CHAPTER IV.


1892-1893

Mr. Bell continued to officiate as Principal and was subsequently confirmed in that appointment. There were several changes on the staff in this year. Mr. Godley resigned the Professorship of History and, after a short interregnum, was succeeded by Mr. Dallinger who arrived from England in October 1892. Mr. Bell, on succeeding to the Principalship, had become Professor of English, and the chair of Philosophy was therefore vacant. This was filled by another new arrival from England, Mr. B. E. Ussher.

The number of students showed a steady increase. It now rose to 165, an improvement of 30 or so upon the figures of the previous year. In this connection Mr. Bell remarks: "Seeing that our fees are now at their maximum and that two other Colleges in Lahore now teach up to the B.A. standard at lower rates, there is evidently no falling off in the confidence placed in the Government College."

Of the new Principal we have the following appreciation from old students of the period. L. Topa Ram (now District Judge of Gurgaon District) writes: "Mr. Bell was always ready to help his students and he took a delight in seeing them succeed and do well in life."

L. Diwan Chand (Judge of the Small Cause Court, Lahore) also a student at this time, contributes the following notes upon Mr. Bell and his contemporaries.
"Professor Bell was the next Principal. He was very sympathetic towards his pupils, and used always to see that they got through their examinations. He used to coach students in Essay writing and encourage them by paying for prizes from his own pocket, for the best Essays. He was the first Principal who had residential quarters in the College compound. Professor Oman was Science Professor in those days, and during his time Science degrees were created through his strenuous efforts." L. Uday Chand, M.A. (State Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir) also joined at this time. I had hardly stayed there (in the Boarding House) a few days when I got cholera, which was furiously raging in Lahore. Arrangements for medical treatment were very satisfactory and with care and attention I withstood the attack. But having grown weak and nervous I left the College and went back to Jammu. However, after two years at the College at Sialkot he returned in May 1894, and became Secretary to the College Cricket Eleven, which went up to compete in the newly organized Punjab University Sports Tournament in 1896.

To return to the year under review. Although the College was getting full, yet there were many more applicants than could be accommodated, and the Principal describes himself as being "inundated with applications for half fees, most of which have to be rejected." The Gymnasium was finally completed in this year and gymnastic classes were soon in full swing. The Hostel now had its maximum complement 108, and another feature of the year was the improvement of the surroundings of the College by the planting of trees, shrubs, etc., "a welcome change from the former state of things." As mentioned above, the Principal was now in
residence in the College compound and "daily visited and inspected the Boarding Hostel." Mr. Bell further remarks on the question of residence: "The result has been to "bring me into much closer personal acquaintance with "my students, while enabling me at the same time to "supervise them more thoroughly. I can now speak "with confidence of the individual character of most of "them."

Another feature of this period was the rearrangement of the College Library, and its division into sections under the care of various members of the staff. The Science side of the College was also improved by the provision of additional Laboratory accommodation. The Union Club was in a flourishing condition and there was a marked increase in the enthusiasm for games, particularly football.

1893-1894.

"There was no change at all in the staff of the College during the year under report, and the year was thus one of uninterrupted work, giving both teachers and students an opportunity to do themselves full justice," so the Principal characterizes the year 1893-1894. The numbers in the College rose to 199, a large increase in every year except the third, which fell, owing partly to the levying of the maximum fee and partly to the fact that the D.A.V. College had opened B.A. classes. The M.A. classes were increasing rapidly but, owing to the fact that the students devoted only one year to the course, and also endeavoured to read Law at the same time! the percentage of passes was not so high as it might have been. The Union Club was in a flourishing condition (its income was now nearly Rs. 500) and gave several dramatic performances during the year. The interest in games was getting more
evenly distributed, and each section of sport had its recognized votaries. In this year the different Clubs started distinctive colours or badges. That proficiency in the athletic field was not divorced from intellectual achievements is shown by the number of "first classes" obtained by prominent athletes. Gymnastics, though now a recognized branch of College activity, languished for want of an Instructor, there being no funds available to pay for one. The College was already beginning to feel the need of more ground, and an extra piece of land was acquired from the Municipality. The Boarding Hostel was full up and the Principal was pressing for the completion of the North Wing which would complete the original design. The question of medical attendance also came up in this year and the Principal in recommending regular medical inspection maintained that "it would lighten his responsibility for the general health of such a large number of students." The College was suffering from a water famine and proposals were made for a supply of canal water, but these were not as yet destined to be carried out. One other pressing want of the time was the need for more accommodation. Besides the classes of the College itself, those of the Oriental College were also held in the building, and the consequent pressure must have been enormous.

1894-1895.

The staff remained practically unchanged in this year, except that L. Jiya Ram reappeared on the staff after a long absence at the Central Training College.

Numbers again showed a remarkable increase. The total was now the high figure of 236, taxing the accommodation of the College to its utmost. The report for this year contains a number of interesting tables showing the very varying percentage of passes in the
University Examinations during the previous five years.

The period may be said to be one of those happy ones which have practically no History. Every form of College activity was forging steadily ahead, and the absence of any detailed comment beyond the statement "at no time has so keen and general an interest been displayed in cricket and football matches, and a very fair share of victory has been the result," only serves to emphasize this. A new aspect of College activity is found in the establishment of a Philosophical Society in this year.

The Boarding Hostel still lacked its North Wing, and the Principal in urging its speedy completion pointed out that until the quadrangle was complete the structural arrangements would remain totally unsuited to the purposes of a well managed and well supervised Boarding Hostel.

1895-1896.

Mr. Bell departed on long leave in this year, and Mr. Dallinger acted for him, Mr. Hirst being appointed to officiate as Professor of History. The number of students rose to 264 in this year, another marked increase chiefly in the 3rd year classes. "During the year Shadi Lal of this College obtained the State Scholarship and has gone to England to prosecute his studies in an English University." This distinguished old student has recently become a Judge of the Chief Court.

As regards the activities of the College in this year a separation was effected between Sports and Debating. Hitherto one Club—the Union Club—had been responsible for all. It was now deemed advisable to establish a separate "Sports Fund," to which subscriptions from past
students were also invited. The Philosophical Society, the first of the learned societies, pursued a flourishing career.

A feature of this year was the holding of a scientific conversazione in the College Hall under the direction of Professor Oman. "The students conducted a series of most interesting and instructive experiments, and showed, when questioned, an intelligent and well grounded knowledge of principles." The entertainment is described as being "unique of its kind in India."

The various College teams had most successful seasons but were much handicapped by lack of sufficient grounds. The water supply was a great difficulty, and we find Government coming forward in this year with a grant for the improvement of the grounds. The Boarding House was still minus its extra wing, and was therefore extremely crowded. The Principal in urging its completion draws attention to the value of residence to students as giving better opportunities for systematic reading and more regular exercise. A change made in this year was the division of the Library into two sections, one to be for the students only and to be the nucleus of a "Students' Library" increased from time to time from the funds of the Union Club.

1896-1897.

On the return of Mr. Bell from leave he was appointed an Inspector of Schools, and Mr. Dallinger became permanent Principal of the College. A further change in this year was the resignation of Professor J. C. Oman, and his retirement on pension after twenty years' service. Professor Oman had rendered splendid service to the College and University, and the latter honoured him on his departure with the degree of Doctor