CHAPTER XIII
PRINCIPALSHIPS OF A. S. BOKHARI
AND U. KRAMET
(1947—1950)

The new Principal was no stranger to this institution. He had studied and taught in the College. When he took over, the city of Lahore was in the grip of communal violence. A sizeable part of the city had been burned down by the rioters. Moving about the city was dangerous even in broad daylight. Radio, electricity, newspapers and water supply were the only services functioning in Lahore. The work of the College had been totally disrupted. All educational institutions were closed for summer vacation on 1 June under Government orders and the Partition plan was announced two days later.

The Partition was carried out on 15 August, 1947. The non-Muslim population of the province started trekking out and the Muslim refugees began pouring in, in unmanageable numbers. The refugees occupied the railway platforms, public parks, evacuee buildings and even the footpaths. Hundreds of them cooked, ate and slept in the open. The city had bled woefully and there was a strange seriousness in the air.

The College wore a deserted appearance. Its vast estate was looked after by two resident professors and a few peons. Bokhari returned to Lahore after finishing his work on the committee constituted to partition the assets of the All-India Radio. The College reopened on the first of October. But it was not the College that had closed on the first day of June. It had under-
gone a vast transformation. Its walls and doors were the same, but the teachers and the taught were different.

With the migration of non-Muslim professors, the teaching staff of the College was reduced to a dozen or so. Bokhari’s first responsibility, therefore, was to provide the College with a tolerably competent set of teachers. This required some thought and a good deal of effort. The Education Department helped generously by allowing a free hand to the Principal in choosing his colleagues. The result was a team as good as could be mustered under the circumstances. Most of the incoming teachers had been educated at places other than this College.

The case of students was not far different. The Partition left the College with a population of about one hundred students. It could still take in a few hundred more. The rigorous admission tests were relaxed and vacant places were filled in a hurry making it more difficult than ever to evolve a corporate life out of the heterogeneous elements now composing the College.

The students who had been enrolled in the College before the Partition viewed themselves as representatives of an extinct race of supermen. They adopted a pontifical attitude and sneered at the newcomers charging them with ignorance of College traditions. Much of this talk was nebulous for they did not quite explain the traditions they appealed to. Their homilies were addressed to their fellow-students as well as to the new recruits to the College faculty whom they patronizingly informed, through The Ravi, that the real life of the College was lived ‘outside its dingy class rooms’ and that their (i.e. teachers’) preoccupation with teaching duties was incongruous with College traditions.
advice was well-meant. But old heads on young shoulders appeared to assume as if nothing had happened between the first of June and first of October 1947. With all their limitations, the new set of teachers did well, even though many of them needed to know much more about the College than they did.

Fully alive to the implications of the social and political change, Bokhari pleaded for a change of traditions. In his first address to the College he stated: 'We are citizens of a new state today, but are yet unused to the exercise of political freedom. I could rule the College all by myself before the fifteenth of August. It is not advisable for me to continue to do so now. Students have got to be a part of the administrative machinery of the College and I expect them to do their duty'.

Although he did not admit the students to full partnership of the College guild, Bokhari was excessively obliging towards them. The students' protest against the holding of an examination scheduled to take place at the end of October created a test case. The demand itself was not unreasonable. But Bokhari surrendered to the rabble tamely. He did not stop here, for he abolished all quarterly examinations and replaced them by monthly tests. These tests were not taken seriously either by the teachers or the students and were abolished soon after Bokhari's departure in 1950.

Bokhari's stay in the College was not undisturbed. He was frequently called upon to shoulder weighty responsibilities outside the educational sphere. In addition to his College duties, he was the principal adviser to the Radio Pakistan in its formative stage and it was he who selected the Quranic verse that forms the motto of that organization. Early in

*Translated from Urdu.*
1948, he was nominated member of a two-man delegation to go to the United Kingdom to draw up articles of agreement for the division of the assets of the India Office Library in consultation with similar delegations from India and Britain. The Government of India dissolved its delegation as soon as it had landed in Britain. The purpose of the visit was not even discussed between the parties. Bokhari returned to College after two months and was again put at the head of a Pakistani delegation to an International Radio Conference in Mexico in the fall of 1948. This conference appears to have worked leisurely. News about its deliberations did not reach this country regularly. Bokhari succeeded in obtaining a favourable quota of frequencies for Pakistan. In 1950 he toured the United States in the entourage of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan. The late Prime Minister's speeches delivered to the various audiences and organizations in that country and collected in a volume entitled Heart of Asia were drafted by Bokhari. The end of this tour found him installed as Pakistan's representative in the United Nations where he proved to be an impassioned advocate of the Arab and Muslim causes. For two years he sat on the Security Council on behalf of Pakistan. In this office he was adjudged as the most eloquent speaker in the United Nations.

During Bokhari's frequent and prolonged absence from the College the reins were held by U. Kramet who had joined his old College as Professor of Economics in 1947 in preference to the principalship of Government College, Lyallpur. Bokhari could be a difficult master. His original ideas were expressed in brilliant and razor-edged phrases and he excelled in the art of satire and insinuation. Kramet was constituted differently. He made no secret of his shortcomings. Perhaps he loved to
talk about them. But he seldom trespassed the limits of decorum. His refined manner and innate urbanity were his most valuable assets and they stood him in excellent stead in the situations that he handled.

The College had come to enrol about 600 students by the end of 1947-48 and about 1000 in 1949-50. Refugees constituted a sizeable proportion of the student body. The post-Partition student was less well-groomed and less smart than his pre-Partition predecessor. But he was far more assertive in his manner, radical in his thinking and intolerant of even reasonable restrictions. A mild sensation was created by an American girl, calling herself Erica Fogg, who travelled all the way from the USA to join the B.A. class at this College which she described as the best educational institution in Asia. For some weeks she received full glare of publicity and was the most fussed about person in the College.

A new society called Almadad came into being to aid and comfort the refugees. Its members did some useful work in the refugee camps. More substantial help came from the Students’ Welfare Society which launched a vigorous campaign for the collection of money, clothes and other accessories for the use of the refugee students. Its resources were augmented by the sale of a College stamp and grants-in-aid received from the Central and Provincial Governments and local bodies. With plentiful funds at its disposal, the society was able to grant generous financial concessions to the children of uprooted families.

College students who had volunteered for military service in the midst of World War II were entitled, under the rules framed by the University, to receive their degrees and diplomas (for which they were studying
at the time of enlistment) after complying with certain formalities and without having to take the examinations. Scores of students had availed themselves of this concession. These regulations were due to expire at the end of the war, but were renewed and amended and their benefit was extended to students joining the corps of social workers in the refugee camps. Exceptions apart, these 'social workers' were scholars of indifferent calibre who treated social service as a short cut to degrees. Bokhari who had otherwise done a good deal to persuade his students to take to social service sternly discountenanced the pursuit of free degrees. He advised his students that social service was not to be tainted with ulterior motives and warned that cheap degrees would benefit neither the givers nor the receivers.

Those who went to the refugee camps escaped the tyranny of examinations, but those who remained behind made frantic efforts to upset the examination schedule of the University. Every announcement of an examination date-sheet was followed by protests, demonstrations and demands for postponement. Students who had received their training in the techniques of leadership in the pre-Partition political movement came to the forefront. Every agitation added to their experience and raised their prestige as veterans. The University authorities were at their wits' ends. They did not know how to bring the students round to sit for their examinations. A bright idea struck somebody in authority. Would it not silence them if examination dates were fixed by students themselves by means of referendums conducted in the colleges? A request to this effect was communicated to the affiliated colleges. The poll at the Government College was conducted by class representatives and its results were passed on to the University. What happened later is not important
but the gain made by the students was obvious.

In 1948, Khwaja Manzoor Hosain and Rafi Muhammad Chaudhri, both from Aligarh, joined the English and Physics Departments respectively. The former had served this College as Lecturer in English for a few months in 1930 and the latter had headed the Department of Physics at the local Islamia College in the early 30's. To Rafi Muhammad Chaudhri was later assigned the task of setting up a centre of nuclear research in this College which came to be housed in an old building on the Church Road opposite to the Civil Secretariat. The same year Ghulam Mohyuddin Asar and Tahir Hussain were appointed to the Departments of Urdu and Physics respectively. Ghulam Ahmad who had been trained as Chemical Engineer in the U.S.A. came back to his original post in the Department of Chemistry, being the first and the only member of the College staff to have availed himself of a fellowship to the United States under the post-war reconstruction scheme of the Government of undivided India.

The Union started with new resolutions and added responsibilities. It was entrusted with miscellaneous jobs like that of receiving letters and messages and transmitting them to their addressees. The first election to the Union after Partition was a war of multicoloured posters. Trees, blackboards, walls and pillars seemed to take sides. Some candidates made their election speeches in Urdu. The innovation was greeted noisily. An interesting debating event was the arrival of a British team in the cold weather of 1948. One of its members delighted the audience by speaking for both sides of a debate making a mincemeat of the arguments he had himself advanced from the 'other side'. In spite of a spectacular rise in student influence, some
Union officials were heard to say that the Union was being trifled with by the College authorities.

The first post-Partition issue of The Ravi appeared in 1948. Its editorial referred to the Partition and said that ‘unbroken exploitation brought to us a mistrust of Hindu capital and cunning as well as a mistrust of British patronage and benevolence’! It went on to criticise the Radcliffe Award as a piece of vicious plotting and the East Punjab riots as the work of professional gangsters and cut-throats. It ended on a note of caution: ‘Communities have to pass through a long process of evolution and adjustment to find their places. Let us, therefore, prepare to find our place’.

Some of the debates held in the College and quite a number of articles appearing in The Ravi made an attempt to examine the socio-religious ideas that had been set afloat by the spokesmen of the new state. An old question, the role of The Ravi in the life of the College, was reopened by a student contributor who touched off a lively controversy; the upshot was that The Ravi should confine itself to College affairs and avoid literary themes. The Hindi and Punjabi sections disappeared from the magazine as the languages were not studied now in the College.

The post-Partition Ravi differs from its pre-Partition predecessor in important respects. The files of the pre-Partition journal contain a great deal of information about the College. True, the College news that it printed was always selective and often biased. Still it was the College news and prejudiced news is better than no news at all. But The Ravi of the 50’s is insensitive to its environment and the task of preserving the College record seems to have passed on to the College Gazette. The building of a home for the Department of Psychology,
the laying of the Rose Garden and the construction of a pavilion in the Oval represented improvements of the first order, yet *The Ravi* either omitted to notice these developments or dismissed them in a line, or perhaps a phrase.

The activities of the societies were mostly confined to the election of office bearers. Their chronic lethargy was frequently censured by the magazine which suggested that a society should be dropped from the list of approved societies if it failed to hold a certain number of meetings in the session. However, the *Majlis-i-Iqbal* and the Garrett Historical Society gave a good account of themselves in the months following the Partition. The former started meeting in December 1947 on Thursdays in the afternoon. The staff lounge was not roomy enough for its expanding audience; so the meeting place had to be shifted to the Hall. Reading of papers was followed by discussions. The *Majlis* proposed a research project on Iqbal as student, resident of the Quadrangle and teacher of Philosophy at the College. The proposal does not seem to have been followed up. The energetic secretary of the Garrett Historical Society, a member of the teaching staff, drew up a programme for the session in advance and arranged weekly meetings in the Staff Room. Attendance varied. Papers were contributed by scholars from outside or by teachers of the College. The Psychological Seminar held a few meetings to discuss the psychology of love and hate and skill in motor driving. A Speakers' Club, which owed its existence to rivalries between the leaders of the Union, was organised to train students in the art of public speaking. The Political Science Society (or Current Affairs Society) had been well-nigh forgotten. A new Political Science and Economics Society was formed in 1950 and one of
its earliest meetings consoled the death of Professor Laski. If the Mushairas were the main business of the Bazm, the responsibility for actually holding them had been assumed by the Majlis. The very name Bazm was now missing from the official catalogue of College societies.

Though sports and sportsmen did not come into the limelight immediately after Partition, sportsmen's complaints about denial of recognition due to them were somewhat exaggerated. This fraternity formed the ruling junta in the hostels where scholars were derided as book-worms. The 'segregation' between the Intermediate and Degree class boarders was temporarily given up. Students in residence were quietly modifying old conventions and setting up new ones. Growing opinion in the Quadrangle now favoured withholding from the Superintendent all information about trouble brewing on the ground floor. Room No. 110 in the New Hostel came to be regarded as unlucky for its tenants preparing for the M.A. examination.

To save students from the unhealthy effects of ill-cooked food, the single New Hostel mess was split into two. This improved the quality of food and gave more satisfactory service to the boarders. The time-honoured office of mess manager was abolished and its duties were entrusted to a committee of three. The character of hostel servants remained unchanged. They competed feverishly to win over the babus and even acted as bankers to their out-of-pocket patrons.

Bokhari's principalship was practically an absentee principalship. With his departure for the U.N., U. Kramet began to reign in his own right. But his tenure was brief. Within a few weeks he left to take over as provincial Director of Public Instruction. Had