CHAPTER III

(Mr. T. C. LEWIS, 1886-1891—Dr. STULPNAGEL, 1891-1892).

1886-1887.

_Le roi est mort, vive le roi!_ Dr. Leitner having departed this life, from an official point of view, a successor was found in the person of Mr. T. C. Lewis, the Professor of Mathematics. The staff of the College was strengthened this year by the arrival of a new Professor of English Literature, Mr. E. S. Robertson. Even now the staff was far from strong enough; "two more Professors are urgently required," to quote the new Principal. The College still maintained its high figure of 248—the same as in the previous year. Two-thirds of the students were now non-scholarship-holders. The examination results were unsatisfactory and there was a general breakdown in Mathematics. This seems to have been due in the main to Mr. Lewis himself who, in a laudable attempt to raise the standard, had forced the pace too much, with disastrous results.

To turn to other matters. The long desired Library grant was at last given and the College received Rs. 200 a year—not a princely sum, but still a beginning and better than nothing. The other question which looms large in the proceedings of the year is that of the Boarding Hostel. The new Principal set himself vigorously to tackle the problem. He found the existing Boarding house arrangement—_i.e._ that of hired houses in the neighbourhood of the College—"entirely unsuited to the purpose, while students enjoy a freedom of control, when
away from the lecture rooms of the College, far exceeding anything that is permitted at Oxford and Cambridge.” Mr. Lewis further secured medical support in his recommendation of reform, for the Civil Surgeon of the day also condemned the existing arrangements on medical grounds. The agitation thus begun was not to meet with a successful response for some years, but still, from this time, the need of improvement was not lost sight of. For the first time, in this year, the students paid a regular subscription to the debating and reading club which had been combined into one organization.

1887-1888

The new Principal did not stop very long in his new office. In March 1888 he left to officiate as an Inspector of Schools, and Mr. E. S. Robertson acted for him. In this year Mr. W. Bell arrived and took up the duties of Professor of Philosophy, while L. Ruchi Ram Sahni, who had been appointed some years before but had remained on duty in the Meteorological Department at Simla, now actually arrived and commenced duty. There was a great reduction in numbers, the total falling to 162. The main reason for this was the rise in fees which were nearly tripled, and which were to be quadrupled in another two years. This decrease in numbers was part of a deliberate policy, as the size of the classes in Government College had become most unwieldy. The Director further remarks in this connection: “it must be a matter of some uncertainty whether the Intermediate classes of the Government College will be very largely attended in future; though they will probably be resorted to by a considerable number of those who are in affluent circumstances.” The scheme of Boarding-house reform was again under consideration, and one of the existing houses having been condemned as “totally unfit for College students” by the Civil Surgeon, a move was made to a
house in Mozang. L. Topa Ram, now District Judge of Gurgaon, who entered the College in May 1888, thus describes the new arrangements: "Before that session (i.e. that of his arrival) there was no regular Boarding house in an organized form. There was a house rented by the Government for boarders, who paid no rent and received no furniture and got no servants. They dined in it, brought other friends and relatives not connected with the College, to live with them and made their own arrangements for food and furniture. In that year a regular Boarding-house was opened in a hired house near Mozang, then known as 'Tupper House.' Each boarder had to pay Re. 1-4-0 a month, and got in return for this a set of furniture and a lamp with oil, and the use of a servant—two for each eight boarders." The attempt to supply oil was soon abandoned. The Boarding-House had as its Superintendent, Pandit Bhana Datta.

On the Athletic side the year is marked by the foundation of the "Union Club." This had originated in a debating and reading club with a small subscription, but the funds in hand were now so large that it was decided to extend its scope, and so the Union Club came into being. Cricket was already flourishing, but now four tennis courts were laid out and the Boarding-house fitted with parallel bars and other gymnastic apparatus. Mr. Robertson was evidently an enthusiast on physical training, and recommended that "proficiency in athletics should be a thing to be recorded in the general certificates we grant to outgoing students."

There were weekly debates at this period, presided over by one of the staff.

Let us quote once more the reminiscences of the old student, whom we referred to on the subject of Boarding houses, this time on the subject
of games. "When I joined the College, cricket was the only game played. Pandit Hari Kishen Kaul (now R. B. Hari Kishen Kaul, C.I.E., and a distinguished member of the Civil Service) was the Captain of the team. Football was in vogue only in the European Boys’ High School and the Aitchison College. A few of us conceived the idea of starting Football and we privately subscribed a few rupees to purchase a ball. We started the game, and after a few months it was recognized as a good game by the College authorities, and thenceforth supported from the students’ fund (i.e. the Union Club). A regular team was started and I was chosen as first Captain. I was Captain for about three years. When I left the College, after having gone up for my B.A. in 1893, L. Kashi Ram was chosen Captain in my place. In the following year Mr. Kunwar Sain (now Principal, Law College) was appointed.”

One more reminiscence from the same pen, which we may give here, though it really belongs to a later date. It is a characteristic story of Professor Oman, (Professor of Science). "In 1892 I failed in my B.A. Examination. In those days failed students used to join in October, after the summer vacation. Meanwhile L. Ruchi Ram and other patriotic citizens of Bhera opened an Anglo-Sanskrit High School there. As they could not get any one to teach English, L. Ruchi Ram asked me to help them by coming over to their school for a couple of months till they got a suitable man. Professor Oman heard that I had joined the school and thought I had given up my education.” On my rejoining in October, Professor Oman remarked: “I am very glad to see that you have come; you must stand first in Physical Science; it would be a matter of shame
"if a student from another College stood first in the
examination when our College is better equipped with
Science apparatus than any other in the Province."

Mr. Narain Das Gupta, who entered the College in
this year, contributes the following reminiscences of his
College days:—

I joined the College in 1888 and left it in 1892. During this period of four years great improvements
were effected in various directions.

When I joined, the Boardinghouse was located in
a hired house known as "Phus ki Kothi" in Mozang. It was so far from the College that few students liked
to live in it, particularly in the hot weather. But the
arrangements in the private Boarding house in the city,
where most of the students resided, were so bad that I
decided to live in the inconveniently distant Mozang
Boardinghouse which was superior in every other
respect. At that time there were hardly a dozen residents,
but even after my admission, the number rose very
rapidly, and before the close for the summer vacation
the authorities had to think of hiring a better house. Thus after the vacations we were accommodated in
House No. 48, on the Lower Mall. This house was so
near and in all respects so comfortable, that all the rooms
soon became quite full, and proposals to build the present
"Quadrangle" were expedited into action. Thanks to
the exertions of the authorities, the wings were ready in
1891 and we were the first occupants.

It is needless for me to say that in 1888 there were
practically no playgrounds attached to the College, and
the provision of these may be considered simultaneously
with the erection of the "Quadrangle." In 1892, when
I left the College, it had regular teams in all games save
hockey.
The College Debating Club, then known as “The Union Club,” was then in its infancy. Through the keen interest and fostering care the Professors took in making it a success, specially the virgorous efforts of the late lamented Mr. Chatterjee, the Club grew in popularity and the students soon began to show signs of independent thought and expression. I remember, with feelings of delight and gratitude, how our Professors compelled the shy students, who pleaded lack of preparation, to come forward and say something, giving them not only necessary hints and suggestions but whole sentences.

I can never forget the cordial relations that existed between the students and the professors, who took parental care in the welfare of the students, and were looked upon by them as father, friend, and sage. The ever-smiling face of that poet and scholar—the angelic Mr. Eric Robertson,—the majestic, tall figure of that great educationist and philosopher—Mr. W. Bell, convincing his pupils with his lucid and learned arguments—the mathematical head of that sage and thinker—Mr. S. B. Mukerji, who was ever busy solving difficult problems—the active and humorous form of Mr. Chatterjee, with his long flowing Indian choga and white pagri, making his pupils laugh by his humour, even when explaining difficult mathematical problems, and last of all the fat, lethargic figure of the College Clerk, L. Sardarilal, whose snoring from his chair could be heard a long way off, and many things that I shall never forget.

You will, I am sure, allow me to relate here a personal anecdote which shows what care was taken by the Professors for the cultivation of virtue in their pupils. It runs as follows:

When I was in the 4th year class, some of my
friends at Kangra wrote to me about a vacancy in the District Judge’s office, and suggested that I should apply for the post. Accordingly I prepared all the necessary papers and secured many testimonials. When I went to Mr. Bell for one, he wrote a long certificate for me, but unfortunately before he had finished, the Superintendent of the Boarding house entered the room. Whereupon Mr. Bell enquired from me if I was a resident of the Boarding house, and being answered in the affirmative, he asked the Superintendent if he had anything to say against me. The Superintendent groaned, which aroused the suspicion of Mr. Bell. He put further questions to the Superintendent which extorted a complaint from the Superintendent that I had once held a meeting against him in the Boarding house. Mr. Bell at once changed his attitude and tore up the testimonial he had just then written. He did not stop there, but at once started an enquiry into the allegation. I produced several witnesses to clear my conduct, but the Superintendent declared they were not reliable, being my personal friends and mess-mates, and so on. I did not know how to satisfy Mr. Bell. At last, relying upon my innocence, I called Mr.—, a class-fellow who was not on good terms with me—a fact known to all the Boarders, including the Superintendent, who agreed upon the reliability of the evidence. Mr.—had the good sense to speak the truth and thus my innocence was proved. Still Mr. Bell refused to grant me a testimonial on the ground that I was not a “kind-hearted fellow” for not having spoken to my neighbour for a year. Both of us had to appear many times before him, and then he asked us to come to his house. He received us kindly, shook hands with us and then remonstrated with us for our unsociable behaviour. At last he asked us if we forgave each other, and as we said “Yes heartily,” he took our
hesitating hands and placed them in each other's grasp. Then he asked Mr.—, "So you recommend Mr. Gupta for a testimonial," "Yes, Sir, I do, most heartily." Mr. Bell was delighted and then gave me a beautiful certificate. It was, however, too late, for the vacancy had been already filled up.

1888-1889.

Mr. Lewis was absent during the greater part of this year and Mr. Robertson still continued to officiate. As had been predicted, the number of students in the College continued to fall as a result of the raising of the fees, and the growth of other colleges supplying education at a cheaper rate. The numbers fell to 118, and this serious diminution, which was especially noticeable in the junior classes, led to a postponement of any further raising of the fees. Of Mr. Robertson's methods we take the following description from the pen of L. Diwan Chand, M.A., LL.B., Judge of the Small Cause Court, Lahore, who entered the College in 1889:

Mr. Robertson was the next Principal. In his time very many improvements were effected and the Government College gained an unprecedented popularity.

Mr. Robertson was a man of letters and was, I believe, Editor of a series known as that of "Great Writers." His lectures were charming, and, though he used to teach English, which was generally thought to be a dry subject, his method of teaching was so pleasing that a student would never miss his lecture. His ringing voice was musical and the students were all attentive so long as he continued his lecture.

Equally good was Mr. Robertson's treatment of his students. He was very sympathetic and started a musical class in the Government College, at which he used to
come and give instructions every evening. Absorbed in his studies, he occasionally did not know whether a 2nd year class was sitting in front of him or a 3rd year class, but his unprepared lectures were as beautifully delivered as the most elaborately prepared lectures of other Professors. Occasionally he used to tear the pages of a book in the presence of a class at the time of teaching. In every subject his knowledge was wonderful and worthy of all praise.

The Volunteer ground to the south of the Town Hall was in possession of the Government College cricket team. The Volunteers wanted to take possession and turned the students out of the ground. The students complained to Principal Robertson. He expressed a regret that his pupils had come to complain to him, and had not themselves dealt properly with the Volunteers. On being told that the students were no match for the Volunteers, Principal Robertson promised that he would accompany them the next day. He visited the Deputy Commissioner, and, in company with a European policeman, went to the cricket ground along with his pupils the next evening. In anger he took hold of the wickets of the Volunteers, and, pulling them out of the ground, threw them away, declaring at the same time that it was his College ground, and that his pupils should not be interfered with. In his time the present Boarding house of the Government College was designed and constructed, the former Boarding house being near Mozang, and at the place where the D.A.V. College is now situated.

In Principal Robertson's time another great change was made in lowering the percentage of marks in University Examinations. Sir William Rattigan was Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University at the time.
Mr. Robertson sent his students several times for the M.A. examination and the results were very bad. He took up the question of percentage required for passing examination and got it materially reduced. When University results were out, he used to send for boys who had passed and used to encourage them with refreshments at his own house. He used to take particular care of the dress of his students and used to go outside his lectures to inculcate high principles of morality and gentlemanly behaviour by giving students happy illustrations and relating the points in a striking manner. He was a very quick lecturer and could get time to do all these things over and above teaching the ordinary text-books. In his time also, the number of subjects was reduced in the B.A. and F.A. examinations, and language was done away with from the B.A. course.

He used always to take care that his pupils should be mainly in their behaviour. Once I had occasion to complain to him about a servant who had not behaved well towards me. On hearing the complaint he at once remarked, "Well, I would have been much more pleased had you taught the servant the consequences of ill-treatment yourself, and I would have been proud if the servant had come to me to complain about your conduct." On further explanation he quieted down and promised to turn out the man, to whom the servant belonged, from the Boarding house. Principal Robertson always impressed upon his pupils to be gentlemanly towards others, to be self-respecting, to be obedient to superiors, to take care of their dress and to be up to mark in their studies. He used not to lose sight of physical training, and used to give subscription to sports, from his own pocket. Football and other games were started in his time.
Prof. JIYA RAM
(1888—1907)
The inter-collegiate admission rules had their beginning from his time. A student of the Government College made practice of going to Forman Christian College and then coming back and repeating the same process. This led to undesirable results and a beginning was made towards drafting some rules.

One day Mr. Bell was teaching English. One of the students was not writing his notes. The student replied that they were all useless. Mr. Bell naturally got angry and turned the student out of the class. Subsequently he complained to Principal Robertson and advocated that the student should be turned out of the College. It was reported that the Principal said, “No, Mr. Bell, the student must have great stamina in him, every student cannot be so bold. Such are the qualities of great men, you must forgive the student.” And the student was not turned out.

The students equally reciprocated Principal Robertson’s attachment towards them. On one occasion when I was in a junior class, a student of the Mission College came to Government College Boarding House where some students were standing near the gymnasium. There was a well known Professor, by name the Rev. Mr. Velti, in the Mission College, and the Mission College students compared him with Mr. Robertson. This threw the Government College students into a rage and one of them handled a Mission College boy very roughly, for daring to compare the Rev. Mr. Velti with the august personality of Principal Robertson. Such was the attachment of the students of Government College towards Principal Robertson, and though no monument was made to perpetuate his memory, College students of his time would always remember him as one of the best teachers who was in charge of their destiny at the time.
When Professor Robertson resigned, his going away was felt as a great shock. Professor Robertson sent a subscription to the cricket fund even from England, when he had no longer any connection with the College, and his memory will always remain a source of joy to his pupils.

As regards University Examination results during this period we may note that, although no B.A. or M.A. students presented themselves for the Calcutta University Examinations, the old connection still lingered on in the F.A. for which examination a few students still presented themselves. The Punjab University Examination results were not very satisfactory. This is ascribed to the irregularities of the Examinations and to the fluctuating standard which then obtained.

The Union Club and its various athletic activities continued to flourish, and in this year the College obtained a regular cricket ground of its own, "the Volunteer ground lying in front of the new Municipal building." It was the disputed possession of this piece of land which led to the scene mentioned above in L. Diwan Chand's memoirs. The Boarders still lived in rented houses, though the latter were now conducted on regular lines and placed under the strict supervision of Professors and a paid "Superintendent." A feature of this year was the number of semi-public lectures delivered in the College, which were largely attended and included such subjects as "Marcus Aurelius, Charles Darwin, Tennyson and Socrates."

1889-1890.

Mr. Lewis went on leave in this year and Mr. Robertson continued to act as Principal. The staff was strengthened by the arrival of a new permanent
Professor of History, Mr. J. C. Godley (now Director of Public Instruction, Punjab,) who arrived in January 1890. Mr. Oman also returned from a long spell of furlough in this year, so the staff was up to a better numerical strength. The number of students remained practically the same—actually 115, instead of 118. To the report of this year is appended a comparative table of the years 1884-1885 and 1889-1890, which shows that what the College had lost in quantity, it had gained in quality for, though the 1st and 2nd year classes were much smaller, the B.A. and M.A. classes showed a considerable increase. The fees were now—Intermediate Rs. 7 ; B.A. Rs. 8 ; M.A. Rs. 10 ; (as against Rs. 10, Rs. 12, Rs. 15 in 1914). The examination results, especially in the Intermediate, showed a marked improvement. The Union Club was flourishing. Its income was Rs. 258. "With this amount in hand the Club has continued its various athletic sports and played frequent matches." This, to a modern generation in which one Club alone spends five times as much, seems almost incredible.

The need of a proper Boarding Hostel had not been lost sight of. "Proposals for the erection of a large Boarding House are before Government, and plans have also been submitted. We hope for great things from our new Boarding House. An increase of friendly union among our students and between them and the teachers will result from this establishment, that cannot fail to make its mark on our roll numbers and on the quality of students which we produce"—a remarkably accurate prophecy, abundantly fulfilled in recent years. The system of semi-public lectures was continued, most of them of "a distinctly moral tendency." There were complaints as to the Library grant. It was entirely used up in purchasing books, and there was no sum
available for binding, which was apparently urgently needed.

1890-1891.

Mr. E. S. Robertson continued to act as Principal, and there were no changes of importance on the staff. The numbers were 113—two less than the preceding year, but the proportion was considerably altered, a very much larger number of third year students being admitted. The Director of Public Instruction (Mr. Sime), in commenting upon the numbers, remarks, "It may be presumed that we have now seen the very worst effects on this institution of the greatly enhanced fees, and the multiplication of colleges." The Principal in the same connection states: "I do not anticipate our securing a greater proportion of University Entrance candidates until we are able to raise the esprit of our College by influences beyond those of mere class-room drudgery, although results show that our class-room work is second to none in the Punjab." The examination results were good, especially the M.A. in which the number of passes constituted a record. "In a year or two," runs the report, "the College should present to parents and scholars many attractions of which it can scarcely boast at present."

These "attractions" were most of them in preparation. The new Boarding Hostel was nearing completion, and a further addition to the College was the acquisition of the Presbyterian Church which was to be converted into a Gymnasium. Further, the question of a Principal's residence had been solved by the handing over of the present house. It had been the Government Registration Office, and then had become the dak bungalow, and in this year was in process of reconstruction as a Principal's residence. This was the first
recognition of the value of the residence of at least a portion of the staff in the close vicinity of the College and Boarding Hostel. Since that time the principle has been extended by the inclusion of "Gotham," now the residence of the two Wardens of Hostels, and more recently of yet another bungalow (1914)—formerly the Land Record Office—to accommodate two members of the staff. Possibly future generations may see a regular Professorial "Ghetto" in the neighbourhood of the College. A member of the staff of the time described the land round the College as "mostly jungle," and yet a further improvement to be chronicled in this year is the conversion of that part of the jungle which lay behind the College (now the tennis courts) into a cricket ground.

Turning to Clubs, we find that in this year the drama first made its appearance, as the Union Club successfully staged the "Trial Scene" from the "Merchant of Venice"—the earliest, it seems hardly necessary to say, of a long line of dramatic triumphs, English and Urdu, extending down to the present year of grace. Music was also introduced—not vocal but theoretical—by a series of lectures upon the elements of solo and part singing. The usual semi-public lectures of moral tendencies was continued—True Manhood; The Life of Buddha; Health and Education, being among the subjects. Among the lecturers one notices the name of Mr. P. C. Chatterjee afterwards Sir P. C. Chatterjee Judge of the Chief Court.

1891-1892.

Mr. Robertson, who had been officiating as Principal since 1888, was now obliged, owing to a breakdown in health, to take sick leave, from which he never returned. He was forced to tender his resignation from the service