these colleges now are bursting at the seams with teeming student population. The worries I had about the viability and successful running of the two non-Govt colleges, Anandamohon at Mymensingh and Brojomohon at Barisal are over; these two have been provincialised. Govt. servants have been posted as Principals of Comilla Victoria College and Faridpur Rajendra College. I am told some more, especially those in district headquarters, will follow suit. The province as a whole is hungry for higher education at all important centres and the sooner funds are available to equip them and staff them at a reasonable level of efficiency the better. I brought the university and the provincial educational authorities together in regard to the composi-



tion of Governing Bodies and my consistent striving was to introduce a system of coordination between the two in regard to financial grants, recurring and non-recurring. Inspection under each authority moves in queer ways and drifts apart; waste of time and energy, conflicting and confusing views pestering local authorities, follow. Coordinated and integrated work in a free country where education is still at the lowest level should be a very desired objective. For the office of the Inspector of Colleges Dr Jenkins secured the sanction of the post of a Dy Inspector of Colleges and that of an Accounts Clerk to accompany the Inspector. It was felt that the former would contribute to efficiency and the latter to the correct maintenance of records regarding income (inclusive of Govt grants) and expenditure. It was clearly laid down that if the Inspector of Colleges was an Arts Graduate, the Dy Inspector should be from the Science side so that work could be satisfactorily complementary. In course of my inspection I discovered that the Education Department had no auditing system to oversee and check-up the grants they made to the colleges. In spite of reminders from our side we failed to stir up the sluggish and ponderous department to any activity. The sanction of the Accountant's post in my office was the result of such inertia on the part of the Govt. I had however a bitter disappointment in regard to the recruitment to these posts. Although a selection was made about the first, the appointment was not made. The second was a still born child. The Registrar of Dacca University stood in the way and thwarted both; I went to SM Hall and Dr Jenkins back home. The "divinity that shapes our ends" gave me a respite of about three years from day to day teaching and administrative duties but it called me to the same duties at Dacca University when I was appointed Provost of SM Hall on the 12th July, 1956.

## **Chapter II**

### **Provost, SM Hall**

**July 1956 to June, 1959.**

This university originated in 1921 as a purely teaching, residential and unitary seat of higher education modelled on Oxford. It had a five-mile radius. The Halls of Residence with Provosts as Heads and House Tutors as their colleagues were the integral units of this Academy. Former Hostels of the old Dacca College were converted into Dacca, Jagannath, Fulzul Huq Halls with metaphorical and some physical adaptations made to fit into the new pattern. A new hall to be a perfect model was designed. This was the Salimullah Hall which for ten years had temporary, makeshift habitation. By 1931 when its present home and premises were constructed and completed it moved in and revealed what it stood for; it became the epitome of an Oxford College with a distinguished Oxonian in Sir A.F. Rahman as its Provost. Tall and magnificent buildings, all concrete, all mosaic, with innumerable architectural niceties and innovations, with the latest amenities thrown in and costing tons of money may be seen now all over the developed areas of Dacca. With breathtaking speed they are springing up everywhere. But the two-storied, domed buildings of the Salimullah Muslim Hall having two inner quadrangles flanked on four sides by symmetrical structures and divided within by a cloister and having an outer spacious compound on three sides of open space constitutes altogether an orthodox class of architecture. When they grew up they were grand and impres-

sive undoubtedly in their own way in an otherwise naked environment. But now they nestle in unobtrusively. However an outward and inside view of the whole place with a discerning eye brings into ken a twinkling star of rare charm—soft, subdued, unique. The cloister (inside) spanning the front row of buildings with the rear, and separating the East and the West Houses, not only throws into sweet relief the inner gardens but also the perfect symmetry and proportions of the construction. As a visitor enters from outside he gets into its noble Assembly Hall; as he crosses the covered pathway he walks into the Indoor Games Room and then into the spacious Dining Hall of 500 feeders. Going upstairs from that end he sees the Reading Room and the Library on one side and the captivating mosque on the other. It is impossible to describe what the eye perceives or the heart conceives. Visitors agree that a comparable hall of residence doesn't exist anywhere in Asia. Concealed from the visitors' view lie two projections of buildings at the east and west ends of the back row for use as residential family quarters of House Tutors. When I took over they accommodated one House Tutor at each end. But there were four such. The third House Tutor used a suite of rooms intended for student accommodation at the west end of the front block of buildings while the fourth lived in university quarters provided at some distance away from the Hall. Two Assistant House Tutors lived at the east end of the front row in bachelor's quarters; they swallowed up two student rooms. These arrangements regarding the 3rd and 4th House Tutors originally unplanned but later pressed into use were objectionable and unsatisfactory. Additions and adaptations were therefore made during my time for the conversion of the family quarters of the two House Tutors into those of four—each occupying a self-contained suite of his own. For a number of years before I came in the

Provost of SM Hall had his residential quarters in one of the loveliest bungalows of the university. A two-storied building with entrance from the Savage Road on the east and Bakshi Bazar Road on the east it was the closest neighbour to the post-partition Legislative Assembly Building (defunct Jagannath Hall Assembly Hall) and had an immense compound occupying the whole triangle of space from the Secretariat Road on the south to the meeting point of the Savage and Bakshi Bazar Roads on the north. Its site including a swimming pool in front was enviable. The Provost's bungalow was thus neither too near nor too far off from the Hall itself. The offices of the Provost and those of the House Tutors were located in the Hall buildings. Leaving aside the kitchen and dining hall staff, the SM Hall had four clerks, four darwans, four/five 'MALI', four sweepers. It was a unit of residential university education planned and executed to develop the highest academic traditions. It was/is the Provost who admitted/admits students to the Hall, who channelled/channels admissions into the various faculties and subjects, who promoted/promotes after periodical exams students to next higher classes, who awarded/awards Hall stipends, who recommended/recommends the payment of scholarships, who was responsible for the discipline of the members of his Hall, who had/has as his duties the execution of the university ordinances in all these matters and who had/has to give his leadership in intellectual progress and character-building who had/has to ensure a clean, healthy, vital existence in the Hall. He had/has to run literary, athletic, social activities through democratic processes of self-governing organs like the Union and the Sports Committee. His was/is the inspiring, restraining, shaping power of turning out scholars and gentlemen who should prove worthy citizens and servants of the State. The

immediate supervision in all these matters, with especial emphasis on clean conditions and reasonably good supply of food, the regulation of hours for coming and going, for attendance at dining hall, for studies and rest lay with the House Tutors and their Assistants. The SM Hall must have been conducted on lines indicated here as admittedly it was a premier Hall which had already turned out many distinguished alumni and which had a pride of place in exam results and athletic achievements. When I took over there was endless talk among the leading students of unique traditions in these directions. Having myself been a lifelong adorer and practitioner of all these ideals I set about my work with my usual energy and zeal.

I took over quietly and unperceived by members of the Hall; it was a monsoon evening of pouring rains. I went round and had a look. I have already spoken of its attractive features. The most shocking experience now was that of the bathrooms placed in dark corners of the ground floor only—there were none upstairs. The rooms were dark and crowded with cubicles or more correctly murky cells with ruined timber-work. Their number was unpardonably too small for four hundred resident students. The cookshed attached to the magnificent Dining Hall was abominable in placement, structure and maintenance; the drains around, especially on the west, had radical defects in construction so much so that they defied daily cleaning and flushing operations which were manually done by sweepers. I had my second shock from these. The third jolt came from the timber and glass and electric fittings of the rooms of the inmates, especially in all of them on the whole length of the northern block. I was reminded of such conditions in the hostels of M.C. College. There responsibility lay with the sluggish C and W department of the Government; here with the

University Steward's section. Similarly I found the magnificent Assembly Hall denuded of chairs and furniture; the few that were seen at the foot of the dais were in a dilapidated state. Hundreds of damaged chairs and benches lay in heaps along the side walls, at the lower end of the Hall, and in the western corridors obstructing passage. Upstairs the longish strips of space at the top of the auditorium and being used as Radio and recreative rooms were in disorder with the same kind of stuff. No explanation was available about this wretched state of affairs. The Provost's Room was dark and longish and congested; his offices were not only crowded but dirty as well. In the lovely, spacious inner quadrangles only the permanent shrubbery stood while the flower-beds were altogether neglected; the fields outside were a wilderness and the hard tennis courts on the south-east didn't appear to have any use; the pathway to the canteen at the south-west was strewn over with bricks, and other litter. And yet my predecessor, Dr Osman Ghani, was a hero.

For twenty six years since its inauguration the Dacca University was of manageable size and proportions; its roll strength was less than a thousand; its faculties were suitably staffed. Its governance under a wholetime, salaried Vice-Chancellor assisted by Provosts, Deans, Heads of Departments was equally manageable although the curse of communal antagonism both among the staff and the students, of cliques among teachers and outside members of the Executive Council and the Court had blighted its life all through. The Halls of Residence provided accommodation for the bulk of the students. The fiction of a residential type was maintained by "attaching" day scholars to one or other of the halls. The women students were attached to S. Muslim Hall. Since the partition and the accompanying extinction of Calcutta

University. Dacca University became a huge, institution and although it couldn't provide residential accommodation to its students it did stick to its original character. In 1956 when I became the Provost my unit had 400 resident plus 600 to 700 attached students so that my duties as outlined in one of the foregoing paragraphs pertained to more than a thousand students. This factor should be borne in mind in the reading and understanding of these pages.

Getting down to normal, routine, administrative duties I found them to be on the pattern of the Principal of a Govt. College minus parallel financial responsibility but with the additional overall responsibility of the feed of the resident students. My office work was overlaid with work of the S M Hall Union; its activities were varied and multitudinous. It was a powerful body; its cabinet was dominated by Post-Graduate students; my first Vice-President was already an MA, one who had earlier served terms of imprisonment being involved in student politics and disturbances. His colleague, the General Secretary, was also a capable young man having taken a good Honours degree in Economics. The other office-bearers were fairly capable as well. The cabinet as a whole was the elected instrument of a particular group of SM Hall students with a particular political platform. Then as now they had their political labels such as National Students' Federation, Students' League, Students' Union, Student Force etc. The first cabinet with which I started work was a homogenous body with no straggling winner from another camp pitchforked into it. At SM Hall unlike as in other halls, the Athletic Board was a separate unit under a separate constitution. Generally speaking the Athletic Board is immune from rank politics. My first Athletic Board—and more or less others that followed—was sportsmanlike in conduct. It worked in harmony with the Union

**Cabinet.** I have already recorded in many places how with the advent of Dr Jenkins the political overtones had died down and how students turned their attention chiefly to their own activities. Nevertheless it should be remembered how Unions were run on political lines and how they had their friends, patrons and wooers in the political parties of the country. My Union Cabinet had a programme of achieving inside and outside influence; it had its eye on controlling the next elections. Its demand on my time, cooperation and lead was more or less monopolistic. Literary, social, national functions were organised and executed in an ever moving cycle and I gave it spontaneous and ungrudging support in its work exactly as I did so to the Athletic Board whose activities proceeded alongside. By training and tradition, by temperament and habits I was fair and openminded, impartial and unbiased. I didn't look into political undercurrents. SM Taha, my first Vice-President, was suave to the marrow of his bone; he was imaginative and had the gift of organising and leading. He didn't interfere in the administration of my duties as Provost. ATM Shamsul Huq, the General Secretary, was plucky and hardboiled but he too kept within decent limits. Naturally enough we worked together smoothly and strenuously in successfully organising functions such as Independence Day Celebration, Symposium on five year Planning Draft, Farewell to Dr Osman Ghani, Book Exhibition, SM Hall Night School, Annual Literary and Cultural Gathering, Quaid-i-Azam Death Anniversary, Freshers' Reception, SM Hall Dranna Staging, Annual Milad, Farewell to Dr Jenkins, etc. Simultaneously we had AF Rahman Shield final, Aquatic Sports Annual Meet, Inter-College Football final, Governor's Cup final match etc. Taha's cabinet continued till the middle of November when new elections were held.



The Provost's daily duties are inextricably, though slightly remotely, bound up, with the feeding arrangements of 400 resident members plus a hundred approximately of their guests. The mechanics of the provision of food in two principal meals in the Dining Hall every forenoon/noon and evening stood as follows. Corresponding to the administrative division of the Hall into East House and West House each has/had one Mess to cater for 200 feeders and their guests. Each Mess functions under a Committee presided over by one of the House Tutors. The Committee works out an approximate sum (say 40 rupees) of monthly charge which has to be paid by a fixed date to the two House Tutors of each House—the payment of the balance or refund/adjustment follows the finalisation of accounts for each month. On admission each student had to pay a Caution Money of Rs 30/00. The University Ordinances include detailed rules for payment and collection of Dining Hall dues. In actual practice the four House Tutors opened their offices early in the morning and made the collections for three hours. Similarly early in the morning everyday the House Tutor (Administrative) in charge of the funds was to make an advance to the monthly or periodical Manager (student) of a lump sum for the buying of the daily supplies excluding rice which was stocked in the godown maintained for the purpose. Collections of monthly dues should be sufficient to meet daily expenditures and expenditure for stocking rice on a periodical basis. Collection in excess was to be deposited in the Bank through the office of the Provost who holds Bank Accounts and operates on them. The Caution Money just alluded to has a separate Bank account. On taking over charge I came face to face with the financial aspects of running the Mess of each House. Similarly I encountered those connected with the conduct of a Hall Canteen which was started by my predecessor a year ear-

lier for providing breakfast and refreshment in the afternoon. He had placed a particular House Tutor of the West House in charge of the canteen. Despite elaborate rules of payment of Dining Hall dues, collections were very unsatisfactory. More than 50% of the students were irregular in payment; of these an appreciable number including the Union leaders in particular were chronic defaulters with unpardonably huge arrears outstanding against them. The rules of payment involving stoppage of meals, cancellation of residence etc. were never enforced. And yet meals must be provided. The Administrative House Tutor would send a requisition to the Provost at short intervals to make an advance of a thousand rupees to keep his mess going. The Provost would oblige by drawing upon the Caution Money account. The Officer-in-Charge of the Canteen would initiate his administrative counterpart and ask for the same privilege although the establishment and conduct of the Canteen didn't come under the University ordinances. It soon appeared that the majority of Canteen patrons were having a free-of-charge entertainment. The idea of closing it or passing it on to a catering contractor would, I was told, lead to serious upheaval. The drain on the limited C.M. fund was recurrent. Of the four House Tutors I had, three were full-time lecturers of the university having an equal load of teaching duties with other teachers of the department. Both the Assistant House Tutors were lecturers although they were recruited from among the youngest teachers. My fourth House Tutor was a Physical Director whose Hall job was a sort of perquisite to him. It was the duty of an Assistant House Tutor to record attendance morning and evening and to help the House Tutors of his House in other ways. It is doubtful whether he did any duty. I felt, however, that none in the Hall took notice of his existence. Of the three House Tutors in residence two at any rate had

their hands full with collection first and attending next to a thousand difficulties in the provision of meals in the Dining Hall. One of them had to shoulder the responsibilities of the Treasurer of the Hall Union, the other of conducting elections. The student members of the Mess Committees were mostly indifferent. The arrears in collection and the consequential drain on the Cautions Money Fund, appeared to me at the initial stage to be insupportable. I went up to Dr Jenkins and spoke to him about my reactions. Having listened quietly he said that the position in other halls was worse. I formed some idea of the normality of such abnormal conditions. Regarding the maintenance of clean, sanitary conditions in the Dining Hall, the kitchen, the adjacent drains I found the House Tutors absolutely indifferent. They wouldn't be prodded into activity either. I handled them myself. About the Canteen I tolerated the waste and drain for six months and then passed it on to a Contractor from whom I realised some rent as well. Direct experience of conditions outlined above gave me food for contemplation, a keen realisation of the hiatus between profession and practice, between abstractions and achievement. The so-called traditions and the bookish prestige of the residential type were non-existent. Inspiring leadership or the spirit of acceptance of the same as a lever of dynamic progress wasn't thought of. On the contrary acquiescence in drift to earn cheap popularity also to speed well in one's upward career was very much in evidence.

Following my relief at college Inspector's office I was given six periods of teaching duties a week at post-graduate and BA subsidiary levels in the Deptt. of English. The Provost's administrative duties at the Hall covered the whole day from after breakfast till date in the evening. Preparation for my lectures and the actual meeting of classes had to be done at odd hours.

And the astounding experience for me was that I couldn't occupy the official residence of the Provost till the 1st February, 1957. For about seven months I had to attend to my duties from my Gandaria residence. My predecessor Dr Osman Ghani who had accepted a Govt assignment in April, 1956 continued to occupy the Provost's bungalow for the whole year. Irregularities of this nature are rampant in organised society and go on unchecked. Frequently I had to make six trips from Gandaria. Hall Committee meetings and Hall functions were always held in the evening—the musical and dramatic events extending to 10 pm and the annual Budget session of the union to midnight. Hall office work and classes were spread all over the day. Besides there were frequent meetings of Provosts, of the Academic and Executive Councils.

Meanwhile another drama was being enacted over the appointment of a successor to Dr Jenkins whose three-year tenure was ending on the 8th November, 1956. This drama ran from 15th September to 8th November, its beginning having been laid on the first of these two dates with the announcement made by the Pakistan Observer that Dr I.H. Zuberi, Vice-Chancellor, Rajshahi University, was appointed the Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University. It was said that the Chancellor Mr A.K. Fuzlul Huq had made the appointment in exercise of his exclusive power as Chancellor. As days wore on it was said that the new Chief Minister Mr Aaur Rahman Khan was opposed to it. He felt, it was reported, that it was he whose advice should govern the Chancellor's selection. And there was a behind-the-scenes tug-of-war between the two. Dr Zuberi himself had been on a visit to Dacca (twice at least within my knowledge) to prepare grounds for his takeover or rather on an "Appointment Offensive". I had a personal, though very unfortunate, experience of the conflict, on the 28th October, 1956,

when I happened to be at the Dacca Government House in response to a call for interviewing the Governor in connexion with the improvement and affiliation of Fuzlul Huq College, Chakhar. Before the interview could take place the Governor himself in his characteristic manner came into the lounge and started loudly discussing the Vice-Chancellor's selection with the then Education Secretary and the Inspector-General of Police who pointed out that the public reactions were against Dr Zuberi. Rumours and reports took on a realistic significance, so far as I was concerned. The Governor became too excited to have the desired interview with me. But the earlier announcement stood till the 8th November when at the big farewell function of Dr Jenkins at the Curzon Hall grounds we missed Dr Zuberi who was living at the Circuit House and expected to attend as Vice-Chancellor-designate. A report ran from mouth to mouth in the function that the same forenoon Dr Zuberi's appointment had been cancelled and Mr Mohammad Ibrahim, an ex-Judge of the Dacca High Court had been appointed instead. It was a denouement of dramatic surprise. The Chief Minister Mr Aaur Rahman Khan got off with his nominee while the Governor-Chancellor had to abandon his claimed prerogative. Was it the first round in the championship combat between the two, which eventually led after about two years to the finals of the Governor dismissing the Chief Minister and the latter routing the Governor and all cooperating to the burial of so-called democracy? The new Vice-Chancellor took over on the following morning, 9th November, 1956.

The changeover coincided with an unfortunate illness of the chief, which appeared to be serious and necessitated his removal to the Dacca Medical College Hospital. It turned out to be a chronic trouble and by the middle of December he began attending to his normal duties.

Meanwhile in the SM Hall we had an exciting and most strenuous time which continued till the cold weather recess in December—the exciting part chiefly included the annual elections to the Hall Union, its preparations and campaigning on full-fledged political lines for days on end till the polling day when votes were recorded, the counting of votes and the declaration of results, the formation of the Cabinet, its installation, the preparation of budget estimates and their presentation and acceptance, the simultaneous elections and allied functions of the Athletic Committee. The electioneering campaign according to traditions was run night after night in boisterous noise till late hours when peaceful residents and the neighbourhood had a full measure of sleeplessness and disquiet. Its climax was reached on the polling day when the parade of posters both in the University proper and the Hall campus was accompanied by non-stop blaring of microphones with party slogans. In those days classes were not suspended. Therefore taxis and buses were hired in bringing voters from the classes. At close of polls wild, ecstatic dancing by the principal parties, first separately, then jointly, rounded off the tremendously important event. The counting of votes and the declaration of results took the whole of next day. The results stood as follows :

Mr Taha's party with Mr ATM Shamsul Huq as Vice-President won 14 seats

Mr Farmanullah's party with Mr Abeed Hussain as General Secretary won 8 seats

Thus a sort of Coalition Govt was formed. The installation ceremony held on the 2nd December was a longdrawn and elaborate function which began at 6.20 pm and broke up at 10.30 pm. I had my dinner at Gandaria residence around midnight. Similarly the Budget meeting was another terrific event which was held on the 12th December, 1956, from 7 pm to

11.20 pm. The newly elected Vice-President took 55 minutes in delivering his budget speech. Without previous notice any number of amendments could be moved and was actually moved. This was the SM Hall tradition I was told. During the consideration of the amendments a pandemonium was created every few minutes when yells and chairs flew between the Treasury and the Opposition benches. The Speaker (i.e. the Provost) was a helpless and ineffective spectator as it were. His attempts at restoring order were countered by thunderous noise which provided great fun and enjoyment. This was another 'glorious' tradition of SM Hall in the course of the enactment of which the Provost was given to drinking several tumblers of water to quench his thirst. There was a surprise I didn't drink any. In between the Installation and the Budget meetings Mr Shahid Suhrawardy's visit to SM Hall and his Defence-of-Baghdad Treaty speech materialised. This has been touched upon earlier. But what was funny about it was that the event had been fixed up over the heads of the Vice-Chancellor and the Provost. The new Vice-President had arranged it in direct link with the Chief Minister. At the end of his speech Mr Suhrawardy announced a donation of Rs 500/00 to the Hall Union. The Vice-President's close contact with the latter continued and flourished obviously under encouragement. The new General Secretary had intimate relations with the American Consulate and the USIS. He had a unique method of meeting the Provost at his bungalow around 10 p.m. He developed a new tradition in this direction. Earlier Mr Asbury, Regional Chief of the Asia Foundation, visited SM Hall and was deeply interested in its progress. He was one of those young Americans who didn't offend but was eager to be helpful. He gave us 200 books from the local stock of books of the Asia Foundation and examined very sympathetically my proposal of

giving us furniture for the Assembly Hall. Mrs Asbury was very well-informed; she was pretty and had much musical skill. Together they won the hearts of all those among whom they worked and moved. The Hall budget meeting was followed by Rear Admiral Choudhury's visit to SM Hall which was addressed by him in a 30-minute speech, a thoughtful, eloquent elucidation of prospects in the Pakistan Navy. The cold weather recess was preceded by the visit to Dacca University and to SM Hall of the Karachi University Inquiry Commission under Mr Justice Inamullah who had winning geniality and address.

The new Vice-Chancellor was well-known in Dacca where he had deep and lifelong roots. He had also been associated with the University. For years he had a successful practice in the Dacca Law Courts before his direct recruitment to the judiciary as District and Sessions Judge. He had been a lecturer in the Law College for a long time and most of the lawyers of Dacca when he took over as Vice-Chancellor were his pupils. Since the partition when I became associated with the university I had been having a glimpse of the man occupying a back row seat in the DU Court meetings and quietly putting at his cigar. His was a dignified spectator's part. At a meeting's end he would exchange a smile and one or two brief words with his friends and acquaintances. Despite his true-to-the-soil brown complexion his was an impressive physique, tall and having well-defined features. In fact he has been the possessor of a photogenic face. A short while before his appointment as Vice-Chancellor he was the Chief Guest at the annual dinner of the Dacca University Staff Club. A whisper went round that Dr and Mrs Jenkins didn't like the idea. But Dr Jenkins was overwhelmed with admiration by Mr Ibrahim's quiet take-over demeanour and his unhesitating agreement to Dr Jenkin's



occupation of the official residence for five weeks at the end of his term. By mid-December, 1956, Mr Ibrahim was available for conducting meetings at which he showed his brevity, adherence to relevant discussions and persuasiveness. His personal hold over the politician-members of the Executive and Academic Councils was manifest; the sharp edges of noisy arguments were smoothed away; he carried his own points. But equally manifest were his chronic ill health, lack of family life, absence of recreational occupation, accessibility to some of his cronies and colleagues and also to leaders of Hall Unions. Dr Jenkin's detachment disappeared. Let me now pass on to the evolution of his regime and to the graph of our activities.

### 1957

Dr Osman Ghani, permanent Provost of SM Hall, who had been appointed Agricultural Commissioner, Govt. of East Pakistan for a term of three years with effect from April, 1956, and who continued to occupy the Provost's Bungalow all through 1956, was good enough to vacate it early in January, 1957. One month was taken to clean up the place and make it fit enough for habitation. I occupied it with my family on the 1st February. I had been Provost till 30th June, 1959; I took six days only beyond that date to vacate it and I did pay rent charged by the university for one week's continuance there. Whether he did the same is not known to me. For two years and a half since occupation I spun round my duties like a top from morning till late in the evening: class work, office work, meetings, functions—a never-ending procession of them. Among external factors affecting internal life Kashmir was very much in evidence in 1957, and participation by students in strikes and demonstrations couldn't be averted on several occasions. Its rumblings died down at the end of October when

in the Security Council Sir Pierson Dixon advocated the deputation once again of Graham. In February the Suhrawardy-Bhasani Groups clashed and parted. The first Revolution of Indo-Pak sub-continent that took place in 1857 in what is known as the Sepoy Mutiny had its Centenary celebration at Dacca at the end of March; at SM Hall it was celebrated on the 10th and 11th May. HRH Agha Khan died full of years and honours on the 11th July. Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani was compelled to resign governorship of W. Pakistan at the end of August. I.I. Chundrigarh formed the Central Cabinet on the 18th October but went out in less than two months; on the 11th December to be precise. In our own academic life Terms and Holidays were : Terms : 7.1.1957 to 31.3.57.

" : 22.6.1957 to 16.7.57

" : 29.7.1957 to 21.9.57.

" : 16.10.1957 to 23.12.57.

Holidays : 1.4.57 to 21.6.57 : Ramadan and Summer

17.7.57 to 28.7.57 : Flu Vacation

22.9.57 to 15.10.57 : Autumn.

The Commonwealth Vice-Chancellor's Conference had its Dacca Session from the 15th January to 19th January — a period during which we had a stirring time with visits, talks and entertainment. The delegates visited SM Hall on the 17th January and were entertained at Coffee. Three of them, Dr Cook, Dr Bunsen and Dr Aitken addressed students and staff at Curzon Hall on the 16th January. Close in their heels came two representatives of the World University Service, the leader being Mr Rafiuzzaman whose persuasive charm and earnestness to give financial and other assistance to the halls of Dacca University compelled admiration. They had a nice time not only

from us but also from the USIS Cultural Affairs Section under Mr David Earth, the American author. Later I was elected Treasurer of the Dacca Branch of WUS when Mr Raisuiddin Khan, Lecturer, went away. This was not liked by Dr Muzherul Huq, Provost, Fuzlul Huq Hall, who along with his Hall contingent whipped up bitter antagonism and sought to undo it but was defeated by all other Provosts. In January I was also elected Treasurer of Prof Turner's Social Welfare Committee which had funds enough to provide financial help to poor students of the various halls. On the 23rd January the SM Hall Annual sports were held on a grand scale. In fact we had a crowded programme of activities throughout the January-March term. In February the 7th Pak History Conference, the 7th Pak Museums Conference, the annual Philosophical Congress were held at Dacca. All of these stimulated intellectual discussions, and warm personal relations following social and cultural entertainment. The political wranglings between the Suhrawardy and Bhasani groups coincided with a visit to SM Hall by Dean Stibbs of Ford Foundation which in 1957 had taken up and zealously pursued the foundation and functioning of a Teacher-cum-Student Centre at Dhaka University. On the 19th February the Dacca University degree-conferring Convocation was held in solemn grandeur and serene enjoyment. It was a well-organised function and the proceedings were dignified from end to end. The Chancellor Mr A K Fuzlul Huq's 16-page printed speech and the Vice-Chancellor's own correspondingly long speech were both read out by the latter in clear accents, a strenuous performance worthily made by Mr Ibrahim whose state of health had never been very good. In retrospect this function provides a glowing contrast to some of the ugliest scenes enacted in later years. On a different level but in the most spectacular fashion was held the Shahid Day (or

Martyrs' Day) on the 21st February. Besides the early morning wandering minstrelsy and subsequent wreath-placing in the Azimpura graveyard there were sky-piercing shoutings of slogans by dense crowds of students collected at the foot of the incomplete Shahid Memorial off the Dacca Medical College. The SM Hall Union had spent more than a couple of thousands out of Suhrawardy donation made to it in December, 1956, in fencing off the biggest slice of the southern grounds and in naming it "Shahid Park" at the head of which a Shahid Minar was erected and dedicated on this day in a public meeting. Speaker after speaker condemned the brutal shooting of innocent students defending the use of their mother tongue. The Curzon Hall symposium and variety entertainment followed in the evening. On the following day was held the SM Hall Tennis Tournament. On the 27th February the Academic Council elected seven members to the Faculty of Arts; among these seven I secured the highest number of votes much to the disappointment of a group working against me. But on the 28th February a large number of students of Dacca Jagannath College staged an ugly demonstration in the house of the Vice-Chancellor demanding postponement of the Degree Examinations. This led to the convening of a special meeting of the Academic Council on the 2nd March, which obliged the agitators by a postponement. It will be relevant to mention here how the same tactics were adopted by the MA and MSc candidates later. They went one step better. They approached the Chancellor on the 13th July (the V-C was away in UK) humoured him and got him to exercise his prerogative in postponing the exam sine die. Such a step was unknown before. But soon afterwards the Medical College students copied the same and succeeded. On the 7th March we held the SM Hall Annual Dinner, an event of high traditions, planned and exe-

cuted on a gigantic scale, the after dinner speeches forming not a mean part. The Union Cabinet not only made a grand achievement over the laying out of a Shahid Park together with a memorial obelisk on it but also added a small but very useful amenity by fitting up a small hair-dressing cubicle near the entrance to the Dining Hall. I have touched upon it in connexion with my observations on such amenities at Officers' Cadet School at Mhow, Central India. Its formal opening was made on the 28th March, 1957. ATM Shamsul Huq, the Vice-President of the union, was chiefly, if not solely, instrumental in effecting changes in both directions.

Abeed (he spelt his name thus) Hussain, the General Secy, enlivened SM Hall on three separate occasions in the month of February by organising music with the help of the USIS. On the 3rd the famous musician Mr Sebastian entertained us with his HARMONICA for 1 hrs and 15 minutes; on the 5th we had a superb CONCERT for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hrs from the WESTMINSTER CHOIR of Westminster Choir College, USA, under the direction of their great leader, Dr Williamson who looked being over 70 but exercised the zest and gusts of a young performer; on the 19th, the very day on which the DU-convocation was held, we had another magic spell of music, (together with interpretative talk) from Miss Eleanor Steber, the soprano, and party from 2.10 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. She wore a black Sari on a tall and stout frame but moved most gracefully and trippingly on the stage. We had some more music towards the end of the year, which will be dealt with in due course.

Early in February, 1957, the SM Hall annexed the Inter-College Athletic Championship.

I had very close association with the Dacca British Council centre from my M.C. College days when it used to function in rented buildings in Nazimuddin Road. The new centre specifi-

cally constructed at Fuller Road in the heart of the university town was formally opened by V-C Mr Ibrahim on the 20th February, 1957. Mr Cawson the then Regional Representative and I were intimate friends; our social contact was many and various. He would bring distinguished visitors to my Hall. During the period under review we had visits from Dr Allen and family and Dr Friez—earlier I had met Dr King, Head of the Karachi Centre. Now the British Council at Karachi and the Ford Foundation there organised a Language Teaching Conference in March. I was one of the invitees and I did send my comments and suggestions sufficiently in advance for the consideration of the Conference from the 20th March. The DPI of East Pakistan, Mr Abdul Hakim, and I flew together to Karachi on the 19th. The Super Constellation plane of those days, now antiquated, took more than five hours to make the flight. This was my first visit to Karachi and West Pakistan. My daughter and son-in-law being resident of Karachi I had comfortable accommodation and also the benefit of transport. I had queer ideas about Karachi, which I had to revise on landing and during subsequent movements. Far flung extensions and developments were proceeding apace; the sand hills and the sand slabs carved therefrom looked like stones, and matched with the colour scheme of camels; the camel carts and the mule carts provided peculiar contrasts in size and proportions; the Sindhis matched us of Bengal (former) in size and proportions; the Sindhi traffic police men provided contrasts to otherwise Brobdingnagian environment and population; the brainless performances of car drivers at cross-roads proved amusing. But the high ways and their clean upkeep, the tall buildings, limousines and luxurious cars, impressive Banks and Offices, fashionable stores and hotels; markets bursting with commodities and goods and above all the illumination at night of the city from the furthest end to the Clifton Beach was a revelation. Calcutta is dirty, mean, congested and dark; Karachi I

found stately, spacious, clean, magnificent. Mere size is no consideration; the overriding factor is how you keep a city and how you use it. I was stirred when I contemplated Qauid-i-Azam's selection of the place as the capital of Pakistan. And I still have a nostalgic feeling about it.

The Language Teaching Conference was held at Hotel Metropole on the 20th March and two subsequent days under the chairmanship of Mian Afzal Hussain. It was a distinguished gathering of educationists from both wings keeping us fully occupied from forenoon till late in the afternoon. Proceedings were managed with thorough efficiency and business acumen and skill. The opening speech (printed) of the President was very interesting. After introductions we split up into different sub-committees each with a chairman of its own to hold relevant

discussions, record conclusions and report them to the Steering Committee. I was on Sub-Committee No 1: Linguistics. Within minutes of the conclusion of each session, typed copies of the proceedings were available. The recommendations of each Sub-Committee were available in the same manner. On the 3rd day the Plenary Session met and finalised deliberations before lunch; after lunch the drafting committee did its job in one hour and then in the concluding Plenary Session finished it. Dinner with Dr Eant, Ford Foundation chief on the 20th evening, Ministry of Education Tea at Hotel Metropole on the 21st and British Council Buffet Supper on the 22nd constituted the social calendar. Dr Eant had his house and gardens illuminated as if for a festive occasion; the gathering of guests was much too large to permit genial company. But I found him very sober and thoughtful. We had more contacts later as will appear from the narrative to follow. The Ministry of Education Tea with the Minister as a central figure

and some of the Vice-Chancellors flanking him and the officials of the Department. humouring him was a boring affair so far as I concerned and I sat all by myself at an inconspicuous corner. On the following morning at 9-30 Mr Zahiruddin, the Central Education Minister, arrived at the conference read out his speech (in my diary the comment is "badly") and hurried out to attend a Cabinet meeting for the discussion of the situation that had arisen from the imposition of Section 193 in West Pakistan. The British Council Buffet supper was held in drab surroundings and in the main office hall but we met a comparatively small collection of pleasant friends of both sexes. There was an atmosphere of informality and considerable warmth; we joked and laughed and ate to our hearts' content very palatable dishes served.

The Language Teaching Conference coincided in point of time with the proposed holding of a conference at Karachi of student leaders from both wings for the formation of a National Union of Students under the auspices of the Educational authorities at the Centre. The Vice-Presidents of 3 unions, those of SM Hall, Fuzlul Huq Hall and Iqbal Hall, Dacca University, being selected representatives had been given advances for their flight; they had also made personal preparations in regard to their clothings and outing when they were notified about the cancellation of the programme and asked not to proceed. This happened during our absence in Karachi. But they declined to take this sudden rebuff and proceeded to Karachi, Conference or no conference. Even before I left Karachi my Vice-President Shamsul Huq called at my daughter's place and gave me a short account of how things had happened and how they were determined to meet their counterparts in West Pakistan. Actually they visited some of the West Pakistan universities and after spending several days there



returned to Dacca on the 12th April. Very intriguing developments followed. From the office of the Registrar flowed a series of communication addressed to me for the realisation from Shamsul Huq the passage money that had been advanced to him and also to enclose his explanation why he had defied the order of not proceeding to West Pakistan. He made repeatedly a clean, frank statement of the circumstances in which they did so and the way in which they had spent the time. Months elapsed and the university didn't pursue the matter. But the preparatory meeting for the formation of a National Union of Students did at last take place at Karachi at the end of August and slightly preceded the session of Inter-University Board there on the 30th August when I attended this session as a representative of Dacca University along with the Vice-Chancellor Mr Ibrahim and Mr BA Siddiky. My General Secretary, Abee Hussain, attended the meeting of the Preparatory Committee on this occasion.

In the meetings of the Executive Council, Dacca University, held in the month of March, 1957, there were interesting discussions about Mr I.S. Turner of the English Department. It may be recalled that when Miss A.E. Stock, Professor and Head of the Department left, Mr Turner was appointed as a Reader and Head. He continued in that capacity for some time but was unsteady. He divided his time with work of the Deptt and that of flood or famine relief in the interior. At the same time there was talk of his taking up a Headmaster's job at a Govt High School. Then he had disappeared. But he did return and this coincided with the advent of Dr Jenkins as Vice-Chancellor in November 1953 and was straightaway appointed Professor and Head of the Deptt on the maximum salary of Rs 1500/- a month plus other allowances including passage home at stated intervals. His term of office was expiring at the end of the

academic session 1956-57. The Executive Council in its meeting held on the 22nd December, 1956, took the decision of advertising the post and making recruitment thereafter. On the 9th March, 1957, the Vice-Chancellor reopened the question but inconclusively. It was taken up afresh on the 31st March when the general agreement was for advertisement. But the Vice-Chancellor made a personal appeal to each and every member to revise this consensus and put pressure upon them to have the appointment of Mr Turner renewed; the pressure was so great that the members slackened their rigidity and yielded to the proposal of a two-year renewal from the beginning of the academic session 1957-58. On full allowances as before including passage home during the summer vacation. Why the V-C went out of his way wasn't clear. I had a shrewd suspicion that Mr Turner had drafted his Convocation speech. Turner's term extended to 30th June before this renewal. The long vacation, as I have made clear, began on the 1st April. On the 18th April there was a news item in The Pakistan Observer to report that the Editor of the paper, Mr Abdus Salam, had given a farewell party to Mr Turner; this was backed up next day, 19th April by a photograph of Mr Turner in a standing posture at the party, and also by an editorial article under the caption "Ave Atque Vale". I rubbed my eyes in amazement and inquired whether Mr Turner had declined the renewal offer. No, he hadn't done anything of the kind. On the 20th April the same paper's APP correspondent reported that Turner addressed a meeting of the students of SM Hall organised by the students of the Hall. I knew nothing about it and I sent for the Vice-President and Social Secretary of the Hall Union. They reported that there was nothing of the kind. In the canteen of SM Hall just a few students had arranged a private Tea and that was all. On the 21st April the Pakistan Observer featured the news of

Turner's departure via Calcutta at the end of his term. His term hadn't come to an end; he had accepted the renewal and drawn TA in advance and yet he was a party to the printing of such rubbish. He did return but didn't complete the two-year term since Dr Sajjad Hussain though then a Reader was officially designated as Head of the Department.

The Vice-Chancellor left for UK on the 11th April, profess- edly with the object of a medical check-up and for the surgical operation of his prostate gland. His daughter and son-in-law were there. He overstayed the long vacation by slightly more than one month although he didn't have the surgical aid he was reported to have planned. I didn't know whether he went on his own or at University's expenses. During the Vice-Chancellor's absence a number of developments which called for his personal attention for better disposal took place and we of the Executive Council had to handle them. On the 11th June there was an immediate meeting in which Dr Mumtazuddin Ahmed, then Educational Adviser of the Govt. of Pakistan presented and explained the Ford Foundation scheme of the establishment of the Teacher-cum-Student Centre. Having discussed many of its facts it was decided to approve it in principle and subject to the exclusive control of the university. The Educational Adviser displayed on a dish its lavish provision of luxurious amenities although there were some among the members who were not lured by the blessings that the scheme would ensure and many who remained unconvinced of have the university would be able to meet the recurring expenditure after the initiated stage (of say three or four years) when the Ford Foundation would stop its recurring grant. This last item in particular received another comprehensive consideration at Karachi on the 31st August, 1957, in the room of the Educational Adviser who had roped us in, after meetings of the

Inter-University Board held there. Mr Ibrahim as Vice-Chancellor, Mr B.A. Siddiky (then Advocate General as far as I remember) and I as representatives of the EC participated while Mr Gant, the Ford Foundation Chief in Pakistan helped the Educational Adviser in discussions. It was pointed out that the initial contribution by the university would be nominal and that the future recurring cost shouldn't bother. The matter received near-finalization. The functioning of this centre at Dacca University, its achievements and failures, what it promised and what it has attained to should be examined in retrospect by those who are the helm of affairs now in the first quarter of 1966. Early in 1957 a decision had been taken to earmark the Dacca Hall for the use of the Muslim students. The Jagannath Hall had been fully expanded in residential accommodation and in the construction of all adjuncts such as the Dining Hall, the kitchen, the Assembly Hall etc to absorb all Hindu students available in the university; in fact there was a good margin for absorption of an increased number. But the commodious Dacca Hall which was by usage a Hindu Hall had been practically empty since the partition by the en mass exodus of the Hindu students and teachers. Meanwhile there was a phenomenal increase in the numerical strength of the Muslims who had to suffer from unspeakable hardship about their accommodation. A handful of Hindu students, just a few Hindu teachers were in occupation of the Dacca Hall. And there were a good few miscellaneous Hindu squatters and numberless guests of their who were enjoying the place as a sort of Hotel. Naturally the university authorities decided on giving the Dacca Hall to Muslim students by undertaking costly additions and alterations to the Jagannath Hall. During the summer vacation when all arrangements were nearing completion the Hindus conceived and contemplated a deprivation of

their time-honoured rights and privileges and ventilated their grievances which were subdued at first but which gradually gathered strength, momentum and vocal volume. The attention of the Chief Minister was drawn to the tyranny of the Muslims. In Mr Ataur Rahman's Cabinet there was a strong Hindu element which succeeded in getting him to interfere. As called for a statement. On the 26th June an immediate meeting of the EC was held to get up a defence. It was agreed to send a deputation to the Chief Minister, consisting of the following :

Mr BA Siddiky, the DPI, the Registrar

They were briefed to apprise the Chief Minister of all the facts and circumstances, particularly of the state of feelings of the Muslim students who were exasperated beyond measure by the false propaganda of the Hindu public and the students. On the 28th evening the Chief Minister brought together in his house all concerned and settled the matter amicably, that is to say, that the arrangements made by the university were accepted as satisfaction. When the EC met on the 29th, it heaved a sigh of relief at the way in which the squabble was disposed of—at any rate they thought that the tangle had been resolved. But no, at the end of one month the intransigent element raised its head again; on the 31st July, three Hindu students of the Dacca Hall went on hunger strike and declined to vacate the hall. A crisis was thus precipitated about the wholly indefensible move. The Vice-Chancellor had just returned to witness for himself how an issue that had been solved to satisfaction was raked up again. The EC met again and prepared its own defence. On the 1st August the Pakistan Observer published hostile news and comment. But on the 4th August it had to publish the Registrar's full statement explaining the university stand and exposing the insidious propaganda. On the 5th August Dr Deb, the Provost of Jagannath Hall, Mrs Akhter Imam, Provost,

Women's Hall, Mr AFM Safiyullah, Member, EC and myself inspected arrangements in the Jagannath Hall and found them excellent; in fact these were better than those in SM Hall—each Hindu student having a single-seated room and decent furniture. Even so if the Hindu students would stand by their time-honoured rights, the university stated, let them do so and accept common life along with the Muslim students. Some of them elected to stay on but eventually joined their own community in the Jagannath Hall. The hunger-strike was called off on the 8th August. Earlier at the end of June when the Vice-Chancellor was still away in UK the annual meetings of the Dacca University Court were held on three successive days. On the first day the non-academics mustered in full strength; they proved to be disciplined, capable and assertive while the academics were found to be weak and unprepared and naturally they were defeated badly by the carrying of amendments to the authorities resolutions. The former also elected their three representatives from the Court on the Executive Council as follows :

1. Mr A M Safiyullah, who secured 86 votes
2. Mr Mohammad Hussain Khan, who secured 76 votes
3. Mr Asaduzzaman Khan, who secured 71 votes

On the 2nd day of the Court meeting they adopted dilatory tactics and caused sheer waste of time. This proved so disgusting that I didn't attend the next day's session. On the 29th June, these newly elected members attended the adjourned meeting of the EC; they were noisy and dominant; one of them dictated terms to the acting chairman in the absence of the Vice-Chancellor. It will be relevant to state here that No 2 was the gentleman who had contested me in 1955 and who had secured injunction against me and whose appeal to a higher court was still pending. He had an implacable grudge against the university and at long last succeeded to his present posi-

tion. But what is success in human life? What is glory with during our short span? He was victorious on the 27th June, 1957, but by a cruel irony of fate he died in the Dacca Medical College Hospital from internal haemorrhage on the 7th July, just about 10 days afterwards. We assembled in the Azimpur Govt Colony the same evening and joined his Janaza prayers. On the following day we met in an extraordinary meeting of the EC and adopted, in the midst of gloom, a Condolence resolution.

Theoretically the Halls of Residence are closed during vacations, the external manifestation of such closure being that the House Tutors do not run the feeding messes. 50% of the resident members stay on one plea or another. Out of 400 members of SM Hall 200 approximately speaking continue in residence. These include the Vice-President, General Secy and other office-bearers of the Union and the Athletic Committee, their supporters of the same party, candidates for ensuing Hons. and Post-Graduate Exams and many unauthorised guests and friends. The Provost's Office is open excepting on gazetted and closed holidays. There is not the slightest bar to call on the Provost or to make demands on his time and energy. It also follows that with such a large number present any untoward occurrence may take place at any moment. During my time the Union Radio was once stolen during a vacation; people responsible for the safe custody blamed each other. The authorities had to supply another with promptitude. All I did was to remove it to my office during the recesses. Speaking of the long vacation of 1957 I had to face and handle a very ugly and also dangerous situation. On the 27th May at 10.30 p.m. I received a peremptory call to hurry to the hall where on arrival I found that a violent crowd of students had been demanding the head of an outsider given refuge by one of the House Tutors. A resident member about to take MA

Preliminary Exam in English (he was one of my pupils, a tall, hefty young man) while returning late in the evening from the Azimpura Colony and passing by temporary, residential structures of Govt employees at Plassey Barracks had misbehaved with two girls about to enter their quarters. The girls having raised an alarm a chase was given to the young man who had slipped and fallen near the railway level crossing off the south-western corner of SM Hall compound and wounded himself badly in many parts of his body. Meanwhile the attention of some of our students having been arrested a counter chase was given and the brother of the girls was caught, brought inside and beaten mercilessly. If the House Tutor concerned hadn't intervened and sheltered him disastrous consequences would have followed. The crowd was truculent and uncontrollable and asked for the surrender of the refugee. I harangued, should, threatened action, used coaxing language and requested it to disperse and go to their rooms and leave the whole incident to me for disposal. I examined the wounds of the student and then I examined the refugee who was another strong-built young man with a lungi and vest on. He was Mr Mokarram Hussain, a Graduate, who was an Assistant in the office of the Accountant General, East Pakistan. He gave me circumstantial details and pointed out how in the prevailing heat he was having a little walk when our student had misbehaved. Our students were guilty of unlawful confinement and assault and ran the risks of arrests and subsequent punishment. Outsiders had collected beyond the compound; I faced them and persuaded them to disperse and gave them my word of honour that Mokarrum Hussain would be escorted home personally by me. I took him in my car and deposited him in his family where there was a tense atmosphere, indignation and sobbing. Very luckily some members happened to be my former pupils. I



counselled them against going to the police and the Law Courts as that would have unfortunate effect on the future of the girls. The majority accepted by settlement but one or two remained sullen. The Circle Inspector of Police and the Officer-in-Charge of the Lalbagh Police Station called at my office shortly after 10 next morning when I was occupied in a fuller investigation and told me how there were formal complaints last night after I had effected a settlement. I didn't give up my own attempts and desired the Police to help me in soothing the feelings of the offended party. By 2-10 p.m. I received a ring from them that they wouldn't pursue further. On my invitation Mokarram Hussain along with a friend of his called at my bungalow on the 4th June and had tea with us. After the MA Preliminary Exam I barred the re-entry into Hall of the young offender.

During the same vacation we held several functions in the Hall, such as Iqbal Day, Eid-ul-Fitr Prayers, Sepoy Mutiny Centenary celebrations. The second item is a very big event. Not only the Hall mosque but the entire premises including the quadrangles and cloister become a seething mass of humanity—an appreciable portion of which is constituted by beggars who squat everywhere to ply a merry trade. The same thing happens during the Eid-ul-Azha. Organisers bring in professional Mullahs to give talks. Barring one or two honourable exceptions they shout and shriek over the microphone and spit out (sometimes literally) crude, abominable stuff of virtue and vice. During my three-year tenure I couldn't make out how Honours and Post-Graduate students could invite such a horrid specimen of religious demagogues and stand them. Indeed their action was a reflection on their intellectual, moral and spiritual make-up.

In the month of May I had my third son married. For a month we were occupied in hymeneal preparations.

Ceremonies and festivities adding variety, colour, buoyancy to the otherwise trying life of a Provost. In June I gave a talk in the Dacca Rotary Club on "A Brief Survey of the life and works of Bernard Shaw". Our friend, Mr Osman Ghani, Principal, Dacca Teachers' Training College, persuaded me to elaborate the same topic soon afterwards in a meeting of 50 teachers taking a Refreshers' Course. Here I had an appreciative audience fairly well-acquainted with Shaw's plays. I had just read from end to end St John Ervine's tremendous volume on Shaw.

I have already written about the election of three representatives of the DU Court on the Executive Council. In the middle of August the Chancellor nominated 3; they were: Mr Justice Murshed (He has retired since), Mr B A Siddiky (he is Chief Justice now) and Dr Osman Ghani and they attended their first EC meeting on the 17th August when the Dacca Hall, Jagannath Hall tangle was causing worry.

On the 28th August, 1957, our Vice-Chancellor had to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee of Vice-Chancellors at Karachi. This was to be followed by meetings of Inter-University Board on 30th and 31st August in which he, Mr Siddiky and I were to attend as representatives of the DU. The consensus of opinion was that I was to accompany the VC and brief him on the agenda and I prepared myself fully for the same. Therefore he and I flew together on the 27th. But in course of the flight he grew worse and worse physically and by the time we landed at Karachi at 9-30 p.m. he had developed temperature and other troubles. I had already made arrangements for his accommodation at Hotel Metropole but he preferred to stay with his old friend, Mr Abdul Latif Biswas, at Somerset House. He was too ill to attend the Vice-Chancellors' meeting next day. The accommodation at his friend's place was wretched, to put it very mildly, and the provision of nourish-

ment and attendance was still more wretched. Most of the time I was by his bed but he starved and became very weak. On the 30th and 31st he did attend meetings and had sparing dict in the dining hall of the hotel. I had by now a fairly full measure of his chronic ill health. Before down on the 2nd September I collected him from the Somerset House and arrived at the airport at 4-45 a.m. to flyback by the 6 o'clock plane. Mr Siddiky had made his outward flight by himself but now we travelled back together. At the Inter-University Board meeting on the 30th the discussions were noisy and ill-conducted, they were no better on the following forenoon. These were in sharp contrast with the efficiently conducted proceedings of the Language-Teaching Conference I had attended earlier.

On return from Karachi we had three weeks of term-time before we had a three-week autumn break. My teaching work, Hall administrative duties, attendance at numerous meetings, went on at high pressure. In two days from the completion of our Karachi trip the Vice-Chancellor paid a surprise visit to my Hall in the evening when I was not there and made sharp comments on Hall discipline in the presence of the House Tutors one of whom from now onwards developed intimate touch with him. He didn't mention anything to me about this although no day passed when our contact was totally absent. A review of developments in the nine or ten months of 1958 will show the significance of this apparently minor event. The 1956-'57 Union Cabinet of SM Hall with ATM Shamsul Huq as Vice-President and Abeed Hussain, General Secretary, didn't appear to have secret dealings with Authority. It had pre-election difficulties with the Hall voters; it was September now and the elections were coming in less than two-months. Notice of a No-Confidence Motion against it was submitted to me on the 9th September and the agitation continued for a few weeks more.

On the same day Captain Abdul Haleem of DUOTC gave a talk in our Hall on The Value of Military Training. It was a sweet and superb performance and I listened spell-bound to him. He had already established a high reputation of selfless and wholehearted devotion as Adjutant of the UOTC the enrolment of which had gone up phenomenally during his term. He had also sponsored and efficiently conducted a Riding Club with donations from rich people. On the 16th September the SM Hall Annual Aquatic Sports were held; we had a number of well-known swimmers including our ace performer, Abdul Malek Mian, who became the Hall Athletic Secretary in the early November elections and who, after 4 days, entered water at Dacca Stadium Swimming Pool and completed twenty-seven miles in eighteen hours and eight minutes. Malek had and was about to have good university degrees although he had to struggle against financial difficulties. In pursuing his swimming hobby he had the same handicaps. But we of the SM Hall had abiding conviction in his capability and potentialities and helped him unstintedly in both directions. The Aaur Rahman Ministry was also compelled to grant substantial donations next year. Malek hasn't yet won his cross-channel laurels but I believe he will have them soon. Sir AF Rahman Shield match was played on the 20th September but Jagannath College defeated SM Hall this time by 1 to nil.

The autumn recess of 1957 brings sad memories. Mr Khadem Mohiuddin, Secretary, Narayanganj Chamber of Commerce, younger brother of one of our esteemed colleagues, Professor Gholam Jilani, died at Sardah (Rajshahi) in a Flying Club plane crash on the 23rd September. The irresistible pull of Death lured him to the plane (being piloted by one of his friends) from his normal daily trip to Narayanganj so that he might give a look up to one of his women relatives at Sardah.

He went, met her, took her aboard and in taking off in the afternoon all aboard had a ghastly death. I shall never forget the tragic scene I witnessed next morning at Prof. Jilani's house. I shall never forget how I met this young, unmarried, 6-footer, brilliant person in January, 1956, when I bought from him his used car, MAYFLOWER,—he having just bought a big de luxe Chevrolet. On the 6th October, my young, Asstt House Tutor, Mr AHT Mohiuddin, Lecturer in Economics, married the daughter of Mr Masud at 143-D, Dhanimondi Residential Area. His young wife and he visited us at the Provost's bungalow on the 18th October. Later he had been abroad, took his Ph.D. and became Reader in Economics at Rajshahi University. When the Dacca-Faridpur-Rajshahi helicopter crashed on the 2nd February, 1966, Mohiuddin's was one of the valuable lives killed. Another valuable life lost in the same crash was that of our own former pupil, Dr Mahfuzul Huq, Lecturer in Political Science, Dacca University. A native of Chittagong he was one of the students of Chittagong College for four years. He was a student leader as well and a champion of the Tamaddun movement. He had worked his way up to his Ph.D. degree against many odds and the community is a grievous loser by his sad, sudden, premature death. Towards the end of 1957 he called on me one morning and sought my help in having a lift from junior lectureship to a substantive one in the immediate higher rung.

Mr Louis McNiece, the poet, was on a visit to the British Council and the Dacca University at the end of October, 1957.

Early in November, 1957, the SM Hall Union and Athletic Club elections were held; there was a sweeping victory for the "একাদৃত" Party with Abdullah Siddiqui and Shaikh Habibur Rahman elected as Vice-President and General Secy respectively. Their Installation Ceremony was held on the 17th

November, and the Budget Estimates passed on the 26th November. The former had passed his I.Sc. in the First Division from M.C. College, Sylhet during my time changed to Arts, proceeded MA in Economics in which he had a second class. He completed twice in the CSS Exam but was rejected on both occasions on the ground of his abnormal squint in the eyes. The latter was a Pass graduate. They will have a full treatment in the course of my narrative till October, 1958.

Space flight would appear to be still in its primitive condition in the light of subsequent conquests. Early in November the Russian Sputnik II with a dog aboard was launched against the present record of three-man aboard and also of rendezvous of space ships.

Early in December I organised in my personal capacity in the spacious lawns of the Provost's Bungalow a huge Tea Party in honour of Dr and Mrs Gant. Their courtesy to us during the Language-Teaching Conference earlier in the year at Karachi stimulated this human and social response. I had brave and lovely flowers all about and Dr Gant had a word of deep appreciation for them when he wrote to me on his return to Karachi.

On the 6th December we had a debate in the Assembly Hall, the motion being "Strikes as a weapon of Student Movement have been failures". It was moved by Dr Sajjad Hussain and opposed by the then Assistant Director of Public Instruction, Mr Fazlur Rahman; both lent intellectual strength to the discussions but eventually it was lost by 46 to 56 votes. Whether such a strike was a failure or otherwise received a lurid illustration on the following day, 7th December and also on the 11th December when the students everywhere struck over a case of Police firing in the town of Sylhet. The teacher of a High School in Sylhet was assaulted by the relations of a Deputy Magistrate. The students of that school resented and

hit back which led to the mobilisation of Police force under a Magistrate and that of students of other institutions with the result that there were firing and casualties. The disturbances were so grave that the Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry under Mr Justice Abdul Jabber Khan of the Dacca High Court.

On the morning of the 8th December the University authorities made costly arrangements with coloured cloth screens and under a coloured Shamiana for holding what looked like a Durbar of British days but actually was the foundation-laying ceremony of the Dacca University Medical Centre by the Chief Minister of the province, Mr Aaur Rahman Khan on a plot of land just across the road running past the east of my bungalow. The elaborate preparations took my breath away. The Vice-Chancellor read a printed speech but the attendance of teachers and guests was very thin; this elicited sharp comments and warring. Being only a few yards away from the scene I did attend from first to last but the enormous amount of cringing and flunkeying that was in evidence on the occasion was indeed very amusing.

For SM Hall 1957 had a musical beginning of great enjoyment; its close was correspondingly musical. Mid-November brought Messrs Vito and Lora to our Hall; they made a thrilling display of their skill in the Harp and the Flute, and what marvellous instruments they brought with them! The Harp was a concrete illustration to the students of English poetry with reverberations of classical music and mythology. Mid-December witnessed the inauguration of the SM Hall Musical Society in a two-hour function in the evening with Mr Abbasuddin Ahmed as chief guest; it was designed to pay appropriate homage to one who had revived and kept up the musical sense and aptitude of the Muslims, first of Bengal,

later of East Pakistan. A musical soiree with the leading roles going to his daughter, Firdousi, and son, Abbasi was organised; it was followed by a Bengali one-act drama. Our Hall was full to capacity. We had a grand finale on the 23rd December. This was an all-University event. The Chinese Cultural Delegation of about 71 (seventy one) including several girls arrived at the Vice-Chancellor's house at 10 a.m. when they were received in the lawns by the V-C, the Provosts, the Deans, student leaders including a contingent from the Women's Hall. Tables with plenty of viands placed on them were in inviting postures. This huge delegation turned out to be disciplined, softspoken, decently clad. They sang and we too joined in the national song chorus. The normally dull lawns became quick and resplendent. Then we shoved on to the Saltmullah Muslim Hall where they were shown round and later photographed according to arrangements going on for a week. Then came the turns of the Women's Hall, the Science Buildings and the Arts Campus. If the display of Chinese arms on the Pakistan Day in 1966 caused a flutter in diplomatic circles this occasion of 1957 should prove an eye-opener to them.

## **1958**

Mutability in human affairs has different reactions in different circles. For religious men, poets and philosophers it provides wisdom in all ages. But instability in national affairs teaches nothing to those who cause chaos in the name of political independence and under the fetish of universal suffrage and full democracy. The authors of topsyturvydom have only one code of guidance, which is insatiable plunder for their own benefits. The Pakistan scene since the murder of Liaquat Ali Khan had been registering shameless depredations in this



direction. In 1958 in the second half of March the parliamentary proceedings of East Pakistan Assembly were marked showdown by tactics by rival groups. When on the 30th March a NAP OPPOSITION MEMBER'S motion for circulation of the Finance Bill was accepted by the Chief Minister Aatur Rahman Khan and the latter asked for prorogation, the Governor Mr AK Fuzlul Huq dismissed him and had Mr Abu Hussain Sarkar sworn-in. Mr Khan had the centre to dismiss the Governor, appoint the Chief Secy Mr Hamid Ali as Governor, who reinstated Mr Khan and his ministry. On the 5th May Mr Sultanuddin took over as Governor. In another three months, that is to say on the 18th June Mr Aatur Rahman Khan and his ministry fell being defeated on a 'Cut' motion by 12 votes. Abu Hussain Sarkar was commissioned to form a ministry. But overnight an understanding having been effected between Awami League and NAP, Mr Khan asked for the withdrawal of his resignation. Mr Sarkar didn't agree and he and two more colleagues were sworn-in on the 20th June. The table was turned and a No-Confidence motion was passed against Mr Sarkar on the 23rd June and once again Abu Hossain Sarkar had to make a retreat. In another three months 'full' democracy had a dramatic enactment of 'blood and thunder' from the 20th September within the Legislative Assembly Chamber. A free fight among the members with the Police participating, it was reported, was on. The Speaker of the Assembly, who was modelling himself on Cromwell contributed, it was reported, to the violence being perpetrated. On the 23rd September the fight became bloodier still. We could see from our bungalow, the Legislative Assembly being situated just across the road, wounded bodies being carried out to the Dacca Medical College Hospital. But on this sanguinary day the 'zaberdast' Speaker had placed his 'Deputy' Mr Shahed Ali in the chair—a harm-

less; innocent gentleman who was fatally wounded in the execution of his duties and who died in the Medical College Hospital on the 25th. Mid-March madness followed by a Mid-June relapse ran amuck in Mid-September; it had to be bound, handcuffed and made to undergo painless liquidation on the 8th October by the proclamation of Martial Law and the abrogation of the Constitution which permitted naked lawlessness in the name of political freedom. A hierarchy of Martial Law administrators under Iskander Mirza was announced; an endless stream of proclamations suspending or superseding existing legal measures and laying down military regulations to take their place started pouring in from now onwards and till the continuance of the regime. At the initial stage it was impossible to know whether civilian rule in some form would be tolerated. But on the 11th October (exactly in two days) a civilian Governor of East Pakistan in the person of Mr Zaker Hussain arrived at Dacca and assumed his duties. News was simultaneously received how all the Law Courts would function excepting as otherwise restricted by Martial Law rules and orders. On the 13th news of the arrest of three former ministers, Hamidul Huq Chowdhury, Abul Mansur Ahmed and Abdul Khaleque, of two leaders, Sheikh Mujib and Abdul Hamid, of the proprietor of a firm, Nuruddin, of three Government servants, Asghar Ali Shah, CSP, Secretary of a Department, Aminul Islam Choudhury, CSP, Under-Secretary and Chief Engineer Abdul Jabbar; was published. On the same day news of the recognition by Pandit Nehru of the de facto Government of Pakistan was received. Next morning news of the replacement of the Inspector-General of Police, Mr Ismail, by Quazi Anwarul Huq was published. A visit to Dacca by General Md Ayub Khan followed; in course of this an authoritative statement was made how the East Pakistan Government

had been responsible for a loss of 50 (fifty) crores of rupees through reckless spending and inadequate collection of revenues. On the 25th October there was an announcement of the formation of a Pakistan Central Cabinet of 12 with General Mohammad Ayub Khan as Prime Minister and including the following from East Pakistan.

Mr Habibur Rahman of Bogra — Education Minister

Mr Abul Kasem Khan of Chittagong — Industries Minister

Mr. Hafizur Rahman — Food and Agriculture

Mr. Mohammad Ibrahim (Vice-Chancellor, DU) — Law.

On the 28th October the report of the surrender of all power by President Iskander Mirza to General Md Ayub Khan and his departure for Quetta was published. It was also announced at the same time how Lt. General Mohammad Musa, Chief of Staff, was elevated to the status of a General and appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Thus Pakistan which was about to die along with the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the east wing was saved from extinction; it had a resurrection and a new lease of life which has ensured stable conditions for some years to come. Many of the independent States of recent times in Africa and Asia are toppling down on account of weak and corrupt governments and on account of the absence of any consideration for the well-being of those countries. Disruptive signs are abroad and nobody knows what the future has in store for us.

Reverting to other relevant events of 1958 we may notice the grand installation Ceremony of Prince Karim Khan as successor to the late Agha Khan, held on the 12th February in the Dacca Stadium where had gathered the whole of Dacca as it were. It was organised with impeccable order and decency. The new Agha Khan's turnout and performance was not only

impeccable but it had all the colour and charm of a dream fugue; if one should be disturbed in such a condition, one would cry to dream again.

In the middle of the year there was a rude awakening to the realities of human affairs by the coup d'etat that took place in Iraq. The gentleman who had held the stage in that country for years and years and who had so much fanfare in Western publicity Premier Nuri-es-Said fell; along with him fell too the Crown Prince Ilah; both were assassinated; King Faisal disappeared; monarchy was abolished and a republic declared instead; General Abdul Karim Quaseem then shot ablaze in the Iraqi sky. We, at Dacca, had gloomy forebodings about the fate and fortune of His Excellency Fadhil Jamali, an ex Premier of that country, one who had visited my Hall on the 7th January and on the 9th gave a talk in the Arts Buildings of Dacca University on The Problems Facing Afro-Asian Nations. When I received him on the 7th and showed him round I was struck with the simplicity and ease, spontaneity and grace of his manner. Scholarship, culture, high status sat easy on his person. When I heard him speaking on the 9th I was equally struck. The following note in my diary will explain: (He had) "Arrived at 10.30 a.m. First there was a group photograph. Then we went upstairs where seating arrangements had been made in Room No. 104. But the audience overflowed into the corridors and many had to leave. Dr Jamali spoke for over an hour in English and held the audience. Contents and presentation of the address were efficient. His style was attractive with nothing hackneyed about it. But to a critical listener he was an avowed "propagandist" or advocate for the Western Bloc."

On tension over the fate of Jamali was soon relieved when we learnt that his life had been spared.

When these lives are being written on the 15th April, 1966, the report of the death from a plane crash at Basra on the 13th April (night) of the President of Iraq Field Marshal Abdus Salam Mohammad Aref comes through. He was one of the architects of the coup in 1958 and in recent times rid the country of the insane rule of Abdul Karim Quasem. His tragic death casts a spell of gloom over the Muslim World.

At Dacca University the first term in 1958 ran from 4th January to 20th March—the period from 21st March to 30th May being observed as Ramadan and Summer holiday. It was packed with many events. Mr HT Heald, President of Ford Foundation, visited SM Hall on the 10th January. The Vice-Chancellor held a Lunch Party at Hotel Shahbagh to meet him on the same day. It was organised on a lavish scale to include a big assemblage of guests entertained at varied menu eaten with lordly leisure. On the 12th and 13th January was held an ambitiously planned and executed symposium on Islam in the Shahid Park of Salimullah Muslim Hall and under the auspices of the Deptt of Political Science, Dacca University. Top ranking Government officials taking keen personal interest were very much in evidence. Dr Newman, the then Head of the Department, was hand in glove with them. It was inaugurated by the Govenor with a printed speech and presided over by the Vice-Chancellor who had with him another in typed script. The Chief Minister was quite logically the Chief Guest. European scholars from abroad, local and West wing educationists attended; the notable among the former were Professor Bayard Dodge, Dr Drews, Professor Richard N Frye who introduced themselves in neat little speeches and very impressively too. It was a pleasures to listen to Professor Dodge's learned discourse on the 2nd day. I had my first glimpse of Dr IH Quraishi, a scholar of slight physical build and small stature.

His was a staccato performance. The Vice-Chancellor entertained them at Tea and the Chief Secretary of East Pakistan at Dinner. Simultaneously we had the Installation Ceremony of our Athletic Club. On the 18th and 19th January we had the Dacca University Rehearsal Convocation and the Convocation proper respectively. On the first of these two days the conference of Principals and Heads of Departments took place. In addressing it the Vice-Chancellor exhorted the teachers never to suffer from inferiority complex. This struck a responsive chord in my heart. But through dramatic irony I had a practical lesson diametrically opposite the same evening when the Dacca University Staff Club held their annual dinner at Hotel Shahbagh from 8 pm to 11 pm. The Chief Minister Mr Ataur Rahman Khan joined us 40 minutes behind schedule; of course we were waiting for him. His after dinner speech was straightforward, fluent and full of confidence but that of the Vice-Chancellor turned out to be "full of inferiority complex". Dr Mahmud Hasan, former Vice-Chancellor, was as usual "reminiscent and wildly incoherent" (the quotations are from my diary). The Convocation next morning was "successfully organised; solemnity was maintained by students and guests alike with dignified silence. The Governor personally read (though sitting) the Admission-into-Degree charge against each category of graduates. The V-C's speech was read out clearly by him, though it was a piece of "unworthy composition, trite and platitudinous thoughts incoherently put together" (jottings from my diary—the last portion in inverted commas were my own reaction). On the 20th January the Japanese Ambassador in Pakistan Mr K Narita accompanied by Consul Takenaka of Dacca visited SM Hall. On the 21st we made a selection of volunteers to work with the Army on the Pak-India border. On the 23rd when I saw the Vice-Chancellor from 1-15 p.m. to 2 p.m.

in connexion with student agitation which had just started simmering over the university decision of keeping it open during the Ramadan I saw Abdullah Siddiqui and Sheikh Habibur Rahman, Vice-President and General Secretary of SM Hall Union respectively, seated by the V-C in his garden. On the following day we had a very significant lunch at Jagannath Hall on the occasion of the Worship of Saraswati from 2 p.m. to 3-15 p.m. It was an interesting experience to be there. When I arrived at 2 p.m. the Chief Minister Mr A R Khan and the Finance Minister Mr Monorangan Dhar, the Chief Minister's Entourage including his Political Secretary Mr Z Ahmed, had already arrived. Similarly the V-C, many Provosts, Dr Quazi Motaher Hussain, Dr Innes Ali were already there. They were taken first to have a look at the image of the goddess Saraswati installed at the main entrance (blockd by the image) to the building and then escorted by a side entrance to feeding places upstairs. On my arrival I had to go through the same process. Lunch (Hindu Style Pilau, vegetables, fish curry and sweets) were served shortly after 2.30 p.m. The V-C had a personal communication to make to me just before lunch. To this I shall refer later. On the 25th January we held our Annual Sports Meet which drew a large assembly of men and women and which was well-organised on the whole. On the 30th January SM Hall won championship for the 6th successive year in the Inter-College Athletic Sports to the senseless envy of Fuzkul Huq Hall. The month of February opened with the threat of hunger-strike to have Intermediate Examinations postponed; soon it was translated into action. But for the first time the university authorities successfully sought the help of the Editors of papers in exposing the hollowness of the demand; it was called off before the week was out. At SM Hall the highlights for February were the observance of Shahid Nazir Day, the holding

of Tennis Finals on the 9th when Mrs Murshed, the wife of Mr Justice Murshed gave away the trophy to our winners Nuruzzaman and partner, the holding of a parliamentary session on the 11th under the chairmanship of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Abdul Hakim, who by his wild and abnormal ways had made himself a popular hero, of a dinner party on the 16th to meet Dr A Latif, one of our House Tutors, on the eve of his departure for Rajshahi University, and of a debate on the 20th on "The World is Ruled by Ideas, not by Force". This year the Shahid Day on the 21st February was organised as a Joint Function by all the Hall Unions. It appeared that at long last the demand of the students for an impressive memorial structure on the spot where Barkat and Salam had been shot dead was about to be fulfilled. The Aaur Rahman Govt. had just ordered for its construction and for about a week preceding 21st, the CandW Deptt engineers and workers were in feverish activity to put up a Mausoleum. Round-the-clock building operations were going on; we could have a direct view of these from the Provost's bungalow, and the mobility of traffic on the adjoining road was either diverted and hampered or slowed down to meet the emergency. On the 20th and the 21st nights the hastily got up pedestal and stairs and improvised screenings were brilliantly illuminated in curious conflict with the hoisting of black flags in all the Halls on the morning of the 21st when the place lay smothered under floral tributes. Spectacular, demonstrative processions came out and converged on the campus of the old Arts Buildings where an all-institutions meeting was held at 10 a.m. under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor himself. It was an unprecedented affair; the Vice-Presidents and General Secretaries of all institutions excepting those of the Jagannath College delivered speeches which were all, more or less fiery. In



conclusion the V-C talked sense. At the end of the month the University had a distinguished visitor in Sir Hamilton Gibb (HAR Gibb) who gave a talk on The Institutions of Ottoman Empire. Being an admirer of his works on Islam I listened to him with great attention and patience. The contents of the discourse were unmistakably marked by depth but his manner was disappointingly shy. There was a Garden Party in his honour on the 28th at the Vice-Chancellor's House. A simultaneous visit took place of 10/12 Chiefs of Tribal Areas, W.P. They were feted and lionised by the Government as well; they visited my Hall on the 15th of next month. The student agitation that began in January against the university being kept open during Ramadan succeeded at the end of February. On the 1st March the grandest ever function of SM Hall, namely its Annual Dinner, was held. For days on end before the event we made elaborate preparations which were charted with division of labour among the House Tutors, Asstt House Tutors and 60 volunteer-students. The latter were drilled and trained by me personally. I also exerted myself to eliminate sectional criticism which do occur in such a big Hall as ours. Covers were laid for 500 including 140 guests representing Deans, Provosts, Heads of Deptts, Readers, all members of the Executive Council, West Pakistan members of the National Union of Students (then on a visit), Regional Director of Dacca Radio Station, Vice-Presidents and General Secretaries of all Hall Unions and some former students of the Hall. All guests excepting the Vice-Chancellor, the Treasurer and three members of the Executive Council had arrived before the scheduled hour of eight; the latter were 35 minutes behind the schedule; this caused some disorder, and dinner which became cold was hurried through. Besides the Provost and two hall representatives, Dr M N Huda, Mr Justice Murshed, Dr Osman Ghani and the Vice-

Chancellor delivered after-dinner speeches. We thought we had done a good job but on the following night one unfortunate mishap in the Dining Hall led to direct intervention and bungling by the Vice-Chancellor who was responsible for creating chaotic conditions in the Hall administration. This incident calls for separate and fuller treatment. Despite the debacle and consequent hullabaloo of the 2nd March night there were "feasts" in the Dining Hall on the occasion of the Shab-i-Barat on the 6th evening and the tempo of activities continued uninterrupted. On the 7th we had the SM Hall Night School Sports; the same evening at Curzon Hall was staged the Installation of the Dacca University Central Students Union (DUCSU). It was an interesting experience to be present there on account of the following features: 1. Very few recipients of prizes attended. 2. Poor quality of speeches of incoming and outgoing Office-bearers. 3. The outgoing Vice-President, Nazmul Huq, stood for the closing of the university during the Ramadan whereas the incoming Vice-President, Badrul Alam, indicated opposition. The latter was a hot favourite of the Vice-Chancellor and also his close associate. 4. The Chief Guest Dr Mahmud Hasan's speech. He spoke without microphone. But he was clear, eloquent and retrospectively allusive to his own achievements as Vice-Chancellor and later outside the university inclusive of his oft-told tale of interview with the Governor (Chancellor) of undivided Bengal regarding the closing of Dacca University during World War II and also inclusive of a unique news that he had been an Aligarh man along with Dr Shafaat Ahmed Khan. He had been at Calcutta University from the Intermediate to Post-Graduate stage. We had just published after two years the 1956 issue of the Hall Magazine; its non-publication meanwhile was caused by the roguery of two successive editors; I refrain from going into the details of their

swindle; the publication now followed from the devoted service of some of the right-minded members of the cabinet and the vital interest taken by the present editor, Mr A T M Mahbubul Huq. Even some former members of earlier cabinets pestered me with carping criticism of the issue brought out. After about one month I got a House Tutor in Doctor Abdul Latif's place. On the 18th March Vice-Admiral Choudhury gave a talk in our Hall at 6-20 p.m. Earlier he attended at 4.30 p.m. a reception at the Vice-Chancellor's house. The latter couldn't participate in either on account of his illness. The authorities directed that I was to take the chair at the Hall meeting but our 'venerable', bearded, deaf Professor, Dr Quazi Motahar Hussain, arrived at the scene in a flutter, created a scene and insisted on presiding. Bemused I yielded. Strange things happen in life. This was followed by the celebration of Spring Festival by the SM Hall students. The University went into the long recess in a couple of days.

When I recall and remember my work in the first three months of 1958 in particular, and in the context of the circumstances in which I was placed I get overwhelmed with life's stipudities and wickednesses, its meannesses and intrigues even in the highest seat of learning. Here a heterogeneous body of learners (or those who profess to be learners on enrolment) and a mixed bag of teachers with another mixed bag of administrators are thrown together. Their purpose and direction are seldom visible. Most of them among the students receive command from self-constituted leaders; their teacher counterparts are mostly spineless; these latter have only one care in life, which is to be safe with their jobs. The clever students ('clever' in bad sense) are busy in forming parties and creating influence; their teacher counter-parts practise unworthy technique in worshipping bosses' for the sake of quick preferment; people

with administrative duties from the highest to the smallest are bent upon perpetuating their own positions; all means are justifiable to further their own ends. They move in a vicious circle. Who are we? Wherefrom do we come? Whither shall we go? What is right and what is wrong?—these are questions which seldom occur and which are dismissed as "metaphysical conceits" to be practised by the fools. If I were to handle just a small portion of my entries in my diary I would fill volumes which none will be interested to read in a busy world. Our Vice-Chancellor had been a chronic invalid for whom it was not possible to play the dominant role he was expected to play. But his physical handicaps he sought to surmount with his lawyer's brains. He was surrounded on all sides by scholars whom he desired to be his intimate family members at their best or errand-boys at their worst. He wouldn't have any understanding of those who had been occupied fully with their teaching and administrative duties. The strength that proceeds from integrity of conduct; the charm that follows from cultural attainments, expressions of the spirit of independence were anathema to him. He was not fit enough to attend meetings of the Standing Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Inter-University Board at Karachi from 30th January to 1st February. He professed to be opposed to the venue at Karachi and persuaded us, the other two members, not to attend. On the 11th and 25th February he couldn't preside at A.C. meetings. On the 26th February he had the same physical trouble to guide the deliberations of the Scholarship Award Committee. His sickness prevented him from presiding at the Academic Council meeting held on the 12th March, and on the 18th March he was too weak to attend Vice-Admiral Choudhury's reception at his own house and later the SM Hall meeting addressed by the Admiral. But all the while he tried to main-

tain his hold with a technique in administration that seldom pays in the long run. The SM Hall Union Vice-President and General Secretary were habitually in his company. By March the DUCSU Vice-President got closer still and became the channel of all 'information' and advice in university affairs. Similarly some members of the teaching staff of a particular complexion formed his inner circle. They had their own ambition to fulfil while he had his own ways to tackle a large group of politician-colleagues. Some members of the Executive Council were his own admirers and supporters whom he utilized in decentralizing 'powers' centred somewhere in his own secretariat or lopping away one or two tall poppies on the teaching staff. But these were his own 'affairs' perfectly in line with the longstanding traditions of Dacca University. In 1957 after the Inter-University Board meetings his 'surprise' visit to SM Hall would appear to be a sort of gerrymandering. In the light of subsequent moves from January 1958 onwards it became patent how I, the Provost of SM Hall, became a subject or rather an object of special interest to him. At the Iqbal Hall Annual Dinner on 27th January, at Dr Deb's dinner on 2nd February, at his Secretary Zaman's dinner on the 16th February, to name only some, I sensed a spirit of 'searching study' and impatience with the attentions I received from my friends and acquaintances. On the 9th February during the SM Hall Tennis Finals I smelt a rat. A definite course of 'debunking' me had begun; a severe blow of 'humiliation', as will be clear from the lines that followed was inflicted on me by the Vice-Chancellor on the 22nd February, with a smile on his lips. The 9th February episode was too unusual to miss. Mr Justice Murshed was the Chief Guest and Mrs Murshed requested to give away the trophy. This choice was of the students themselves, not mine. Unlike all practices in this direction by other

Provosts and heads of institutions. I never suggested the names of visitors or managed to bring people of my own choice. Men in key positions bring influential powerful guests to serve their own ends. On the 9th February the Vice-Chancellor joined us later than Mr and Mrs Murshed, watched just for a few minutes and then left excusing himself on the ground of a "function" at his own house. Our Vice-President Abdullah and General Secretary Sheikh Habibur Rahman left shortly after without any excuse. It was learnt afterwards that they and some other student leaders were entertained by the Vice-Chancellor at his house. On the 11th February in the 'parliamentary' that was organised in the Hall by Abdullah and Habibur Rahman there was a 'carnival of bad manners'. On the following day the Installation Ceremony of the new Agha Khan took place. I had a full programme from 5 a.m. to lunch time with files, classes and a meeting. In the evening Habibur Rahman thrust himself on me at my bungalow and got me to modify our settled list of volunteers to work with the Army. Having had to do the same without the official records and to write out credentials in my own hand I resented his interference in administrative affairs and warned him for the future. He had no cultural background; as a student he was a third rater but he thought too much of his Union position which he pronounced as Zi (G) S. The same he exploited too in running a private 'business' of his own in which he gradually amassed a few thousand rupees as profit. I had information about this from a colleague very much later. But he had demoniac energy. His native boorishness reinforced his overbearing rudeness; his present rank and growing fortune, his personal touch with the V-C made him uncontrollably bloated. My warning hurt his amour-propre and he lost no time in stabbing me in the back. It appeared later that on the evening of the 14th February

Abdullah and he met the Vice-Chancellor and lodged a verbal complaint alleging that I didn't attend the Provost's office and do my duties and that I misbehaved with the students. Mr B A Siddiky and EC member who was seated with the Vice-Chancellor was asked by the latter to look into their complaint. Without the slightest hint or information to me Mr BA Siddiky inspected the Dining Hall and the Bath Rooms of SM Hall on the evening of the 17th February. When some people in the Hall told me about this visit on the 18th and couldn't comprehend the meaning and purpose of such an unprecedented course but I had a full lesson on the 22nd February at 12 noon when the Vice-Chancellor displayed his hand. That morning after having met my class from 9.30 a.m. to 10.20 a.m. I hurried to his house just to attend a meeting for the consideration of Michigan University Student Exchange Programme. It was a short meeting of a small Committee which requested me to obtain details and particulars from the Director of the Dacca USIS or others concerned. Then the V-C started talking in a leisurely fashion on varied university topics till about 12 noon when other members left. I invited him to a Dinner Party at my house the same evening in celebration of the marriage of my fourth son. He accepted it and then produced a classic document for me to read. It was a short report of inspection of SM Hall made by Mr BA Siddiky on the evening of the 17th February. It said in effect that under the direction of the Vice-Chancellor he had gone into the Dining Hall and found it dirty; he further found that the drains attached had not been cleaned for a year. Then he looked into the bath-rooms. About the drains and the bath-rooms he made some proposals for improvement. In the next place he recommended the removal of the House Tutors. He further proposed that an explanation be called from the Provost, which proving unsatisfactory pro-

ceedings should be drawn up against him on the ground of irregularity in attendance and misbehaviour to students. Mr Ibrahim smiled and smiled as I was having a glance. At 12-15 (noon) I hurried home to say good-bye to my daughter who was about to leave for the airport to fly to Karachi. I was next in my office at 12.30 p.m. and continued working there till 2.40 p.m. Forwarded by the V-C's Secretary and calling for a report from the Provost this document was delivered to me next day. The dinner party at my bungalow the same evening was a pretty big affair. My son and daughter-in-law both being Final Year MB college students, the Surgeon-General and the Medical College staff attended in strength. My own friends on the teaching staff and outside attended too. Altogether there were 60 guests including the Vice-Chancellor and some Judges of the High Court. An atmosphere of informal cordiality prevailed and it appeared to me that the guests enjoyed the feed and the company.

A glance at the salient activities and engagements I have already recorded in regard to January-to-March period (numerous other routine duties having been omitted) should be sufficient to show whether I had been enjoying a sinecure or whether a powder-magazine such as the SM Hall was, on which I was sitting permitted sloth and shirking. Indeed beyond this period and throughout the long recess from 21st March to 30th May I had seldom any rest from most trying duties. And yet on the foundation of invisible allegations and one verbal complaint by two student leaders the administrative head of the University presented me with a sheet of indictment and wholesale condemnation drawn up by an outsider while all the time I had been in daily contact with him in attending meetings and discussions, social and literary functions, while all the time he would assign to me responsible extra duties.



Two days after the condemnation I had to preside at the Academic Council meeting in his place. And my hands were too full to apply them to the drawing up of a report on the indictment. The Annual Dinner on the 1st March had called for a week-long preparation. The following night came very handy to the Vice-Chancellor. The meat that was served in the West House Mess that evening was reported to be rotten. Some members ate it without any smell but some others became angry, kicked up a row, formed a group and instead of approaching me marched to the V-C's bungalow and made a demonstration of meat-cups there. The Vice-Chancellor instead of referring them to me proceeded to the Hall at 11 p.m. and stayed on there till 1 in the morning listening to outbursts of anger against the House Tutor concerned and against all others not directly concerned that evening. From reports received by me next morning it was clear that the two Administrative House Tutors who had been at their job for a dozen years had to go through harrowing experiences of abusive accusations for the whole length of two hours during which they were lynched. They tendered their resignations and asked for immediate relief; the third HT who was merely a collecting agent resigned too. The fourth post was vacant since the departure of Dr Abdul Latif in the preceding month. The indictment made by Mr BA Siddiky at the instance of the chief was already there. And now the V-C created an administrative crisis. All through the day and till late in the evening I conducted an investigation allaying unnecessary worry to the House Tutors and soothing the aroused passions of the students and there was ALL QUIET on the Hall FRONT next morning. Buying of foodstuffs, cooking, service, were the responsibility of the House Mess Committee under the general supervision of the Administrative House Tutor. In actual practice, however, the

money was advanced by the latter and everything also was done by the cook under the control of the Mess Manager for the month. On this occasion the cook was wholly responsible for the rotten meat and he was fined heavily and eventually dismissed. I have already stated how the two House Tutors had no interest in their day to day supervision; they had also other heavy duties. The West House gentleman was generally strict; his counterpart in the East House had a finished exterior blandness and unfathomable complexity within. He pulled many wires within and without the Hall and he had many remunerative jobs in the office of the Controller of Examinations. The former was just completing the construction of his own house and was sincere in the tendering of his resignation; he gave one month's notice too. The latter, however, made a show of his seriousness in calling for immediate relief but actually was unwilling to go. He entered upon a course of manoeuvring with the Vice-Chancellor and with student leaders including the redoubtable G.S. He ran with the hare and hunted with the hound and that was too much for me. I took him at his profession and asked for immediate relief. But now it was the Vice-Chancellor's turn to go on angling and fishing in troubled waters. He interviewed my nominees on written proposals on the 6th March but declined to issue orders of acceptance of resignations and new appointments without Ex-Council decisions; he went back upon his own words given on the 5th March. And he kept the Sores running till the 8th April when my pressure compelled him to accept the resignations formally. He also sought industriously and indecently to first one of his own men on me—one whose antecedents before appointment to the university were very questionable. Only on the 18th April he gave his approval to my proposals of successors to the outgoing House Tutors. The

famous or infamous inspection of my Hall by Mr BA Siddiky added fuel to the burning zeal of the General Secretary Sk Habibur Rahman for the extension and consolidation of his power; his interference in administration and his dictation about what should or shouldn't be done became more and more outrageous and he was seeking opportunities to create greater troubles but I handled him with Himalayan patience and addressed myself to the execution of my duties with sleepless vigilance. Tara Mian of M.C. College, Sylhet, didn't have an elective status in residence. Nor did he nestle under the protecting wings of the Education Directorate. Professor Habibur Rahman (minus the 'Shekh' of this gentleman) had to work under cover. Dr Shastri swaggered and bullied and conspired as well but he gave himself away in words and deeds which didn't accord with his own responsibilities in high administrative service. Nevertheless my armour in each case as in the present was truth and unfailing devotion to duty, and truth is mighty and shall prevail. On Sunday the 16th March despite other demands on my time I prepared a chart of my engagements and occupations from the 7th January, 1958, (the day on which the University reopened after the cold weather recess to the 17th February, the day on which Mr Siddiky inspected SM Hall) to meet the impeachment drawn up in the report. I devoted three afternoons from the 20th March to write out my own defence and comments. When I got it typed out and had it ready for despatch to the Vice-Chancellor on the 4th April I found it ran to 16 pages. From hour to hour entries in my diary I gave a lie direct to the vindictive and malicious allegations against me and raised constitutional issues regarding the institution of the inquiry and the demand for an explanation (although I didn't shirk explaining). Mr Siddiky had asked for EC decisions and my prayer was for the same. The receipt of

my report by the Vice-Chancellor had the immediate effect of acceptance by him of the resignations of the House Tutors kept deliberately pending so long. In a few days he gave approval to my recommendations of successors. In a verbal discussion on this occasion the Vice-Chancellor tried to exonerate himself from the step he had taken in asking Mr Siddiky to have a look and said that I shouldn't have taken the matter so seriously. Later he shelved the matter altogether. But he didn't have to wait long for a boomerang on himself. To this I shall return presently. But before doing so let me say a word or two about the two principal House Tutors. Khandker Abdur Rahman, Lecturer in Arabic and House Tutor, West House, vacated his quarters and released himself from his own duties without a word to me on the night of the 11th April. When I discovered it on the following morning I had some idea of the observance of service rules and regulations by the staff of Dacca University. I inspected his residential quarters and found them in the filthiest state. As I was half way through in reporting this matter to the authorities he turned up (it was 11.15 a.m.) and handed over to me Rs 2698.75 representing Hall funds with him and although he couldn't explain why he had retained such a huge balance during the vacation his accounts and records appeared to be properly maintained. I noted it in my report exactly as it happened and sent it up. But the second gentleman, the Administrative House Tutor of the East House Mr Bhuiyan wouldn't quit. The acceptance of his resignation on the 8th April was followed by an agitation led by the General Secretary, Sk Habibur Rahman, who day after day pestered me with student deputations for retaining Mr Bhuiyan who was however compelled by me to make over charge on the 25th April. According to his own verbal statement he had a balance of Rs 3000/- approximately with him. Asked to bring it for

despatch to the Bank he CD produce only Rs 1000/- and failed to account for the balance. The following day being a Sunday he had advice enough from friends and understand the implications of his failure and retrieved the position on the 27th April. But a rough and ready examination of his accounts and records continued for three or four days more, in course of which many other irregularities were detected. He apologised copiously and asked for adjustment of another Rs 1100/- from the union funds of which he was the Treasurer. Vindictiveness being alien to my nature I allowed adjustments desired by him. Besides I had the fullest realisation of the most exacting nature of the duties of an Administrative House Tutor in SM Hall where ill-bred, irresponsible, troublesome graduates and undergraduates do not treat him with the courtesy and consideration he deserves. Is there any organisation in which a good percentage of reasonably efficient men are available? We have got to get on with the material available and touch it up as far as in humanly possible. I was keenly alive to the deficiencies of the two men under discussion and I had been directing and guiding them in my own way. At once I was aware of their good points as well. I never reported against them although I handled personally many of their duties. But Mr Siddiky walks in, has a glance at the Dining Hall table cloths on which meals are served for 400 people morning and evening, finds them dirty and recommends their dismissal ex parte. He finds adacent drains dirty—the drains which had radical defects in construction and had manual cleaning from shirking sweepers, concludes that these were not cleaned for a year and proposes that proceedings be drawn up against the Chief Sweeper and also Inspector of Drains, namely the Provost. He didn't realise that one day's negligence would beat the filth of an Augean stable. The Vice-Chancellor sees meat-

cups in display, walks into the Hall at 11 p.m. and stays there till 1 am to listen Harunar Rashid—like to the woes of feeders who wouldn't take the slightest interest in their own mess affairs but abuse their House Tutors in vituperative language. Repeatedly since my assumption of office I had asked for a care-taker (or supervisor), one butler, marble-top tables, and decent chairs but no heed whatsoever had been paid to my written requests. And now the Vice-Chancellor asked me to prepare estimates for a Central Govt grant. He created the ugliest of situations and most unenviable problems for me. I had insuperable difficulties in finding decent and capable teachers to work as House Tutors in the wake of the panic he had caused among them by his midnight check-up of meat-plates.

And now for the boomerang he had from some of the same people he had pampered from the beginning of the year. Ten days before the re-opening of the university after the long vacation a student agitation began to have Degree Honours and Master's Preliminary Degree Examinations postponed. Although the Vice-Chancellor had received information from authoritative sources about the strength and volume of this agitation he made a show of his own determination to adhere to schedule and got his own henchmen in the Academic Council to turn down on the 2nd June requests of the examinees. On the following day when a violent demonstration was staged at his bungalow, his unyielding attitude of the preceding day was unabatedly shaken; he promised postponement and in the adjourned meeting of the A.C. got it passed by the same body that had vociferously gone against it 24 hours earlier. After two days two rival groups of students clashed over minor incidents in the Arts campus, extended their violence to SM Hall premises in the evening and repeated the same on the following day. We, Provosts and Deans and the Proctor, exert-

ed ourselves to check the disorder against which the Vice-Chancellor was feeling helpless. His protege, Sk Habibur Rahman, proved defiant and uncontrollable. In another ten days he led a far worse demonstration against the Vice-Chancellor over postponement of the Final MA, MSc, M.Com exams and continued it for four days in course of which the Vice-Chancellor's car was stoned and his personal safety jeopardised. Habibur Rahman's part in these lawlessness activities became widely known. On the morning of 25th June in an immediate meeting of Provosts and Heads of Departments the Vice-Chancellor gave a vivid picture of the indignities to which he had been subjected and called for the enforcement of disciplinary measures. His call appeared to be so solemn and fervent and serious that the Heads of Departments were visibly moved. The centre of the storm was placed at the SM Hall. I was glum and silent through the presentation of the case and the discussions that followed. Eventually I was jabbed into a pronouncement of my views and of what I knew about the issues raised. Nothing could be more welcome to a lifelong practitioner of orderly behaviour than a call for discipline, I said, and that my wholehearted support would be available in any circumstances to disciplinary action against the disturbers of the academic peace. Then I gave a few concrete instances of how indiscipline was being handled by the authorities, how over my head they were entertaining, and giving direct indulgence to, lawbreakers in SM Hall. Only on the 23rd June a number of students who had no authority to continue in residence at SM Hall submitted a direct application to the V-C who had forwarded it to me for consideration. The same G.S. who was one of the leading agitators on the present occasion was being allowed to move in the highest circles including an interview with the Chancellor etc. etc. Let me have, I claimed, sup-

port against indiscipline and I would prove on the 26th June (the day fixed for the next meeting of the Academic Council for the consideration of postponement of Master's degree examination) whether the SM Hall contingent should be amenable to a code of decency in their prayer. Hasty, ill-advised rejection of good cases by pliant bodies was responsible for aggravation. Since the Honours Exams had been postponed after professedly "unalterable decisions" it would be a logical corollary to grant a reasonable extension of time to the candidates for the Master's degree exams. The Heads of Departments who had no knowledge of how cases of indiscipline were being handled raised their eyebrows at the very limited number of cases I had mentioned and they had their second thoughts over the Vice-Chancellor's apparently solemn stand. There was a somewhat abrupt conclusion and I received apologies from friends that they had misunderstood my apparently inexplicable silence in the meeting. I went back to my Hall, gathered round me all the leaders and told them how the slightest deviation from orderly conduct would be visited with the sternest measures. The following afternoon they were perfectly well-behaved when the A.C. meeting was on and they gained their objective. But the Vice-Chancellor ever learnt; till the moment of his departure in October to join as the Central Law Minister he entertained Habibur Rahman's direct petition against the Provost's decision in a matter which was not admissible.

People who will have the patience and kindness to go through these pages are respectfully invited to turn back for a moment to my introductory paragraphs to the year 1958 and refresh their memory about the three-monthly political gambling that was going on in the parliamentary form of government of the province. The March-April duel ending in the ouster of Abu Hussain Sarkar and Mr AK Fuzul Huq was now



witnessing in June the exit and re-entry of Aatur Rahman Khan and Abu Hussain Sarkar respectively. And in three/four days the position was reversed with the re-entry of Mr Khan and the exit of Mr Sarkar. Three months hence with the death of the Deputy Speaker Mr Shahed Ali the death-knell of democracy was signed. All the three political events, however, did not affect politically the students of Dacca University; even the bloodshed on the 23rd September within the Legislative Assembly didn't upset the academic apple cart; classes were held on the 24th September; the autumn recess began on the 25th September, the day on which the Deputy Speaker died. The students were busy with their own internal politics. In March the Provost and House Tutors of SM Hall were having a day of reckoning with the Vice-Chancellor and his close associates; in June the Vice-Chancellor himself was being paid back in his own coins; in Mid-September while the SM Hall Union was about to celebrate an eight-day schedule of literary, social and cultural activities our formidable "Zi"(G). S. Shekh Habibur Rahman, ruthlessly assaulted in the Assembly Hall at 2.45 p.m. in the presence of a crowd the Librarian of the Union, AKM Hedayetul Huq. He is a highplaced C.S.P. officer now, who was a Kali Narayan Scholar; the Governor Mr Sultanuddin Ahmed was formally opening the Book Exhibition the same day at 4 p.m. On the day that Mr Shahed Ali died and on the following two days I was being constantly bullied and intimidated by the General Secretary because of my investigation of the assault case. The two had been quarreling when the preparations were on over precedence. One was brawny and brutal, the other was lean and a trifle hysterical. A few minutes after the exchange of blows or rather the raining of blows by Habibur Rahman and a few scratchings made by Huq on the chin and neck of his assailant I arrived on the scene and with the ready

support of all students succeeded in averting the disgrace and scandal of a breakdown in the ambitiously planned programme. I promised an impartial inquiry and a just punishment. The aggressive lawbreaker having withdrawn from the scene for the rest of the day Hedayetul Huq had the precedence that was legitimately his in the inauguration of the Book Exhibition. All the fixtures in the programme were gone through successfully, the final one having taken place on the 23rd September. A patient inquiry begun immediately after the incident and conducted with meticulous care with the recording of evidence of witnesses of both parties was concluded towards the end of the month. I wrote out a regular judgment based on a charge-sheet and defence and fined Habibur Rahman Rs 10/- ten only on the 4th October. This was a penalty in the exclusive discretion of the Provost to which there was no appeal according to the university ordinances. Although there was not the slightest reaction among the students against the judgment the offender moved about frantically and used all his bullying tactics against me. His grievance was that I hadn't given him preferential treatment as General Secretary but on the contrary rated him as an ordinary student. He submitted a direct representation to the Vice-Chancellor who accepted it and sent it to the Provost's office for a report on the eve of his departure for Karachi as a Central Minister on the 26th October. His administrative technique had an unmodified pattern.

But I have jumped many events in the interim. Mr Madani, the Chairman of the Dacca Improvement Trust did two remarkable services to our Union during 1958. He had an extension built to the small canteen building of the students. The work started in May and was completed by October. He had promised to furnish a number of concrete benches to the

Shahid Park which received from him the further amenity of illumination at night with all appliances supplied by the trust. 10 concrete benches with light mosaic atop, each costing approximately Rs 75/- were available on the 30th October. With the balance of funds still available from Mr Suh-rawardy's donation in December, 1956, a lounge was fitted up at the entrance to the Assembly Hall with adaptations carried out by the University to a small room used as sports gear stores and situated just opposite to the Darwan's Post. A Nigerian Goodwill Mission of five visited our Hall on the 11th July. On the 1st August we received and entertained at Tea a team of students from California; a symposium followed in course of which Miss Weaver, one of the members, delivered an exceedingly attractive speech. Invited by the Education Department the Vice-Chancellor desired that I should organise a reception at SM Hall on behalf of all Hall Unions to an International Student Delegation of four, which arrived at Dacca on the 20th August. My Vice-President along with the General Secretary quarrelled with Abeed Hussain, a founder General Secy., and a sponsor of the present visit, canvassed all the other unions and adopted a combined resolution not to accord a student reception. The delegation consisted of 1) Roland Morell (Sweden) 2) Molina (Bolivia) 3) Jamal (Malaya) 4) Paterson (Australia). I forestalled the indecent move of Abdullah and Habiur Rahman by organising a grand reception at my bungalow at my own cost on the 22nd August. I invited 35 people including the Registrar, the Proctor, House Tutors and Hall leaders, the Director of Physical Education, D.U., the Planning Adviser to the Govt of East Pakistan, Abeed Hussain, Mushtaque Karim (the last two were included in an East Pak student delegation to China. At the end of the party I took the delegates to SM Hall and showed them round. Next week (on the 29th August to be

precise) we had a couple of amusing visitors to our Hall from the Federation of West Indies; they were ministers of the Govt; one of them, Kamaluddin Mohammad with the portfolio of Agriculture, a young man, gave the airs of high importance on his arrival and observed that he had no time to spare for going round. From me he had a devastating retort to the effect that he had better turn back and leave immediately since my time was much more valuable than his. It may be noted here that many of these delegations were thrust upon us by the Registrar of the Dacca University with the request that the Provost was to receive them personally. Mr. Kamaluddin kept quiet afterwards. On the 4th September my afternoon was spoilt by rings from different quarters including one from the Secretary of the Chief Minister and another from the Home Secretary to bring together four students (two from my Hall) and to see that they were ready to proceed to China on the following day as student delegates to that country. I complied, and Abeer Hussain and Mushtaque Karim of my Hall were courteous enough to call on me at 9 p.m. to wish goodbye on the eve of their departure. Explaining why I have used "spoilt afternoon" I like to state that whenever the Government considers it convenient they use leading students to serve their own ends but when the latter go against the Government on political issues unpalatable to them they are condemned as lawless and undisciplined; they are moreover treated to mouthful homilies that they should exclusively devote themselves to their studies and not dabble in politics. When student leaders are feted and lionised in this way they lose their bearing naturally enough and are defiant to their own academic authorities. Even after the introduction of Martial Law they had easy access to high places. On the 8th September, 1958, the Assembly Hall of SM Hall was the venue of an event which for years to come proved to be a great boon

and blessings to our students at Honours and Post-Graduate levels. Their hardships in regard to the availability of standard text books in various subjects were acute. For one thing these were not simply available in the market; for another even when available our students couldn't afford the prices. The USIS having a correct appraisal of this dire need organised relief by the procurement of 2500 volumes of text books of strong, de luxe editions. Dr Nurul Huda, then Head of the Economics Department, served as the Coordinating Officer of the demand and the supply. This invaluable gift was made and received in an exquisitely moving ceremony on the 8th September. Messrs White, Fiske and Colvin on behalf of the donors and the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Huda and Abdullah Siddiqui (Vice-President, SM Hall Union) on behalf of the recipient delivered emotional speeches. The Heads of Departments have since maintained their respective lists and issued them for use by the students for required periods. The books go out and come back after use by generations of students who would have failed otherwise to procure them. The Deputy Speaker Mr Shahed Ali's death on the 25th September from the injury he had sustained on the 23rd did cast a gloom in the mind of every thoughtful man in Pakistan. In academic circles at Dacca there was an occasion for deep grief on the 28th September when the Registrar of DU received a cable from Mrs Jenkins to the effect that Dr W.A. Jenkins, Vice-Chancellor for 3 years in the immediate past, has just died from a stroke. He had left late in December, 1956. He had always been fit, strong, hardworking. We never found him sick or sorry. It was Donne who said "the death of everyman diminishes me". Dr Jenkins's death should have stirred everybody of Dacca University but alas! it was a callous world on which the news fell. There was not even a show of mourning. The Registrar issued a notice on the following day that all

offices should be closed at 2 p.m.; my office received it at 2:30 p.m. That was all. But in the same world deaths and death anniversaries of many are observed and celebrated with a noise and an exploited purpose that are mean and shocking.

Dacca University's autumn recess began on the 25th September and ended on the 27th October. Its reopening on the 28th coincided with the exit of Iskander Mirza and the assumption of all powers by General Mohammad Ayub Khan. Normal work in the university was resumed and continued since. Since August I had been having disquieting news about the serious illness of my only surviving brother in Calcutta. He was subsequently removed to Nilratan Sarkar Medical College Hospital where he had a mild stroke which not only weakened his left arm but caused a continuous tremor in it (excepting during sleep). His condition became pitiful and called for my presence. By the time my travel documents were ready Martial Law was proclaimed; in fact I booked my seat on the 9th October to fly on the morning of the 11th October. The past three days had been absolutely uneventful. There was no bang, not even a whimper. Not a soldier was seen on the streets. My early morning trip to the airport of Dacca had all the charm of a fresh, dewy, solitary morning walk. I was riding a cycle rickshaw, and one of my sons a bicycle to see me off. I was at the airport at 6.30 a.m.; the Customs and Passport Police took slightly over half an hour to give a clearance when I saw an array of Secretariat officials including the Chief Secretary and other secretaries, drawn up in a line in the apron to receive somebody from Karachi. Major General Omrao Khan, the Martial Law Administrator in the East Zone, Sir Nazimuddin, Ex Speaker of the Central Legislature Mr Abdul Wahab Khan, Vice-Chancellor Mr Mohammad Ibrahim were also there. Just then the PIA Super-Constallation taxied up; out came Mr Zaker

Hussain, formerly IGP, East Bengal, and later Chairman, F.P.S.C., to receive a ceremonial welcome—even in normal times such an event causes dislocation to normal movements. But we had to face no such thing. We boarded our plane immediately afterwards on schedule. A look at the Pakistan Observer aboard removed all doubt; Mr Hussain had arrived as the Governor of East Pakistan. A civilian government would function subject to restrictions that might he imposed by Martial Law Rules and Orders. When I landed in Calcutta by 8.30 a.m. (EP Time) I received insistent inquiries from all present at the Dum Dum airport about our 'fate' at the dispensation of the Martial Law regime. Some people at the Immigration Police counter went to the length of suggesting that now that I was in India I needn't conceal anything from fear. They didn't believe that the transition was noiselessly smooth. My stay in Calcutta continued till the forenoon of 25th October when I flew back to Dacca. Two of my sons along with their wives had also been there on holiday trips. We visited our sick brother at the Hospital forenoon and afternoon and rendered what little help we could. He didn't have any idea of the foreign exchange difficulties or those of travels between the two places. The aftermath of his stroke didn't respond to the Hospital treatment which was mainly trying to eliminate sugar. When it became fairly clear that the Hospital authorities would discharge ere long such a chronic case he told me "I am a man of some education; how can I ignore the dread and horror of being thrown out on the street the moment I am discharged?" Immediately elder to me he was 63, a practising lawyer in the Calcutta Police Courts and earning barely enough to maintain himself, his latest comparatively young wife and three little kids. He had already used up 50% of his share of inherited, landed property and had no Bank balance to fall back upon. To transfer him

to Dacca with his dependent family would have been an act of folly. I therefore made all arrangements to transfer them to our village home the moment my brother was discharged. This eventuality occurred by the 15th of November. He struggled on for a year and a half in the midst of proper medical care and most affectionate sick-nursing by our relations. I visited him in December each of 1958 and 1959. During the 15 days of October that I spent in Calcutta I had a larking tension that I would be summonsd back to Dacca peremptorily to meet the exigencies of the situation created by the administrative changeover. I apprehended, and very wrongly too, that the new government would, among other things, turn their attention to the Dacca University, particularly to its Halls of residence for a thorough overhauling and for giving a healthier, saver direction to student activities. But I received no call. Having landed at Dacca on the early afternoon of 25th October I made anxious inquiries of my grown-up sons and later of my Hall staff whether the Vice-Chancellor had already introduced some reforms under the orders of the government. There was no trace of any interest anywhere. On the way out I learnt about Mr Zaker Hussain's new assignment; during the return flight I had a full list of Central Govt Ministers from both wings from the Pakistan Observer. Although there was considerable bumping in the bad weather conditions through which I was flying I couldn't take my eyes off the East Wing contingent. I rubbed my eyes once, twice, thrice at their names. But they were there all the same. We, academics, always befool ourselves by holding on to the belief that the State limbs and organs, especially of a revolutionary regime, should have scope only for effectency and drive. Our Vice-Chancellor left for Karachi on the following afternoon to take over as Central Law Minister. On the 28th October i.e. on the re-opening day Mr Abdur Rashid, then



Education Secretary, took over as a part-time Vice-Chancellor. Radio Pakistan's 6.30 p.m. Dacca News on the 4th November announced the part-time appointment of Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman as Vice-Chancellor.

Before I deal with the new dispensation in University administration let me refer to the change I felt and noticed in the general life of the community, introduced by the Martial Law regime. On landing at Dacca airport I sensed a panic among my sons who received me, and later in my family. We had an immense compound in the outskirts of which there were jungles; in the kitchen area there was some accumulated garbage. These must be cleared forthwith. That was the proclaimed order failing which military penalty would be imposed. At SM Hall as in other Halls, among householders, shopkeepers, and the general public there was a consternation. Everywhere cleaning up operations were in full swing; in a couple of days Ramna and Dacca (old town) were filth-free. Among all classes of Government employees there was a dread about unpunctuality, laziness and other rampant sins. In every office military officers were stationed to enforce dutifulness and speeding up of arrears. In the Mufassil all branches of administration had to carry out their responsibilities under the orders and supervision of representatives from the armed forces. Anti-social trade and commercial transactions were dealt out whipping and summary trials only in some cases, especially in the interior, but everyone everywhere shared in the universal apprehension of severe punishment. Shortly afterwards the gates of the E. Pak Secretariat were slammed down after the arrival hour to exclude late comers. Despite dread there was an undercurrent of hope that there would presently be an end of administrative wicked-nesses and tyranny. Ere long corrupt officials galore were screened out and in due course EBDO proceedings were instituted against corrupt

ministers, and legislators entrusted with public duties in the deposed government.

But I have wandered far from my own sphere. There was no visible impact on student behaviour in my own Hall which continued to be a plague spot of many problems created by the leader of the **একদুত** Party A R Yusuff and his close followers on the Union Cabinet and without. For a year they had been consistently hampering administrative functioning under the weak-kneed policy of Mr Ibrahim and they continued to do so after he had left. With a new set of House Staff who had become acquainted with their duties meanwhile we had already turned seriously to the detection and elimination of irregular conduct on the part of resident students. Many who had ceased to be students or couldn't be permitted to continue beyond the normal four-year (3 yrs for Hons. and 1 year for Post-Graduate studies) period wouldn't simply quit on one pretext or another; many would share beds with others; there were some who were working as teachers elsewhere or in offices and who wouldn't heed verbal and written orders to make room for eligible newcomers. The question of forcing them out physically didn't arise; the enforcement of university ordinances in regard to residence and dining hall payments should have been the normal order but it was not. We now gave them final warning to quit. Among others Abdullah Siddiqui, the Vice-President who always egged on his G.S. to be rough and turbulent, was detected to be one of the leading law-breakers. He had ceased to be a student on the 30th June and he was holding a temporary Gazetted post with the Govt. of E. Pakistan. He had now to quit on the 2nd November. The G.S. himself had been in Dining Hall arrears for four months and forfeited his right to continue in residence. But he wouldn't quit. Abdullah wanted to enjoy his privilege as Vice-President in Hall functions. Sk Habibur Rahman began new tactics to have his fine remitted

but he didn't succeed. One Tofall Ahmed had been the worst of offenders. He apologised for his past misdeeds and asked for condonation which was not admissible. Another gentleman, Nurunnabi, was another squatter. My hands were always too full to relax by a change of Vice-Chancellor. Shekh Habibur Rahman in trying out new experiments first attempted an uprising against my 'misbehaviour' with students, then an inspection of the hall by a Staff Reporter of the Pakistan Observer, then a proposal to promote me and to harass the new Vice-Chancellor. In regard to the last two he took on the role of an Achitophel to debauch an Absalour in me. On the 5th November one of the Staff Reporters of the Pakistan Observer along with a photographer went round the Hall (without my knowledge) and then came into the Provost's Room and had from me a short account of the hall. Before he left he had a snap of me in my working posture. On the 12th November several pictures of different parts of the SM Hall including the last were published in the paper along with a supporting article in the nature of a write-up which "was inspired by me" in the opinion of our friend Dr Muzherul Huq, Provost, Fuzlul Huq Hall. Actually the press men were brought in to run me down. On the 7th November Dr King and Dr Fries of the British Council Centre at Karachi being accompanied by Mr Ball of the local centre had first a look all over the place and then a discussion with me about the teaching of English language and literature at all levels in our educational system. They came at 9-30 a.m. and left at 11 a.m. They expressed great pleasure at what they saw and also at what they heard regarding the success or otherwise of English teaching in the future.

This should be a fit place to introduce the successor Government of Dacca University. Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman, the new Vice-Chancellor, held a meeting of Deans, Provosts, Heads of Deptts and the Proctor on the 7th November

from 4.05 p.m. to 5.15 p.m. He had taken over on the 5th. He began with great humility in "beseeching" (that was his own word) the help and cooperation of the assembled and then gradually warmed up to the core of his discourse making it clear at the same time that he had a lot of administrative experience as Deputy Mayor of Calcutta Corporation and that he had what was an unflinching trait in handling legal matters the habit of reading files. He went on to cite from what he had read during the last two days some concrete cases of unsatisfactory treatment of files. The substance of his address on this first day of his contact with the key men was : 1) Living within means in each Department keeping in view university deficit budgets but without impairing efficiency 2) Seeking no verbal orders from the Vice-Chancellor 3) Careful reading of files before submission of proposals. The first meeting of the Academic Council under him was held on the 22nd November from 4.30 p.m. to about 9 p.m. The deliberations were conducted with two initial instructions : i) No smoking ii) Everyone to speak standing. Both made a departure from existing convention. November was wearing towards its end and it was now time for the Vice-Chancellor to turn his attention to union elections in the Halls, which were generally held early in November. There was a widespread misgiving whether such elections would be held at all under the Martial Law Government. From informal discussions some of us had with him it appeared that he was in favour of the same but under restricted terms and conditions. On the 28th November he held a meeting of the Provosts and the Proctor, elaborated his views on these terms and conditions, asked for a note from each Provost about a more or less uniform pattern of holding elections. When these notes were available they would be moulded into a common shape and the rules and procedure of running the elections

drawn up. Further he consulted us whether we would endorse his proposal for giving a talk to the university students in general terms and with special reference to the elections. When we gave our warm support he fixed up 7th December, the venue being Curzon Hall. We spent the interim in preparing our notes for finalization in a joint meeting. At the Curzon Hall meeting on the 7th December, his first with the students, he gave a forty-five minute talk in course of which he first enunciated the two fold purpose of university education, namely, the development of critical faculty and the building up of character, and then tendered the advice that the students should always follow rules and regulations and avoid all waste. Turning to the Hall elections he said that these must be conducted not on party lines but on the basis of individual candidature; no corrupt practice would be permitted; the use of microphone was banned. On the 9th November we, the Provosts and the Proctor, met at 6 p.m. and broke up at 9.45 p.m. after having drawn up a final time-table for the elections and framing rules outside the constitution provisions of each hall and on the lines indicated by the Vice-Chancellor in his Curzon Hall speech. It was a ten-day schedule from announcement to polling, beginning on the 10th and ending on the 19th December. We had a hectic time in going through the formalities. The Dacca University students having long been inured to electioneering on political lines mostly outherod herod in the technical aspects of electoral rolls, eligibility of candidates by the application of constitutional tests, the filing, scrutiny and declaration of nominations, legalistic interpretation of rulings, appeal to authorities other than the Returning Officer. Yusuff, Mohsin and Misbah of my hall raised hair-splithing arguments and objections during scrutiny, demanded written rulings, called for appeal to Vice-Chancellor and when I gave my written deci-

sions with reasons on each count I was threatened with their resolve to go to the Law Courts. The next ticklish question was about written appeals to the voters or in other words election pamphlets and leaflets. The Vice-Chancellor had laid down clear rules about their size and contents and approval by the Provost before they could be printed. The result was a deluge of drafts to check and process. They were to be leaflets and free from political or party bias. But was it possible to weed out objectionable portions from the tough and the thoroughbred? However I did the best of a bad bargain in regard to the leaflets. The shape the elections took on the polling day in my hall had best be summarized here.

Polling day: SM Hall, 19/12/58: Went round, saw things from 8-55 a.m. to 11-55 noon; noisy crowd in the corridor; shouting; brisk canvassing; pressure on voters; at one moment there was about to be a free fight between Mohsin and his friends and Ashraf (?) and his group. I intervened and stopped it. Shouting and noise were forbidden by notification. A.R. Yusuf was whipping on the line of his একাদ্ত Party; leaflets were stitched together to signify the party of the candidates. Each batch of leaflets had a distinctive colour in print to indicate party label.

Attended once again for a few minutes from about 3 p.m. Things were going on smoothly now.

At 5 p.m. walked back to Hall from a party at English Preparatory School in the neighbourhood; the polling had just closed; students of all groups collected on the front stairs at the entrance to the hall and started delivering speeches one by one. Kept a watch till 6.30 p.m. and then came home [from my diary] 20th December; Provisional results were announced by the Returning Officer (one Adm. H. Tutor) subject to scrutiny and disposal of Election Complaints received yesterday by the Provost.

Shaful Alam declared provisionally Vice President  
Humayun Kabir declared provisionally General Secretary  
Ahsanul Huq declared provisional Athletic Secretary

21st December : Hearing of Election Complaints from 10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Disposed of all these. Final lists put up on the Notice Board.

The election of office-bearers and representatives on individual capacity and merit aimed by the Vice-Chancellor was a total failure. The একাদৃত Party swamped the board excepting a solitary example in Humayun Kabir who was prominent in the University as a capable scholar of outstanding merit. To this I shall return later.

We were now on the eve of the cold weather recess. On the 20th we had our second Academic Council meeting with the new Vice-Chancellor from 4.30 p.m. to 7-15 p.m.; the proceedings were orderly.

One or two things happening from early in December will not come amiss at this stage. On the 2nd December that is to say in less than a month since assumption the Vice-Chancellor's term of office was extended to five years; this had necessitated an amendment of the act. On the 10th December we observed at SM Hall on a successful scale the Human Rights Day. Two students, Humayun Kabir and Raushni, and two teachers, Messrs R A Khan and Hasan Zaman delivered speeches. Mr Zaman's written speech in Bengali was not only thoughtprovoking but also a distinct contribution to the conception of Human Rights. On the 12th December the English Department held at Hotel Shahbagh a farewell dinner to Mr Turner. The Pakistan Observer's farewell noticed earlier at some length in the course of this narrative was a propaganda stunt. He had returned from England in due course and instead of serving two sessions conceded to him by the E.C. with effect from the beginning of 1957 was leaving four months

earlier. On the 19th December the University Staff Club held its annual dinner at the same posh place with Mr Sultanuddin Ahmed, Ex Governor, as Chief Guest. I leave the significance of this move to the guesses of those who are critical of the ways of the Dacca University. Here is a laconic observation in my diary: V-C's wife attended but due courtesy was not shown to her. Meanwhile there was a rumour that Dr Osman Ghani was reverting to the university; it became an authentic news when the Vice-Chancellor himself informed me about it on the 13th December. Immediately afterwards I gave a ring to Mr S M Mujtaba, Secretary, Dacca Improvement Trust, who was in occupation of my Gandaria house and who gave an evasive reply to my request for vacating it within a reasonable margins of time. Mr Madani, Chairman, DIT, and I having been in frequent contact since the Barisal B.M. College Enquiry Commission was informed in writing about the imminent reversion of Dr Osman Ghani with my personal request for the release of my house by his Secretary. 1958 was coming to a close with the prospect of a close in the New Year to my career at Salimullah Muslim Hall. On the 22nd December I flew to Calcutta and West Bengal to make satisfactory arrangements for the treatment and sicknursing of my stricken brother.

### **1959 (1st January to 30th June)**

I flew back to Dacca on the 1st January and resumed my duties as Provost, S M Hall. I continued in the same position till 30th June, 1959, when I made over charge not to Dr Osman Ghani (who was scheduled to revert in the first quarter or so of the new year but who was diverted elsewhere by a pressure group) but to Dr Muzherul Huq, so long Provost of Fuzlul Huq Hall. I propose to record here a short account of the first half of 1959.



Actual teaching and academic work began on the 5th January, continued through Ramadan (fasting month) to 22nd April which was the last working day before the summer vacation covering the period from 23rd April to 30th June. The Provosts' duties were however full time and continuous.

Generally speaking the opening months of a year are marked in the University Halls by the installation ceremonies of new union cabinets, budget meetings, annual sports and dinners; in the university itself the high light of the season was the holding of the annual convocation, a solemn, ceremonial degree-conferment function. In the opening months of 1959 there was a regular succession of such functions from Hall to Hall, verve, vivacity colour, and on many an occasion some heat and controversy, being added by the arresting personality of the new Vice-Chancellor, a sitting Judge of the Dacca High Court and working under a new system of Government, military-cum-civil. At SM Hall I had my first union cabinet meeting on the 6th January, formal installation of both the union and the Athletic Club Select Committees on the 12th, ceremonial installation plus music and dance on the 17th, budget meeting on the 21st, annual sports on the 7th February, the annual Dinner on the 15th February. The Annual Dinner for the session, 1958-1959 was held :

1. Fuzlul Huq Hall, 14/12/58, 2. Iqbal Hall, 18/1/59. 3. Women's Hall, 31/1/59 4. SM Hall, 15/2/59 5. Dacca Hall 5/3/59, a Garden Party for both resident and attached students plus বসন্ত উৎসব or Spring Festival, an unprecedented item so far, on the 9th March and so on. The annual Convocation of the University, preceded on the 24th March by a rehearsal function and the Conferences of Principals of Affiliated Colleges, was held on the 25th January forenoon and noon while in the afternoon a Garden Party to which the recipients of degrees and diplomas were also invited. This was the first

time that such a graceful step was taken. A thousand guests gathered in the lovely lawns of the Vice-Chancellor's House where a personal touch between the teachers and the alumni was fostered. May be it was the also the last time because it hasn't been repeated since. Indeed the Convocation itself has disappeared from the University Calendar in recent times.

These notes are being written at the end of January, 1967. I had broken off seven months ago, six of which were spent in doing remunerative jobs at the Dacca Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education and Dacca University. Eight years have passed since the occurrence of the events. This is at once a disadvantage and an advantage—disadvantage because of their staleness, absence of contemporaneous importance etc; advantage because of the better perspective I am having of the procession of events into which I merged then, and because of the mellowing of my reactions by the passage of time. Academic and administrative activities at Dacca University have continuously been changing since then whether for good or for evil history and time alone will decide. Turning to the entries in my diary for the first half of 1959 I find I had as hectic a time as in its immediate past. The College of Social Welfare which is now a thriving, popular, permanent institution was formally inaugurated in rented buildings at Sidheswari on the 3rd January, 1959, by Mr Ibrahim, then Central Law Minister and the immediate predecessor at the University of Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman who did play a dominant role at the inauguration being the Chairman of the Council of the College. I still recall how the proceedings were disproportionately long and how the speeches were far too many. It was just the beginning of what looked like a modest enterprise with a skeleton staff and half a dozen trainees. But the Vice-Chancellor himself being the Chairman guaranteed its affiliation forthwith. On the

16th January we, the Provosts and Deans, received Dr Moore of Minnesota University in the Room of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and held discussions for a little over of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, the discussions from our side were longwinded and irrelevant as is generally the case on such occasions. Dr Moore shoved on to my Hall where he spent one hour and a quarter in going round and gathering relevant information. On the 23rd January, the Vice-Chancellor led the five Provosts, and 3 student representatives from each hall to a dinner party at Government House. The Governor, Mr Zaker Hussain, was a champion of Tandoori Roti (baked bread) and boiled vegetables, vegetables grown in one's own kitchen garden. He said we shouldn't expect anything beyond rugged and Spantan food but in actual practice treated us to varied, delicious dishes including the simple stuff promised. His desire was that the students in the different halls should themselves grow their own vegetables on their open spaces. On the 31st January, Dr John Sheeler, Professor of History and Geography, Texas University, visited SM Hall, being accompanied by Dr Fiske, Education Officer, local USIS. A warm reception was accorded to him and he was good enough to address a meeting in the Assembly Hall. But we missed a grand opportunity of meeting Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, consort of Queen Elizabeth II of England. The Vice-Chancellor desired to give the halls a combined occasion for the Prince's reception at SM Hall at the end of January. All the Provosts and all the student representatives were enthusiastic about it excepting two who were stupidly wild and the Vice-Chancellor was too shocked to allow it. A grand function was however held in the Curzon Hall of Dacca University on the 4th February. This was organised by the Science Association of Pakdstan of which Dr. Osman Ghani was then President. It was a short function in which the Prince by his ease and grace of

movement and manner fascinated the huge audience. In his reply to the Address of Welcome presented by Dr Ghani the Duke addressed Dr Ghani in familiar terms and made his remarks in crisp, clear accents. This was in sharp contrast to the ponderous and flamboyant address of the President, read ever so poorly by the latter. The Vote of Thanks was moved by the Vice-Chancellor. The same evening the Dy High Commissioner for U.K. at Dacca held a reception at the British Council Centre situated in the middle of the Dacca University area. It was a crowded party but Prince Philip was nice and cordial to all who milled around him. Till the end of the term i.e. 22nd April, 1959, we had a number of other distinguished visitors and guests. Col ASB Shah, Chairman, Central Public Service Commission, visited SM Hall on the 20th February, while I showed him round, most of the talking was done by the Vice-President Shafiul Alam and General Secretary Humayun Kabir who had taken the initiative of bringing him to the hall. Both of them had appeared at the last C.S.S. Examinations, the former being a repeater. The former competed in the CSP and the latter in the Pakistan Foreign Service. On the 2nd March Dacca University received two stalwarts of the Council of Advisers of the President of Pakistan; they were Lt General K M Shekh and Mr Manzur Quader; they brought with them an atmosphere redolent of the new, Martial Law regime. We the Provosts and Heads of Departments, first met them at 9-45 a.m. at the Vice-Chancellor's residence where discussions of a miscellaneous nature without any earlier agenda continued for one hour and 20 minutes. The General Saheb did hardly any talking which was all left to Mr Quader. There were many petty questions and some serious ones from the academicians. The answers to the serious questions appeared to me to be unsatisfactory and unconvincing. At 11-05 a.m. we hurried to the

Curzon Hall where the students had gathered in full strength and appeared to be in a taut mood. The moment Mr Quader invited questions, at least 50 students jumped on the rostrum and began firing away with interrogations. A moment's intolerance or impatience on the part of the Central Minister would have led to the ugliest of situations I could contemplate. But he handled it with great tact. He asked the students to jot down their questions on pieces of paper readily available and promised to answer a selection of them and within the time at his disposal. Having collected a number of Chits he proceeded to answer them with reason and arguments which proved to be persuasive and eloquent. He held the audience successfully till lunch time—an unexpected turn of good fortune in the context of the crowd that had gathered in rebellions mood as it were. On the 27th March the Vice-Chancellor entertained at very short notice at an Iftar Party (this being a month of fasting) Prof. and Mrs Warner. Weather conditions all through the day had been uncertain, squally and rainy but even so the Members of the Executive Council, Dacca University, Deans, Provosts along with a dozen ladies attended. Both the guests appeared to be experienced and affable. In three days we had occasion to receive at SM Hall President Harman Wells of Indiana (USA) University. On the 17th April a three-member Iraqi Delegation visited SM Hall in the morning; they were given a reception by the Vice-Chancellor in the late afternoon. Meanwhile at the end of February we the Provosts had to interview the Commission on National Education. Three Provosts were taken in a batch. When I spoke in a straightforward manner on the subjects of studies at Honours and Post-Graduate levels and emphasised that they needed no overhauling without intellectual retardation and when I referred to the complete politicization of the outlook of students and their behaviour

(and I gave reasons and concrete illustrations, some members were visibly annoyed and began heckling me. When I gave an unflurried a unhurried substance of my remarks, the Chairman Mr Shariff stopped his touchy colleagues and closed the issue. At the end of February was also held the 9th All Pakistan Economics Conference which was inaugurated by the Chancellor and, of the Reception Committee of which the Vice-Chancellor was the Chairman. The following note occurs in my diary: "Prof. SM Akhtar's Review of the Economic Position of Pakistan" was fairly capable minus too much expectation, from the new regime."

I have already written more than one hundred lines in recording functions, visitations etc during the first term of 1959. These are ephemeral and will have no importance for the years succeeding other than a sort of day to day chronicle of the period. Things of deeper significance from the standpoint of direction and purpose within the university were happening, unperceived by the uncritical. The new experiment of "party-less" hall elections was a total failure. Parties with distinct creeds emerged atop or sank underneath. The Vice-Presidents and General Secretaries of the halls and the Vice-President and General Secretary of DUCSU (Dacca University Central Students Union) had a dominant influence within the halls, with the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Council, with the higher provincial and All Pakistan authorities. The subconscious feeling that the Martial Law authorities wouldn't brook flagrant violations of law, order and discipline kept them comparatively subdued. During Jenkin's time lawlessness was practically nil; during Mr Ibrahim's time it raised its head occasionally; during my six month period under the new dispensation it was subdued, mostly limited to internal issues; later it propped its head gradually and increasingly and since the time

of Dr Mahmud Husain it has been in a crescendo and marked by indecent fights among groups of students, between the students as a whole and the authorities. Violent assaults, destruction of valuable equipment, arson, smash-up of solemn functions, lathi-charge and tear-gassing by Police, beating up of teachers have been the normal order. Nothing shames the authorities into wisdom and honesty, nothing prevents teachers from forming cliques, students from forming political parties or drifting into terroristic activities. I have already observed how when the Martial Law regime began my expectations, foolishly cherished, were that the unacademic conduct within the Dacca University would be purged by the professed high patriotism of its sponsors. Instead politics of the successors were preached and propagated, perhaps fostered too within the university. On the 21st January, 1959, the Budget meeting of my Hall Union was held. About the conduct of Budget meetings I have made my comments in the earlier pages. On this occasion I feared that there would be no quorum, attendance being very thin. Gradually some 60 people attended against 1100 roll strength of resident and attached students. This gave us a bare quorum. The budget was passed within a few minutes. When I barred the aftermath of rowdiness by not allowing extemporary amendments on the ground that no notice of any amendment had reached me by the prescribed time-limit 3 or 4 leaders were piqued; some with malicious motives egged them on. My decision that the meeting stood dissolved since there was no other item on the agenda was not honoured; one of the leaders mounted the platform, took possession of the microphone, talked excitedly for 5 minutes, formed a little procession of about 20, started shouting slogans and moving down the attached corridor. Eventually they marched to the Vice-Chancellor's House. It was a negligible affair but in terms of the

martial law regulations shouting of slogans and forming a procession, however small, were banned. I would have sent no report because I didn't know that they had gone to the length of marching out of the hall. But they did, met the VC and complained that amendments were barred. The VC told them that the Provost was cent per cent right. Next day the V-C himself spoke to me and called for a report and proposals for action. Three of the leaders who had defied my ruling were famous (or infamous from a different standpoint), and I having a humorous conception of the vaunted disciplinary measures of the Dacca University authorities asked the Vice-Chancellor pointblank whether he would actually mete out the punishment provided for, namely, expulsion, he was emphatic and insistent. On the 27th January despite what I had visualised correctly and infallibly about the fate of my proposals I despatched the report. Other forces and factors bestirred themselves and there was perfect blanketing of the incident. I had a clear understanding of the outcome and therefore I didn't raise the matter but after about two months I was asked to prepare a charge-sheet and send it to the offenders for their explanation. This I did on the 17th March. But eventually action was shelved altogether. Almost simultaneously a similar incident occurred in the Women's Hall and some of the students infringed rules exactly in the same way. For all I know the threatened action was never taken. This weak, little straw was an index of the direction in which the wind was moving or likely to move.

Mr. Justice Hamoodur Rahman took over as Vice-Chancellor on 5th November, 1958, i.e. in 9 days since assumption of all power by President Mohammad Ayub Khan. On the 2nd December, 1958, his term of office was extended to five years for which the relevant provision in the University Act was amended. His was a part-time appointment, that is to say



in addition to his duties at the Dacca High Court. This part-time character continued till he went out on the 15th December, 1960, being succeeded by Dr Mahmud Husain, Professor of History, Karachi University. The five-year period was thus shortened into a little over two years. I understood that the extension was necessitated because of some manoeuvring to oust him at the initial stage. His duties at the High Court cost him the best part of a High Court working day. Nevertheless he devoted all his spare time on these days and his whole time on holidays to Dacca University duties. It was widely known that within a few minutes of his return from the High Court he would proceed straight to these duties and work till 9 p.m. or later according to requirement. Tall, attractive in looks, comparatively young, energetic, he was always impressive; he would always cut a figure in university circles. At his first annual convocation, held on the 25th January, 1959, his movements compelled admiration, his performance was superb. In the annual dinners of all the halls, in their sports meet his speeches held the audience by their clarity in thoughts and expression and in the manner of delivery. I distinctly remember how he acquitted himself against odds during the post-prandial talks at Fuzlul Huq Hall on the 14th December, 1958, and Iqbal Hall on the 18th January, 1959. On both occasions the Vice-Chancellor had his turn at the 2nd while a former Vice-Chancellor Dr Mahmud Hasan, D. Phil (Oxon), spoke first. I do not know whether Dr Hasan was planted with an earlier plan. But it looked like one. Being a specialist in English and lifelong practitioner in speechmaking Dr Hasan was always eloquent, it didn't matter whether he talked sense. At the Fuzlul Huq Hall dinner Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman was incomparable. At that in the Iqbal Hall it looked as if he would have his discomfiture in his contest with Dr

Hasan. But it was otherwise. Speaking last he first "drew out into legal lore and then liquidated Hasan" (the quotation is from my diary). In his handling of the university administration and in his dealings with the staff, in conducting the deliberations of the Academic and the Executive Council, he was forthright and frank, though slightly loud, assertive and impatient. Sometimes he would betray irritability and make rude remarks without provocation. These are, however, human failings, especially, when one has to deal with talkative assemblies. In his policy-making speeches before teacher-cum-student gatherings he would speak out what he considered right instead of what should be wise. Like political affairs university affairs too, particularly those at Dacca University, conceal many traps. One has to be cautious about displaying one's heart on one's sleeve for daws to peck at. There were people around to exploit to their own advantage some of the traits I have just glanced at. For months, as I have already given hints, the Vice-Chancellor was feted and lionised. The Urdu-speaking Heads of Departments such as Dr Shadani, Dr Jilani, Dr Majid Ahmed, Dr Nafis Ahmed etc. with their decent dress, polished manners, smooth tongues did cast a spell of fascination on him. Among Bengali-speaking teachers Dr Muzherul Huq Provost, Fazlul Huq Hall, looked very impressive. He was tall, apparently and externally strong, had an aquiline nose and very well-defined features. He was proud of his London School of Economics doctorate, would deftly use a few, well-chosen turns of expression, spin out equally adroitly his long and intimate association with the university affairs and tender gems of wise counsel in season, mostly out of season. From what would follow it should be abundantly clear how he was a great spell-binder. The Registrar who was the boss of the Vice-Chancellor's secretariat soon made himself an infallible guide and the most trustwor-

thy functionary. Mr M. Safiullah, the Proctor and also generally (in the absence of the Professor) the Head of the Department of Commerce, has for years now been a unique character. What he lacks physically he more than makes up by his indefatigable and everyday services to the Vice-Chancellor whoever he may be whether Mr Mohammad Ibrahim or Mr Justice Rahman or Dr Osman Ghani. His elasticity and adaptability are classic. Together these three constituted a security ring. The former two, it may be recalled, had been very much crippled by Mr Mohammad Ibrahim. The staunch admirers and disciples of Dr Osman Ghani of the Science Faculty, such as Dr Kamal, Dr Abdul Matin Chowdhury and others were not in the picture. The new Vice-Chancellor stood for economy, increased internal revenues and stern punishment on delinquents. In his first address to the Heads he had stressed the first. One of his earliest pronouncements in the New Year (1959) was about increasing student fees, instructional as well as residential. He did also speak out that the Martial Law regime had given him a DANDA (truncheon) to rule with. His basting baton was only brandished but disappeared soon after he asserted he would use in the slogan-shanty procession coring-SMH case. In addressing some of the other halls he had spoken against SM Hall. I didn't know why since there was no earthly reason and justification for the accusation. Since Dr Jenkin's time SM Hall hadn't caused any trouble. If Mr Ibrahim created some internal trouble it was promptly and quickly made up. There was so much jealousy in interested quarters that these gave up using the name SM Hall and called it হেনা সাহেবের হল (Hena Saheb's Hall). With reference to the crippling of the ambitions of Dr Muzherul Huq by V-C Mr Ibrahim one episode stood out prominently. It was in connexion with the initiation and concretisation of the Teacher-cum-Student Centre at Dacca University by

the Ford Foundation. In my review of events of the year 1957 I have dwelt at some length with the origin of the scheme beginning in April and nearing finalisation in August. On the 5th July, 1958, the Vice-Chancellor called a meeting of Provosts and Deans to meet Dr R J Kibbee, Adviser-designate, of the Teacher-cum-Student Project. He was made the Ford Foundation chief to put it through. We met and discussed the qualifications and selection of candidates for two top posts: 1) Adviser to the centre on Rs 2000/- a month plus allowances 2) Director of the Centre on the scale of Rs 900/- to Rs 1500/- joint deliberations led to the laying down of the following conditions: Regarding 1) above Ph.D. or MA having the status of a Professor or Reader in the University of the age from 35 to 55 years. Regarding 2), a University Lecturer from 35 to 50 years of age. The views of the Vice-Chancellor on the composition of the Selection Committee differed from those of Muzherul Huq who later offered himself as a candidate for post No. 1. The Selection Committee compared by the Vice-Chancellor who was the chairman and consisting of Dr Kibbee as the chief guide met on several occasions on each of which the Vice-Chancellor thwarted the consideration of Muzherul Huq's candidature. He had the support of Dr Kibbee as well. But Dr Huq made frantic manoeuvres to have him selected. The Vice-Chancellor succeeded having eventually chosen Dr Mafiz Ahmed, Head of the Deptt of Chemistry and Provost, Iqbal Hall for No. 1 and Zaman, his Secretary, for 2. They were to proceed to USA for training for a couple of years. With the departure of Mr Ibrahim Dr Muzherul Huq was out with the backing of the Registrar to retrieve his position and to rehabilitate himself as second in importance to the Vice-Chancellor who, it may be stated now with clearer perspective against the passage of eight years' time, discovered in Muzherul Huq the ablest officer in the

University being ignorant all the time, I am sure, of his past record. On assumption of office the Vice-Chancellor became closely linked with the then Government's plan for shifting Dacca University to a new area at Tungi, not less than 20 miles off from the city limits. Soon after he examined the spot and the implications of building up a university on it. In fact he became an enthusiastic champion of the project and buried himself in giving a concrete shape to it. He told all the members of the teaching staff that the Government had taken up the scheme earnestly and was making all arrangements to implement it with so much speed that it would be possible to make the initial shifting very soon. He would discuss with the teachers the problems of their daily transport to the new campus pending the construction of staff quarters. The proposal for increasing students' fees, that of the transfer of the university, the curtailment of expenses of the various departments, the rejection of proposals seeking very badly needed amenities to the halls of residence and also to the Arts Buildings created their reactions among all concerned; the students became half articulate in respect of the first item, namely, increase in revenues from student fees and soon enough became demonstrative in their protests; the staff had their reactions too but they dared not give any expression against plans and projects of the Martial Law Administration. The Vice-Chancellor having had no earlier experience of student behaviour at Dacca University, of currents and cross-currents in the stream of residential halls where group formations on political lines had been operative in full strength for years and years, had no grip over realities. Neither did he have any personal and direct acquaintance with teacher behaviour within. From long before the partition of Bengal in 1947 the teachers had their own groupings which worked for the rise of the dominant party and the fall of the

opponents. Vice-Chancellors were made or debunked or a succession of them by turns was arranged by these parties. Dacca University was not a place where rulings given by the top executive had the enforcement of laws of the realm. The now Vice-Chancellor didn't know the length and strength of poster campaigns plastering the walls of the campus and those outside. On the 17th January, 1959, the ceremonial installation of the incoming Union and Athletic Club Committees of my hall was fixed up. Such a function in the halls had a set pattern of rituals followed by music and dance under the common denomination of "variety entertainment". The rituals consisted series of speeches by the outgoing and incoming leaders ending up with the address of the Vice-Chancellor who was invariably the Chief Guest. I had a full day commencing with class teaching at 9.30 a.m. when within the hall a serious misunderstanding occurred between the Union and Athletic Club leaders. This I resolved at 11 a.m. Then a sharp clash occurred between the Vice-President Shaful Alam and the General Secretary Humayun Kabir. The former's party had swept the elections while the latter was a lone representative of a minority group, a sort of freak landed by accident on the otherwise homogeneous cabinet. In my efforts for neutralizing this conflict I found "both were incompetent in organising this evening's function" (quotation from my diary of date). At 4.30 p.m. I received a poster which was pasted on a wall of SM Hall against the Vice-Chancellor's proposal to raise fees and containing a threat of demonstration in the function. At 6-15 p.m. I called on the V-C and showed him the poster. As Chief Guest he accompanied me to the hall where the function began at 6-45 p.m. and ended at 9 p.m. The proceedings were longdrawn (as already indicated) and the audience got bored, especially in their eagerness to enjoy the music and dance to follow. And

what an audience! Possessed of the most imposing Assembly Hall among other places of residence and having on its rolls the cream of students, both in their academic records and breeding, maintaining lofty standards in extracurricular activities the SM Hall always attracted full-to-capacity crowds. It was difficult to prevent outsiders from filling the gallery. On this particular evening at the end of the ritualistic performances of the student leaders the Vice-Chancellor delivered a long speech in course of which he, with his usual candour, posed questions of raising fees and made other proposals of reforms to which the audience responded with long and loud "Nos" but unperturbed he continued with strength and assertion. As I rose just to say a word of thanks on the eve of song and dance the gallery members made a very unseemly demonstration; in fact they were "brutal in their conduct" (quotation from next day's entry in the diary). I found they were all outsiders; I sat down immediately and declined to speak even for half a second. But the Vice-Chancellor wouldn't listen; in another sermon, patronizing to the Provost, he compelled the audience to give me "a chance". I stood up and said "Thanks". During my three-year tenure never before or ever afterwards there was any display of such discourtesy but it was pre-planned and organised by some of my "friends" who had their eye on the Provostship of SM Hall as will be clear from what follows. Let it be also noted that two of them were in the company of the Vice-Chancellor at the latter's house when at the interval of three days, i.e. on the 21st January at the end of the Budget meeting a group of students marched there. They had thus their second welcome opportunity of discrediting me and advancing their own interests. They had their final and triumphant opportunity in another event which looked like maturing then. That event or rather eventuality was being talked about since December, 1958. The V-C

himself told me on the 13th December, 1958, about it, namely, the reversion of Dr Osman Ghani to Dacca University from his assignment at the East Pakistan Secretariat as Agricultural Commissioner. On the same day i.e. on 13th December, '58, I took effective steps to get my Gandaria house vacated as early as possible. In the circles in which I moved there was no further development for two months. By the middle of February, 1959, the report of reversion became persistent and I have it on record that on the 22nd February I saw Mr Madani, then Chairman, Dacca Improvement Trust, and requested him to provide quarters for his Secretary who was occupying my house and who was reluctant to quit. Mr Madani was good enough to take prompt action which resulted in my house being available on the 3rd March, 1959. What was happening behind the scenes at University or Government levels about the reported reversion I didn't know. But I was ready to quit. Throughout March there were conflicting reports but the deadline was fixed on the 15th April on which day Dr Ghani's three-year assignment with the Government would come to an end and I would have to make over on the forenoon of 16th April. There was direct and personal touch between the Chief Secretary and the Vice-Chancellor. The Govt was anxious to release Dr Ghani early in January and therefore the V-C spoke to me on the 13th December. At the initial stage he accepted the reversion as perfectly normal and didn't indicate his slightest reaction against it. But later from his casual talks it became increasingly clear that he was opposing it. Why? The "two friends" of mine referred to in the preceding lines backed by a far more powerful university officer had been working on the mind of the Vice-Chancellor who was persuaded to take it that the return to the University of Dr Osman Ghani would spell a disaster whereas the Chief Secretary assured the Vice-



Chancellor that with the powers with which he had been invested by Government he had nothing to worry. I doubt very much whether the Vice-Chancellor was aware of the feud between the Registrar's group and Dr Ghani. On one occasion a member of the former group was frantic in procuring from SM Hall one particular issue of the SM Hall magazine during Dr Ghani's Provostship, which it was alleged, contained serious allegations against the authorities. This they wanted to show to the Vice-Chancellor. This group occasionally gave hints to me that it wouldn't allow Dr Ghani to revert forgetting that I hated their manoeuvring exactly as I hated all skulduggery. In the light of what happened on the 16th April and the following day it became crystal clear that sustained efforts were made throughout March, 1959 and till 16th and 17th April to thwart Osman Ghani's reversion. On the one hand I was urged to make preliminary preparations to hand over on the 16th April but on the other the two interested persons were getting ready to take over by making it impossible for the permanent incumbent to return. As Provost of SM Hall I was the custodian of WUS, Dacca Branch, and although Dr Muzherul Huq made continual and persistent efforts to be elected to this position he had failed on account of the firm decision of Vice-Chancellor Md Ibrahim. It is a long story which need not be inserted here. Since I must go, some one else must be elected and that some one was Muzherul Huq who received the blessings of the present Vice-Chancellor. This was done on the 9th March. I made over charge on the 21st March. A grant of Rs 2400/- subject to the fulfilment of obligations laid down earlier was made by Mr Rafiuzzaman, Regional Chief of WUS. Muzherul Huq took it for granted that we had spent the sum without fulfilling conditions laid down and expected to haul me over the coals for violation of contractual obligations. When I

refunded it intact he had a shocking disappointment. On the 13th March I made arrangements for withdrawing my little son from Ramna English Preparatory School. On the 3rd April Muzherul Huq made a two-hour friendly call on me and in the midst of many discussions told me how he had been selected by the Vice-Chancellor for SM Hall Provostship. In 12 days from 3rd April I was to have made over to Osman Ghani; I was exasperated at this revelation. On the morning of 12th April, Shaful Alam, Vice-President of SM Hall Union, called, narrated his interview with the Vice-Chancellor the preceding evening and said that Dr Osman Ghani might not join on the 16th. On the 13th, 14th and 15th April I worked at high pressure along with my office and House Staff at getting papers and accounts ready for a smooth transition on the 16th. That morning as I was about to start for office I received a ring from the Vice-Chancellor to say I was to continue as Provost because Osman Ghani was not joining. On the 17th April I received a ring from Mr M Safiullah, then Proctor, D.U., who read out to me over the phone an order of the Chancellor under Section 9A of the Dacca University Act (see page 6 bottom, D.U. Calendar, Vol I, 1957) cancelling the holding of two administrative posts by one individual officer. Dr Osman Ghani was holding two such posts 1) Professor and Head of the Deptt. of Soil Science 2) Provost of SM Hall. By this order his Provostship was cancelled. His reversion was thus successfully eliminated. Safiullah concluded by making it clear that he intended being the Provost himself. It may be recalled that eleven days earlier his intimate friend, Dr Muzherul Huq told me that he had been selected for the position. On the 1st July, 1959, Dr Muzherul Huq became the Provost of SM Hall and Mr Safiullah succeeded him as Provost of Fulzul Huq Hall. Their services to the Vice-Chancellor were appropriately rewarded; their earlier exertions

received a precise focus. But ere long that is to say, with the assumption of office by the next V-C, the holding of two administrative positions revived and has now become the normal order. Dr Sajjad Hussain, Head of the English Deptt became the Provost of Iqbal Hall during Dr Mahmud Husain's regime. With the return to Dacca University of Dr Osman Ghani as Vice-Chancellor in February, 1963, Muzherul Huq had to quit both Hall and Economics Deptt and Sajjad Husain the Iqbal Hall. Dr Mofizuddin Ahmed, Head of the Deptt of Chemistry, was appointed Provost of SM Hall in addition to the headship of Chemistry; Dr Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Head of the Deptt of Physics took over Iqbal Hall in the same way. Later still Dr Azizul Huq, Head of Maths, replaced Dr Matin. The action that was taken by the Vice-Chancellor in April, 1959, in response to the coaxing and hustling of the interested group barred Dr Osman Ghani only temporarily. Whether the V-C's expectations of the services he would receive from the cancellation of the Provostship of Osman Ghani were fulfilled or not I have no authentic data to state. Rumours soon circulated that he was disillusioned within an inconceivably short time. I had just one solitary experience of his disquiet. It was on the 29th March, 1960, when I made a courtesy call at his residence following Eid-ul-Fitr on the preceding day. I hadn't met him since 1st July, 1959, when he ceased to be the Provost of SM Hall. He was all alone in his drawing room; a refreshment tray with post-Eid sweets was close at hand; he offered me some and then showed a strange disquiet by walking up and down and expressing his resentment at what appeared to be a little conspiracy going on against him. Didn't he have his permanent berth to go back to?-he asked. And he soliloquized in the same strain. I had no knowledge of what was simmering nor any comments to offer. I felt very uncomfortable and left in a hurry.

But I have been writing about events and developments in March-April of 1959. Concurrently with the organised efforts made to bar the reversion of Dr Osman Ghani a definite move was made to get me fixed up for another assignment at the university. Mr Turner who was working as Supernumerary Professor in the English Deptt left in December, 1958. On the 13th December, 1958, the Vice-Chancellor informed me personally of the imminent reversion of Osman Ghani and also required whether I could think of any other job for absorption. I gave a forthright reply and said that the university could, if it so chose, utilize me in Mr Turner's place. The Vice-Chancellor appeared to be aware of who is who and what is what in the English Department in which I had been doing six periods of teaching work as Provost with unquestioned reputation and unfailing zeal and diligence. He welcomed the idea with unconcealed pleasure and asked me to get ready for a call to the position. As two months and a half passed since that particular day of December, 1958, a period in which there was a temporary lull in the reversion report I had no further talk with the Vice-Chancellor. There was a revival of these reports in March and simultaneously of the question of an alternative appointment for me. This latter called for formal proposal and approval by the Academic and Executive Councils. For the interested circle the sooner I could be fixed, the sooner their path to Provostships would be clear and they arranged things accordingly. A unanimous approval by both the AC and EC was available on the 28th March and 4th April respectively and what was still more curious that of the Selection Committee on the 15th April, a step that should have preceded the presentation of the proposal to the A.C. The story of my emoluments as Supernumerary Teacher had better be glanced at briefly. Turner was drawing Rs 1500/- and many other allowances. I

desired that I should be paid what I was then drawing as Provost, namely, Rs 1050/-. There was mean and petty bargaining by the authorities with an offer of Rs 600/- but I didn't agree to anything less than Rs 800/-. a sum that was sanctioned to me as Inspector of Colleges. The V-C's proposal in the AC and EC for Rs 800/- was approved. The Selection Committee sealed it down to Rs 750/- because the then Head of the Deptt was drawing at that rate. Meanwhile another drama was being enacted at Comilla where the Victoria College needed a Principal. Deputation after deputation of some of the leading Muslim citizens and many Muslim members of the teaching staff waited upon me beginning on the 7th March and continuing till after the 15th June. I agreed to go only when the petty bargaining at the university level became galling. The Comilla appointment was made and announced in the newspapers; I had written out acceptance as well but before I despatched it I came to know of glaring irregularities made by the Governing Body (after having appointed me) in regard to the appointment of 4 Hindu gentlemen, two as Vice-Principals and two as Rectors. I had already heard of Hindu domination and Hindu communalism there as also of factions in the staff. But as a former Inspector of Colleges I couldn't ignore gross violations of university regulations. On the morning of 14th June Khan Bahadur Fariduddin Ahmed, very well-known in Comilla and East Pakistan called to persuade me for acceptance. Within 5 minutes Dr Muzheral Huq called; he was followed by the Registrar of Dacca University. These two in an abnormal state of mind; knowing than as I did I sensed another game but I didn't care to make an inquiry. In their presence I gave a clear 'no' to the Khan Bahadur who withdrew soon afterward. My friends had called too for my acceptance of the University job. At my rejection of the Comilla appointment they

looked very much relieved and requested me to intimate agreement to the Vice-Chancellor. Soon enough I gathered from them that in a meeting of the Executive Council held on the preceding evening three members, all friends to Muzherul Huq had stoutly opposed his appointment as Provost of SM Hall but the Vice-Chancellor had set his heart upon Huq and declined to consider Saftullah for it. Now, they said, the whole thing depended on my willingness to stay on in the university. In "confidence and sincerity" Dr Muzherul Huq whispered into my ears that delay on my part might lead to a bad turn. The gentleman didn't have the intelligence to understand that I had lived among these sinister and insidious tactics for 31 years and 3 months in Govt. service before I had joined Dacca University in October, 1953, and how I couldn't imitate their ways and use their weapons for speeding in life. I need it add that on the following day I communicated my decision to stay on at the University as Supernumerary Teacher and I did continue in the same capacity for five years ending on 30th June, 1964.

During May and June, 1959, I was obliged to do the onerous and most exactly responsible duties of Head Examiner in one of the English papers at the Intermediate Examination (it was still under the Dacca University). The Hall Office was open; a large number of inmates continued to be in residence and in the enjoyment of their "birthright" of self-government; the visitation by notabilities was not infrequent; the pull and push, jerks and jolts occasioned by an alternative assignment at the university and another such at Comilla were in chronic swing and I had to stand them with patience and equanimity. The end was approaching with inconceivable speed and the heavy job of clearing out lock, stock and barrel from Ramna and Gandaria was awaiting in the offing. At the end of April one

of my daughters-in-law gave birth to a son; her husband (my doctor son) being commissioned to Army Medical Corps flew to West Pakistan on the 6th June but the end of June was the ETC (expected time of confinement) for another daughter-in-law. We couldn't possibly move out nor did we like to stay on. But delivery and consequent deliverance took place on the 3rd July when a grand-daughter with chiselled features, blue eyes and the most delicate skin pigmentation was born. She is now growing into a slim, little lady and claiming to be my "real Mem Saheb". In three days i.e. on the 7th July, 1959, my daughter-in-law supported herself on my shoulders which are neither broad nor strong and limped on to and out of the car at the two ends. Another transfer, another shifting took place. For me the best is yet to be.

## **Chapter III**

### **Dacca University**

**Supernumerary Teacher**

**Department of English, Dacca University**

**July 1959 to June, 1964.**

On the 1st July I took over the duties of a fulltime teacher in the English Department of Dacca University. It was an outside the cadre appointment with an unknown, non-descript status. In fact I stood now stripped of all status without any place in the Academic or Executive Bodies in each of which I had a part to play since I had been the Principal of M.C. College, Sylhet. But what did I gain being there all the time? Just an inconsequential member of talking fraternities without sanity, without any moral urge, without a deeper and wider purpose of reaching out into evolutionary progress. And what did I lose? The trappings of office only and the company of dignitaries—nothing more. Othello cried out in agony :

Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump.

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing life,

The royal banner and all quality

.....

Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

In my case my own occupation came back to me chastened and purified; I was rehabilitated into an absorbing pursuit of



studies and zealous interpretation. I escaped from soulless snobbery and chicanery, from dirty games, from mean politics and stupid flamboyance, from cheek and ill-breeding. I became sceptreless but free and uncircumscribed, free from an atmosphere of pollution, so much the bane of modern, urban life. I was towed into the haven of reading, comprehending and assimilating first and then of sailing out everyday into the coastal waters to feed fishes in the pools. My six periods of work a week as Provost increased to fifteen as full-time teacher. To the earlier assignments in Dryden, Pope, Lamb, Romantic poets and miscellaneous prose writers were now added those in Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Addison and Swift. A senior colleague being seriously ill I was called upon soon enough to take up the History of English Literature (Anglo-Saxon and Middle English periods in particular) and Spenser (F.Q. I and III in particular). These two remained with me for five years to come. Blake and Collins were added in the following academic session. But the core of Honours and Post-Graduate studies lay in the Tutorial classes where work done by the students on guided lines must be examined and assessed regularly and of which records were to be maintained. Generally I had six such groups a week to handle. At the beginning of the academic year 1960-1961, my work-load like that of other teachers was increased to 19 periods a week according to the recommendations of the Commission on National Education. I have seen it authoritatively stated that these were put through in 1961-1962. No, this statement is incorrect. At Dacca University they were introduced hurriedly, precipitately, within a few months of their publication. "Functional English" became compulsory even for Science students and the numerical strength of such a class rose to 40. The underlying principle of such a class was the correction of exercises. Could anything be more mon-

strous? I have, however, drifted far from the trend of the present paragraph. I was speaking of my coming home to full-time teaching from the field (or battle field?) of Hall life. This involved work at home and that in the University. Owing to the requirements of time-table lecture and tutorial classes were spread over half a day for four days and full day twice a week in 1959-60 whereas they covered the whole day on

four days a week and two half days with the advent of the National Education Commission's recommendations. "Haven" used earlier had a relative import. Here at all waking hours I was completely absorbed either in lecture preparation or looking over exercises. The work-load was a challenge to energy, application and tenacity at home; that in the classes was just like placing briefs and arguing cases before a tribunal of judges who were habitually restive, impatient and inattentive. Most of the students came unprepared. But the challenge was met; the cases of the clientele were presented with assiduous earnestness. I was in my metier as a passionate student and as one of the warmest of interpreters. And I had my meed in the attendance in my classes and in the measure of interest I evoked. On Pakistan-West Indies and Pakistan-Australia Cricket Test series at Dacca when the Arts Campus and also the streets of Dacca wore a deserted look and even on a Ragging Day when there was a pandemonium in the campus my MA Final classes on the History of English-Literature were full. Here was the rewarding experience.

But oh, what labour!

O prince, what pain!

And the toil and the strain were fraught with "piercing sweet" outsoaring envy and columny. The students of my classes were not merely "roll numbers"; they were mostly living men and women, individuals of recognised strength and fallings, of

foibles and oddities. All of them in the tutorial classes had my personal attention and guidance. Parveen and Sultana, Anisuzzaman Khan and Junaid Iqbal, to name some, of the MA Final classes, Ataul Huq and Baharuddin, of the Third Yr. Hons. classes, Kurshid Hameed and Azizul Hakeem, Manzoor-i-Mowla and Qudrat-i-Elahi, Nilufer and Rifaat of the Second Year, Masihur Rahman and Ziaus Shams, Ayesha Choudhury and Nishat Shadani of the 1st Year—all these of the academic year, 1959-60—have their places in my memory. Those who went out and those who came higher up struck deeper roots. Most of them have been doing very well in Civil Services, teaching professions, journalism and so on. And to correct an improper omission I must add to the list those of Ajit and Shandilya, Kamal Krishna, Devranjan and Pranesh Kumar, Bipashi Sreeman, Chittyaranjan, Monju and Putul.

From July to December, 1959, academic work at the university didn't suffer any dislocation. And I was much too occupied with my duties to care for other goings-on within or without the university. During the autumn recess I made preparations to go to my native place and attend on my ailing and stricken brother. But cyclonic storm and torrential rains in West Bengal early in October caused widespread havoc in Calcutta, Midnapur, Howrah and Burdwan; communication was disrupted; DVC reservoirs at Malthan and Panchet overflowed; terrific cascades of water being let out devastated the central part of Murshidabad; the Ajoy river bridge between Bhedia and Bolpur was washed away. I had to cancel my visit which it was possible for me to make at the end of December when I was shocked to discover that my brother's partial paralysis had extended to his tongue hampering his speech and the intake of nourishment; he was in a helpless state. Palliatives were arranged but to me the painful end was in sight. In strict

secrecy I left instructions for his burial and funeral when he should breathe his last, which he did after lingering for another five months. Early on the morning of 4th June, a couple of days before the Eid-ul-Azha, he passed away leaving me the sole survivor among five brothers. Two surviving sisters who were already very old joined the others in course of the next two years. We were a close-knit family of rare affection; we had a sweet home and some property which provided all our requirements in rice and 'dhal', milk and 'ghur', fish, fowl, mutton and beef. My father had left it intact. Heavy disintegration followed the death in 1953 of the 3rd brother older and elder to this last one. The ancestral property has disappeared more or less; the ancestral home is partly occupied by usurpers, partly in ruins and partly dilapidated. "Sweet home" is now the dream of a dream, the shadow of a shade. So are all things human and terrestrial. And let there be no moaning of the bar when I too put out to sea.

These lines are being written several years after the occurrence of the events; their impact on my mind has well-nigh been obliterated; such oblivion is nature's gracious boon to human beings who had to go through much stress and strain of life's struggle. The entries in my diary, however, lead me to glance at some of the significant experiences and happenings.

## 1960

The Dacca University annual degree-conferring Convocation was scheduled to be held on the 21st January at 11 a.m. Its additional attraction was the conferment of LL.D. (Honoris Causa) on President Mohammad Ayub Khan. Elaborate preparations including a Rehearsal on the 20th were made. At 1 p.m. on the 20th I witnessed processions and bus-loads of students and miscellaneous people from the western

corner of the High Court premises to the Sutrapur Police Station in my locality. These were on their way to the airport to welcome the President on arrival in the afternoon; the streets were reverberating with slogan-shouting. In the evening we heard that he hadn't arrived; his "Viscount" had failed twice to land at Lahore airport where it was to collect Lt. General Shekh and the West Pakistan Governor Mr Akhtar Hussain. Radio and Press announcement next morning said that the Convocation would be held at 4 p.m. instead of at 11 a.m. and that the Vice-Chancellor's Garden Party stood cancelled. At 3 p.m. we gathered in the Curzon Hall premises and formed and reformed the teachers' procession ceremonially to escort the President and the Chancellor to the Shamiana under which the Convocation was to be held. On their arrival at 4 p.m. we moved ritualistically in measured steps with flowing gowns and flaming hoods on. When the conducting was accomplished we, hundreds of teachers, were thrown into an undignified predicament; our seats were occupied by guests, a record gathering. "Get into the alleys between the rows of chairs and stand and wait" shouted Mr Saifullah with matching flourishes of his arms like those of a Drill Sergeant and the cadets under orders tried to obey meekly and tamely but the lanes were thread-like to squeeze in for so many who would otherwise cause insufferable inconvenience to the sitting guests. Most of the Heads of Departments were disciplined enough to obey and to present an unedifying spectacle of stationary pike staff. Most of the other teachers equally tamely got through and on to the grounds outside the Shamiana; it didn't matter whether the grounds were covered with grass or dust. Along with many others I went out; we us took out our hankies, spread them on the dust and squatted. At any rate it was not lying on the dust, the ultimate fate of the commoner. We continued in this posture till 5.10 p.m. when we

dispersed being unable to see or hear anything. At home after tea I had the opportunity of listening to the Radio recording of the President's speech; the relevant entry in my diary reads "President's speech—outspoken but sensible". I carried with me a printed copy of the Vice-Chancellor's address which I read. "Doesn't appear to have any substance"—is the laconic comment available in record. Since I haven't got the originals with me I cannot recount what they had actually said. Mr Safiullah, then Provost of Fuzlul Huq Hall, has always been the Master of Ceremonies and Functions with the blessings and benedictions of the Registrar and with the obvious satisfaction of successive Vice-Chancellor's. None of the Administration had the intelligence of an ordinary human being to comprehend that the President's presence would call for adequate accommodation. And admission to the convocation being limited to invitations the Administration's arithmetic was a marvel. The Registrar issued to the teachers on the 23rd January a letter of regret.

Here is an anecdote connected with the President's visit to East Pakistan mentioned above. I do have an eighty-to-ninety minute evening stroll along the railway embankment by my house, through the rice and jute fields when they are barren and then along the Hatkhola-Narayanganj high road bulge. Four days prior to the Convocation day I discovered on this road feverish activity in the laying of electric wires on tall, strong poles recently fixed. Earlier these were not there. Simultaneously lighting trials were going on. On the 22nd January, the day following the Convocation, in the course of my evening walk I saw that the lights were on; they "looked like stars against the firmament" (from the diary of that date). Indeed they turned out to be stars of my fate on the evening of the 24th January between 6 and 7 when I was having my walk.

I found 2/3 armed sentries on the road and also a gate of welcome; the President was shortly to move down to Narayanganj. There was a false alarm at the far off junction of Jatrabari with Demra Road and one sentry compelled me and 2/3 villagers to go down the embankment and far into the rice field at the bottom, and to wait there. A cold wave was on and the place was otherwise deserted. After quite a few minutes the President's cavalcade sped away. Even then the sentry didn't concede a passage to us. When the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan passes let not a mouse stir. And what were we other than 3/4 mice in rural fields to the Security Squad?

It is true my customary jaunt had a jolt from overzealous and semi-literate cops. It is also true that Dacca University Administration's bumbling marred the beauty and solemnity of the convocation but in less than one month, on the 16th February, 1960, the country's basic democrats recorded 95% votes of confidence in the President; on the 17th February we had a public holiday to celebrate the occasion.

On the 13th April the University of Dacca held another Special Convocation for the conferment of LL.D. degree on President Nasser. It was a short but very successful function. The Vice-Chancellor's citation was quite good; he read it better still. And President Nasser's address delivered in Arabic and without notes fell like Hybla drops on the audience. Unhurried and also unperturbed by a hundred flashlights from scurrying photographers he spoke softly in perfect self-possession. He had steered clear of all politics excepting a casual reference to strained relations between UAE and Pakistan during Mr Shahid Suhrawardy's regime and dwelt throughout on Taalim or Education. We were in listening and visual contact with a great man.

From January to the third week of April our academic work went on in full swing. I pulled hard and long and pulled together with departmental colleagues in paper-setting and moderating, in paper examining and in the preparation of examination results. The summer vacation began on the 23rd April and continued till the 30th June. There was however no rest for me. From the middle of April I had to handle once more as in the preceding year the Head Examiner's job in one of the Intermediate English Papers. It was more or less a whole time occupation during the two-month recess. It started with two big handicaps: 1) the Second Paper in English of which I was in charge was much too stiff ii) there was a row in the province that there was leakage in the English questions. On scrutiny it was found that fertile conjectures had caused the hullabaloo. Even so the Vice-Chancellor gave his careful consideration and also fairly comprehensive instructions to us. I had also to snatch time from this heavy preoccupation to meet special MA Preliminary classes on Faine Queene, BK I, which the students had considerable difficulty in understanding. One or two other points pertaining to this period wouldn't come amiss. In the Staff Club Annual Dinner held on the 26th February the non-participation of the Vice-Chancellor was enigmatic. Other busybodies had a grand occasion to talk nonsense. But in the Staff Club buffet dinner held on the 15th April he did participate and made a policy speech. I was not present but on the following day there were strong reactions in the Staff Room in the Arts campus. In all probability these two had a link with the developments that took place in November and December of which I shall try to give an account in due course.

Did the policy speech also refer to the introduction of the recommendations of the Commission on National Education with effect from the academic session 1960-'61? At any rate



these recommendations were accepted by the government on 6th April, 1960. Did it also refer to the shifting of the University to Tungji about which the Vice-Chancellor was so very active? In order that the recommendations of the Education Commission could be put through with immediate effect the Committee of Courses in English had to meet on the 1st June under peremptory direction of the Academic Council to draw up syllabuses in i) Three year Degree Course Functional English ii) Language and Literature English iii) Subsidiary English. These were drawn up in a hurry and submitted. The second meeting was held at the shortest notice on 28th June and the third on 2nd July. All these were rushed through and the 10-period work load was imposed in the academic session, 1960-'61.

In our private life Mrs Hena had to be away at Karachi for about three months with effect from 20th June to be of help to my daughter who gave birth to a son there on 4th July. In the political life of Pakistan Mr Shahid Suhrawardy was EBDOED in the middle of July which in international affairs was marked by the nomination of J.F. Kennedy for USA Presidentship. In Indo-Pak relations the signing of the historic Canal Water Treaty took place on the 19th September when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was there at Karachi not only to sign but also to receive cordial greetings. East Pakistan had a cataclysm of nature on the 31st October when there was a terrific cyclone in which Chittagong had been the worst of sufferers, the loss of human life being at least four thousand. The Chittagong Port was in a state of shambles and put out of commission. As many as eight loaded ships were driven aground and the damage amounted to crores of rupees. The hero of the hour in the havoc caused was the Governor of the province, Lt General Azam Khan who brought about relief and rehabilitation within

an inconceivably short time. Simultaneously he rehabilitated himself permanently in the affections of the people.

The University of Dhaka had an ugly and disgraceful shaking on the 23rd November, 1960, when at mid-day Dr Newman, Head of the Deptt. of Political Science, was the victim of a violent demonstration in the Arts Campus near his own office. The violence was the result, it was alleged, of his manifest injustice to a prominent student of his Department. He was Mr Maniruzzaman who, it was alleged, indisputably deserved First Class but who by the manipulation of Dr Newman had been placed in Second Class whereas another incomparably inferior student had been placed in First Class. Mr Maniruzzaman was then either the Vice-President or General Secretary of Salimullah Muslim Hall Union. Pro-Maniruzzaman Group of students had launched the attack. Dr Newman having left the campus immediately, the news 'spread like wild fire' to use a hard-riden phrase, and drew the Pro-Newman group to the scene. The latter was stronger and far more numerous and under the command of the student boss, AR Yusuff, whose leadership has been noticed already in course of this narrative. Yusuff and his disciples swooped down upon Maniruzzaman and Co. and thrashed them. This incident was far too serious to escape notice and the Vice-Chancellor announced on the 25th November that a High Court Judge would be appointed to hold a thorough investigation. On the 26th it was reported that Dr Newman had gone on six months' leave and that the Executive Council would meet at 4 p.m. Soon Mr Justice Asir of Dacca High Court took up a Judicial Inquiry in which open, public hearings were held. Regular examinations and cross-examinations of witnesses summoned were conducted by lawyers of both the parties. More or less all Heads of Departments, all Provosts and administrative functionaries

had to appear before Mr Justice Asir who was holding the inquiry in the old Legislative Assembly Hall right in the heart of the university area. This went on for months and much dirty linen was washed in public. One of the issues was whether other Heads of Departments too manipulated the results of examinations. I was out of it, and perfectly in consonance with my character and temperament I never pried into what was going on. But day to day proceedings were talked about in the Staff Room and elsewhere and reports circulated that many a skeleton in the cupboard was in full view. We were told that Mr Justice Asir aired his views and opinions in course of the probe and had submitted a comprehensive report to the Government sparing none involved in the outrageous scandal under investigation. Years have rolled by but the public still ask why this valuable document hasn't been published.

In 18 days since the announcement of the Judicial Committee a new Vice-Chancellor arrived at Dacca. He was Dr Mahmud Husain, a German Ph. D. who had been Reader in History at Dacca University for years before he went over to Karachi University as Professor of the subject—a brother of Dr Zaker Husain of Indian fame. Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman was leaving having been appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court. On the 15th December i.e. on the morrow of the Vice-Chancellor-designate's arrival we were invited by the Central Ministry of Education to a Garden Party at 4 p.m. in the premises of the then Institute of Art (now designated Govt. College of Arts and Crafts). I arrived on time along with two other colleagues and found that the Central Education Minister, Mr Habibur Rahman had organised a very decent function. Tea over he was the first to speak praising in high terms the achievements of the outgoing Vice-Chancellor and then those of the incoming one. He spoke at length and in clear

and emphatic language. Appropriate replies were given by Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman and Dr Mahmud Husain. Then the Chancellor Lt General Azam Khan, Governor of East Pakistan delivered the concluding speech. I had my first glimpse of him, his smiling face and unconventional manner—altogether a genial personality. There was a unique feature about this good-bye and welcome ceremony. Mr Habibur Rahman made it clear that the selection of the new Vice-Chancellor was his and he felt very happy about it. So far we thought that it was that of the Chancellor. The customary function, however, took place on the 16th December when the University Staff Farewell Party was held. A Farewell address was presented in a silver casket placed on a silver stand.

Academic work continued till the 22nd December when the university went into cold weather recess.

The year concluded with the beginning of the third India-Pak Cricket Test in Calcutta. This continued till the 4th of January, 1961. Pakistan had given a very good account of itself.

## **1961**

Oh my private journals! The day-to-day and hour-to-hour entries open up an endless procession of events in the life of an obscure individual in his relations with his professional preoccupations, domestic affairs, with the society, with the impact of some deplorable occurrences in India, with hitherto undreamt-of performances in space, with the behaviour of nature in our province. The professional duties involving nineteen-hour work-load in the time-table, their support of preparation at home running to hours each day and also during holidays, the correction and examination of stacks of scripts, the holding of seasonal tests and tabulating their results according to the rec-

ommendations of the Commission on National Education, in addition to other departmental duties connected with the conduct of Post-Graduate, Honours, Pass and Subsidiary Examinations chased me relentlessly and I chased them back with dagged determination, an inner urge for excellence and the maintenance of self-respect. Lecturing for three consecutive periods on some days, doing five periods at least once a week did undoubtedly cause immense strain. But moving on to the third period when I met another responsive class I had a renewal of strength from the spirit within. The journals record each day's journey or journeys to the university and back, from Gandaria to Ramna. In 1961 my "Mayflower" despite 'watering and tending' withered much too frequently. I had to take with me one or two sons, young or grown-up to be of aid during break-downs en route or for handle. Starting after stoppage. The self-starter went out of commission once too often. When my sons were not available or when they too failed, groups of students ran to the rescue lovingly, in great, good humour and pushed the car with their youthful vigour. In short the "old lady" made herself an object of attention in the campus. For days together she was static in the garage calling for repairs or an overhaul. Consider my plight during her total inactivity. The numerous baby-taxies of today didn't simply exist then. A cycle-rickshaw with a thin margin for 8-30 or 9-30 morning classes or 2.50 afternoon classes was a great risk inpunctuality with the Iron Bridge to cross. I would then run to the Wooden Bridge (both are famous at Gandaria), cross it and take one cycle-rickshanw to save time. In rainy days—and these are the normal order here—we would have a nice drenching. On occasions I would take railway journeys from Gandaria to Dacca stations but when trains were uncertain about keeping to schedule there would be further complications. Imagine also

four trips a day in the burning, blazing, blistering sun of April. But what are these travails to the Olympic gods whose banquets, dinners, receptions send-offs are published and illustrated in the newspapers and blared in the Radios? They smile in secret and look down upon toiling famine-stricken masses while their radios broad

cast crores of foreign exchange earnings and the ever-growing prosperity of the land. My diaries record in great details illnesses in the family, their medical treatment, the educational expenses of my sons, the payment of rent, rates and taxes, the trepidation that is caused by the Income-tax department. In 1961 there was a domestic quarrel involving one of my sons, his wife and two children. A split followed; this son of mine, ordinarily and mostly sweet and suave, developed the wrath of Achilles and declined to be placated. Parental love that knows no diminution and patience brought about reconciliation after a tension of two months. Another son brought up till graduation in the family had his first appointment in Jessore with touring duties in the interior. On arrival there he could have his accommodation in a ration godown; he was about to throw up and return home; later he was caught in the terrific cyclone of May, 1961, off Madaripur; for days he couldn't be traced; the agony of the family had its relief only when news came through of his providential escape, Ulysses-like.

On the 5th February, 1961, the annual Convocation of Dacca University was held. The Vice-Chancellor made a thoughtful speech in which he registered a spirited plea for academic freedom. The Chief Guest on this occasion was Professor Rushbrook Williams who was imported in his old age to make a Defence of Basic Democracy. What a subject for a Convocation address! Was it or was it not naked political propaganda by the reigning Govt? From hundreds of platforms,

through hundreds of Radio transmissions students of universities and educational institutions are being urged to eschew politics from their sacred precincts. But the silent, though tormented, observer asks "If the salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted?" The Chancellor (who is the Governor of the province) delivered an ex tempore speech, wild, incoherent, emotional as was his wont. Memories of addresses on such occasions by Newman, or Bryce, or Asquith or Haldane did flit across my mind but heavy-laden sorrow overwhelmed me when I recalled the Convocation speeches at this very university of Mirza Ismail and Sir AF Rahman to mention only two names.

To dispose of the same topic in the same context let me note here that we had another full-dress Convocation (not a special one) at the end of the year. It was held on the 10th December, 1961, when Dr Salimuzzaman Siddiqui, Director, Pakistan Council of Scientific Research was the Chief Guest. Let the brief entry in my diary speak : V-C's address — Fairly good

Dr Salimuzzaman (who looked being 70) was full of modesty. His approach was quite rewarding.

The Chancellor talked wildly, incoherently but with popularity tricks just the same.

Although Dacca University has been having no Convocation now for 3/4 years the fact remains that till then it was a regular annual feature and it had two in 1961.

Latest Saturday enactment provides for several according to categories of degree recipients and with different categories of functionaries to preside.

We had a refreshing contrast seven days later. On the 18th December, 1961, we had an address from Professor Salvador de Madriaga in the Arts Buildings on European Races and Their Distinctive Approach to Poetry—a venerable old man,

four score years or more. He went into the roots of European Civilisation, their literary origins and developments, their kinship and divergencies. In a profoundly philosophic dissertation, delivered slowly, he analysed the basic trends in European poetry and illustrated his theme with special references to Hamlet, Don Quixote, Falst (and another which I missed). He opened up vistas beyond our ken.

By the time we had the first Convocation on the 5th February, 1961, a Hindu-Muslim Riot began in Jabbalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India. It had a week-long or more of orgiastic run in which Muslims of the town, men, women and children, were pulled out of their homes and massacred brutally in the open; their houses were burnt; their property looted and they didn't know why. Indian newspapers gave lurid accounts of one or two Muslim young men causing licentious assault on a college girl. Nobody could make any head or tail out of these versions. The Statesman, by sending a special correspondent to the spot, succeeded in publishing a despatch from the latter on the 12th February, 1961, Calcutta City Edition. A clue to the holocaust's origin was furnished in this despatch. One evening Usha Bhargava, a college student, went into her bath room, put kerosene on her clothes and burnt herself. She was removed to a hospital where three hours before her death she had made a dying declaration before a questionable trio, namely, a doctor, an advocate (later joined by) and an aunt. The declaration said in effect that there was an attempt on her modesty by one whose name she didn't know. When she was pressed hard by the aunt she gave the name. With the highest standard of journalistic fairness and objectivity the Statesman correspondent exposed the part that was played by the aunt at home and in the hospital where although the girl had been alive for hours before she had succumbed to her injuries, no



arrangement was made for a legally valid dying declaration; the part that was played by the doctor and the advocate referred to was equally clearly exposed. When the end came, absolutely twisted and mangled versions of an assault on the girl by Muslim goondas got disseminated; riotous crowds were on the rampage; two so-called culprits were arrested and shown to the crowds with pledges of adequate punishment to follow. But the mad pursuit and massacre began just then and went on unchecked for days on end. After the holocaust Pandit Nehru visited the place and tried to make a balanced assessment. Being a regular and keen reader of The Statesman I had a clear picture of the riots since the 12th February, but East Pakistan and West Pakistan both had been ignorant for days on end. Pakistan repercussions emerged only at the end of February. Violent demonstrations against the Indian High Commission at Karachi became very lawless; the Government adopted stern measures, arrested culprits, some of whom had been eventually imprisoned after trial in law courts. There were rumours of communal tension in Jessore and Khulna at the end of February. At Dacca University on the 1st March a meeting of students was held and some speeches delivered without interfering with normal work. Only on the 5th April when news of the imprisonment of Karachi students reached Dacca, the students absented themselves from their classes. That was all.

The citizens of Dacca had been deeply preoccupied with the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Dacca where she arrived on the 14th February, two days after the The Statesman's revelation of the origin and course of Jabbalpur riots. For a couple of days Dacca and East Pakistan revelled in that glamorous visit; President Ayub Khan arrived at Dacca to give her a befitting send-off on the 16th. And he availed of the opportunity to give a talk to the Heads of Depts of Dacca University on the 17th.

Let us omit the last paragraph dealing with the 2-day visit to Dacca of Queen Elizabeth II and get back for a movement to the first week of April, 1961. On the 6th April which was the hottest day of the season in Calcutta and which was fiercely hot and humid at Dacca we received in the midst of our work a message that Lt General Azam Khan, the Governor, would address a meeting of the teachers at 4.30 p.m. (the same day) in the Chemistry Gallery. Having attended to my duties from 9.30 a.m. to 12-15 p.m. and again from 2.50 p.m. to 4.15 p.m. I proceeded to the venue and listened to his speech which said in effect :

There are two important things in Pakistan: Religion and Education. Let there be a balance between the two and let teachers live a dedicated life.

Indeed we had a full measure of dedication, with a parching throat in the classes and presspiring body in the lecture theatre and later in the attached lawns where we had staff Tea under the same conditions! But no provision for the other part, viz. religious practice for Asr or Mughrib, was in evidence.

Space-ship's orbiting round the earth with man or woman or men aboard has now been common enough but the then greatest achievement in this direction was made by Russia on the 12th April when Cosmonaut Gagarin had been in space for 108 minutes in a  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ton ship. Spell-bound we read how it was safely brought back to earth by reverse blasts, retro engines, atmospheric drag and parachute. In less than four months, on the 6th August, 1961, to be precise, Russia repeated the same, going far better than the first. Titov made 17 orbits in a 24-hour flight in Vostock II, each orbit in space varying between 110.6 and 159.7 miles. What a piece of work is man! Why not contrast this with my puny orbiting in my own little spare? Like

Anatole France's *Our Lady's Juggler* I was performing my stupid feats.

Conquest of space is already in man's grip. In all probability the conquest of a cyclone is in sight. But shortly after midnight, that is to say, on the 9th May, 1961, a cyclone burst over Dacca with elemental fury and continued unabated till 2 p.m. imperilling life and property. We cowered in a ground floor room while blast after blast, like lolling tongues of fire, blew by just to devour and destroy whatever should come in its path. One of our first floor rooms which had a corrugated sheet top was blown down with a fearful crash while we witnessed with pain and horror similar structures in the locality meeting the same fate. Trees were uprooted, electric wires twisted and power supply cut off for several days. From the following day news percolated, drop by drop, as it were of widespread loss of life and property from all over Mymensingh, Dacca, Khulna, Barisal, Noakhali, Chittagong, Faridpur. The official casualty figures, as usual, were unbelievably low; they mounted to a few hundreds by the 14th May. On the 15th the Statesman reported a thousand at Barisal alone. The same evening we heaved a sigh of relief on receipt of an incomplete message from a common friend about the providential escape of our son caught in the storm off Madaripur on the morning of 9th May. There was a second cyclone in the coastal belt of East Pakistan on the 30th and 31st May. It was, however, less destructive than the earlier one.

Speaking of social relations I shall refer only to one such event. The rainy season was in full swing. But the bride being a niece of a Central Minister elaborate arrangements under gaily decorated shamianas had been made. Shortly after 12 noon with the lunch hour near at hand a big, black patch of

clouds moved up quickly from the south-west corner and delivered a short but heavy cascade which completely marred the open-air arrangements. When I arrived with my family after the downpour all guests had sought shelter indoors in the attached small bungalow and the guests included judges of the High Court, prominent leaders including erstwhile Ministers Ebdoed. Their behaviour in such a feasting function is a sight for porter Sindbads to see. They receive knee-croaking attentions; they talk loftily, laugh roaringly, proceed speedily to the viands tables and eat with gusts and without any ceremony. On this occasion the rains had brought them in jostling contact in a congested room but they didn't mind in the least. They had their fill, shook hands with the host and left expeditiously on one pretext or other. My wife's eldest brother, (a venerable old man and a near kin), and I silently patiently sat in a corner of the verandah, watched a swank whose pockets were bulging with hundred-rupee currency notes, spending money unstintedly. When our turn came we made timorous attempts at a bite; there was plenty of 'parata'. Mutton curry and Kabab but ill-cooked obviously by a catering concern. What was still more repellent was absolute want of warmth.

In the history of Dacca University a new chapter opened in the third week of July when a new University Ordinance was published. The Executive Council and the Court were superseded by a Syndicate consisting of six ex-officio members and five nominated. The hitherto elected Deans were replaced by nominated ones. It also incorporated a schedule of teachers' work. The same totalitarian pattern is continuing. How far it has succeeded in doing away with "democratic" disorder and violence and how far concentration of power in the Vice-Chancellor or Chancellor or both has ushered in the millenium of benevolent rule and order in academic progress is being

written since in lurid characters. a casual glance at the happenings of 1962 alone will throw some light but the attempt at centralisation, unification, integration is still proceeding unabashed.

Dr Newman went out with effect from the 5th September. The Asir Committee investigation and report lies buried.

On the 19th September report was received of the death of the U.N. Chief Dag Hammerskoeld in an air crash over NDOLA, Northern Rhodesia (then), in his journey from The Congo where he had been on a mission of peace with Katanga which UN troops had just annexed for The Congo. It was the severest blow to the UNO and a matter of profound grief to the world as a whole.

On the 8th November we had a queer function at the Staff Club where a dinner was organised to meet the members of the National Integration Conference then going on. Trying to establish some link between the Staff Club and the National Integration Bureau I gathered that the dinner was actually financed by the latter body. Further comment is unnecessary. Is not a university a handmaid of the State?

At the end of the year, just on the eve of the cold weather recess Dr Sajjad Husain, Head of the English Deptt. arranged an afternoon party to meet Dr K.S. Murshid, Reader in English, who was about to proceed to U.S. for studies and research. He had been there for two years and four months and returned early in June, 1964, on the eve of my quitting Dacca University,

During the cold weather recess I took my wife along with me to West Bengal. She hadn't been to our village home for over 25 years and she was eager to meet our relations with whom she had been very intimate till 1935. Till then we used to spend

our vacations there. For her as well as for me it was an enjoyable trip. At Calcutta we did our shopping together and had been to pictures together. At the village home she had an intensely affectionate welcome; relations and visitors poured in to meet her after such a long time. She richly deserved a holiday and my sons made it possible for her to get away from her drudgery from year's end to years end.

Following the arrest under Security Act of Mr H.S. Suhrawardy on the 30th January, 1962, at Karachi, the whole year was a year of defeat and shame for us at Dhaka University. Student strikes marked by noisy meetings, wild demonstrations, picketings within the campus and by processions with all concomitant factors of violence, arson, lathi charge, police firing, outside the campus paralysed all educational work. If classes were resumed after long or short spell of suspension, they were closed again after uneasy truces. The first long spell of disorder covered the period from 1st February to July 31st, the second from 4th September to the end of October when the Academic Council took the decision of abolishing Functional English for Science students. Strike on one plea or another broke out afresh in mid-December and student unrest culminated in the abandonment at the last moment after costly preparations of the University Convocation on the 23rd December. The sequel to the Convocation debacle extended far into the new year during the opening two months during which the university was entirely closed and during which the reigning Vice-Chancellor simply disappeared one fine morning to be replaced by another. Mr Suhrawardy was arrested on 30th January, 1962. On the following day President Ayub and some of his ministers arrived at Dacca on a week's tour. The university students went on strike with effect from the 1st February. On the 2nd there was a black-out of the preceding

day's strike news in the local papers. This incensed the students who formed a cluster under the mango tree and made a bonfire of the newspapers. Simultaneously a History Conference was being held at Dacca. Although I was an enrolled member of the Reception Committee, circumstances in which we were placed didn't provide the urge to attend. On the 4th February the president and members of the Reception Committee had organised a dinner at Curzon Hall. When I arrived there at 7.35 p.m. I found attendance thin. No VIP attended. Excellent food provided remained untasted; and after-dinner speeches were poorest, rather worthless. On the 3rd February although I met three consecutive classes in the forenoon, tension and restlessness among the students in the university area were great. The scene of activity shifted from the Arts campus to the old Legislative Assembly Buildings and vicinity where there was a hand to hand engagement between the students and the authorities; in this the Foreign Minister of Pakistan was roughly handled and the Vice-Chancellor's car damaged. It was further reported that the Statesman dt 2/2/62 was seized by the Government. On the 4th (which although it was a Sunday) we held the 3rd sessional test in Functional English; it was a compulsory exam which would go into the session's record. Even so the examinees were in a restless mood and could explode any moment. My colleague, Mr Adams (under Teacher-Exchange programme) and I managed a big hall with great caution and tact. On the 5th I had an afternoon class but at 12 noon an Intelligence Branch officer in mufti was caught in the students' canteen and beaten; his identity card was also snatched away. On the same day a Special Convocation that was scheduled to be held at Rajshahi University in honour of President Ayub was cancelled. On the 6th February things took the ugliest turn; students had gath-

ered in force within the Curzon Hall precincts and without; police made a lathi charge on them; they retaliated with brick bats; soon the situation went out of control; a bus was burnt; the Vice-Chancellor addressed them and spoke against forced closure of the university about which there was rumour but they formed a huge procession, marched down Nawabpur Road unhindered, started slogans, pulled down President's portraits from shops and smashed them and resorted to other acts of violence in a frenzy. The university was declared closed till 11th March. The Vice-Chancellor's Garden Party fixed for the afternoon in honour of President Ayub was abandoned. Confused situation prevailed. The local newspapers didn't publish any news of the occurrences. On the 7th I had an English Department meeting and duties to attend at 10 a.m. Conditions upto the neighbourhood of the Arts Campus were normal but within the campus many students were moving about; some cars of teachers were parked. Outside the campus police in full strength were patrolling the area; crowds of outsiders and students were watching. At about 12 noon when I came out of the office of the English Department I noticed a huge big crowd of students moving across the University Playing Ground from east to west carrying posters and banners demanding the blood of the President. Reportedly they went into the Dacca Medical College compound and then took a circuitous route to avoid police cordon and marched down to Chawkbazar, Islampur and then to Nawabpur Road and repeated violence as on the preceding day. For the first time since the 2nd the Government issued a Press Note and made the Radio announcement that the university and all educational institutions were closed. On the 8th February ALL WAS QUIET ON THE POLITICAL FRONT. The Govt. issued another Press Note giving a fairly full account of incidents on the 7th.



On the 9th there was yet another Press Note referring to i) Objectionable shorting of slogans by Dacca Hall students. ii) Arrest of 25 persons at Barisal and two at Kushtia. The Statesman of Calcutta continued to be under a ban till the 17th February.

I had a month's respite in the wake of the 19-period-a-week's load in the earlier session. I had thus relaxation and quiet study of what I liked. I read *The Outsider*, *The Wild Duck*, the former being absorbingly interesting, the latter proved to be a great play, a moving play of ideas against realistic background. But I also read from cover to cover *Lolita* which appeared to me an artistically constructed piece of pornography, nothing more, nothing less. I have omitted *A BURNT-OUT CASE* which also towards the end degenerated into a story of crime and sex. The Eid Moon was visible on the 7th March and we celebrated Eid-ul-Fitr on the following day; visited friends and relatives on the succeeding two days and then looked forward to the re-opening of the university on the 12th March when we thought we would resume our normal, academic duties.

But wait. On the evening of 1st March with Jumaatul-Vida on the morrow President Ayub's Constitution for the country for ending Martial Law Government was announced—a Federal type with a Presidential Cabinet, a Parliament with 150 men + 6 women and Provincial Assemblies with 150 men + 5 women in each wing and with all power concentrated in the President. Following elections to both in the coming two months Martial Law ended on the 8th June, 1962. This Constitution has been working since. How far this solved political problems and student unrest is for the historian to record. The government effected the detention of Mr Suhrawardy and the Government watched immediately afterwards the violent repercussions

among the students—watched and waited, waited and watched for a week and then closed all educational institutions.

Full of hope for a return to normal conditions when I arrived at University Arts Buildings on the 12th March at 9.20 a.m. for my 9.30 class I found the whole place dirty, filthy with layers upon layers of dust; the class rooms were hardly opened. Out of three classes I could meet only two with thin attendance. On the 13th and 14th some classes were held and these were followed on the 15th by another full scale strike with a noisy meeting in the campus. Another half-day's work was followed by a huge meeting of students and staff in the Curzon Hall on the 17th. This was addressed by Mr Khurshid, President, Azad Kashmir. The Hall was full; we teachers had to keep standing. Read the following entry in my diary of that date:

Listened to Khurshid, young, enthusiastic politician knowing all the tricks of a political demagogue but speaking in good English.

For three days with effect from 19th March there were some more classes. The visiting King and Queen of Thailand occasioned a holiday on the 22nd and the Republic Day another on the 23rd. From 24th March to 3rd April ran another spell of full scale strike. Sunday, the 25th March witnessed one of the most deplorable demonstrations which originated at Dacca College where the students violently defied all rules and restrictions, went out into the streets, formed processions and marched down but they were intercepted by police near the Railway Hospital before they could cross into the old town; they were teargassed; 200 of them were arrested on the spot. Sunday being observed as a holiday in the university our students entered upon their sympathetic strike with effect from Monday,

the 26th March. Read the following entry in my diary for 26th March: I arrived at 9.20 a.m.

University students on strike. Groups of students standing, chatting, sitting in the campus. Police in full strength were around. Meeting held from 10.30 a.m. under the mango tree to 12 noon when the students wanted to go out in a procession. Proctor closed the gate. On the street the police force formed a cordon on both east and west and then closed and then entered into the compound and gave a chase to students, arrested many of them. Subsequently they guarded the gate. I saw some police men throwing brickbats from the street into the compound etc. Hasan (one of my sons, and a young college teacher) sitting in our car (parked in the campus) was taken into custody but released later on my identification. Left at about 1 p.m.

Strike days at the University had a uniform pattern. By 10.30 a.m. the campus became full. Soon after a meeting under the mango tree began, speeches were made, slogans shouted resolutions with student demands passed. By lunch time they dispersed. None attended classes but hour by hour the bell rang; at the beginning of each period the teachers went out with Attendance Registers in hand, walked into their rooms, stared stupidly and vacantly at empty benches, recorded absences and returned into the Staff Room. Meanwhile Heads of Departments would pretend to be innocent of any occurrences and busy with their office duties. Proctors would move about sheepishly. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts was invariably absent. And the Vice-Chancellor was never seen. When speeches became loud or movements violent and wild we, teachers, would sometimes go to the balconies and see and hear like helpless spectators what was going on below.

Walking into class rooms period by period, marking absences and then returning were most humiliating experiences. There was no direction from anywhere for an intelligent approach or sensible moves. Teachers other than Heads were simply non-existent but during speech-making by Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, President or Ministers these teachers were always the scapegoats.

This went on day after day; there was an additional feature on the 30th March in the Hoisting of a Black Flag "presumably at the visit of President Ayub to Chittagong today to inaugurate Karnafully Hydro-Electric Project tomorrow". The President met selected staff on the 1st April.

From the 4th April to 15th there was another uneasy truce involving the holding of a number of classes but on the 16th April there was another outburst. A 3-day token strike declared earlier was on. At 9.30 a.m. as I walked into my class room in the Commerce Building one student accompanied me. We sat together side by side for 15 minutes—he doing a task and I reading a book when 3 students appeared in the corridor and started shouting at the attending student. When the shouting became vehement the latter left and I followed him. When I returned to the Staff Room it was noticed that Dr Sajjad Husain was holding a class (3H) with about 5 students. Mild protests having failed, 60/70 students rushed upstairs, made a terrific noise, smashed glass panes and the class was abandoned. Perhaps simultaneously (I didn't see) Dr Jilani (in another building) was not only harassed but stoned in his class. On the 17th the University announced suspension of classes till the end of the term—the term was extended on account of earlier dislocation till 31st July. On the following day the students gathered under the mango-tree and in the

canteen shouted, yelled, held a meeting, condemned teaching staff and others. This was another temporizing; the malady should have been correctly diagnosed and remedial measures taken accordingly. But what happened meanwhile was that the most mortal blow had been inflicted on administrative authority which forfeited confidence and respect of the student community. If a popular and representative Govt had been in power it wouldn't have permitted, I believe, such chaotic drift.

Inertia on the part of the administrative heads, the Vice-Chancellor and the Chancellor, the hush-hush policy of all categories of authority must have deluded them into the belief that another suspension would bring about a "simplicity" cure. They did put through, perhaps on a secret decision, a scheme of informal classes. Let teachers meet the students of different classes according to a mutually agreed schedule and give them help and guidance. I fixed up classes with MA Final, MA Preliminary, First Year Subsidiary English classes and went on with my work with effect from 23rd April. In this zealous work I received some relief from the agony of the occurrences of the earlier weeks.

On the 27th April after I did a full hour's lecture work with the MA Final students from 11 a.m. to 12 noon I received a report that Mr AK Fulzul Huq had just breathed his last (10.45 a.m.) at the contiguous Dacca Medical College Hospital where he had been for a month, suffering from Uraemia, pneumonia etc, now rallying, now having a setback. His passing was the passing of a CENTURY as it were of Muslim Renaissance in Bengal and India and later in Pakistan and the history of the period was more or less the history of his unparalleled services to the country and the community. We gathered that his body had already been transferred to his house at KM Das Lane,

Hatkhola, Dacca. Immediately afterwards my son, Hasan, and I drove to his house; at the junction of his residential lane with the main road we noticed a long line of people converging there—people from the highest to the lowest, from the oldest to little boys. Inside the precincts of the house, at the south-west corner of the main building and on the north of the swimming pod lay the body with the face exposed to view. People were filing past; I did the same and had my last glimpse; to me it was still the same rounded face which I had had imprinted on one of the Second World War publicity posters in 1942-43—fathomless and sublime like the ocean in calm. I shut my eyes, recited ..... and went back to my car. There was a deep, personal bond of abiding love between him and myself. This I treasured and still treasure as something sacred and I have never desecrated it by participating in any public mourning. In his latest death anniversary (1967, 27th April) the editorial of the Pakistan Observer and an article from Mr Abul Mansur Ahmed exploited him politically. But unquestionably he was much too GREAT for such uses.

In referring to his death I am reminded of another sad death of the period affecting Dacca University, that of Mr Shamsuzzoha Ansari, Reader in Law, DU who was run over and killed by a running train under হাতীরপুল on the morning of 13th April. The late Mr Ansari was a refugee from the district of Batiya in UP (India). In full manhood then and father of several children he had built up an enviable reputation as a successful teacher. I first met him in meetings of the Academic Council and was struck by his forthright remarks and opinions. We developed since friendly contacts; once we travelled together to Calcutta in course of which I was thrilled to hear how from a humble beginning he had worked his way up by sheer perseverance and tenacity. His family was stranded by

Hall in a clash between the students and the police. On the 16th April the Pakistan Observer featured a report under the caption, V-C's Resignation Demanded by Students following post-prandial talk in Iqbal Hall Dinner on the 15th evening. At this dinner the Vice-President of Iqbal Hall Union requested the V-C to safeguard the sanctity of university premises violated by the police on the 10th April. The Vice-Chancellor in his speech referred to this grievance and pointed to an office-bearer of DUCSU present in the dinner and stated that this office-bearer had reported that not more than 20/25 students participated in the 10th April procession. This sparked off controversy. Later a procession of students went to V-C's house and demanded categorical statements... and so on. A further meeting was announced for the 16th. On the 17th April between 12 noon and 1 p.m. there was a bloody clash in the Arts Campus between EPSU and NSF groups of students, in which, according to newspaper report available on the 18th, 14 students were injured but the injuries were minor. This clash resulted from an incident on the night of the 14th April when there was unruly exuberance to usher in the Bengali New Year. The incident pertained to the pulling down of Quaid-i-Azam's portrait in the Assembly Hall of SM Hall and breaking it into pieces. Bloody clashes between rival student organisations, beating up of a senior teacher by a particular group, students breaking up a Convocation, clashes between police and students etc since the 17th April 1963 have been the order of the day at Dacca University. Some of these will be glanced at in due course.

By 17th May, 1963 the last of the several rounds of talk between Pakistan and India collapsed at Delhi.

The month of May has been especially dreadful in recent years on account of the visitation of cyclones. In 1963 while we

had been meeting our classes being heat-afflicted, the coastal left of the province, especially, Cox's Bazar and Chittagong as also the offshore islands of Sandwip and Hatiya were afflicted by another cyclone on the 29th May killing people and destroying property on a terrific scale. The casualty figures, as reported, mounted day by day—the official version on the 3rd June was quoted as :

Death — 10,000

Homeless — 3 lakhs

Damage to property — Crores of rupees

While we were calamity-ridden, United Kingdom and the rest of the world were being thrilled by the Profumo-Keeler erotics and complications. While we stood stunned by the tragic death from electrocution at Iqbal Hall of an MA student on the 10th June, the rest of the world was on the threshold of another thrilling achievement in space by the Russian Cosmonaut Lt. Col. Valery Bykovsky and cosmonette Valentina Tereshkov in Vostock V and VI respectively. Mid-June recorded their historic feat. It is slightly incorrect that we at the university didn't have some 'thrillers', and from another standpoint 'shockers'. On the 28th June, one day preceding the end of the term, there was a Wild and Uncontrollable 'ragging', reportedly by SM Hall MA Final students in the Arts campus and also in the streets nearby from 8.30 a.m. to 12 noon. This was a Friday in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and pre-Jumaa activities must have been holy and sacred. Classes should have been held from 8.30 a.m. when no student attended by class; at 9.20 a.m. I was lucky enough to have my students, but at 11 a.m. only 10 out of 50/60 attended while bomb explosions, noisy acrobatics, wild revelry in mud and spray-colours were going on. The 'rag-mongers' terrorised us



all. The same evening we attended a staff farewell at the club on the eve of departure of Physics Professor Dr Innaas Ali as Member of the Atomic Energy Commission. Earlier in the session we had a similar function for Professor (and Doctor too) Md. Nurul Huda on his appointment as Member of the Planning Commission.

We had a month's recess in July during which my wife and I had a very comfortable 17-day holiday in the quiet and sylvan old cantonment of Jessore where my son and daughter-in-law were posted in the Combined Military Hospital. We made a short car trip to Khulna and Daulatpur—the drive along an excellent road providing charming scenes of green rice fields, plenty of old and massive 'A-Shoth' and 'Bat' trees, dotted with tall coconut trees bearing picturesque wealth of rounded green coconuts. What gripped our attention still more was an unnumbered number of date palms standing (undoubtedly naked and rugged) everywhere, even in the midst of and on the edges of crop fields. The inhabitants, mostly farmers, peasants and day labourers—all appeared to be well-fed and therefore of strong muscles.

The next term at the university ran from 1st August to 18th October when began a brief autumn recess which ended on the 3rd November, 1963. At the reopening we had work only in 2nd and 3rd yr Hons. classes. Heavier load gradually piled up with effect from 22nd August. On the 19th August after I had met two classes from 9.30 a.m. came the news of the death of the Pakistan National Assembly Speaker Mr Tamizuddin Khan at CMH, Dacca Cantonment, at 10.40 a.m. True it is that the end came after protracted illness but there must have been a sudden setback immediately before the death. I saw his daughter, Razia Khan, one of our colleagues in English going into her

class at 10.30 a.m. the same morning. He was 73 and had lived a strenuous life in which he had to weather many a storm. He had played his part in Muslim League politics and in Government before Independence and after. Full military honours were given him at his funeral ceremony and at burial the same evening. Academic work continued without dislocation but proving much too heavy on certain days a week particularly in stuffy, ill-furnished, ill-lighted, ill-kept dungeon-like rooms in the Commerce Structure of the then Arts campus which was a godforsaken place in which we had lavatories which could be used only with lungis on instead of with western dress and in which we had strange, depressing experiences on occasions, i.e. a dog running across a lecture room while the lecture was on. During this term in the main building and on the first floor on 14th September as I was getting into the stride of my lecture on Spenser's F.Q. an old beggar entered into the room, started whining and also humming a tune. On the 25th September Mrs Daisy F. Balsley joined our department under Fulbright Teacher-Exchange programme. She stayed on till the end of the academic session, 1963-'64. A line or two about the 17th September will not come amiss. It was the much publicised anniversary of the province-wide Strike Day of the preceding year when pitched battles between the students and the police had taken place—a day on which the students' demonstration against the enforcement of provisions in the National Education Report had reached its climax. Here is my experience of the anniversary day :

I had a sore throat, irritating cough and chill from the morning; my classes were in the afternoon; "before breakfast I corrected four 2nd yr. Hons. Tutorial scripts and after breakfast I made lecture preparation upto 12 noon... in bad health of drove through furnace-like heat to university and back (2.20

p.m. to 3.20 p.m.) just to perform the hypocritical role of marking; students absent. In fact in the particular Commerce Building Room-2 where I was to meet my 2nd yr Honours class a drama rehearsal by a number of women was going on" (from my diary, dt 19/9/63). I may add that I was laid up with flu for five days with effect from 18th September. Here is another entry for 12th October :

Met classes from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. — M.A. final class in the third period proving a torture both to teacher and students being held in Morrison Structure (made by the Americans for teacher-training classes in the old campus) without any fan; the stuffy heat was insufferable.

For D.U. staff club dinner the same evening I arrived at 7-25. There was sheer confusion in grabbing and grubbing food insufficiently and improperly served. Left at 9 p.m.

During the 16-day autumn recess I had heaps of examination scripts to look over. Distraction in this job was caused by inclement weather conditions which caused the Madras Coast cyclone, by increasingly strained relations between India and Pakistan leading to the rejection by Pakistan High Commission at New Delhi of the Indian reply—unique in sixteen years, by a tragic incident in Maudoodi's Jamat-i-Islam Conference at Lahore in which a worker was shot dead and during which attempts were made, it was alleged, to burn and beat up the session. But the most diverting drama during the recess was being enacted in England following Mcmillan's resignation of Premiership and during the scramble for it. His machiavellian technique succeeded eventually in the selection and induction of Lord House at the cost of Butler. The orient is always blamed for unseemly scrambles but it is forgotten that the West has always set models for the same.

The next term at the university began on the 4th November and was to have ended on 30th December but eventually it continued right up to 15th January i.e. upto Ramadan Eve. The last week of November was marked by a serious police-public clash at Chandpur (Comilla) at the end of Governor Abdul Monem Khan's formal inauguration of the heliport there. In this unseemly fight two people (including one student) were killed and several wounded. The public outburst on this occasion was an alarming pointer to their mood vis a vis governmental authority. Dacca University students observed strike on the 25th and 26th November against Chandpur Police firing. On the 22nd November, in USA President Kennedy was assassinated—an insane, brutal, inhuman murder of the youngest of USA President which stunned the world and which has just received in 1967 an immortal treatment in William Ranchester's book, The Death of a President. But here in Pakistan another historical event was in the offing; after twelve days news came through of the death at Beirut from heart failure of H.S. Suhrawardy on the morning of 5th December. His body was brought to Dacca for burial by the side of Mr. A.K. Fuzlul Huq who had passed away a year and a half earlier. Death brought them closer together. From 9th December to 11th December Pakistan Vs Commonwealth Cricket series were played at Dacca ending in a draw. I had pretty full classes during the period. Such an experience always provided soothing reconciliation to my own avocation in life against the sharper reactions to which one is subjected by me, manners and events of the world. On the 21st December, 1963, I received news of the death of my 2nd sister in West Bengal; she had died on the 13th December; she was about 80; her last wish to meet us during the cold weather recess remained

unfulfilled. She would of 'our home' was now moving on to extinction; the eldest sister was yet alive but completly bed-ridden. The former's death led me to form a plan for the coming holiday. We had better go and spend a few days with the bereaved family in the district of Murshidabad. 10 days' earned leave was due to me and I applied for prefixing it to the Ramadan holiday to commence on 16th January, 1964. I was therefore on duty till the 5th January. On the 6th I arranged for visas for my wife and myself. But Hindu-Muslim relations in East Pakistan and West Bengal following the theft of the SACRED HAIR IN KASHMIR overturned our apple cart as will be clear presently.

### 1964

I had just another half-year to go at Dacca University. And what a semester it was! At the beginning we had a near two-month holiday. The whole of January was marked by Hindu-Muslim killings, first in Khulna and Dacca; East Pakistan, then in Calcutta. The first half of February was a chronicle of consistent and continuous campaign in India of keeping up the bitterness which was fed at the same time by Kashmir discussions in the Security Council. Mid-March to its end went into history on account of the recrudescence of riots in Calcutta and the wholesale massacre of Muslims in Ranchi, Singhbhum, Chakradharpur districts. At the latter places the February-onward blood-feud propaganda sent the tribes into frenzy. The tribal armies marched with primitive weapons and mowed down the Muslims in barbaric orgies. A Belgian Jesuit Priest, Father Rherman Rassechdert who had made an attempt to save some Muslim's was killed by a poisoned arrow. Communal tension did spread over to Patna, Rewa, Jabbalpur.

The Government adopted measures to air-patrol tribal areas in Bihar. The Dacca University having re-opened on the 22nd February entered upon a career of madness in mid-March following violence at the Rajshahi University Convocation on the 16th March. Barely for a month it was open for work which too had been marked by violent demonstrations from 18th March and these culminated in law-breaking and law-enforcing operations on the 22nd March, Dacca University Convocation Day and also in the simultaneous closing of the university till the 7th May, 1964. This Convocation's sequel hasn't yet been disposed of (May, 1967). Towards the end of January while Calcutta's holocaust was still smouldering and while the annual session of the Indian Congress was going on at Bhubaneswar, Orissa, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had a stroke which for the best part of four months to come crippled him. He had hardly recovered his fitness when the end came and that was on the 27th May. From recorded events of the period it would appear that he was contemplating, particularly in the context of savagery in India in the month of March and in that of chronic discontent and violence in Kashmir, action to restore better relations between Pakistan and India. This impression was strengthened by the release early in April and after eleven years of incarceration of Shaikh Abdullah and also by the initiation of a meet of the Home Ministers of India and Pakistan to deal with the problems of minorities in each country. Shaikh Abdullah's triumphant movements and unrestricted speeches within India and later the permission granted to him to visit Pakistan for a fortnight on the eve of Nehru's sudden death raised widespread expectations of a reorientation in India's policy towards Pakistan and Kashmir. Riots in East Pakistan and then in India, madness within Dacca University and Rajshahi

University, the release of Shaikh Abdullah, Pandit Nehru's illness and death—all these events during the first six months of 1964, or in other words during the last lap of my work at Dacca University kept me and other citizens of the sub-continent on the see-saw of sharp reactions, of a sense of shame and humiliation at the failure of man and his social and political organisations. On occasions I felt :

Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns

Earth's returns

For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!

Shut them in.

With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!

Love is best.

The poet's longing for love among the sexes or for love, sympathy and Sanity among mankind still eludes everybody; the kingdom of houghnhnms certainly makes better showing.

The theft of the SACRED HAIR from the Hazratbal Shrine in far off Kashmir sparked off holy flame in Khulna where stabblings, arson, loot and general strike began perhaps on the very day of the receipt of the report of the theft, namely, 3rd January, 1964. A similar situation was apprehended at Dacca simultaneously. At any rate our late, lamented colleague of the English Department, Mr Bhabanicharan Roy, expressed the same fear and accompanied me as I was returning home at the end of my classes. There was however no tension or incident at Dacca till the 15th January. On the 5th evening my son posted at Combined Military Hospital, Jessore, reached home and gave us first hand reports of the conduct of riotous crowds on the Jessore-Khulna Road and at Daulatpur, near Khulna. On the eve of his coming home on privilege leave he wanted to see

his elder brother at Khulna and on 3rd January he was traveling in a motor cycle along that road in course of which he was very much harassed and eventually had to seek shelter in my nephew's residence at Daulatpur beyond which he couldn't proceed. He returned to Jessore on the following day under Police Protection. On the morning of the 5th the Pakistan Observer reported stabbings and other brutalities perpetrated at Khulna on the 3rd. On the 6th The Statesman of Calcutta gave an account of Khulna disturbances and said that repercussions in India were apprehended. On the same day I took out from Indian High Commission at Dacca visas for my wife and myself to visit West Bengal. But in one day news from Calcutta was very upsetting; West Bengal started howling for blood. In another day the Staff Reporter of The Statesman gave an account of repercussions in West Bengal, of demonstrations in Halra, of arson in villages near Bongaon, of Hindu-Mahasabha agitation and cogitation. Retaliation began on the 10th January on which day my son posted at Khulna arrived at Dhaka to take his family there where the situation permitted such normal movement. Khulna disturbances were limited and very shortlived; on the 12th he went back. But Calcutta's retaliatory course enough became one of diabolical vendetta. On the 10th disturbances spread to Nadia in addition to 24 Paraganas necessitating the calling out of troops. On the 12th we received reports from various sources including BBC of gruesome atrocities on Calcutta Muslims; arson and other brutalities were committed all over Calcutta; PIA planes didn't land there. Reports available here on the 13th showed that on the preceding day Martial Law was declared over extensive areas in Calcutta; Reuter reported that the army and the police opened fire more than 59 times on the 12th as more disturbances took place and at 11 a.m. the same day a 24-hour curfew was



clamped down. On the 13th link with Calcutta by PIA, or telegraph or telephone was cut off. On the 14th while Calcutta was full of violence Dacca was wonderfully quiet and normal; strong protection to the minorities and the maintenance of law and order were given topmost priority. But on the 15th by noon Dacca became violent; two of my sons who had been to the Dacca airport returned home by railway train (other transport not being available) at 1.30 p.m. to report incidents such as arson and killings and of the clamping down of a 24-hour curfew from 1.30 p.m. The Pakistan Observer reported disturbances at Narayanganj on the 14th and the imposition of curfew at night in certain areas. The 24-hour curfew which began on the 15th at 1.30 p.m. was extended by another 24 hours on the 16th when no newspaper was available; it was not possible to have food supplies either. An Air Force officer, a friend of my sons, having cherished a kindly thought about our plight called in the afternoon, went back to Ramna New Market which was unaffected and brought us bread, butter, fowls etc. Although fasting began on the 17th there was no relaxation of curfew which was extended to 8 a.m. on the 18th on which day a 4-hour respite from 8 a.m. was permitted. At a stretch we were confined indoors for 64 hours and more. During the 4-hour interval on the 18th we walked up to Sudderghat via Farashganj. At the last place I met some of my former Hindu pupils; the rich Hindus of Farashganj were absolutely safe and chererful; the huts of poor people near ~~কাজল~~ were in ashes; only poor pedestrians had been stabbed as far as my information went. The curfew continued with slightly extended hours of respite. On the 20th January I received 6 issues of The Statesman from 12th which contained pictures of dislocation of life and services in Calcutta and reports of widespread loot, arson, stabbings and of the imposition of punitive tax on 24-

Paraganas. The Statesman of the 19th and 20th was available on the 21st; the leading article in the 19th, NOT SAME AGAIN, gave a vivid picture of the fate of the Calcutta Busteers; that in the 20th. THIS SIDE and THAT contained severe comments on East Pakistan news black-out. The following entry occurs in my diary for 21st January: This is a reflection on our Public Relations. Government have been very strict in quelling disturbances and providing refuge and relief: Riot-torn Calcutta was reported to be incident free on the 24th January. Then began a long period of hate campaign and bitter propaganda against East Pakistan in regard to its treatment of the Hindu minority. Read the following entry in my diary under 31st January :

Pak Publicity over East Pak Communal Riots—nil

India Publicity over East Pak Communal Riots — Stupendous.

Central Ministers of India (Home, Finance, Rehabilitation) came over to Calcutta, thrashed out matter, held Press Conference and agreed to 'ease' (not liberalise) migration of Pak minority. Report was received of a lakh of Hindus of East Pakistan ready to move out on receipt of migration certificates. Consequences are obvious to the layman but not to our East Pakistan Govt. On the 2nd February The Statesman came out with a leading article "As They Come" referring to refugees from E. Pakistan and to the arrangements being made in India for settling them in Dandakaranya and four other states. This contained a bitter and scathing attack on Pakistan, also on Pak Home Minister Habibullah Khan's proposal of restoring communal harmony and rehabilitating refugees and his reference to unwarranted interference by India in regard to the 'easy' issue of migration certificates. My own comment runs "The garb put on by The Statesman is that of righteous indignation

and perferoid patriotism of India but the real game is that of British Imperialism of playing off one country against the other." On the following day the same newspaper gave the following statistics of migration :

Left Khulna and Jessore : 8000

Migration Certificates about to be issued : 8000

Crossed East Pakistan Border without valid travel documents but admitted into India on compassionate grounds : 25000

Next day the same paper played up East Pakistan atrocities keeping a tight-lipped silence on Calcutta holocaust. On the morrow it again breathed out fire with the leading article "East Side Story". After a day's interval it came out with another editorial "Exercise in Futility", highly inflammatory and in uncontrolled language publishing at the same time the 17000-word speech of India's representative Mr Chagla in the Security Council. The same paper's Political Correspondent from Srinagar, Kashmir, however, did send a very interesting article (published on the 9th February) about widespread discontent against Bakshi, the Prime Minister. Despite the boost given by the Statesman to Mr Chagla's speech in the Security Council Adlai Stevenson of USA lent the support of his country to Pakistan's stand over Kashmir and advocated mediation by the U.N. Secretary-General Mr. U. Thant according to the wishes of the people of Kashmir through a plebiscite immune from coercion (published in the paper on 17th February). In my introduction to 1964 I said on the basis of these facts how bitterness had been kept up in India till the middle of February, if not beyond, leading to the massacres of the innocent Muslims there in March. I have already touched upon their widespread course shaking the Sub-continent from end to end. It led to

agreement between India and Pakistan to hold Home Ministers' conference. From 1st April onwards till the death of Pandit Nehru on the 27th May and coinciding with the release of Shaikh Abdullah stirring events on the political scene were happening. The Home Ministers' conference had two rounds, one in India and the other in Pakistan on 7th April and 5th May respectively. Pertaining to the mass massacres of Muslims at the end of March it will be relevant to refer to a significant statement issued by the Sarvodaya leader Mr Joyprakash Narayan to his colleagues Messrs Naba-kishore Choudhury, Annada Sankar Roy, Charuchandra Bhandari and three others, published in The Statesman in its issue of 26th April on the Moral Smugness in India over Atrocities on Minorities in the country in contrast with those in Pakistan. The statement pointed to distortion of facts leading to distortion in the scale of values. On the 29th April the Statesman in its leading article, A Matter of Truth, offered explanations to the allegations made by the Sarvodaya leaders and made learned comments to say among other things that the statement had been made from Olympian heights. Here is an extract of 'learned' comments by The Statesman :

There is a formidable political as well as moral argument for balanced and objective presentation of facts, however unpalatable..... It is a case which a democratic government determined to maintain order might well examine and which the Press itself could profitably study. Truth, we remind ourselves, does triumph in the end; the presentation of it however may sometimes require careful timing.

In the same issue of 29th the paper published an article, "Vital Meeting on Kashmir: Epic Problems facing two leaders", by Pran Chopra.

On the 1st May Joyprakash Narayan's crushing reply to insinuations in the editorial was published. He said he and his colleagues were actually working in the fields of destruction and devastation which could never be characterised as Olympian heights....He also accorded his appreciation of Pran Chopra's article.

Meanwhile Shaikh Abdullah had been having his meetings and Press Conference and talks with the Govt. of India. Over all these Pandit Nehru showed the highest measure of tolerance and wisdom. But alas ! his death ruined the remotest chance of an amicable settlement. India plunged back to still more reactionary policy leading eventually to the armed conflict in September, 1965.

But I have travelled far afield. The University of Dacca reopened on the 22nd February, 1964, to carry on work for less than a month. Serious trouble began at Rajshahi on the eve of Rajshahi University Convocation fixed for the 16th March, 1964. There 10 students were arrested on the eve of the function which reportedly was held under strong police protection. On the 15th March Dacca University students went on strike and held a noisy meeting in protest against the arrest of the Rajshahi University students. All Party Action Committee declared 19th March as a day of HARTAL, demonstration, public meeting, procession etc. The Hartal was so successful that no vehicle, public or private was seen in the streets which were deserted. From Gandaria I couldn't proceed beyond Northbrook Hall. On the 20th the Pakistan Observer gave a vivid description of students' processions taken out on the preceding day and of incidents around Jagannath College but there was no major trouble. On the 21st it was possible for me to hold my

class at 8.30 a.m. but after one period the usual strike and demonstration began. Lectures were suspended on the 21st March to hold Pre-Convocation Rehearsal, the Dacca University Convocation being fixed on the 22nd March. Exactly as in December, 1962, the authorities proceeded with the making of elaborate arrangements for the function although they had before them the debacle at Rajshahi on the 16th March and although they had plenty of opportunities to understand the attitude of the students to the holding of the function with the Governor presiding. It appears that on the 21st March an All-Party Students Committee held a meeting in the old Arts Building Campus and moved a boycott resolution. With iron rods, hockey sticks, brickbats etc the sponsors of the resolution did beat up those who oppose it. On the 22nd March I arrived at the Curzon Hall West Gate at 8.40 a.m. to attend the Convocation at 9.30 a.m. I proceeded straight to the nearby Physics Department to join the teachers' procession which was being formed; I didn't go to the Shamiana site under the impression that things were in order there. That site was not within our view. The Governor arrived on time for the 9.30 function. Along the narrow, winding corridors of the Physics Department, extending on the east to the Curzon Hall west wing we went on forming and reforming ourselves into two (right and left) serpentine lines to march up but no order for movement was forthcoming. Instead I saw important administrative officers of the university together with the District Magistrate, DIG of Police, and some other Police Officers in uniform walking forward to the Shamiana site and backward and holding confidential discussions among themselves. Right in front of the corridor where I along with others had my post I

saw a number of Medical Graduates in appropriate academic costume squatting on the green grass in relaxed posture. Our static wait while the Chancellor was obviously in the Cloak Room looked being interminable. I stole out and hurried near to the venue where I saw all the chairs of the Graduate recipients of diplomas upside down; they were standing shouting slogans, on all sides of the Shamiana, an endless mass of them, both men and women, on the grounds, on the verandahs of the Chemistry buildings, on the eastern corridor of the Curzon Hall, on the whole length of the iron railings fencing off the main road on the north. Helmeted police constables with lathies in hand were also there not only on the confines but also inside the enclosure squatting in between rows of empty chairs. Guests were occupying their seats in their enclosures. It was only then that I realised why there was such delay for the Chancellor's procession to move. I hurried back to my place and waited. At 10.15 a.m. (one hour behind schedule) we were ordered to move. When we were within hailing distance of the entrance to the Shamiana we noticed some obstruction and confusion caused by the Graduates. I apprehended a fight and an attack but the police staved off the obstructionists. Peals of boing and slogan. Shouting greeted us from all sides making it absolutely clear that there was perfect unanimity among the students. I saw the Vice-Chancellor Dr Ghani waving in vain to the students to fall back. The Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor occupied their seats on the decorated dais and we in our enclosures. The formal opening of the Convocation, the speeches of the Vice-Chancellor and the Chancellor, the presentation of Degree recipients by the several Deans although only 6 or so were present and all other absent, the ritual of the

Chancellor's charging of the Graduates to be worthy of their conduct and character etc took one hour so that the function ended at 11.20 a.m. Dr Ghani's speech didn't receive much interruption but that by the Chancellor was punctuated all through by boonings which had a musical wave order from bass to tenor as it were. Every time that the Chancellor read out his "charge" he received slogan, shouting; undeterred he too raised his voice above the defeanny noise by stressing "conduct and character". The usual convention of reading out the names of recipients by the Deans was faithfully gone through without the corresponding convention of their rising from their seats which were empty. Of the six who stood up and bowed about three were teachers and the rest Urdu-speaking students. Among the vast number of teachers seated a handful clapped when the Chancellor concluded his series of "charge" while all others sat through glum with bowed heads in the enveloping disgrace. Guests, most of them distinguished, from all walks of life, Pakistan as well as from other countries, were silent and dignified spectators. I felt this actually in my bones. The whole ceremony or rather the opposite of it was one HUGE-FARCE from end to end. When the function was halfway through or rather past its middle we heard recurring deep bursts of tear-gas shells at the Science Laboratory Dacca Hall corner (concealed from our view) of the campus. It was fairly clear that a fight was on between students who had had their position in those buildings and the police. At the end of the function it was possible for me to return to my Gandaria residence at 12 noon. Three years have rolled since but the traditional Convocation of Dacca University that had its burial then hasn't been resurrected. University ordinances have been passed to split it up



into local units, one such to be presided over by the Chancellor, another by the V-C, yet another by a head of a college. etc.

On the 23rd morning the newspapers reported post-convocation post. Convocation developments on the preceding afternoon and evening. In the university halls or about them, armed the Vice-Chancellor's house or even within there were clashes between :

Students and Police

Students and Students

There was violence among the students, violence against the Vice-Chancellor. The Iqbal Hall, it was reported, was the scene of a pitched battle; two hundred students here were arrested. The Dacca University was declared closed sine die.

On the 24th March the students of Dacca College and other local colleges took out a procession in protest against injustice done to the university students. The Dacca College procession was lathi-charged and many were arrested.

On the 26th I went to the office of the English Department (old Arts Buildings) and found the whole place empty and the main gate to it was guarded. The same afternoon at 5-15 p.m. I received two letters from the Registrar:

1) No teacher to leave the station without the previous permission of the V-C.

2) Notification of a meeting of all teachers on 27.3.64 at 10 a.m. at the V-C's House.

In obedience to the notification at 2) above we, the teachers assembled at V-C's residence on the 27th March. About this meeting the following extract from my diary of that date will give a clear outline:

"Attended from 9.50 a.m. to 11.25 a.m. when it came to an end almost abruptly without formulating any future course of action.

In a 45-minute speech the V-C vehemently supported the steps he had taken in organising the Convocation, taking police help in putting down bloodshed and lawlessness and eventually in closing down the university. He made unconcealed accusations against his predecessor, Dr Mahmud Husain, in abandoning last year's (? December 1962) Convocation and also against the teachers. What a commentary on his former career as a teacher and Provost. S.M. Hall."

I recall that when he was about to conclude without indicating the future course of action I stood up and requested him to give us guide-lines so that we might play our part in following them. A short discussion or rather consultation with his closest associates led to the termination of the meeting as already indicated with the additional remarks that every one was welcome to make proposals in writing to him.

It must be borne in mind that at no stage earlier he had summoned such a meeting of the teachers and consulted them. We never knew what he, his Deans and Provosts, his administrative officers had been doing in regard to the organisation of the Convocation. But our misfortune was that we came in for unwarranted censure for student indiscipline and lawlessness.

I wondered whether abandonment by his predecessor of the December function of 1962 was worse than the riotous violence and disgraceful scenes of March, 1964.

But as it appeared later the teachers' meeting on the 27th March had an altogether different purpose. It was that of defence of the action of the university authorities, first before the bulk of the teachers and next before the public. On the 3rd April a long press statement was issued by the Registrar to

describe the riotous conduct of the students on the Convocation Day leading to the closing down of the university sine die. This statement was virtually a printed version of the Vice-Chancellor's address to the teachers on the 27th March. On the 4th April was published the punishment inflicted on some of the offending students :

1. MA Degree of two students of the year 1962 were cancelled.

2. 24 students were expelled : 4 for 5 years, 6 for 3 years, 14 for 2 years.

3. 20 were asked to furnish good conduct bond by 20th April, 1964. Among the 14 expelled for 2 years one Zakir Hussain filed a test case in the Dacca High Court which adjudged the expulsion illegal on the 7th July, 1964. On the 9th April eleven student leaders of D.U. in a Press statement questioned the motive and veracity of the Registrar's statement, dated, 2nd April and issued on the 3rd. On the following day the Registrar issued another statement as a rejoinder to the eleven leaders' and the V-C granted an interview to a reporter of the Pakistan Observer. On the late afternoon of 20th April I received a letter from the Registrar. This asked all teachers to return to the station on the morning of 30th April. On the evening of 28th April I received another letter calling attention to the provisions in the University Ordinances and Regulations to the effect that each teacher, officer and employee had to do Proctorial duties for the maintenance of discipline in the university. This was totally silent about the earlier letter, dated, 20th April. With the 30th April as deadline for the teachers to return to the station I resumed my lecture preparation and the correction of tutorial scripts on the 25th, and actually

went to the university on the 30th. The following entry in my diary will explain:

"Left home at 10.30 a.m. just to examine how far the Registrar's notice asking teachers to be present was operative. First I went to the old Arts Buildings and found them deserted; the Library and all offices including English Deptt had the silence of a graveyard. Dust and dirt were in an accumulated condition; even the clock was enjoying a holiday.

Then I showed on to the offices of the Registrar where stray office hands were working. Neither the Registrar nor the Deputy Registrar was available."

The long-looked for notification came on the 3rd May when it was announced that the university would reopen on the 8th and continue till the 30th June, the day on which I was to retire. But on the preceding day were published two joint statements, the first by 25 student representatives of Dacca University resenting action (also arrests) taken by the University following the Convocation debacle and stating that the reopening of the university 'tomorrow' (8th May) without revoking action and rescinding earlier orders was meaningless, and calling upon students to observe strike from the 8th to 11th by way of protest, the second by 13 distinguished ladies (Begum Sufia Kamal leading) of Dacca expressing grave concern over restrictive orders imposed upon students and demanding withdrawal of arrests, cases pending, release of arrested students.

For 3 days with effect from the 8th May attendance in my classes was nominal. But by the 15th it was full. On the reopening day we had another interesting notification from the Registrar to the effect that all teachers must be present at the

university from 10 am to 4.30 p.m. on week days and from 8.30 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. on Fridays. On the 30th May there was an outburst, a full-scale strike and demonstration and a noisy meeting under the mango tree from 11.30 a.m. The Proctor, Provosts and the then Dean of Arts Dr Shadani were present at the meeting in full strength but they failed to stop the students who were intercepted at 1 p.m. by police at the gate as they tried to march out in a procession. An array of police officers was there; police force were deployed everywhere in the locality from 9 a.m.

June was in and with it just a month's normal and quiet work. The university would go into a month's summer recess with effect from 1st July. The MA, MSc, M.Com and BA, B.Sc. B.Com. Honours Exams were to follow. Students and teachers raced along to finish syllabi whatever little it was possible to finish in the course of four weeks. For my part I concentrated on synoptic surveys of difficult textbooks entrusted to me, such as, Absalom and Achitophel, Fairie Queene and the History of English Literature. On the 30th June before joining a students' farewell function at 5 p.m. I completed in course of the afternoon the Spectator Papers in the 3rd yr. Honours English classes and closed my D.U. career. On the 3rd June Dr K.S. Murshid returned from the USA after two years and four months. On the 6th the English Department organised a dinner at the banqueting hall of Hotel Shahbagh to say goodbye to Mrs Balsley, Mr B.C. Roy and me. The Vice-Chancellor and Dr Shadani attended. On the 26th June there was a full dress students' farewell to B.C. Roy and myself; in it men and women students competed among themselves to pay rich tributes surcharged with emotions. They brought gifts as well. These I disapproved as objectionable taxation and they agreed not to

repeat them on the 30th June, when another farewell function was held. Once again men and women students and colleagues of the English Department were generous enough to shower on me praises which I didn't deserve. At function's end when we moved downstairs the sun had just set, the sky was overcast and a drizzle began. But hundreds of students clustered round, smothered me under wreaths and bouquets of flowers and also their affectionate embraces. No reward could have been greater. And RECONCILEMENT to my life's vocation despite sharp REACTIONS in immediate past was sweet and soothing.

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### **A short Sketch of Abu Hena**

Mr. Abu Hena was born in the year 1898 at Rampurhat (Sub division) under the District Suri in West Bengal. He studied at Rampurhat Midnapore, Presidency College Calcutta and obtained his Master's Degree in English from Calcutta University and was placed in the First Class. This distinction has so far achieved by only a few Muslims.

Mr. Abu Hena had all through his life been in the teaching profession. Only for a brief period of 3 years he has been Director Public Information during the Second great World war under the Govt. of Sher-E-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq. A man of strong principle and uncompromising attitude he loved his students which included a late Prime Minister of the then Pakistan. Before his death in January 19th, 1975 he was the treasurer of Dhaka University. He left behind 10 sons, one daughter and several grand children at the time of death.