PREFACE

“Trisandhi”—literally means, the union of the three, i.e., the Hindu, the Mahomedan and the Christian. This book has been prepared in accordance with the vernacular curriculum prescribed for class V in High and Middle English Schools, in Eastern Bengal; and as the name signifies, has been representative, as far as possible, of the three cultures which rule the life of the Bengali people at the present day. The curriculum prescribed has been strictly followed, but with a definite plan in view, the plan of representing the three cultures through the medium of simple and interesting lessons, so that no one among the three may be given undue prominence.

The connexion of the author, as a teacher, with Sir Rabindranath Tagore’s school at Santiniketan, Bolepur, for eleven years or more, enabled him to have a first-hand knowledge and experience of the requirements of the boys and made him think of preparing a book, in which the three cultures, the Hindu, the Mahomedan and the Christian, would be represented.

In moral stories, therefore, anecdotes have not simply been chosen from Hindu history and Hindu life, but equally from Mahomedan history. In poetry, three poems have been composed by the author, the subjects being taken from the Koran, the Bostan of the poet Sadi, and the Mahomedan history of India. The first lesson of the book is about Sultan Mahmud and the Kingdom of Gazni and
gives a picture, through stories, of the splendid literary life and culture at the court of Gazni. It may help to remove the misconception and sometimes the prejudice that may naturally arise in the minds of young Hindu boys, when they read about Mahmud of Gazni's invasions in Indian history and think of him and the Mahomedans as a band of fanatics, knowing nothing of the great history and culture that is behind them. Similarly, Mahomedan boys, loving their Sadi and Firdusi, ought to have some ideas of the ancient Hindu literature, of the great Mahabharata. Two moral lessons have therefore been written from the Mahabharata.

The Christian side has not been illustrated from the history and literature of the west, but from the present-day history of the British rule in India. The influence of the British rule and its manysided results, have been shown by means of (i) a short biographical sketch of Rajah Rammohan Ray, the greatest product of British rule and the influence of western culture (ii) a lesson on the two greatest benefits we are enjoying from British rule, viz, sanitation and education, the spread of charitable hospitals and of schools and colleges.

Perhaps, a word ought to be added about the selection of poetry, which covers a wide range. The selection has been made from the earliest bards, Krittibas and Kashmirandas, from mediaeval poets like Lochandasa, Vrindabandas, Bharat Chandra and Mukundaram and from moderns such as, Hemachandra Bannerji, Krishna Chandra Majumdar and Sir Rabindranath Tagore. The author owes a deep debt of gratitude to the latter, for
having kindly permitted to put in, three of his poems, in this book. Perhaps no objection will be raised, on the score of language, for going back to old poetry. The language of old Bengali poetry can never be said to be antiquated, rather it is wonderfully fresh and modern. There may be a few words which are archaic and need to be explained. A few explanatory notes are given at the back of the book.

In conclusion, the author begs to submit that he has spared himself no pains to make the book, as suitable as possible, to the needs of the students, for whom it is intended and has made the style easy and the language, chaste and elegant. Special attention has been paid to make the book helpful and interesting to the Mahomedan boys, whose requirements are very liable to be forgotten, when one does not bear in mind that they form an overwhelming majority in the schools of Eastern Bengal.

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