



Introduction...

EVER since the publication of the initial number of the *SAVITAR*, that of the year '94-'95, its readers and friends generally have concurred in this one opinion, that *Savitar* in sound is pleasingly harmonious, but in meaning provokingly enigmatical. Hence this short account of its christening. When the plan for publishing an annual was complete and

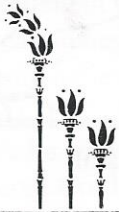
put into execution, the editors began casting about for a suitable name—one that would carry with it associated significance and thereby express in a degree the full intent and purpose of the proposed volume. After considerable research and cogitation *Savitar* was selected because we liked the size and sound of the word, and because its associations bore with them, as we thought, appropriately suggestive meanings.

Savitar is the sun god of the Rig-Veda. The word contains the root *su*, meaning to drive or stimulate. *Savitar*, and its alternate in mythology, *surya*, denote the splendor of the luminary and its irresistible energy. *Savitar* is the god who sees all things and notes all the good and evil deeds of men. His power is irresistible. Age can not touch him, and nothing can withstand his will. To him are addressed the verses, "Holiest of All the Veda:"

"May the golden-eyed Savitar come hither,
Shining forth he rises from the lap of the dawn,
Praised by singers; He, my god, Savitar,
Stepped forth and never missed his place.
He steps forth, the splendor of the sky, the wide-
seeing, far-shining, the shining wanderer."

—Rig-Veda, vii, 65.

H. H. R.



A PEEP INTO THE PAST presents a picture of Columbia more than a hundred years ago. Sanskrit was already being taught here then. The name of Professor James Blackwell figures prominently as a powerful professor of the time. He also functioned as president of the university for some time.

He was both a teacher and an administrator. Officially, he was a professor of Semitic and modern languages and chairman of the faculty. Several students were studying Sanskrit under his good guidance.

I believe Professor Blackwell was the European scholar-sage whose sagacious thought brought Savitar to this university. Blackwell was a specialist in Latin and Greek. He could have drawn from any classical Indo-European language, such as Greek or Latin. So why did he choose to draw from India and not from Europe? Why Sanskrit?

Sir William Jones of Great Britain, one of the greatest orientalisists the world has ever seen, had anticipated this question and answered it two hundred years ago:

OM in MO Timeline compiled by Betty D. Robins OM in MO

WWII triggers the development of "area studies" programs. An India section was established with the Office of Strategic Services.

1941

Fulbright exchange programs begin. Noel Gist, Howard Hirt and Arthur Robins were among the first MU awardees.

1946

U.S. Agency for International Development awards the MU College of Agriculture a contract to help farmers in Bihar, Orissa, Assam and W. Bengal.

1955

Visiting Asian Professors Program starts. MU is one of 8 participants.

1957