

Ekushey for the World

OUR glorious Language Movement has earned us a special place in the history of mankind. We are the only nation to have fought for a mother-tongue. Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar and others put their lives on the line to protest an evil design of the Pakistani rulers more than 47 years back on February 21, 1952. The whole nation bled as these vibrant young men embraced martyrdom to press home our demands for recognition of Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan. They lost their lives but dispelled the sinister pall over their mother-tongue.

On the threshold of a new millennium, Unesco's adoption of a resolution to proclaim February 21 as the International Mother Language Day comes as a tribute from the international community to our glorious language movement. From now on, as per the resolution, February 21 will "be proclaimed International Mother Language Day throughout the world to commemorate the martyrs who sacrificed their lives on this very date in 1952." In other words, Amar Ekushey will be for the nations of the world, not only for us. Speakers of all languages on earth will pay tribute to those valiant souls who deemed their own lives inconsequential weighed against their mother-tongue. They will renew their vow, on the day to dedicate their lives for the honour of their mother-tongues as we do for ours.

The recognition, a matter of great pride and honour as it is, also calls for an introspection. It is time we revitalise our realisation that the Amar Ekushey is not only about the language, it is about the pride we take in it and the pride we take in being what we are, an independent nation of Bengalees. Have we been able to fully appreciate the significance of Amar Ekushey? Have we been able to really acknowledge the sacrifice of our language martyrs? It is time for realisation that freedom essentially comes along with graver responsibility.

Punish the Uniformed Sadists

NO sooner had we finished writing on the brutal murder of Dr Mosharruf and the ink on the paper was still wet, than a tragedy struck the family of a former banker Abdur Rab Chowdhury of South Mughdipara in the city. His 22-year-old young son Shamsuddin Jewel was the victim of a totally sadist attitude of a couple of policemen as he was drowned in the quagmire of filth of a sewage. His body was returned by fire service men after 28 hours, according to press reports.

When Jewel started for Kalyanpur in the evening of Monday on a rickshaw along with his friend Ripon, with some borrowed money from his beloved elder brother, had he ever thought that would be his last meeting with his family? When the rickshaw reached the South Kamalapur Government Primary School, four policemen, led by havilder Abul Bashar stopped the rickshaw and started conducting a body search in a most foul manner and reportedly mugged Ripon of Taka 60 which he had on his person. The constables alleged to have demanded Taka five hundred from Ripon. Obviously, Jewel was perplexed and afraid of the police assault on him. He jumped from the rickshaw and started running for safety followed on his heels by Havilder Bashar and constable Ajmeer. In the darkness Jewel slipped and fell into an under-construction sewage line deep and full with filth. The drowning young man begged for help as he could not swim. But Bashar and Ajmeer did not help him out of the water rather watched him go down and suffocate to death. When people nearby came to his rescue the constables not only warned them of dire consequences but even threatened to take them to task if anyone reported the incident to the proper authority.

Can we ask the home minister how long will the innocent citizens of this country will remain hostage at the hands of such uniformed rogues? When will the parents of Rubel, Mujibur, Jewel will get any justice? We urge the home minister to personally look into this sordid situation and not only bring the culprits to book but bring an end to this sort of state terrorism.

Ensure Security

WE once again proved that we really rear barbaric brutes among us. When the society tends to look forward economically and culturally to the next century, they act like the Middle-Age offenders to its distress. We fail to understand what level of sordid sickness can provoke hoodlums to throw acid on two girls, only because they refused to hand over money or other possessions. There has been many a story of vandalism, extremely atrocious in nature, but acid-throwing touches the nadir of the state of our law and order situation. What aggravates it more is that these crimes, in most cases, go unnoticed by the police. In what kind of a society do we live where even such heinous crimes are not addressed? At this juncture we are compelled to question the function of our law and order enforcers responsible for ensuring public security. It is sad but true that the police force is fast becoming a symbol of failed governance. We live in a society where we are, specially our sisters and daughters are not safe!

But blaming the police alone is not enough. We, as citizens, also have to bear the responsibility of what happens to our fellow citizens; we have to care and cure. To curb the rise in terrorism, the administration and the people have to stand together, tough and tempered against the odds, to work for a safe society. It is time the government had truly shown it worth to the society. In a sincere bid to improve law and order, we urge upon the government to immediately ponder over these matters of grave concern. It is the government's foremost duty to ensure the citizens a secured society.

THE Commonwealth has concluded its 4-day Summit in Durban (South Africa) from 12-15 November. The Summit is the last one in this century and obviously the leaders of the Commonwealth must have thought seriously how to revitalise this organisation as the next century approaches.

There is a view that the present structure and the way it is being run need to be overhauled. The organisation has no appreciable impact on the member-countries. A Pakistani government spokesman took an indifferent attitude when he was told that the Council of Commonwealth decided to suspend Pakistan because of the military coup. Why? Because he knew that the suspension or even expulsion from the organisation would have minimum impact, if any at all, on Pakistan. This demonstrates how less important is the Commonwealth.

Diversity is the hall mark of the Commonwealth as the leaders come from varied backgrounds, religious, political institutions and level of economic development. The attire of the leaders in the Summit amply reflect the diversity. This is undoubtedly the strength of the Commonwealth. The Queen summed it up when she said: "The extraordinary diversity of the summit is its unifying factor and the source of its richness and success."

There is a view that although diversity is a unique element, it is one of the causes of the weakness of the organisation. The larger is the number of members (54) of the organisation, the less is the chance of reaching a consensus in its decisions. Some argue that it is the diversity of the members — poor and rich, small and large and industrialised and agrarian — that impedes in advancing its new approach.

Revitalising the Commonwealth

by Harun ur Rashid

The Commonwealth leaders must realise that the existence of poverty, lack of education and man-made inequality of women in the society are pulling down the developing nations. Unless a new approach is adopted, the organisation will fail to achieve its potential. The choice before the Commonwealth appears to be stark.

Since 1991, two most important documents are in hand with the Commonwealth. One is the Harare Declaration (1991) and the other, the Edinburgh Declaration (1997). The former relates to democracy and the latter, with trade and business. Ironically, it is Zimbabwe whose capital is Harare is being accused of promoting authoritarian rule within the country. Democracy does not mean only periodic elections. It means to what extent the media and the freedom of opposition parties exist to operate in the country. Any attempt by the Commonwealth to monitor the practice of democracy in a member-country drew a sharp negative reaction from some of the develop-

ing member-countries. They do not wish to be policed by the Commonwealth. The other Declaration is to encourage promotion of business and trade within the Commonwealth. Trade and commerce must have a definite objective — poverty alleviation. So long poverty exists, democracy and liberalisation of trade will suffer. A benchmark for the activities of the Commonwealth is the alleviation of poverty of the people in the disadvantaged member-countries.

Globalisation is the answer, according to the industrialised nations, to promote business and commerce within the Commonwealth. Some argue that globalisation means abundant markets in developing countries for the multi-national companies to make good profits. Where does it leave the poor nations? With heavy foreign debts, depressed commodity prices, restricted accessibility of their commodities in external market and less direct foreign aid, these countries are suspicious of globalisation and its effects on them. It is chaste to learn that even on this

apparently promising frontier (globalisation) there appears to be nothing for the poor countries. Rather it has adversely affected them because they have to open their markets to the multi-nationals and the domestic products cannot compete with the foreign goods. They feel globalisation is to be greeted with less enthusiasm and more prudence. The Commonwealth's push for free trade and not fair trade is likely to be resisted by the disadvantaged members.

On these two fronts, it seems that the Commonwealth leaders might not have achieved any concrete results. There are many pious statements in the final Declaration about the goal and objectives of the organisation and unless there are specific targets, nothing is likely to materialise. The Jamaican Prime Minister Patterson touched a raw nerve when he said in his opening speech: "Why don't we set specific targets?"

Although the Commonwealth is carrying out silently good work in the areas of youth, education, drug-trafficking and women, hardly it has any impact on the people in the Commonwealth. The organisation appears to be seen as a classic example of old-style and old-boys political club. They get together and influential members work out what they thought the activities to be carried out. The poor countries feel that they are left out in the decision-making process.

One way to run the organisation, according to British Prime Minister, is to set up a few committees with the regional leaders to identify and resolve the socio-economic regional problems. The regional leaders will meet often, even via video-conferences to share their views. There is a view that the opinions of the young and the women should be taken into account in the process of participatory economic development. The experience of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is rich in some of the sectors and there could be more effective collaboration between the Commonwealth and the NGOs.

Another is the lack of participation by women at the Summit. Look at the Durban Summit. Bangladesh Prime Minister is the only female

head of the government among the leaders (47) attending the Summit. What does it indicate? It shows that the women who constitute almost 50 per cent of the Commonwealth's population and the backbone of the communities appear to have been completely sidelined and input on socio-economic development.

To rectify this situation, a view prevails that a council of distinguished and socially active women from the member-countries should be set up by the organisation to enable them to submit a report to the Summit as to how the poor members of the Commonwealth would achieve economic development from the grassroots level. The Commonwealth leaders must realise that the existence of poverty, lack of education and man-made inequality of women in the society is pulling down the developing nations. Unless a new approach is adopted, the organisation will fail to achieve its potential.

The choice before the Commonwealth appears to be stark. Either it moves forward in some fairly major ways or risks falling back into an irrelevant organisation. The tasks before the newly elected Secretary General are formidable and onerous. We wish him all the success.

The writer, a barrister, is former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.

Clinton for Turkey's Inclusion in EU

US and Turkey have been allies within NATO for the last half century. There has never been a little cloud in that relationship. Clinton appears determined to take that relationship to a much higher plane, writes Arshad-uz Zaman from Istanbul

AT the beginning of his five-day visit to Turkey US President Bill Clinton took a giant step forward in declaring the special nature of the relationship between the United States of America and Turkey. During his day-long programme Clinton pronounced the word "partner" half a dozen times while mentioning Turkey.

Bill Clinton was preceded by a day by his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea. Clinton arrived in the early hours of November 14 and was received by President Suleyman Demirel. The day's programme began with the laying of the wreath at the imposing mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey. Clinton in his half hour address to the Grand National Assembly compared Ataturk with George Washington.

The ceremony at the mausoleum was quickly followed by an impressive welcoming ceremony at the Cankaya Palace which was then followed by substantive talks. At the press conference following the talks President Clinton announced a credit of one million dollars from the Ex-Im Bank to be given to the recent earthquake victims, particularly small traders to help them start life anew. Clinton added "I shall not need Congress approval for the disbursement of the funds."

At the press conference Clinton repeatedly underlined the necessity of Turkey's entry into the European Union (EU). Indeed Clinton stated that he could not conceive of a Europe without Turkey. He pledged to campaign ceaselessly with the other members of EU for the entry of Turkey. This is sweet music in the ears of the Turks, who have been waiting for the green light from EU since Turkey originally filed her application

back in 1963. Although Bill Clinton did not tie up the membership question with a settlement of the knotty Cyprus dispute between Turkey and Greece, it became evident from his remarks that he fervently hoped for such an outcome. It may be recalled that the island of Cyprus, 80 kms south of Turkey, remains divided into Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot parts since 1974, when Turkish troops were sent to protect their kith and kin in northern Cyprus. Numerous efforts under the UN auspices have led to no result. Once again under US prodding southern Cyprus leader Klerides and northern Cyprus leader Rauf Denktas has decided to resume "indirect talks" under the auspices of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in New York on 3 December next.

On the Cyprus question the truly meaningful change is the recent wave of euphoria in the relations between the sworn enemies Turkey and Greece. This amazing development has taken place following the devastating earthquake of Turkey on 17 August last, which killed more than 30,000 and it brought an astonishing outpouring of aid and sympathy from Greece to Turkey. That has blossomed everywhere and especially in the cultural field. Turkey had another major earthquake on 12 November last and so far about 500 are reported dead and over 2300 injured. Greece has been among the first to send help once again.

In his press conference Bill Clinton underlined the fact that differences between the two rivals were small compared to the great benefit they could reap bilaterally and well as the EU, were they to cooperate. News was received that the Greek Prime Minister is due to arrive in Istanbul for the Summit of Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and will hold bilateral talks with the Turkish Prime Minister. Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced his participation at the Istanbul Summit. Indeed the OSCE Summit, which will be participated by 54 nations will include besides President Clinton, leaders of Major European powers. This is being hailed as the last great Summit of the century.

The press conference at the Cankaya palace jointly held by President Suleyman Demirel and Bill Clinton, provides an occasion to Demirel to underline the strategic location of his country. Indeed Turkey is the gateway to Eurasia including the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Middle East and has border with 13 states. In arguing in favour of Turkey's entry into the EU, President Clinton also stated that for Cyprus a bilateral federation was in his thoughts, the like of which was set up by the British, while granting the island independence in 1960. Much water has flowed since then and the division of the island has solidified. A negotiated settlement — and there is no other option — can at best be on the line of a confederation although for practical purposes a different name may be given to it.

The press conference was followed by questions and the most ticklish was one on torture addressed to President Demirel. In a brief answer Demirel admitted that "torture existed in Turkey but it was not a state policy". He added that whenever torture is reported the offender is caught and punished according to law. President Clinton praised the progress registered by Turkey in the twin front of human rights and democratisation and expressed the desire to see more progress on the "Freedom of expression"

front. President Clinton responding to another question stated that EU had much to gain by the inclusion of Turkey because it would "enrich the religious and cultural diversity". President Clinton underlined the fact that Turkey was an island of security in a sea full of troubles.

President Bill Clinton delivered a major address at a special session of the Grand National Assembly. Paying homage to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk President Clinton stated "If we could assemble here today it was because of Ataturk. We have been friends in the past and we shall always be friends in all adversities". This is bound to touch a sensitive chord because due to the devastating earthquakes followed by small earthquakes the nerves of the Turks are on edge. He held the parliamentarians that Ataturk caught the imagination of the Americans in the early twenties by his victory at the battlefield and sweeping reforms of the Turkish society.

The Grand National Assembly was jam-packed and sitting among the guests were Hillary and Chelsea. Turkish security along with CIA and other US agents offered a spectacle of total security surrounding Bill Clinton. A small number of demonstrators at the Kizilay Maidan, in the centre of Ankara, were quickly rounded up and removed from the scene.

President Bill Clinton has made the unusual gesture of coming to Turkey on a five-day visit. From his first day's activities it is evident that the target is no less than to have a special relationship with Turkey. US and Turkey have been allies within NATO for the last half century. There has never been a little cloud in that relationship. Clinton appears determined to take that relationship to a much higher plane.

To the Editor...

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

Where are we going? Nowhere!

Sir, We, the master's students of Jahangir Nagar University came to the campus about 5 years ago with a lot of dreams. But now all our dreams are shattered. Over the last 5 years, we have seen some ugly students and teachers politics. This is sometimes worse than student politics. We have seen a lot of favouritism and nepotism from most of our respected teachers. We have seen some first class students who cannot even write an English application. Even we have seen some rape incidents. There has been no justice for the victims. Actually, justice in many incidents was denied. We have seen even some rapists and killers supported by some of our teachers!! Our campus is now closed. It was not a serious movement for which the university should be closed. Now, we realise that we have wasted our youth in the last five years. I am appealing to the Chancellor of Jahangir Nagar University to open our University as soon as possible.

Riyad Hossain (Dipon) Dept. of Govt. & Politics Jahangir Nagar University Savar, Dhaka.

People should get their due importance

Sir, We welcome that the government has finally decided to build the conference centre for the NAM summit at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar instead of Os-

many Udyan. So the 11000 trees have been saved and it is a great relief for the concerned multi-

According to a report published in a leading Bangladeshi daily, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad declared at Sylhet Airport on November 6 '99 that they have decided to build the conference centre at some other place, leaving the Osmani Udyan alone because they do not want any controversy over Bangabandhu's name. Wouldn't it have been more appropriate if the Foreign Minister had said that the step has been taken to give importance to people's verdict and to honour their sentiments? May be it is out of the question to expect this sort of utterance in our country where people are being overlooked the most.

Nur Jahan Chittagong

Why no authorised parking spaces?

Sir, It is very surprising and strange that in the metropolitan city of Dhaka there are no approved, authorised and proper parking spaces for thousands of buses, trucks and rickshaws. As such, most of the vehicles are parked here and there indiscriminately and haphazardly. This is one of the main reasons that causing traffic jams in the city. DCC has built many mammoth supermarkets in Dhaka and has earned crores of taka but it has never come forward to build any parking spaces with a view to checking and control-

ling the traffic jams and to maintain discipline and order on the public roads.

We feel that no amount of construction of over-bridges, fly-overs and foot-over-bridges would help ease and regulate the disorderly and rowdy road traffic in Dhaka unless and until authorised parking spaces are made.

Would the ministry of LGRD, DCC and DMP kindly look into the matter?

O H Kabir 6 Hare Street, Wari Dhaka-1203

Kamlapur railway station

Sir, It is very unfortunate to note that the Kamlapur Railway Station is in a terrible condition. If one visits there in daytime, he will obviously get the feeling of entering a criminal zone, where he would be encountered by frauds, beggars or varieties of salesman, starting from selling cigarettes, chocolates to food stalls and even drugs. I was appalled to see a boy of about 12 years old; selling drugs openly in cigarette packets, and nobody is concerned about it. The railway station doesn't give the appearance of a real station as in daytime most of the station's seats are filled up either by beggars or by the local people and not the passengers. During night time, the station gives a dead look as homeless people especially beggars and rickshawpullers occupy the entire station making its floor their bed.

The station has also been a shelter for people involved in illegal activities for a long time. Even prostitutes of different ages can easily be located inside the station. It seems like the local people and the criminals get to utilise this place better than the passengers do. The passengers are the one who suffers

most, as the facilities are not at all up to the standard. One has to be very careful with one's luggage, as stealing of luggages has become very common. The few public toilets which are situated in the station, always gives an unpleasant and disgusting smell and the station's seats are always dirty. It seems like the caretaker has forgotten to clean these places at least for a year. The sadest thing about the station is that the people sitting on the ticket counter are so unmindful that they cannot give sufficient information. Even the trains do not arrive or depart in time.

Is this the way a railway station of a capital city should look like?

Rizwan Hussain Jabbar Dhanmondi Tutorial

'No-smoke area'

Sir, The UN offices advertise vacancies for filling up various posts with the post script that the UN premises were 'no-smoke' areas. While candidates who smoke are not debarred from applying for any post, still some see in this notice some trace of discrimination. For one thing, a UN staff who is a smoker has to go out of the boundary of the UN premise (on to the street) to smoke and return, quite a number of times during a working day. Since smoking is not illegal, or a criminal act, why some smoking areas should not be kept reserved for smoking? According to a scientific research study carried out in the US (as published in the newspapers a few years back), it would take a passive smoker 175 years to contract cancer. Why the non-smoker are shown preferential treatment within the UN premises?

AZ Dhaka

Martyr Mystery

by Mohammad Badrul Ahsan

We have created a tradition of condensing mystery by trying to obscure the mysteries in our politics. And the result is that we have failed to collectively agree on our martyrs since the independence of this country.

IT must be the only thing common between heaven and earth. If the gods of heaven move in mysterious ways, so do the demi-gods of politics on earth. Mystery is the magic mask of the unknowable, the twilight zone between knowledge and ignorance where mind roams in the maze of subjectivities. The death of a housewife entered that maze on November 7 in a shooting during a shootout between police and picketers. The government claimed she was killed by an opposition gunman and the opposition counterclaimed she was gunned down by the police. While the politicians stonewalled each other over whose name was on the bullet that killed her, Rina Begum's death remained in suspended animation between mockery and mourning.

The issue here is not that one more death has been shuffled into the quagmire of labyrinthine politics. It is understood that one may not be as fortunate in death as in life by being in the right place at the right time. Nur Hossain was killed by police during political demonstration and became a national hero. The same significance may not be attributed to the death of a housewife who enjoyed politics as a spectator sport and fell victim to its recreational hazard. But the question that comes to mind is why did this particular death draw so much controversy when two other lives were lost on the same day?

Perhaps the answer is known to all. The politicians like to go for the solar plexus of popular sensibility to deal the heaviest blow to their opponents. The death of a mother in police firing gives political advantage over that of two youths, because the images of a grieving husband and a weeping child conjure a more tenable sense of loss. Believe it or not, there is a marketing aspect even to martyrdom: it will not generate political interest unless one dies for the right cause. Whether Rina Begum died in the hands of picketer or police, her death, at best, will be remembered as a cause itself. For the first time in our history of political demonstration, the police fired rubber bullets aiming at the head, throat and chest of an opposition leader who was protesting her death.

In all likelihood, Rina Begum will have died in vain, because her killing will neither be elevated to martyrdom nor escalated to a fair trial. How many of us know that Russian terrorism was born in 1887 in the hands of a very young girl named Vera Zassulchik who had shot down General Repov, the Governor of St Petersburg? How often do we remember the young Bosnian who had assassinated the archduke Francis Ferdinand in Serbia, which sparked off the First World War? Martyrs make history more often than history cares to mark them. In this country, we don't know the names of many martyrs who died for its freedom. We have recently uncovered a burial ground in Mirpur where many of them perished without a trace!

In fact, it is pathetic that one should die in political remembrance without recognition or recompense. Etymologically, the word martyr is derived from Greek meaning a witness. During the first three centuries, Christian martyrs became known as "witnesses in blood" to the faith, often in circumstances of great heroism. Initially, martyrs were those who had suffered without losing their lives, but soon came to mean persons who had met their death. That is not to say that political deaths are never shrouded in mystery. John Kennedy was shot in Texas, as a result of god knows what con-

spiracy. Although Lee Harvey Oswald was charged with the murder, the world till doesn't know whose hands were behind the killing. Robert Kennedy was assassinated in the kitchen of a restaurant while campaigning for US presidency. Sirhan Bisara Sirhan, a Jordanian-American was convicted for his murder, although its reason remained a mystery ever since. Similarly, the world doesn't know why Martin Luther King was assassinated in the balcony of a Memphis motel. Jimmy Hoffa, the powerful boss of AFL-CIO in USA and an enemy of the Kennedys, disappeared after his release from jail, not to be seen again. The deaths of General Zia and General Manzur are still what Winston Churchill said about Russia, "... a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

But their deaths made them larger-than-life, their sacrifices being compensated by the sacrament of public worship. In the ancient days, martyrs were raised to greatness in recognition of their contribution. It was held a special privilege to receive the martyr's benediction, to kiss his chains, and to visit him in prison or to converse with him. The martyrs could give certificates to sinners requesting bishops to pardon the culprits in virtue of the merits of martyrdom. The bodies of martyrs as well as their clothes, books, and other objects, which they had possessed, were honored as relics and their tombs were visited for the purpose of asking their intercession. What happened to Rina Begum was a travesty wrapped inside a tragedy. Her death has been reduced to the lightness of a forensic rise as the bullet, which killed her, drew more attention than her death!

Walter Bagehot, English economist and essayist, argued that royalty shouldn't be examined too much because its mystery was its life. He then cautioned that it will not let in daylight upon magic. Politics' magic after all, where intricate elements of human instincts dance to the mystical power of charismatic leadership. It's often difficult to explain how the leader leads as it's to explain why the follower follows. But if one of them has fallen in that delicate exchange, the least the other can do is uphold the mystery.

The government undermined that mystery last week when it blamed the death of Rina Begum on the opposition and rushed to bury her corpse amidst tight security. It didn't realize that a mystery grows if one tries to obscure it. When the father of this nation and his family members were killed in a coup, their dead bodies were hurriedly buried amidst tight security. When the four leaders were killed inside Dhaka Central Jail, their bodies were also buried in the similar manner. General Zia was also killed and buried in obscurity. General Zia's body was buried in an unmarked grave in Chittagong, but later brought to Dhaka for a formal burial.

We have created a tradition of condensing mystery by trying to obscure the mysteries in our politics. And the result is that we have failed to collectively agree on our martyrs since the independence of this country. If we are divided on such issues as who is the father of this nation or whether Ziaur Rahman was a statesman or a stuntman, it is because we have lost our way in the darkness of a terrible mass. We would not understand if the rest of the nation doesn't realize it, but not the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition who have lost their dear ones in the throbbing thickness of these mysteries! The author is a banker.