CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS
9.0 Introduction

The researcher, while studying the life and activities of Syama Prasad, observed that he, all his life, fought for the rightful demands of Indians as a whole, and Bengal in particular. The demands could be educational, social, political, etc. He succeeded in getting respect from all because of his broad-minded political and oratory skills. Right from his childhood, he nurtured a love for his motherland, and so, could not restrain himself from any political upheaval against the foreign rule in India. He became the youngest ever Vice Chancellor of one of the renowned Universities of India, i.e., the Calcutta University. He was a great inspiration for the educated youth during that time. The researcher finds him to be a great stalwart, dedicating his heart and soul to the development of the University and education at large. During his tenure at the University, he brought about havoc changes in the fields of literature, science, agricultural studies, education of women, military training and lastly, the welfare of the youth.

9.1 Observation

According to a Sanskrit adage, it is the natural ambition of a father or a teacher to see his son or pupil surpass him. The researcher observed the most significant reflections of Syama Prasad had a great and strong influence from his father and how he excelled in his mission. Right from his childhood, he steered his academic pursuit according to his father’s wish. Syama Prasad may, not have fought for his mother tongue if Sir Asutosh did not compel him to study the Bengali language and grow a love for it. Syama Prasad watched his father working relentlessly for the Calcutta University from very close quarters. He grew up with the idea, that it was his ardent duty to serve the country, especially Bengal, through the platform of Calcutta University and other educational issues. Education was his first priority, alike Sir Asutosh’s. Syama Prasad, from the very beginning visualised a National System of Education. But, this he could materialize only when he became the Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University. He framed so many policies, that which he passed in the Senate, and implemented them. He believed in autonomy of the University, and also practiced it to a great extent. Many of his thoughts pertaining
to education in general and the administration of the University, owe a great deal to his father’s outlook and wishes. Many of Syama Prasad’s later activities were actually a reflection of his father’s philosophy and practices. Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy had remarked that, Syama Prasad was a worthy son of Sir Asutosh. He ardently tried to carry on the legacy of his father to the best of his intentions. Whatever Asutosh had left undone, Syama Prasad completed it with great vigour.

The researcher has observed that Syama Prasad worked in two phases – one educational and the other political. It might be very important to note that the second phase of his educational career started, when he joined politics. He joined politics only when the education of Bengal was at stake, due to the political situation of the country. He never dwelled into party politics; rather he politically influenced the various educational issues, that were being twisted and ruined by the British Government, the Congress and the League rule. His actions regarding the above are highly observable in the political speeches he gave regarding so many separate issues. His struggle was mainly against the Muslim League in Bengal, with the issue of Secondary Education Bill, which he opposed highly. He actually tried to resist the communalisation of education. He felt, that he alone could not fight against an organisation or Ministry, and so the need for a party or a platform was felt. Hence, his joining the ‘Mahasabha’. He was never against the Muslim community; - he opposed the bitterly communal organisation like the Muslim League and its policies. Actually, at no stage was he prepared for a compromise with the basic national demands. The followers of Jinnah and the Leaguers could not withstand his towering personality and so stigmatised him as communal.

Coming to the University, Syama Prasad had to work in a situation which was less congenial than what it had been during his father’s time. The entire academic work was always disrupted by several political storms. The leaders of Bengal were mostly engrossed with political and social upheavals, and so they hardly took education seriously. Also, the Provincial Government, which was already communal, never wanted any constructive work to be done in the University. ‘It was never failing devotion to the great temple of learning, an ardent spirit of service and tireless industry which enabled him to pilot the ship along the right track.’ (Bannerjee, A. pp. 16). Even the violation of the Government in conferring
knighthood to the Vice-Chancellor was politically motivated, inspite of there being a precedence.

Syama Prasad claimed that it is only on education, rightly planned and timely implemented, that the future of Bengal depended. He hoped that education should bring in a common pride for our own culture and tradition.

His various political speeches revolve around particular educational issues he took up as an opposition leader or a supporter. He pursued so many issues, such as, the demand for grant in education, educational expansion, the Bengal Secondary Education Bill, budget on education debate, etc.

On the other side, when the proposal came for the partition of India, he opposed to it very strongly, but failed. So, when it did happen, he felt that there was no need for a Hindu Mahasabha, as India was already supposed to be a Hindu state and thereby left the Mahasabha.

At the fag end of his life, he took up the Kashmir issue, whence he tried to integrate Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian Union. He was partially successful. And for that even, the Indians are grateful to this great national leader. Again, it may be observed that the stigma of communalism against his name proved false, as he fought only for the Muslims in Kashmir. He had the courage of his convictions and was prepared to stake his life for them. In the face of perennial national crisis in Jammu and Kashmir, the historical value of his speeches, reports and correspondences are of great value.

Another phase worth observing is the relation he had with the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore. Sir Asutosh was already very close to the Tagore family, and Syama Prasad took the relation very naturally. Of course, he showed great reverence to the poet, and went out of his way to facilitate and felicitate, whenever an opportunity came. It has already been said that it was Syama Prasad who invited Tagore to be a special lecturer in the Calcutta University. Tagore got himself occupied with many educational issues in the Calcutta University, at the request of Syama Prasad. Even when his health was failing, he could never turn down any
demand or request from Syama Prasad. A few letters have been included in the Annexure, that which were exchanged between Tagore and Syama Prasad.

**9.2 Conclusion**

The researcher tried to ascertain the contribution of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee towards the building up of a national system of education, both during the pre-independence and post-independence period. It may be rightfully said that the Indian Universities had a distinct part to play in the building up of a new Indian, as civilized Indians are highly indebted to this great national leader.

In the words of Tagore, Syama Prasad Mookerjee fulfilled his philosophy and put forth his life to the cause of national welfare.

*Let honour come to me from Thee*

*Through a call to some desperate task,*

*In the pride of poignant suffering.*

*Lull me not into languid dreams,*

*Shake me out of this cringing in the dust*

*Out of the fetters that shackle our mind,*

*Make futile our destiny,*

*Out of the unreason that bends our dignity down*

*Under the indiscriminate feet of dictations,*

*Shatter this age long shame of ours*

*And raise our head*

*Into the boundless sky,*

*Into the generous light,*

*Into the air of freedom.*