

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT FOR 1997-98
(Read on Prize Day - 21 March 1998)

Lt.Gen. Sangra, Mrs Sangra, Trustees & Governors of La Martiniere College, Lucknow, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To welcome you, here, this evening is a great privilege. To have given us of your time in spite of a heavy calendar of engagements is a mark of singular honour and we are sensible of it. We are grateful, indeed, that you accepted our invitation to preside over this, the most important of all our College functions. When we approached you to be Chief Guest we were most conscious that you are a splendid example for our students to follow. We were most pleased when you accepted our invitation and are more than delighted Mrs Sangra is also with us this evening. Nothing could make us happier than if you were to remember your visit to La Martiniere with as much pleasure as we have in welcoming you here.

As a token of our esteem and affection we should like you to accept some small floral tributes from our garden.

It is now my privilege to present, the report of the College for the year 1997 - 98.

TRUSTEES AND GOVERNORS

Mr R. S. Mathur, Chief Secretary to Govt., U.P. took over charge as Senior Trustee of the Lucknow Martin Charities from Mr Brijendra Sahay on the latter's retirement. We were pleased to welcome Mr Mathur and look forward to a long association with him, while wishing Mr Sahay a comfortable and peaceful retirement. We were also pleased to welcome Mr N.K. Mehrotra, who took charge as Legal Remembrancer to Govt. U.P., and Trustee, Lucknow Martin Charities on the transfer of Mr Khem Karan, to whom we are grateful for his concern and interest in the well-being of the College. We wish them both success in their new appointments.

We were happy to welcome Mr Raj Pratap Singh, District Magistrate on to the Local Committee of Governors of the College. Mr Singh took over charge from Mr Arun Kumar Sinha who in turn took over charge from Mr Pradeep Shukla. We wish all of them well in their new appointments and thank them for their support and help at all times.

In April last year, Justice S.N. Sahay was co-opted on to the Local Committee of Governors for a second term. We thank him for his interest in the College and for his help at all times.

Mr Justice Brijesh Kumar, Senior Judge of the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, Mr Desh Deepak Verma, Commissioner, Lucknow Division, Brigadier Noel Kumar, Commander, Lucknow Sub-Area and Mr Neil O'Brien continued to serve on the Local Committee of Governors. We are grateful for their contribution to the administration of the College, for their support and for their assistance whenever needed.

BEREAVEMENT

It is with sadness that I record the death of Abhinandan Trivedi of Class XI A who drowned in a swimming accident at the Mohammad Bagh Club Swimming Pool. The sympathy and condolences of the College are extended to his widowed mother and two surviving sisters.

It is with no less sadness that I record the death of three former members of the Staff, Mrs Lily Parel, Mr Kenneth Jordan and Mr Bindya Prasad. Mrs Parel joined the College in July, 1987. She resigned owing to medical reasons in December, 1997. Although we all knew she was seriously ill, few could have foreseen that she had so short a time to live. Two years ago she had undergone major surgery, yet she continued to work until a little over three weeks before she died. Despite her illness she was largely responsible for the production of the Annual College Plays in Hindi. It is no exaggeration to say that they were of a remarkably high standard. Her courage and fortitude are to be admired and her contribution to the College, as such, is to be valued all the more highly, for it was rendered at a great price. She was a kind and friendly lady with a fund of good humour and to those, who knew her well, she was a staunch and compassionate friend.

Mr Jordan joined the College as Bursar in April, 1978 and retired in December, 1989. He brought with him a wealth of experience, having worked in the Secretariat of the Government of U.P. earlier. His contribution to the institution was invaluable and his devotion to work was proverbial. No hours of work were too long nor was any work too arduous for him to perform. He was conscientious to a fault and he was scrupulous about details. Seldom could he have been faulted in anything he did. Mr Jordan was a genial, gentle

patient human being, who never seemed to get upset and as a friend and confidante, there are few who could be his equal. He was a loyal supporter of the College and seldom failed to attend a school function if he were in town.

Mr Prasad retired from the service of the College over twenty-five years ago, but he never failed to keep in touch with it. Although well over eighty, he was most active and continued to keep himself occupied by taking up teaching and tutorial assignments. He died most suddenly following a heart attack.

La Martiniere mourns their loss and extends to their bereaved families its sympathy and condolences.

STAFF

Appointments

Mr N.D. Sharma joined the Staff as a teacher of Science and Mathematics in the Senior and Middle School while Mrs Nina Ann Lal and Mrs Manisha Gupta joined the Staff as teachers in the Junior School. Mr Sanjiv Srivastava was appointed Office Superintendent, Mr Kevin Peters took over charge as College Steward and Mr Krishna Nand Singh joined as Additional P.T.I cum Assistant Warden.

We are particularly grateful to Mr M. Mohan and Mrs O. Adams, both former members of the Staff, who very kindly came to our rescue when we most needed help. Mr M. Mohan assisted in a temporary capacity as a Science and Mathematics Teacher in the Senior School till a replacement was found for Mr R.D. Sharma, who resigned. Mrs O. Adams helped teach Geography in place of Mrs L. Parel who resigned owing to illness.

Mrs Renu Agarwal worked temporarily as a Hindi Teacher in place of Mr D.B. Tripathi who had proceeded for Senior Division N.C.C. Training, while Mrs Sarika Govil worked in a temporary capacity in the Junior School in place of Mrs R. Khosla, who had broken her leg. Mrs R. Mukerjee was employed temporarily as an Office Assistant in place of Mr Amit Srivastava, who abandoned his employment in July.

We hope that the newly appointed Staff will have a long and happy tenure at the College.

Resignations

Mrs Lily Parel resigned in December owing to ill health. Mr Amit Srivastava, Office Assistant did not return to work in July.

Retirement

Mr Ram Rattan, Office Superintendent, retired at the end of July and Mr D.H. Serrao retired at the end of August. We are grateful for their contribution to the College and wish them a comfortable and peaceful retirement.

Long and Meritorious Service

Mr Trevor Savaille, Vice-Principal and Mrs Valerie Savaille, Assistant Teacher in the Junior School, completed twenty-five years of service at the College in July, 1997. Service of such long duration is appreciated and is highly valued. The College is happy to acknowledge their contribution. In recognition of their service they will receive a token presentation this evening.

Mr R.K. Bhasin has completed over twenty years of service as Senior Physics Master. His contribution is no less valued and appreciated and he, too, will receive a token presentation this evening.

La Martiniere looks forward to their continued loyal service and dedication.

Appointment of Mrs S. Simlai as Second Assistant

Mrs Sheila Simlai joined the Staff at La Martiniere College, Lucknow, over twenty seven years ago as Headmistress of the Junior School. As the College has grown the number of sections of classes under her charge has increased from ten to twenty and consequently her load of responsibility has also increased. She has fulfilled her duties remarkably and the reputation of the Junior School has been enhanced greatly during her tenure. In view of her services to the institution the Local Committee of Governors promoted her to the post of Second Assistant in December.

DEVELOPMENT

With the promotion of the children in the newly opened third section of the Preparatory Class it was necessary to open a third section in Class I at the commencement of the new academic year.

As the supply from the Municipality is extremely irregular and insufficient to meet the needs of the students and residents of the campus, the College receives most of its water supply from three tubewells. The main tubewell ran dry in June and it was imperative that a new one be bored. The work was entrusted to the U.P. Projects and Tubewells Corporation Limited at a total cost of Rs 3,38,457.00. This did not include the cost of the submersible pump. The College is grateful to the Old Martinians' Association which supplied the pump (Please give them a warm round of applause). The new tubewell has been sunk to an approximate depth of 120 metres with a bore of 8"/6". It is hoped that the school will not have another major water problem for some years to come.

This year the College was able to secure gas connections for the College kitchen and for the laboratories. This is not only cleaner and more economical but what is most important, it is more sound environmentally. For this innovation we are indebted to Mr Ajit Singh, Regional Manager, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation, Limited, and the parent of one of the little boys in the Junior School. It would only be fitting to give him a round of applause.

As part of the celebrations for the Golden Jubilee of India's Independence, nearly 800 teak trees were planted on the estate. This will not only be beneficial for the environment but will provide a source of income for the College in the years to come. We are extremely grateful to Mr D.R. Bansal, Divisional Forest Officer, Unnao, for his keen interest and for making the trees available to us at no cost at all. Let us show our appreciation by applauding him.

ENROLMENT

The total strength of the students in the academic session which commenced on 11 March, 1997, was 1770. Of these there were 165 Boarders, 26 Foundationers and 5 Demi-Foundationers in keeping with the provisions of Maj. Gen. Claude Martin's Will.

HEALTH

In general the health of the resident scholars was good but unfortunately several members of the Staff suffered from long and serious illnesses. We are grateful to the Medical Staff of the College and to the

Steward and Housekeeper in looking after the health and for providing balanced and nutritious food to the boarders.

FINANCES

With the rise in the cost of living and the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue providing quality education while keeping the staff satisfied in an extremely competitive world. Neither can we afford to lag behind in offering comparable salaries if we are to attract the best people for the school. It is with regret that I shall have to recommend to the Trustees and Local Committee of Governors that fees be considerably raised in the following year to meet the costs of running the establishment.

EXAMINATIONS

In March 1997, the College presented 134 candidates for the ICSE Examination. Of these 120 were awarded Pass Certificates. Shashwat Khandelwal came first in order of merit securing five points in the five best subjects. He scored an aggregate of 94.2 percent. Rahul Agarwal came second with an aggregate of 92.8 percent. In all, twenty-six boys scored over eighty percent, six of whom scored over 90 percent on the aggregate of the five best subjects.

148 candidates were presented for the I.S.C. (Year 12) Examination, of whom 145 were awarded Pass Certificates. Ankur Agarwal stood first scoring 4 points and with an aggregate of 95.25 percent in the four best subjects. Deepak Agarwal came second with an aggregate of 94.25 percent. In all, 6 boys scored over 90 percent and 26 others scored above 80 percent on the aggregate of the four best subjects.

ANNUAL COLLEGE EVENTS

The Annual Prize Distribution was held on 22 March, 1997. Mr Haridas Rao, Director General of Police, U.P., was Chief Guest. He was presented the traditional Guard of Honour by the N.C.C. Cadets of the Senior Division Army Wing. Mrs Rao graciously gave away the prizes. It was an honour for us and they were most appreciative of the function.

The Annual Inter-Martiniere Meet was held at Calcutta in the last week of August, 1997.

Although the College Football, Swimming and Debating teams performed creditably the Calcutta teams won all three competitions. We are grateful for and commend the efforts of Mr R.W. Carville, Mr P. Collins & Mr G.F. Gomes in training the debating, football and swimming teams respectively.

Possibly for the first time since the Inter-House Swimming Competitions were introduced it was not possible to hold them owing to the water crisis which the College faced because of the failure of the main tubewell.

The Commemoration Service was held on Founder's Day, 13 September, 1997. As it was also the day on which Mother Teresa was buried the service was also held in her memory. The Rt. Rev. Dr D.C. Gorai, Bishop of Calcutta, Church of North India, preached the sermon. Dr Gorai is also the Chairman of the Governing Body of La Martiniere Schools in Calcutta, and it was a privilege to have him with us.

The Annual Founder's Concert consisted of two plays. "Queer Street" by John Donald Kelly was performed by the students of the Senior School while those of the Middle School presented "Shivering Shocks" by Clemence Dane. As State Mourning had been declared for Mother Teresa on 13 September, the function which is traditionally held on 13 September had to be held on 14 September. The plays were most entertaining and were enjoyed by all who attended. Mrs B.Bobb, Mr S. Godin and all concerned with the production are to be greatly commended and thanked for their hard work. The Metro-Goldwyn Mayer Award for Histrionics is to be presented this evening to Mark Yep and Imran Khan. Mark Yep will be receiving the award for the second consecutive year.

The Annual Inter-House Athletics Meet and P.T. Display were held on 22 November, 1997. Mr P.C. Srivastava, Chief Conservator of Forests (U.P.) was Chief Guest. The Prize Distribution had to be curtailed owing to the rain. We are thankful to Mrs Srivastava who kindly presented some of the prizes. We are especially grateful to both of them not only for sparing their time but for their patience and forbearance in sitting through the function in spite of a persistent drizzle. Possibly for the first time in its long history La Martiniere had Sports Day in the rain. At this point I must make special mention of the tremendous calibre of our students

who went through the entire afternoon under the most unpleasant and adverse conditions. They are deserving of the highest praise as the entire function was conducted throughout in a heavy drizzle. Their discipline left nothing to be desired and the boys of La Martiniere have shown yet again that they are able to perform even under the most trying circumstances.

The Senior Championship was won by Amit Sharma, while the Junior and Colts Championships were won by Rahil Shahryar and Khalid Arshad respectively. The College Team won the Inter-School and the Past versus Present 4 x 100 metres Relay.

We are greatly appreciative of and are thankful for the efforts of all the members of the staff who helped with the organisation of the Meet, especially Mr R Robinson, Master in-charge of Athletics, who was in overall charge. We are also indebted to Mr D. D Singh and Mr K.N. Singh for organising the P.T. Displays. It is regrettable that the Displays could not be seen to their fullest advantage. The Gymnastics Display had to be cancelled as it would not have been safe to perform the exercises on wet apparatus.

The Annual Play in Hindi "Qurbani" was performed on Wednesday, 10 December, 1997. It was directed and produced jointly by Mr K.B. Lyall and Mrs Ranjana Chakravarti, to whom we are most grateful. The entire cast performed superbly and are to be commended for their efforts. All concerned with the production are also deserving of commendation and are warmly thanked. Khalid Arshad, though very young, gave a remarkable performance as an old woman. He will receive the prize for Histrionics in Hindi this evening.

The Annual Carol Service was held in the College Chapel on 11 December, 1997. The volunteers who participated in the readings and recitations did so with interest and reverence, which added much to the solemnity of the occasion. For all matters concerning the Choir we are most grateful to Mrs M. Whittaker.

The Annual N.C.C. Inter-Platoon Junior Division Competition was held on 12 December, 1997. The Naval Wing was awarded the Hashman Memorial Shield for the Best N.C.C. Troop in the Junior Division. The Intermediate Trophy for the Best N.C.C. Troop (Senior Division) was won by Platoon No. 1 comprising of

Class XII. In the Inter-Wing Competition the Naval Wing was adjudged the best and will be awarded the Boardman Trophy this afternoon. Arvind and Ritesh Tandon were adjudged the Best N.C.C. Cadets in the Senior and Junior Divisions respectively and Rachit Seth was adjudged Best Scout.

The Annual Declamation Contest in Hindi was held on 14 August, 1997, and the Annual English Elocution Contest was held on 04 December, 1997. The prize winners of both contests will receive their awards this afternoon.

Special parades were held on Independence Day and Republic Day in which the Scouts, Cubs and N.C.C. Cadets of all three wings of the N.C.C. participated.

Mr D.R. Bansal, Divisional Forest Officer, Unnao, was Chief Guest on Independence Day. He took the salute and inspected the Parade after which he presided at a tree planting ceremony.

To celebrate the occasion in a special way an entertainment programme was organised later in the day in which students of the Junior, Middle and Senior School participated. It was greatly appreciated and we are thankful to all those who took part and those who took special pains to organise the event. Art, Quiz and Essay Competitions were also organised and the winners will receive their prizes this evening.

In the evening an Inter-School Football Tournament was organised. The College won the Final match which was played against St Fidelis' College. We are grateful to all the Principals of Colleges who permitted their boys to take part in the Tournament.

On Republic Day Mr Satyavrat Bansal, D.I.G. P.A.C., Lucknow was Chief Guest. He took the salute and inspected the Parade.

Each year a workshop on Career Counselling is held. It was conducted in November mainly for the students of Classes X to XII. We are grateful to Dr Amrita Das and her Faculty from the Institute of Career Studies, Lucknow, for their support and professional guidance. It is not compulsory for all students to attend the workshop but those who have done so have derived great benefit therefrom, particularly in making the correct choice of subjects for the development of their careers.

OTHER EVENTS

I am pleased to record that our boys participated enthusiastically in several competitions during the year and fared rather well. The College was represented by Wasim Zaidi of Class 8 B and Arjun Buxi of Class 7 B in the Bourne Vita Preliminary Quiz - held at St Agnes' Loreto Day School. The team emerged joint winners with Loreto Convent and proceeded to Bombay in August for the Quarter Final Round. Unfortunately, the team was eliminated from the competition at that stage.

Macfair 97, an All-India Mathematics and Computer Fair, organised by the City Montessori School, Mahanagar Branch was held from 8 - 11 August, 1997. The team comprising of Varun Chatterjee, Sharjeel Noor and Mayank Shivam won Second Prize in the Computer Quiz and Akash Banerjee also placed Second in the Turn-coat Debate.

COFAS 97, the Computer Fair and Seminar was hosted by the City Montessori School Station Road Branch from 19 - 21 September, 1997. In the College Section La Martiniere was represented by Ashish Agarwal and Aaditeshwar Seth who won First Prize in the Mathematics Quiz. Akash Banerjee and Abhishek Goel were declared Best Speaker for and against the Motion and the College placed First in the Debate Competition. Varun Chatterjee and Mayank Shivam placed Second in the Quiz and the team comprising Mark Yep, Vaibhav Gautam, Gaurav Gautam, Anubhav Watal and Dhananjai Jamwal placed Third in the Jingles Competition. In the School Section Aishwarya Raj Singh stood First in the Speech Competition. In addition a special prize was awarded to Akash Banerjee for participating in the Competition for three consecutive years.

Extravaganza 97 was a Competition organised by St Dominic Savio College from 3 to 9 November, 1997. Akash Banerjee won First Prize in the Extempore Debate Competition.

On 8 November, 1997, Akash Banerjee and Gautam Bajaj participated in the First Round of the Frank Anthony All-India Debate Competition and were adjudged Best Speaker for and against the motion respectively. La Martiniere College, Lucknow, was also declared the Best Team. Unfortunately, they were deprived of participating in the Semi-Final round held at New Delhi as information was received only on the day it was being held.

At Quanta 97, the International Science Olympiad, hosted by the City Montessori School, Chowk Branch from 25 - 28 November, 1997, Ashish Agarwal and Mayank Shivam won First Prize in the Science Quiz. Shashwat Khandelwal and Gaurav Misra, two members of the Science Club also won a Gold Consolation Medal for their preparation of a model showing the importance of non-conventional sources of energy in today's world.

Akash Banerjee was adjudged Best Debator and Varun Chatterjee won First Prize as the Best Actor in the Skit Contest at ICSQCC 97 the First International Convention on Students Quality Circles hosted by the City Montessori School from 18 to 20 December.

During the year there were several tournaments organised by the Old Boys. The College teams won the Past versus Present Football and Hockey Matches which were held on 12 September, 1997 and 4 February, 1998, respectively. The Past team won the Past versus Present Cricket Tournament held on Republic Day, 26 January, 1998.

We are grateful to all those who helped train the teams and congratulate the boys who won laurels.

Besides sports and co-curricular activities students are also encouraged to give of their time to helping the poor. Under the supervision of Mrs S.B. Hasan and Mrs S. Godin some of the boys distributed clothes, which had been collected from the students, to people in the slums. It is important never to forget our less fortunate brethren. A BBC Television crew, working for Channel 4. asked permission to film the College buildings for a television series entitled 'Stones of the Raj'. Permission to do so was granted and the producers paid the College Rs. 75,000/-. This will go towards the restoration of Constantia. The programme was telecast in August and has done much to promote interest in the Institution. Several people who saw the programme have visited the College and many others have written letters of commendation.

JUNIOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

A film and a talk on dental hygiene were conducted by Dr Sudhir Kapoor, Dr Tikku and Dr Mehrotra on 6 October, 1997. It was greatly beneficial to the children and we are thankful to the doctors for

giving of their time to instruct the young boys.

The Annual Elocution Contests in English and in Hindi were held on 8 November, 1998. The winners will receive their prizes this evening. Siddharth Agarwal of Class 3 B, Dhananjai Gaur of Class 4B and Sharad Saxena of Class 5 B represented the College in a Quiz Competition organised at the City Montessori School. The team placed Third.

On 29 January, 1998, a group of young actors called the Covenant Players performed short plays with moral themes. The students were also encouraged to participate. The entertainment was not only enjoyable for the children but it was educative as well.

On 14 February, 1998, the Junior School had a Project Display which was appreciated greatly by those who visited it. But perhaps, the highlight of the Junior School activities was the Variety Programme staged on 6 December, 1997. Every child in Junior School was encouraged to participate. An enormous stage was erected on the Sports Field and all parents were invited. Entire families came to watch the little ones and literally had a grand picnic. From reports that came back and from what was observed the show was an unqualified success. The credit is to be shared by all the Staff and the parents who co-operated so willingly, but the Mistress of Ceremonies, Mrs Sheila Simlai deserves a special word of praise.

During the course of the year the boys were taken to special movie shows arranged for the school. "Jingle all the Way", "The Lost World" and "Babe" were thoroughly enjoyed by the children. In addition two Bal Melas and a Christmas Party were organised for their entertainment. Judging from this report it is hardly surprising that we have received some complaints from the parents of young children that they do not like holidays.

Regular monthly visits to Prem Niwas, run by the Missionaries of Charity, are also organised for the Junior School students. They take medicine, clothes and toilet articles for the inmates. This has helped them become aware of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the support and guidance of the Trustees and Governors of the College in all matters concerning the welfare of La Martiniere and I am particularly thankful to those who are with us today.

Mrs Farida Abraham has recently taken over from Mrs Florence Keelor as the Lady Principal of the Girls' College. I have in the past acknowledged my gratitude to Mrs F. Keelor and I now thank Mrs Abraham for her help at all times especially in matters that concern us jointly.

I am most grateful to the Vice-Principal, the Second Assistant and Headmistress of the Junior School, the House Masters and the Bursar. The co-operation of every member of the Staff no matter of which category is highly valued and I am indebted for each one's contribution.

La Martiniere has many friends and well-wishers and I am grateful to them for their support and help at all times.

Life to a teacher holds no meaning without students. It is for them that I reserve my deepest gratitude and highest praise. I am thankful that we have parents who trust us with the lives of these young people. My prayer is that we shall never fail them.

Long live La Martiniere !

Mr Justice Brijesh Kumar, Senior Judge,
High Court, Lucknow Bench &
President,
Local Committee of Governors,
La Martiniere College,
Lucknow.

Dear Sir,

Given below is a draft of the vote of thanks to Mrs Keelor, which I undertook to prepare at the meeting yesterday.

"The Local Committee of Governors wishes to thank Mrs Florence Keelor for the part played by her in the progress and development of La Martiniere Girls' College, Lucknow, during her tenure as Principal for over twenty years. The Committee is appreciative of her varied talents and energy and respects her strength of character. Her indomitable courage and tremendous calibre as an administrator have maintained the College as one of the premier institutions for girls in the country.

On her retirement she will be leaving a void which it may be difficult to fill. Her commitment and devotion to the school and her dedication to those entrusted to her charge were her paramount concern. It is these qualities which will cause her to be greatly missed by all who have had the privilege of coming in contact with her. It is regrettable that she has desired to retire while she has yet much to offer, but she is wished a contented and peaceful retirement.

The Committee records its gratitude for her contribution to a great and glorious school."

Kindly let me know if you approve so that I can forward it to the Girls' College for inclusion in the minutes of the meeting.

A line in reply would be greatly appreciated.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

(E. deSouza)

Principal