

Q: Draw up a report of a debate held in your college on the following proposition:

‘In the opinion of the House, the dowry system should be legally abolished’.

Ans. A lively debate, on the proposition, ‘In the opinion of the House, the dowry system should be legally abolished’, was organised by the Students’ Union of Bhogeswari Phukanani College, at the Gandhi Memorial Hall, on Wednesday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2020. The Principal of the college, Mr. Manik Baruah, who graced the seat of the Speaker of the House, inaugurated the debate at 3 p.m. with his brief welcome address.

Inaugurating the function, the Speaker, Mr. Baruah said that the dowry system in ancient India was not a curse but a blessing for the newly married couple. It was introduced to help the newly wed out of their initial household and financial problems. Moreover, in some parts of India, it was the parents of the groom who had to pay dowry contrary to the most common practice. But the system, the Speaker held, had then assumed ugly proportions, and the recent reports of bride burning by the husband and the greedy in-laws gave a new urgency to the problem. It was therefore necessary to hold debates on the issue in order to find a solution to the besetting problem.

A special feature of the debate was that it drew participants from amongst the guardians apart from the Lecturers and students of the college. Those speaking in favour of the proposition argued vehemently that the dowry system could not be rooted out or even checked without some legal measures. Others arguing against the proposition asserted that even if there were laws banning the system, it might continue in some form or other. Hence, they asserted the need of women’s education and mass awareness, which, they believed, would do away with the problem and pave the way for a better social order.

Summing up the debate, the Speaker of the House, Mr. Baruah observed that the dowry system had outlived its utility and must be eliminated in whatever way – whether legally or through education and awareness. He then announced the names of the prize-winners and thanked all the participants as well as the audience who showed great interest in attending the debate.