In more developed countries, schools have the back-up of a whole range of services that just do not exist here and which means that you cannot 'crash' help to children when they are still young enough for it to make a real difference. I have had small children brought to me for admission who were obviously deeply disturbed. The parents of one such child told me, "Oh, just put him in the corner of the classroom! He will be all right."

I am sorry to be cynical but I fear that some girls are under pressure to become doctors because their parents would like to live in that reflected glory and hope that some young man may think the same. I think we need to research the number of women doctors, trained in Bangladesh, who never practice or rather, never practice effectively - after marriage. Surely, we have to question their motives - or rather, the motives of their parents - for their training at all..

If gifted young people could go into one of the *alternative* ways of serving the nation in the field of health, they might be much more likely to get a job and much more likely to be interested enough in their work to continue it in later life. Thus the wastage could be staunched of 'qualified' doctors. Their salaries may well be lower but the job satisfaction and service to the nation would undoubtedly be much higher. I can hear the cynical laughter of some readers at this - but isn't it strange that Bangladeshis cling both to the belief that doctors are worthy of respect and the assumption that they only do it for the money, which is not respectable at all? Both cannot be true!

Even in some of these alternative therapies, there are some strange things going on. I met a young physiotherapist who told me proudly what he was and I congratulated him. I then asked him where he had practiced and he did not answer the question but told me that he was now training other physiotherapists. "Yes, but where do you actually *practice* as a physiotherapist?" I persisted. He looked awkward and admitted, "I have helped a little at a clinic." I gave up. It was obvious that the heresy was alive and well that all you need to get honour and status - and the entirely false reputation for knowing what you are doing - is to go through a course of study at some place that offers such a facility and pass out with a piece of paper! Anyone who is *truly* professional, however, knows that it takes years and years of faithfully practicing one's profession before one starts being really useful! There are many issues in health care that need to be addressed reforming attitudes and values and systems that have been corrupted. Those of us who are beavering away in such fields are kept going by the wonderful people and organizations who *have* caught the vision of what their profession *should* be about. It is a privilege to work with them. They are invariably humble enough to be continually learning from the practice of their profession in real life situations.

I pray that such people and organizations may be given the authority to check that all those who want to be trained in health care have a true understanding of what it means to be a practitioner and of the various alternatives available. By the grace of God, they will also put in place the *procedures* that enable those who *do* have such a vocation to get the training and experience that will enable them to meet and respond properly to their patients at their point of need. So you want to be a doctor? Check it out!

(The writer has requested to remain anonymous)

School... Goodbye!!



Gunjan Barua

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women are merely players:
They have their exits and entrances
(William Shakespeare)

Man loves to turn back from the present to the past again and again. The present may be good but the past seems to be golden. Nothing is more pleasant to him than to recollect the memories of past. Life itself is like a drama stage, according to Shakespeare! We enter the stage with a dramatic mood, act our part and then exit after that. But during our act we catch some parts that seem to us to be the most attractive part. The school life is one such act. It may appear that I am recalling the memories of my school after many years, but in reality, I am still a school student! But after spending 12 years in schools my school life is drawing to an end!

While writing this some memories knocked on my mind. I remember I was just five years old when I went to my primary school with my parents. It was a lot of fun. We used to draw pictures, sing songs and play games. There I remember was also a big library and a picture gallery. After my primary education I got admitted into my present school Chittagong collegiate school. After getting admitted into the school I used to think that I am now a grown up and have become the big brother of the school! But I got my lesson after some days from the real big brothers of the school. The memory of that experience is not something worth recollecting about!

Besides our education we used to participate in some extra-curricular activities including debates and recitation. The annual sports day is one of the most attractive parts of our school affairs. And the most amusing portion of this event is the "Act as you like" contest. The students dressed themselves like famous characters. But I remember one of our friends acted like our class teacher. He got praise from both our friends and the teachers. But I really don't know how well that teacher received it!

Once I got into our city war symmetry. On one epitaph it was written that, "Thoughts go back to happy days, life goes but memory stays." I think the resident of that grave had written that message for the people who like to be nostalgic like me. After some days we will leave the school and will become busy in making our own career. But the memories we are leaving that will remain in the epitaph of our heart and will become nostalgic reminding us of those days.

Student of Chittagong Collegiate School (Class 10)