

Dr. Kashiprasad Jayaswal

In Dr. Kashiprasad Jayaswal the Society has lost prematurely a member whose energy and enthusiasm had won him wide recognition in India, and some of whose original speculations and discoveries, as well as his more normal contributions to learning, had been approved by Indologists in general. References in standard works, such as *The Cambridge History of India* and Professor de la Vallée Poussin's admirable volumes in the *Histoire du Monde*, not to mention reviews and articles contained in Orientalist journals, show that his activities were appreciated by scholars: and it was to be expected that with increasing circumspection his insight and vigour would accomplish a work of permanent value.

Returning from Oxford, where he had been a member and Honorary Scholar (1910), of Jesus College, as well as Davis University Scholar in Chinese, to a professional career as a barrister, first in Calcutta and later in Patna—he held also in Calcutta an university appointment as Lecturer in Ancient History—he quickly acquired through some notable articles published in the *Modern Review* and elsewhere a reputation for original research. In the foundation of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, instituted by Sir Edward Gait, then Governor, he took an active part, becoming a member of its first Council. With its *Journal*, now in its twenty-third volume and distinguished by scholarly efficiency and regularity of issue, he was closely associated from the beginning and during some sixteen years, until his death, he was its editor. He was a frequent contributor of extensive articles; and of the general activities of the Society he may be said to have been, despite the distractions of a busy professional life, a mainspring. He took a keen interest in the archæological exploration of Patna, and himself carried on excavations which led at times to notable finds, now preserved in the Patna Museum. For that Museum, working in conjunction with the

late Rakhaldas Banerji, he procured a cast of the famous Hāthīgumpha Cave inscription of Khandagiri in Orissa. A joint edition of the inscription, with translation and commentary, was published first in the Society's *Journal* (1917) and again, after a number of further studies, in *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. xx; it comprises some marked improvements in reading and interpretation. In 1917 Jayaswal was selected to deliver the Tagore Law Lectures in Calcutta. When the sixth All-India Oriental Conference (1930) met in Patna, he was elected President of the Reception Committee, and at the inaugural meeting he delivered an eloquent and informative address. A much more elaborate discourse, surveying the progress of Indologist studies, signaled his presidency of the Conference at its Baroda meeting (1933). In 1935 he paid a visit to England, on which occasion he lectured before the Royal Asiatic Society on finds of Maurya coins and symbols resulting from the Patna excavations. The same year brought him recognition, in the form of Honorary Doctorates, from the universities of Patna and Benares.

Probably the most notable of Jayaswal's writings is to be seen in his contributions to the *Modern Review* (1912-13), on the subject of non-monarchical states in ancient India, to which phenomenon attention had been drawn by Professor Rhys Davids in his *Buddhist India*. Jayaswal showed how the procedures of the Buddhist Saṃgha shed light upon the administration of those states. The topic retained his interest, and the states in question, concerning which he elicited much new information, occupy a large space in his extensive, but not in all features quite sound, treatise on *Hindu Polity* (1924), a matter in which he was a pioneer with many followers. In the meanwhile he had published a number of papers dealing with Nanda, Maurya, and Śuṅga chronology, and also with difficult early inscriptions, wherein he was, no doubt, too ready to find in obscure passages mention of historical names. Other inscriptions, of a less debatable character, he edited with commendable versions and discussions in the *Journal*

of his Society, and in *Epigraphia Indica*. Useful work on normal lines is contained also in his edition (1924) of a *Smṛti* text, the *Rājanīti-ratnākara* of Caṇḍeśvara, and in the two stout volumes of *A Descriptive Catalogue of [Sanskrit] Manuscripts in Mithilā*, compiled in collaboration with Dr. Ananta-prasad Śāstrī (1927-). He also edited with historical commentary the famous *Yuga-purāṇa* of the *Garga-saṃhitā*.

With the last-named may be associated the volume (1934) too optimistically entitled *An Imperial History of India in a Sanskrit Text* [c. 700 B.C.–c. A.D. 770], which is for the most part successful attempt to identify and fix chronologically the kings and dynasties obscurely (often only by initials) particularized in a Buddhist Tantra work, *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*, published at Trivandrum in 1920–5. In this volume he was assisted by the Ven. Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana, who enabled him by the aid of an old Tibetan version to correct the Sanskrit text. Jayaswal enthusiastically supported his friend's very fruitful efforts to procure old Sanskrit MSS. by journeys into Tibet. In his last years he himself visited Nepal, and he contributed to the *Journal* in 1936 a long article (subsequently published separately) on the chronology of the country "from 600 B.C. to A.D. 880".

Along with *Hindu Polity*, the volume of Tagore Law Lectures (1930) and *The History of India*, A.D. 150 to A.D. 350 (1933) constitute the most elaborate and characteristic group of Jayaswal's writings. Both contain speculative elements, and the former of the two will in places evoke protests from scholars, while the latter has been strongly criticized by numismatists. But Jayaswal's works, dealing with difficult problems and obscure periods, do not leave matters where he found them: the two books embody important conceptions, concerning the composition and date of the "Laws of Manu" and concerning the history of the Nāga and Vākāṭaka dynasties; furthermore, they comprise valuable new particulars, and in regard to the two dynasties

the author himself brought to light some new archæological materials.

Dr. Jayaswal's sanguine and vigorous temperament, which made him a loyal friend, manifested itself also in a decidedness of view and a promptness in disposing of divergent opinions, which, together with a touch of patriotic bias—in historical studies no more a virtue than is its opposite—affected some critics unfavourably. That natural vigour carried him through an operation for carbuncle, which became necessary in the early summer of the present year, and maintained a long struggle, terminated in August last.

Our deep sympathy goes to his widow and children.

F. W. THOMAS.