

# **GARDE, The Great Mentor**

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As a student in MBM Engineering College, every morning entering the college, one would glimpse a tall person standing erect with hands inter-laced on his chest, on the road, besides the morning prayer ground. It used to be better to opt to line up behind the other college students assembled for prayer than try to ignore and cross over past the taller shadow of this person cast on the road as if showing a road closure. V.G. Garde, the name of this person, one can never forget. He was the revered Principal of our college. While praying with bowed head though I never heard him reciting the prayer himself, yet his mere presence was more than a feeling of his being with us and that too to engineer faith of God in us.

Parents and principals sometimes appear unkind & cruel when they use hard words & harsh methods to shape and sharpen the raw content in their chums & pupils. They give them lessons as would engrave long lasting impressions including self realized emotions, well in time. So also Shri Garde would cast the tender clay brought to him into a proper mould. Closing college gates exactly at 5 minutes to 8.00 AM during examination days, is such an instance. Students reaching even a few seconds before 8.00 AM even though otherwise being in time, found the entry gates locked up. They had to then line up before Principal Garde in his chamber and to none else and with nothing to speak. At 8.10 AM a simple word "GO" would then let them be off to rush and run to their examination halls. This spelled a sufficient click to them learn how to take examination, for rest of their life.

I myself experienced such an episode, but then leading to have learnt never to miss a bus thereafter.

Principal Garde's ways were all sturdy. Students confined to class rooms because the would be vacant periods in absence of the teachers were not allowed to be as such by deploying other teachers. Student Union elections showed no posters, no slogans and no shouting. Elections thus used to be silent affair. Orderly laid and equipped labs and library reflected his vision and fore-sighted endeavor.

Principal Garde devoted most of his lecture period without speaking more than a few words by explaining the text of lecture mostly by drawing figures on the blackboard. Principal Garde thus established into our mind the principle, "Drawing is the language of Engineering".

Principal Garde's tenure was thus a paradigm of his sincere, ardent and useful services done to the college for establishing high ethical and technical standards. Though now he is with the God Almighty yet he still occupies some of our mind & heart. Let us complete his job by raising the college into a center of excellence rather than leave it toil & mourn as a mere faculty of engineering.