



THE OLIPHANT

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WELHAM BOYS' SCHOOL

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THINK ABOUT IT

Wisdom is often times nearer when we stoop than when we soar.

William Wordsworth

Editorial



Their strength was about 30 Their age was between 7 and 9. Nothing much could be said about their size, ranging from 3' 6" to 4' 6", but they marched with determination and confidence, banners of condemnation floating in their hands. One may come to the conclusion that some youngsters had the audacity to strike demanding extra ice creams on Sundays. But he would be far from home.

The reference is to the boys of classes III, IV and V who escorted by a few teachers went on a demonstration all over school, and around the neighbourhood including a few other schools, making people aware of man's exploitation of his environment on Earth Day (22nd April) considering they made this effort when the elder, 'mature'

lot were busy solving other crucial problems in their dreams further contributing to noise pollution by loud moves, I feel they deserve a big hand. Hats off to them!

Elsewhere, the rehearsals of the Joint Production are going on with the same fervour and excitement which is always present in any joint production, yet somehow no one gets to see during other plays. The stage committee are always ready to come and 'work' and the actors ready to make several sacrifices. Anyway one can hope that all the 'work' and 'sacrifice' pay off and that the play is a success.

A lot more could be written, but I feel that too much paper should not be wasted telling you all what you already know, I leave you to The Oliphant

Yours Truly,

Sourav Sinha

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

SB : What tense is 'I am beautiful' ?

Vikram : Ma'am, past tense.

SS : How is their English ?

SB : Pathetic

SS : Is it, as pathetic as apartheid ?



The Literary Affairs of Welham

Mother

A dark, dank, fifty square feet cramped room. The atmosphere is sullen, everyone, but one person's mood is hopeful, expectant and prayers are being chanted in their minds. The wife of the house is just about to deliver a child (hopefully a son). The exception is Shanti (the to be mother). At that moment she has no feelings, only one excruciating pain which abstrains her mind from pondering, praying, remembering

Fifteen minutes later, the child leaves his mother's protection and finds itself amongst the crowd trying to prove the denomiatic world to be heaven, not ready to face the facts, to reform themselves for the much required metamorphosis to regain the sanctity of the world. The nurse, relieved because there was no trouble and because the young one was a male (a supposed incarnation of the almighty) sokips merrily outside where six pairs of fingers were crossed patiently awaiting the declaration, 'Congratulations' says the nurse in her shrill titillating voice, a son is born. The mother's pain is over. How false her statement would seem to one with apoclyptic powers. The pain had just begun.

Initially, the troubles of the child are posed off light heartedly. No mother minds having to wake up thrice in the night to change her son's nappy or feed him milk when he is hungry. Everything is peaceful and happy and the atmosphere is serenty personified. The pain has almost begun.

Five years fly. The boy has started going to the local nursery. Reports of his misbehavior start triking in, at first only once in while, later more incessantly. For the first time the mother realizes how over protective she is towards her son. She mildly warns him not to trouble the black, ugly boy who never combed his hair, telling him that all of Gods' creatures are equal. The next day again the teacher sends a report home as to how her son abused the same boy, saying that his family was one of monkeys and not of men. The mother is sad at the sudden realization that her son does not bother to obey her. That night she sheds her first tears on the account of her son. The pain has just begun.

After another ten years of sacrifices, tears and joy our protagonist is now the mother of a fifteen years old, tall, muscular and handsome boy. To her, he is all that matters in the world. To him she is like the chair in his room. She serves a purpose. She feeds him, buys him new clothes and occasionally saves him from the wrath of the stern' father who complains when he comes at two o'clock in the night, stightly inebbristed, smelling of nicotine

and sounding something like a bull in the rodeo with the gladiator.

He has a strong stand in life which he knows cannot be changed, but pretends that he will mould himself according to the wishes of his parents. The mother pleads with him to improve, tears in her eyes. The boy cares for her, he is not the insentient that his father makes him out to be but constant admonshing of him as a notorious, spoilt adolescent has despirited and demonalized him and he has become a rebel. He makes a promise and breaks it one next day. The whole relationship has an aura of pain admidst it.

A half a dozen years later, our man is now a post graduate, his mother and old lady with white straints alternating her once fully black silky hair. She is on a look out for a princess worthy of her gallant prince, now free from the temporary vices he had picked up during his teenage years. After a large girl hunt, a damsel was finally selected on the basis of her looks, education, nature and the strength of her fathers' bank account. As the marriage ceremony takes place, ignorant vioces comment "Finally Shanti's worries are over" Wrong again. But then how were they to know that real trouble would begin now for Shanti. How were they to know that the 'Shehna' playing in the background marked not merely a matrimonial alliance between two youths but was actually the requium of the relationship of mother and son.

All the sacrifices of her life for her son all the pain she bared now repays itself in futher agony & destitution in magnificent proportions. The mother becomes an extra piece of furniture that every ones uses when the furred sofa set is occupied, but still always looks for ways to dispose of it.

Life goes on like this until the day dark death envelopes the old mother, already lost in the darkness created by her son himself, whom she created light for. That is the life of a mother. Ridiculous that the word mother has changed from a noun to an adjective symbolising care, devotion and sacrifice when it should really be associated with suffering, ungratitude and incessent many dimensional sorrow. That is what mother really is.

Saurav Sinha

The Secrets of the Titanic

One day, we, the children of Class III watched a movie called—The Secrets of the Titanic. The Titanic was the largest ship of her time. She was a luxurious ship. The people who built her said she was unsinkable because she had automatic doors and water tight compartments.

On April 13, 1912 the Titanic sank on its maiden voyage. One night at 1 O'clock when the Titanic was sailing to New York from England she struck an iceberg. The iceberg made a 300 ft hole in the gigantic ship and a lot of water went inside. At 2.20 p.m. the Titanic was swallowed by the mighty waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Out of 2277 passengers more than 1500 passengers drowned. Only 727 passengers were saved. The captain went down with the ship.

In 1986, Dr. Ballard, a marine geologist, went down with his team to find the Titanic. He and his team found her lying two and a half miles below the surface of the ocean. They went down in a submarine called Alvin and they took with them a robot called Jason. Jason took pictures of the Titanic. The ship is still lying on the ocean floor and it is rusted.

Vivek Khemka
Class IV

The Postman

I saw a postman,
going to the town.
With letters in his bag.
Never a frown
With a smile on his face.
Always being brave.
He gives me letters from mum and dad.
It makes me feel better and very glad.

Jitender Kumar Singh
Class III

The Magic Hat

One day, Vicky found a hat lying in a ditch. The hat was gorgeous and very colourful. Vicky didn't know that the hat had magic powers. He picked the hat up and ran home. He showed it to his mother. His mother allowed him to keep it. Vicky looked after the hat very carefully. One day while he was wearing the hat he wished for a mini-bike. Immediately there was a mini-bike in front of him. He rode the bike the whole morning until it was time for lunch. Then he showed the bike to his mother and told her how he had got it. At first his mother did not believe him but she knew that Vicky was a truthful boy. She said that it was a magnificent bike and she told Vicky to look after it carefully. He promised to do so. Then he wished for a pot of gold. It suddenly appeared and landed at his feet. Vicky

was surprised, and he said, "I don't know what is happening today. All things that I wish for come true." Then he wished for a Super Sonic plane similar to Lockheed S.L.R.-71. At once it appeared before him. Luckily he knew how to fly an aeroplane. He flew the aeroplane twice around the city and then made it land in his garden. He gave the pot of gold to his mother. His mother made him delicious tea. She served hot scones, jelly and patties. After tea, he wished they had a castle instead of the small old cottage. He also wished for a carriage. The cottage turned into a castle and a carriage appeared outside the castle door. Then he said, "I do not want this hat any more." He threw the hat up into the air and it got stuck on a mango tree. He merrily walked towards his castle. What did he see? His cottage was there instead of the castle. His mini-bike and lockheed had vanished. Then he ran to look at the pot of gold. It, too, had disappeared. He ran inside the cottage and told his mother his story. When he finished, his mother said, "You foolish boy! That hat had magic powers. Go and get it." But when Vicky reached the mango tree, the hat was not there. A boy had picked it up when he was plucking mangoes. Vicky smacked himself for doing such a foolish thing. He woke up with a start. Just as well he had only been up dreaming.

Vivek and Anirudh

Brain Teasers



- Q. 1. Who wrote the first Modern Indian novel in English 'Rajmohan's Wife'?
- Q. 2. What was the name of the Ashram founded by Mahatma Gandhi?
- Q. 3. Who was the first Indian Badminton player to reach the finals of the All England Championship?
- Q. 4. The Chenab takes its name from which Confluence?
- Q. 5. The largest telescope in Asia is named after an Indian Astrophysicist. What is his name?
- Q. 6. In India the diamonds are quarried from which place?
- Q. 7. What was the original name of the Mahabharata?

- Q. 8. Who said the following words 'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever'.
- Q. 9. What is the American name for Anti Ballistic Missiles (A.B.M.) ?
- Q. 10. Which of the following rivers crosses the Equator twice :—
 (a) Congo (b) Nile
 (c) Amazon (d) Kaveri
- Q. 11. Which of the following Delhi Sultans himself assumed the title of 'Khalifa' ?
 (a) Babar
 (b) Alauddin Khilji
 (c) Qutubuddin : Khilji
 (d) Muhammad Tugluq
- Q. 12. Who was the Diwan during the regime of Akbar ?
- Q. 13. Name the tallest Cricketer ever ?
- Q. 14. Where is the next World Cup Hockey going to be held ?
- Q. 15. Name the oldest living Indian Cricketer ?

Sharib Khan

Happenings

- * We welcome Mr. M. Ram who joins us as a P.T.I. and Mr. A. Bishwas who joins us as the school's media manager.
- * G.N.A. was creamed in a friendly match.
- * Editions of 'Newstrack' were screened recently.
- * Two matches were played against the Blue Star Club; we won the first; and the second ended in a draw.
- * Earth Day was commemorated with some hard reforestation work at the quarry on the 22nd of April.
- * The life saving classes for this year have commenced.
- * The school won the Inter School Badminton Tournament held at YMCA. Krishna won the Inter-house badminton tournament.
- * Congratulations to Hariender Mann on being proclaimed the best player in both tournaments.

* Joint production is being staged on the 12th of May.

✓ The school won the Council Schools Hockey Tournament.

Welham Now !!!

Meet Mr. Ashish Bishwas

He's one of the three persons in school who keep a beard and is probably the best person in school to talk to. Be it—books, music, art or films—he can talk to you about anything. Having spent almost the whole of his life in Calcutta, he finds himself pretty uneasy in D. Dun for the lack of humidity and also for the lack of a 'social circle'. He has been officially announced—the media adviser, but till now he has been mostly involved in repairing the damages made by most of us in the library.

Brought up in a missionary school in Calcutta, he has done his B.A. and M.A. in History also from his home town. He has his favourites like most uncommon men do. He reads Huxley, Koestler, Forsythe and Jack Higgins. He enjoys listening to Robindra Sangeet, Rock and Blues, Jazz Rock etc. He likes eating what tastes good. He loves art films and good. Hollywood actions thrillers.

Ouring to the place where he comes from, he appreciates art. R. Tagore, Van Gogh and Cezanne are his favourites.

He finds the average Welhamite very polite. Well, everyone who joins Welham has that opinion, but one thing that he admits is that the 'book culture' is more or less missing. How could the learning resource centre be a success if that basic culture is missing ? The new resource centre is an experiment, probably no other school can boast of that kind. 50% of its success; if not more depends on us. Hope it works, he wishes and so do we. And that is his prayer.

Nature's Diary

Here are some unusual nuggets of information which may help you test your own knowledge. Let's see how many you know ;

1. Which is the smallest fish in the world ?

Ans :—The goby. It lives in the Philippines and grows to length of 1 cm.

2. Which fish has no bones in its body except for its jaws and teeth ?

Ans :—The Shark.

3. Which animal's mouth is one-third the size of its entire body ?

Ans :—The bow-head Whale.

4. What do fish and trees have in common ?

Ans :—You can tell their ages by counting their rings. Trees have rings in their trunks and fish have them in their scales.

5. Which creature has eyes which are one-third the size of its body ?

Ans :—The deep sea benthic octopus.

6. Which creature has different brains for its ears, nose, skin and taste ?

Ans :—The Shark.

7. Can flying fish fly ?

Ans :—No. They can only glide.

8. Can fish drown ?

drown.

Ans :—Yes. If for any reason their gills are unable to extract oxygen from water, they would

9. What is a *Humuhumunukunua*—*puoa* ?

Ans :—A Hawaiian trigger fish.

10. What climbs trees, eats coconuts and has ten legs ?

Ans :—The robber crab.

Discovery

A Short Mid-Term Break To Tajewala

After long, monotonous days at school, our Mid-term break started. We a group of eleven boys, along with our escort. Mr. Nagalia went fishing to Khizrabad. We left early in the morning for our destination on the 24th of March. We took a bus to Paonta as there was no direct bus to Khizrabad. On our way only barren patches of mountain were visible. The roads were dusty and the journey to Paonta was quite.

A Paonta we switched over to another bus going to Khizrabad. We reached Khizrabad at around twelve thirty after a tiring journey. We walked up to the Rest House. To our greatest astonishment, the rest house was luxurious. When enquired, was we were informed there were no fishes in the river that flowing through Khizrabad. In an instante, there was a sad look on our faces.

We decided that there was no point in staying in Khizrabad; even though the rest house was luxurious, because the river contained no fishes and the water was dirty.

We at once took a bus Tajewala which was only seven kilometres away. We managed to get a room in the rest house at Tajewala.

The rest house was well built and their was a beautiful garden. A variety of flowers were growing in the garden. The grass was well mowed. It looked as if a green velvet carpet had been laid on the ground. The river was very close to the rest house and far of we could faintly see mountains.

We dozed off to sleep early that day as we were tired. The next day, after breakfast we went fishing. The river was very broad and fast flowing. There were several dams and canals built to divert the direction of the river for irrigation.

We fished the whole day, but unfortunately we could not get hold of any fish. We were very disappointed. We came back to the rest house in the evening.

At night we cooked dinner ourselves. There was complete chaos in the kitchen. There is a saying that too many cooks spoil the Groch. Same

was the out case with us. Some did this, some did that. Some one dropped the water; some one added extra tastemaker in the food. In the end we ended up from where we had started. However, we managed to cook the food (Maggie noddles) after an hour.

The next day, with new hope, we set out fishing. We tried our luck in the canals, but we caught no fish. It seemed as if we were seeing a replay of the events which had occurred yesterday. It was a hot dayso we decided to swim. The water was extremely cold and muddy also, but we still swam. It was fun splashing water at each other. In the evening we returned back to the rest house with our fishing nets empty.

The next day we took a fisherman along with us. This time we were sure we would catch some fish. We all used to stand still whenever the fisherman would cast his net and would wait patiently for a fish to come up, but always we were unlucky.

There was lot of sand and frequently we used to go knee-deep into the soft sand. The river was chest deep.

House passed by slowly. but still we had caught no fish. We became quite convinced that we would not be able to catch any fish. Suddenly the fisherman exclaimed joyfully that he had caught a fish. We ran as fast as we could towards him. He had caught a fish, not a big one. Our joy new no bounds. We were truly happy. I thank God. At least we had caught a fish.

We rested for a while for we were tired. In the evening, when we were coming back to the rest house, we caught four fishes, but unfortunately one slipped from our hands. It was a lucky day for us.

That night we cooked the fishes and ate heartily. After three days we were able to catch only four fishes.

The next day, we packed our thing, had our breakfast and left with a heavy heart for Dehra Dun via Herbertpur.

It was a memorable mid-term break.

Sharib Khan

In the Arena of Sports

While the rest of the school—rucksacks and all—were going to the hills for a welcome mid-term break the cricket team packed their kit and set out to play a couple of matches against the Pilibhit Sugar Factory team. Last year the sugar factory team had beaten us by 2 wickets so this time the players were desperate to avenge the defeat. However that was not to be... ..

The first match ranged from the exciting to the dull. Welham were put into bat and were soon tottering at 30 for 4. However we recovered well to put up a fighting total of a 150 odd runs at the end of the stipulated 40 overs. Harinder Mann once again top scored with a defiant 40. Raghav and Munish chipped in with 31 and 21 runs respectively.

The Pilibhit team started poorly. They were soon in trouble as two wickets fell down for only 12 runs. Another wicket fell soon and the opponents were in due straits. However some loose bowling and rather poor fielding let the opponents off the hook and they recovered to post a five wicket win.

The second match was reduced to 35 overs apiece. Gagan Taleja won the toss and put the opponents into bat. This match saw the Welham fielders at their worst. Easy catches were dropped and the ground fielding was terrible. It seemed the only way the batsman could be dismissed would be by clean bowling them. Despite all this the Pilibhit XI could muster up only a meagre 165. The Welham batsman had a very tough task at hand considering the quality of the Pilibhit bowlers—several of whom had played at District and State level. Vikrant Lamba finally struck form and it was mainly due to him that the match turned out to be such a thriller. With the last over to go Welham required 14 runs. The first ball was struck for a six by Vikrant. 8 were needed in 5 balls. This was when Vikrant lost his wicket while trying to hit the ball out of the ground. Welham finally ended up 5 runs short but it was a truly unforgettable match. Vikrant topscored with an attacking 80.

Although Welham lost both the matches due

credit must be given to the players who fought tooth and nail for every run. Th sum everything up—Welham was beaten not disgraced.

The mid-term break concluded and the hockey season commenced. Hockey is a game where Welham is supposed to be formidable. However no team can win without regular practise and hard-work. This was the case when Welham played R.I.M.C. on our ground. Within two minutes of the start we were 2 goals down already. The Welham piayers were shocked and jolted into action—but it was too late. However hard the players tried they could not wipe out the two goal deficit and finally went down by the same margin. Rank bad referring did not help our cause in any way but then despite everything we have only ourselves to blame. The team must pull up their socks and practise increasingly harder if they have to regain their lost glory. I am confident tnat the Welham hockey team can get baek to their winning ways soon. Best of Luck to them !



खरसाली

भारत देश के इतिहास और संस्कृति की व्याख्या विश्व के कोने-कोने में की जाती है। गुजरात से असम तक और काश्मीर से कन्याकुमारी तक हमारा देश ऐतिहासिक स्थानों और लाखों मन्दिरों से भरा हुआ है। इस ऐतिहासिक एवं सांस्कृतिक देश में शायद ही कोई ऐसा स्थान होगा जहाँ कोई मन्दिर नहीं है। इन ऐतिहासिक स्थानों तथा मन्दिरों में से अनेक तो ऐसे हैं, कि उनकी चर्चा सात समुद्रों पार भी की जाती है, दूर देशों से पर्यटक घूमने आते हैं, उदाहरण के लिए आप आगरा में स्थित ताजमहल या भारत की राजधानी, दिल्ली के लाल-किले को ले लीजिए जहाँ कई बार अपने देश के कम वरन् परदेस के वासी अधिक संख्या में देखने को मिलते हैं। प्रत्येक ऐतिहासिक स्थान या मन्दिर के पीछे एक गाथा भी होती है, जो सुनने में तो असत्य लगती है परन्तु होती बिल्कुल सच है। भारत-वर्ष में असंख्य ऐसे भी स्थान हैं, जो ताजमहल या कुतुबमीनार की गणना में कई साल प्राचीन होंगे और यह भी संभव है कि वह अपरिचित स्थान, उसमें रहने वाले वासियों की दृष्टि में भारत के किसी भी अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण स्थान से अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण हों।

ऐसा ही एक अपरिचित ऐतिहासिक स्थान है खरसाली, जहाँ का बच्चा-बच्चा अपनी जन्मभूमि को अपनी जात से भी बढ़कर समझता है। यमुना नदी के जन्म-स्थान यमनोत्री से लगभग छह किलोमीटर नीचे, यह एक अत्यन्त रमणीय एवं प्राचीन स्थान है। वहाँ के भोले-भाले व्यक्तियों से मिलकर मुझे ऐसा प्रतीत हुआ कि उन्हें आज पता नहीं है, कि दुनियाँ कहाँ से कहाँ पहुँच गयी है। जो हमारे लिए बोता हुआ कल था, वही उनके लिए आने वाला आज था। यमुना नदी के तट पर बसने वाले, खरसाली के लोग बताते हैं कि उनके पुरुषों द्वारा बनाये गए अभिलेखों से उन्हें इस बात का अच्छी तरह से ज्ञात है कि उनकी जनजाति को इस भूमि पर रहते हुए पाँच हजार से भी अधिक वर्ष हो गये हैं। वहाँ के रहन-सहन के तरीकों से यह भी स्पष्ट रूप से पता चलता है कि खरसाली ग्राम में बसने वाली पहली जनजाति बौद्ध धर्म को मानती थी।

खरसाली के लोग अपने अन्य देवी-देवताओं सहित यम को भी पूजते हैं, कारण यह की यमराज उनकी यमुना माँ के भ्राता लगते हैं। गाँव के दुर्गा मन्दिर के एक वयोवृद्ध दुर्गा भक्त से हमें इस बात का भी ज्ञात हुआ कि सौ-दो सौ वर्ष पूर्व ग्राम खरसाली में जब किसी व्यक्ति की मृत्यु होती थी तो लोग यही मान लेते थे कि कालान्तक देव उससे अत्यन्त प्रसन्न हैं इसलिए उन्होंने उस खुश-नसीब को अपनी सेवा करने का मौका दे दिया है। यह मानने का एक और भी कारण है, कि यमदेव ने ही अपने सेवकों को भेज कर इस जनजाति की स्थापना करवायी थी। इस पहाड़ी जनजाति का ईश्वर में पूर्ण विश्वास है। वहाँ के अधिकतर गृह मन्दिर के आकार में ही बने हैं। घर बनाने में ईट-पत्थर का कम, लकड़ी का ज्यादा इस्तेमाल किया जाता है। खरसाली के तीन मुख्य मन्दिर

हैं— महादेव मन्दिर, दुर्गा मन्दिर और सूर्यदेव मन्दिर जो तीनों में से प्रमुख है।

गाँव तक पहुँचने का संकरा मार्ग खत्म होते ही शिवालय दिखाई दे जाता है। ग्राम में अनेक परिवर्तन होने पर भी इस देवालय में कोई बदलाव नहीं आया है। भीतर जाने के लिए एक छोटा सा द्वार था जिसके चारों ओर कढ़ाई का अनोखा नमूना प्रस्तुत किया गया था। किवाड़ के दोनों ओर पुराने-पुराने सिक्के लगे हुए थे। दरवाज़े से अन्दर आने के कुछ कदमों बाद हम एक छोटे से कमरे में पहुँच गये। चारों ओर अन्धकार, गहरा अन्धकार था। कमरे के अन्तर्भूत में बस एक दूध सा श्वेत शिवालिंग चमक रहा था।

गाँव के मध्यवर्ती भाग में पहुँचते ही हमें दुर्गा मन्दिर और सूर्यदेव मन्दिर दिख गये। दुर्गा मन्दिर के विषय में हमें ज्यादा कुछ पता न चल सका, कारण यह कि कई वर्षों से उसका ताला न हटाया गया था। बाहर से देख कर ही यह पता लग गया था कि ये दुर्गा-देवी का मन्दिर है क्योंकि द्वार के ऊपर काष्ठ का सिंह, दुर्गा माँ की सवारी, बना हुआ था। मन्दिर के चारों ओर भी एक-एक काष्ठ का सिंह बना हुआ था। उत्तरी ओर एक जलाशय भी था, जिसके किनारे विशाल वृक्षों के झुरमुठ त्पश्चर्या के लिए उपयुक्त स्थान थे। मन्दिर के पीछे वाले द्वार के आगे एक बारहदरी थी, जिसकी दीवारों पर, सुन्दर कलाकृतियों के उदाहरण पेश किये गये थे। दुर्गा के विभिन्न रूपों का चित्रण भी किया गया था।

तीसरा मन्दिर, सूर्यदेव का मन्दिर आकार में अन्य दो मन्दिरों से पूरी तरह से अलग था। काठ की जगह इस मन्दिर के निर्माण में पत्थरों का अधिक इस्तेमाल किया गया था। वह एक मीनार की तरह ऊँचा था तथा सोलह खण्डों में बंटा हुआ था। पहले खण्ड में आश्रम था और दूसरे खण्ड से मन्दिर शुरू हो जाता था। भीतर पहुँचते ही हम तम में खो गए। यहाँ भी विजयेश मन्दिर की तरह अन्धकार ही था। पुजारी जी की मदद से हम सीढ़ियों तक पहुँचने में सफल हुए। सीढ़ियों! वह कोई आम सीढ़ियों जैसी तो नहीं थी। द्रुम के तने में गड्ढे बना कर, रोगन कर उसे सीढ़ी का रूप दे दिया गया था। एक तो गहरा अन्धकार और फिर इस प्रकार की सीढ़ी जिसपर हम पहले न तो कभी चढ़े थे, और न ही कभी देखी थी, बहुत डर लग रहा था परन्तु हम आये भी तो प्रभु-दर्शन के लिए थे, कोई अप्रिय घटना नहीं हो सकती थी।

अन्त में अन्धकार को चीरते हुए हम मुख्य कक्ष तक पहुँच ही गये। हर तरफ काठ की बनी मूर्तियाँ थी। जिनके मध्य में एक चमकीले धातु से बनी सूर्य देव की मूर्ती थी। देवालय के विशाल झरोखे से अत्यन्त रमणीक दृश्य देखे जा सकते थे। उत्तर दिशा में गगनचुम्बी पर्वत, बन्दरपूँछ की हिमधवल चोटियाँ दिख सकती थीं जिनमें ही स्थित है यमुना का असली जन्म स्थान, सप्तऋषि कुण्ड। कक्ष के पश्चिमी ओर वाले झरोखे से हमें यमुना घाटी का अनूठा दृश्य दिख रहा था। खिड़की से पूरा खरसाली ग्राम हमारी नज़रों के नीचे आ गया था। देख

कर ऐसा प्रतीत हो रहा था कि खरसाली खूब सारे मन्दिरों की शृंखला या समूह है, कारण यही है कि वहाँ के सब गृह मन्दिर के आकार में निमित्त हैं।

गाँव के वासियों से हमें एक और बात की जानकारी प्राप्त हुई, वह यह कि खरसाली का प्रत्येक कुटुम्ब अपने पुरखों की पूजा भी करता है हजारों वर्ष पूर्व चीन में भी यह रीति थी। अपने पुरखों द्वारा बनाये गए अभिलेखों और उन द्वारा लिखित ग्रन्थों को सच्चं मन से पढ़कर प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अपने पुरखों के सदगुण अपनाने की पूरी चेष्टा करता है। वही शिक्षा लोग अपने बच्चों को भी देते हैं। इस कारण इस छोटी जनजाति ने मिल-जुल कर, शान्ति से और मित्रभाव से रहना सीखा है।

खरसाली नामक इस छोटी सी जनजाति के पास आधुनिक ज्ञान तो नहीं था परन्तु फिर भी एक घण्टे में ही खरसाली की भूमि में हमने बहुत कुछ सीख लिया था। काश पूरा भारत देश भी खरसाली के पुरखों द्वारा ज्ञान प्राप्त कर सके और इस देश का प्रत्येक नागरिक मिल-जुल कर शान्ति से रहना सीख जाए।

सौरभ नारंग
कक्षा '६'

पत्र

पत्र लिखता हूँ, किन्तु जवाब नहीं मिलता है, मन करता है किन्तु हाथ नहीं हिलता है, दुःखों की बात जब कभी सताती है, हृदय तिलमिला उठता आँखें आँसू बहाती हैं।

मित्रता हमारी आपकी बहुत छोटी है, किन्तु तकदीर कहीं उससे भी छोटी है, मिलन की बेला का संसार बड़ा अनुपम था, यात्रा लम्बी थी किन्तु समय बड़ा सुखमय था।

जिन्दगी भगवान ने कैसी विचित्र बनाई है, बजती शहनाई कहीं-कहीं तो तनहाई है। आशा जिन्दगी में मात्र एक तृष्णा है, मैंने भी इसको अच्छी तरह आजमाई है।

सौरभ जी सच कहता हूँ आपमें अपार धैर्य है, जिन्दगी जीने का भी बड़ा शौर्य है। मेरी चिट्ठी में कुछ नहीं बनावटी है, विपत्ति ही मनुष्य के धैर्य की की कसौटी है।

—पवन अग्रवाल
कक्षा '८'

हास्य

पंडित पेटूमल के साथ कुछ क्षण:-

पंडित पेटूमल जी अपनी फुटबाल जैसी तोंद पर हाथ फिराते बीच सड़क में चले जा रहे थे। होठों पर मुस्कान, आँखों में चमक, चाँद सा चेहरा-गोल।

पंडित पेटूमल को खोजना कोई मुश्किल काम नहीं है। अगर आपका कभी बनारस जाना हुआ और आपको कोई ऐसा जोब दिखाई दे गया जिसका पेट लगता है एक गैस का गुब्बारा जो कभी भी फट सकता है, गंगा सर और उसपर लटकती एक लम्बी काली चोटो जो इस प्रकार हिलती है जैसे कि एक कुत्ते की दुम जब वह खुश होता है। लेकिन पंडित पेटूमल जी कोई कुत्ते तो हैं नहीं। वे हैं बनारस के सबसे महान, चिरंजीवो पंडित। जिसके जीवन का सदा एक ही मकसद है—“खाना-खाना” ये खाना ही तो एक चीज है जो उन्हें इस दुनिया में रोके हुई है। पंडित जी का लक्ष्य है संसार का ज्यादा से ज्यादा खाना हज्म कर जाना।

पंडित जी के पेट का अन्दाजा आप इसी बात से लगा सकते हैं कि बनारस का बच्चा-बच्चा बोलता है—

“पंडित पेटूमल का पेट,
लगता जैसे इंडिया गेट।

अब इंडिया गेट तो आपने देखा हो होगा। सोच लीजिए आपने पेटूमल जी का पेट भी देख लिया।

सुबह-सुबह रामू जमादार ने मुँह दिखा दिया। चलिए यह अपशकुन तो पंडित जी ने गंगा में स्नान करके मिटा दिया पर जैसे ही वे घर से निकले पंडिताइन ने छींक दिया। पंडित जी को आया गुस्सा और पंडिताइन की हो गई पिटाई। पंडित जी को अब एक घंटे गंगा में स्नान करना पड़ा, तब कहीं जाकर यह अपशकुन मिटा।

वैसे पंडित जी आलसी नहीं थे। वे कुछ काम-धंधा भी करते थे। वे शादियों में पूजा-पाठ कराते थे। पूजा-पाठ क्या कराते थे केवल खाना खाते थे। खाने में ज्यादा नहीं कुछ दो सौ से तीन सौ पूड़ियाँ, दो चार कुकर छोले वगैरह, वगैरह, वगैरह। फिर समोसे और जलेबियाँ की तो बात ही छोड़िये। गुलाबजामुनों को तो बात ही कुछ और है। और रसमलाई मिल जाए तो क्या कहने। वे अमरिकन और चाइनीज खाने से भी परहेज नहीं करते थे पर मांस-मछली से उन्हें चिढ़ थी वे कहते थे—

मांस मछली जो करे आहार,
चौदह बंश गिद्ध अवतार।

पंडित पेटूमल जी के पिता का नाम बनारस के पंसेरी खुराक वाले ब्राम्हणों में आता था। पिताजी ने बचपन में ही कह दिया था कि, “बेटा पेटू तू बड़ा होकर मेरा नाम रोशन करेगा”। हुआ भी वही। पेटूमल जी दुनियाँ के सबसे पेटू इन्सान हैं।

अक्सर पंडित पेटूमल जी बारात का सारा खाना खा

जाते थे और वारातियों को भूखा ही सोना पड़ता था। 'फिर भूखा क्या मांगे कुछ खाना'। अगर पंडित जी थोड़ा सा खाना छोड़ देते, सब वाराती उसपर झपट पड़ते।

एकवार तो ऐसा भो हुआ कि एक वाराती भूख सहन नहीं कर पाया और गिड़ागड़ाने लगा, "रहम पेटूमल जी, रहम। भूखे पेट का सवाल है। कुछ छोड़ दीजिए। पंडित पेटूमल ने भी टका सा उत्तर दिया--

"अरे भाई, हमने की है सेवा,
ता हम खाएंगे मेवा"।

फिर होनी को अनहोनी कौन बना सकता है। सारा खाना पेटूमल जी हजम कर गए।

पंडित जी के कुछ आदर्श हैं। जैसे उनका कहना है -

"बाप बड़ा न नाना,
सबसे बड़ा है खाना"।

पंडित जी कभी बस में सफर नहीं करते थे। उनका कहना था कि पैदल चलने से सेहत अच्छी रहती है। पर वास्तविकता कुछ और ही है। असल में पंडित जी का पेट बस के दरवाजों के अन्दर नहीं जा पाता। फिर पंडित जी के बस में होते हुए बस कभी भी पिचक सकती है। विश्वास न आए तो पंडित जी से उनका वजन पूछ लीजिए। यकीन करिए वे शरमा जाएंगे। बात यह है कि पंडित पेटूमल का वजन अभी तक दुनियां को कोई भी मशीन नाप नहीं पाई है।

पंडित जी को बचपन में जो मंत्र सिखाए गए थे वे उनका पूरा फायदा उठाते हैं। लेकिन उनके पेट के जैसे ही उनको अकल भो थोड़ी मोटी ही। बीच-बीच में थोड़ा-थोड़ा भूल जाते हैं। ऐसी अवस्था में वे 'जैक एण्ड जिल

वेन्ट अप द हिल' जैसी कविताओं का पूरा फायदा उठाते हैं।

सुनने में आया है कि जब कोई बच्चा खाना नहीं खाता तो उसकी माँ कहती है, "बेटा खाना खा ले नहीं तो पेटू खा जाएगा"। फिर इतनी बड़ी धमकां नन्हें मुन्हे बच्चों के लिए बहुत होती है।

खाना खाने के अलावा पंडित जी का एक और शौक भी है। वह है सोना, गहरी नींद में। जब पेटूमल जी सोते हैं उनके खरटि इन्सानों को उनकी याद दिलाते हैं। खरटि क्या हैं पूरे राजधानो एक्सप्रेस। कहा जाता है कि

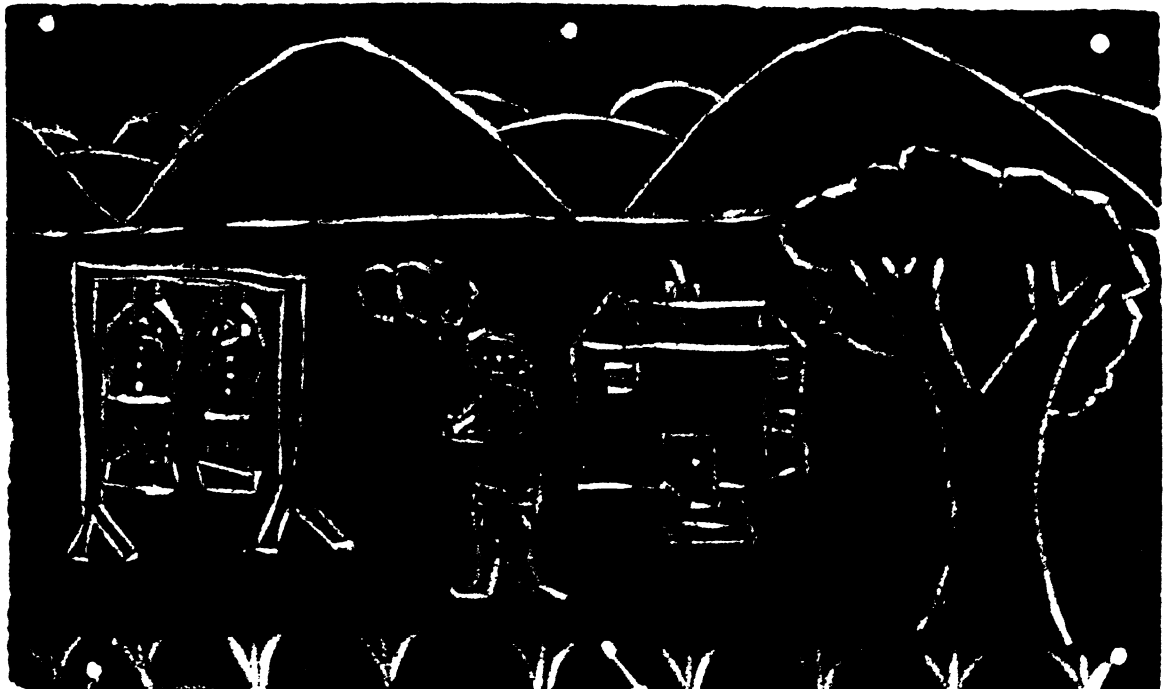
"जब पेटूमल सोते हैं,
दुनियां वाले रोते हैं"।

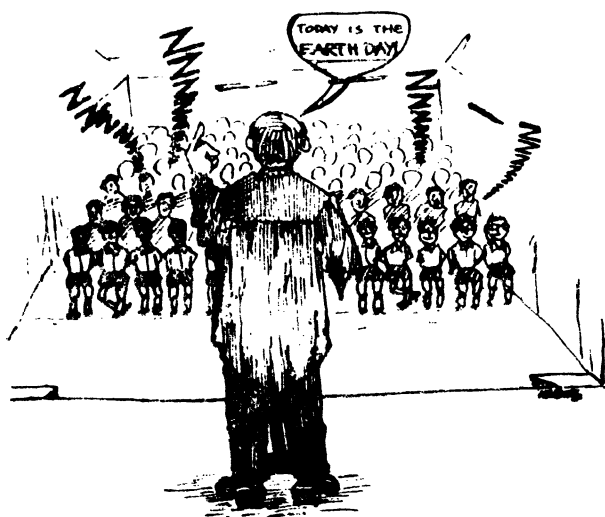
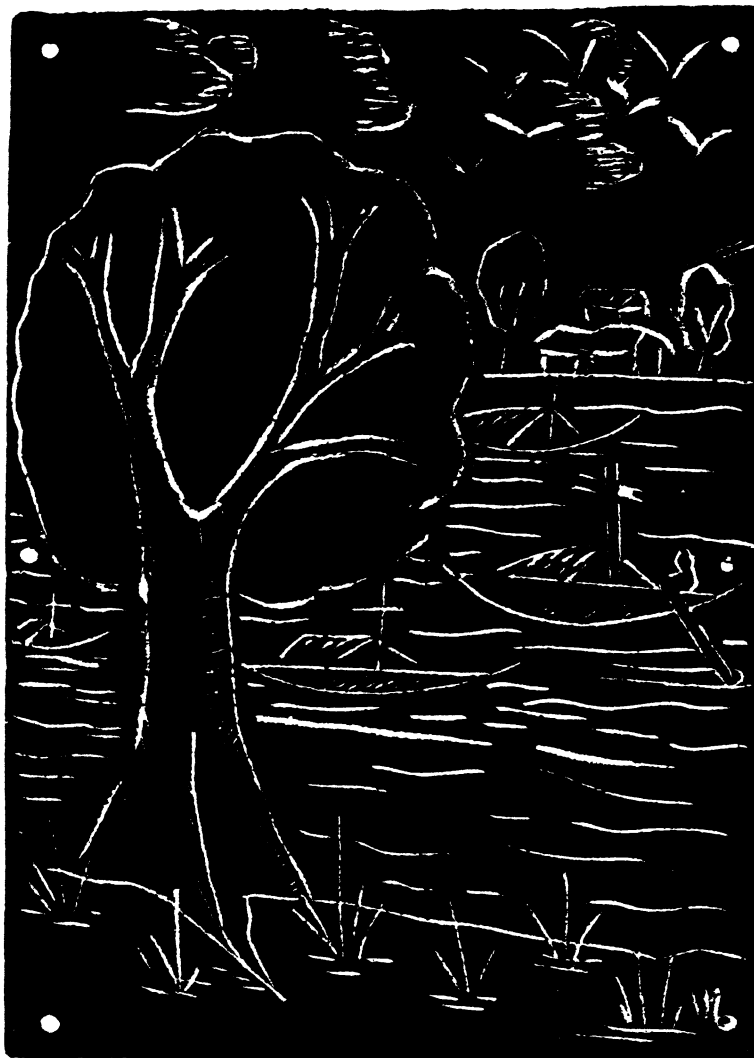
रोएंगे क्यों नहीं? उनकी नींद जा हराम हो जाती है। इसीलिए बनारस के लोग अपना नींद दिन में पूरी कर लेते हैं।

अरे हम कहाँ से कहाँ आ पहुँचे। हमने तो पेटूमल जी का इतिहास हो पढ़ डाला। हाँ तो मैं कह रहा था कि पंडित जी खाने के सपने में डूब हुए अपनी मंजिल की ओर बढ़ जा रहे थे। पर वे अभी चौराहे पर ही पहुँचे थे की एक काली बिल्ली रास्ता काट गई। पहले तो वे कुछ दूर बिल्ली के पीछे दौड़ पर उनकी ताँद जवाब दे गई। फिर पंडित जी बिल्ली पर गालियों और शापों की बौछार करते हुए गंगा-स्नान के लिए बढ़ चले और गंगा माँ से आशिर्वाद मांगते हुए गाने लगे—

"माँ गंगे,
दुनियां वाले ठहरे लफंगे,
एक पंडित पेटूमल ही चंगे,
उन्हें खाना दे माँ गंगे"।

—निशान्त सिंह





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