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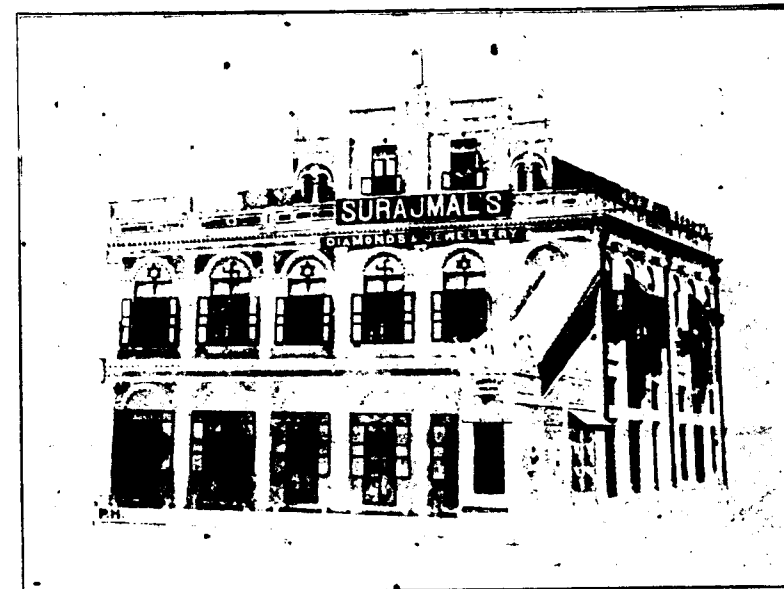
VOL. 3

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MAY 1928

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MAY

No. 8

No

CONTENTS

1. **Two Potent Factors In Our Religion**
By S. Sivasuri
2. **Stoicism (A poem)**
By Priya Ranjan Sen, M. A.
3. **Simple As Saint Francis**
By T. L. Vaswani 437
4. **Contemporary French Literature**
By L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar, M. A., B. L. 440
5. **Browning, The Practical Mystic**
By K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar, B. A., B. L. 444
6. **Spiritual Ardour**
By John Norris 447
7. **Progress Of Scouting**
By K. R. R. Sastry M. A., B. L. 448
8. **India (A Poem)**
By Duncan Greenlees 450
9. **The Conqueror: a Short Story**
By M. S. Ranganathan. 451
10. **Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's Poetry**
By S. Sivaraman, B. A., L. T. 454
11. **An Adventure In an Automobile**
By M. Sivarama Menon, B. A. 459
12. **The Coconut Tree in the Tradition of the Sinhalese**
By C. Nagavathe 462
13. **The Charm of Courtallam**
By V. H. Sundaram, B. A. 466
14. **Reviews and Notices** 469
15. **The Way of The World.** 471



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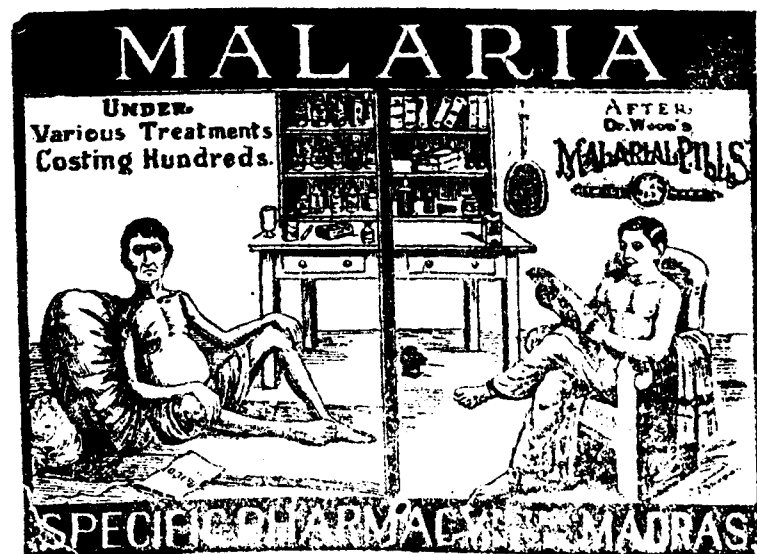
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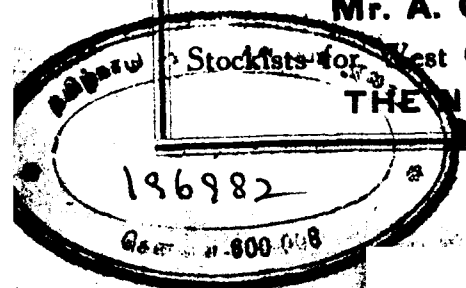


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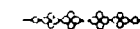


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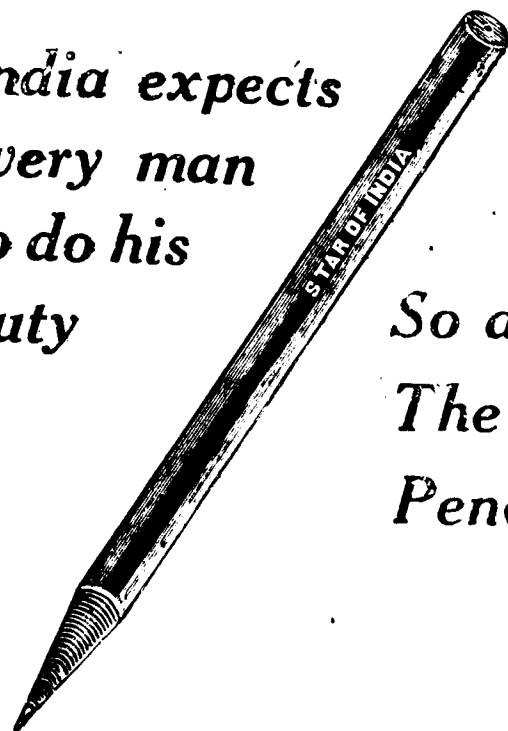
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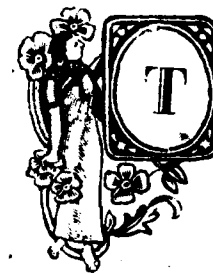
Vol. III

MAY 1928

No. 8

TWO POTENT FACTORS IN OUR RELIGION

BY S. SIVASURI



THE policy of drift is the most widely accepted policy in India. Already a stronghold of dreamy fatalism, everything about her seems to drift, a mere plaything of chance. The Varsity man prepares for the drift even while pouring over books and begins scanning the "wanted" columns of advertisement. Anything between the Deputy Superintendent of Police to the poor census clerk who has a long wait of ten years between his jobs, fits in with the policy of drift. As with individuals so with society. Even our Hindu society is drifting to an unknown haven. It is not static as in Moghul times when like a scared tortoise it drew all its limbs under its shell and bore with patience the onslaught of a strange faith. It was ever dynamic and even during the rule of bigoted Aurangzeb, the way Sivaji risked his life to attend the Bhajana of Saint Ramdas attests to the dormant vitality of the Hindu Soul. If Hinduism is dynamic to-day, what are the forces which help it to be so and what is the direction of the resultant? One can risk a guess.

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The Arya Samaj is a factor to be reckoned in the future of our religion. Their cry of "back to the pristine glory of Vedic days" may sound absurd to the modern ear; the deification of the Vedas as God-sent scripts intended for centuries gone and to be, may raise the smile of modern men accustomed to see the law of Gravity itself overthrown by an Epstein; its aggressive attitude towards the tenets of Islam may confound the political dreamers of the day; the dogmatic assertions of Satyarth Prakash may drive the orthodox to profound despair. Still the Samaj has got a function to perform and it does it admirably. The spirit of Dayanand lives in his followers. They have arrested the blind march of men into the arms of a foreign culture. They have trimmed the old lamp of our past so that it may light the dim future. They have forced us to own our past glories and feel proud of them at a time when our heads were getting giddy with the wine of western civilised life. All thanks to Swami Dayanand for starting his Samaj at a crucial moment in the life of our religion. So much for the past. Fearless men abound in the Samaj and their zeal for work is patent everywhere in North India. The Kanya Vidyalayas, Dalit uddar mandals, widow marriage societies and Shudh associations that strew the important centres of Upper India indicate the present direction of their activities. They are reforming our society by giving refuge within their fold to people who have transgressed the orthodox law, setting forth new interpretations to texts which lend authority to things like "Early marriage". The Arya Samaj mandir in Calcutta is not a mere place of common prayer; weekly discussions and lectures are held; inter-caste marriages now and again and widow marriages oftener, get celebrated there. While Bramha Samaj has become an effete association of top-hatted respectability, the Arya Samaj is doing substantial work among the masses and is winning its way to the front.

But there is another phase of its life which at present is trying to grow beyond proportion and brings it into conflict with other creeds. Swami Dayanand allows his followers to preach and proselytise and the vedic missions of Northern India are missionary depots for reclaiming lost sheep. The past history of our religion does not warrant conversion. Being

numerous ourselves, we never attempted to swell our numbers by encouraging conversion. We never had foolish tenets emanating from prophets to inspire us with the zeal that is now more or less the exclusive property of the Islamic missionaries. We lived and let others live. But since the British period of Indian History, events are happening which justify Dayanand's break with the past. Wholesale conversions have thinned our numbers. The moplah-war showed us that conservatism is only a sandy waste in which frightened philistines can bury their heads like ostriches and compose themselves in imagined seclusion. The Samajists have done wonderful work in Malabar and everybody who has the welfare of Hindu culture at heart must give them whole-hearted support.

But there is a *but* in all this. The aggressive type of Hinduism which Dayanand founded, has like everything that has pep behind it, over-reached itself in one direction. The anti-Islamic bent that it has recently developed is a matter to be deplored. There is no need to borrow fanaticism from Islam and spend all powder and shot in showing up the crudities of the Koran.

The mutual mud-slinging indulged by vernacular presses in N. India, their endless litigations, the anxiety to phrase a new crime in the penal code so as to make contempt of creed or religion an offence, and the silly resolution of the Hindu Maha-Sabha to request the census authorities to classify 'aboriginees' as 'Hindus'—these are only the outward symptoms of a warped mentality. No doubt Islam grows in numbers through proselytism and extensive exercise of limited polygamy and grant of social status to the lower orders of the Hindu caste-system who form the so called "Depressed" and "suppressed" classes. Missionary propaganda whether Christian or Islamic rarely succeed by sheer appeal to reason or intellect. Hinduism has enough philosophy in it to despise the preachings of other creeds but its weaknesses have been sedulously exploited. The rigidity of the caste system is a weak link in its armour. The upper castes kept the lower in intellectual starvation withholding from them the accumulated wealth of scriptural lore. The result: the crude name of the fakir and the Jesuit becomes thrice welcome to his soul. The

street-corner harangues of Padres are feasts to the starving intellect and the man succumbs. The inability of the caste-system to take back within its fold the foolish sheep that might have strayed out of it, has also been an asset to the missionary. It required no effort on his part to keep guard over his acquisitions. He was free to extend his activities to fresh fields. The Arya Samaj has perceived these weak links and it has every right to make them strong. But why go about the whole world bursting with sudden love for the depressed classes and parading it on all public occasions? Why print in bold types news of reconversions into Hinduism and showing up insignificant achievements, just as an irritant to the mussalman fanatic? Why rush to save the Ex-Holkar and Miss Miller from becoming Mohamadans stretching the sanctity of Hindu marriage rites to ridiculous limits? Bona-fide widow remarriages must have some sort of religious sanction but how many of them, seen celebrated in Calcutta are mere lustful connections seeking refuge from the ban of Hindu Society is a moot point. Hinduism will not be the worse if such people leave its fold. In fact the Samaj is over-shooting its mark. How one wishes that there is another Shradhananda to keep it alive in the right direction and renovate Swami Dayanand's original ideals!

The different mutts that decorate the religious centres of India have a say in the future trend of Hinduism. There are Sankarachars at Kumbakonam, Sringeri, Puri and Dwaraka. There are Vaishnavite Gurus in Tinnevely, Ahobilam, Navadwip, Brindaban and elsewhere. They still command immense influence with the masses and bring with them a religious atmosphere wherever they go. But what are they actually doing? Beyond travelling in their jurisdictions once in a decade or two, with huge paraphernalia and getting their feet or on their behalf the feet of God's image worshipped with silver and gold coins, they leave no trace of religious influence. It is true their chelas become suddenly orthodox and symbols of piety like the tuft and profuse caste-marks become very evident where they tour. But the inward mentality of the people remains unaltered. The brave beginnings of a reformed life fade away like dew at morn and the desert face of their aimless existence again comes to view. Now they forget their Sandhya

and God, and become agnostics till some providential mishap surprises them into retracing their steps, which is difficult or leaves them groping in the dark of their own making. The erstwhile agnostic develops a sudden thirst for an intense religious life with disastrous result. His reason abdicates, and his emotions run amuck. He dances and weeps in temples and experiences the joy that should rightly ensue from service and work. Or he swings to the other extreme. He denies God and hugs worldly pleasures closer still. These are human tragedies that happen everyday when the Gurus cease touring and get back to their old haunts to meditate. It is no doubt true a big Personality is required to leave an indelible impress on peoples' minds but it is also true that an organisation with systematic ramifications can effect to some extent what a Personality can do. A band of mediocre but sincere preachers working under the direction of mutt-adhipatees may like the Parivrajakas of old turn out to be so many torches of Hindu culture whence each Hindu home can light its lamp and live in light. They will din into people's ears the call for a better life, advise pursuit after wholesome ideals and encourage a life of disciplined existence. If their emoluments are not dependant on the charity of their audience, there cannot be any doubt that people will at least pay them half the homage they pay to their Gurus and remain better chelas throughout their lives. We will not then thin in numbers. The soil will not then exist for foreign creeds to take root in. After all religion is the only valued possession of India and the few that are interested in her come to her only for learning it.

The mutts must realise this and hasten for the protection. They must become centres of Hindu culture, change their methods of work according to the needs of their chela-folk, and justify their existence. Mighty Shankara stormed Buddhism with his philosophy and galvanised the Hindu mind and his greatness does not come home to us unless we go to Pasupathinath in Nepal, Kedarnath in Gharwal, and Amarnath in Kashmir and peer over the Tibetan Border across the Himalayas. These are bastions erected by him for the protection of the Hindu culture. Will not his successors in the mutts realise his greatness and do likewise something Shankara-like? Let them keep his ideal and aspire after it and there will be no dearth of proper men.

"civilised" Babu but a simple child of the Mother. "Shall I teach you Vedanta?" says Totepura to the Saint. "I don't know", he answers, "let me ask the Mother." He goes to the Temple, speaks to God the Mother, and then returns with the reply:—"Yes; teach me; Mother permits." His face was so child-like. His countenance was lit up with the smile of a child. In him was no crookedness of the "clever," no guile of the "civilised". "God", he said, "is to be reached through child-like faith and gentleness". Many revered him as their Guru. But he said:—"I am only a child of the Mother. The word "Guru" pricks me as a thorn."

Simple, transparent, he had not the egoism of the so-called "great". In his heart was tenderness of the child. "As potato or brinjal, when boiled, becomes tender" he said, "so a man becomes tender when he attains to perfection; he loses all egoism." Am I wrong in saying the perfect man is the perfect child? "Of such", said Jesus, "is the Kingdom of Heaven". It is the Kingdom of Little Ones. A little before Ramakrishna passed away, he began, like a child, to play with flowers. "The child-mood", he said, "is upon me: I behold the Lord within and without". Pandit Ishvar Chandra Vidya-sagar was a great scholar. Ramakrishna went to see him. On the way, Ramakrishna prayed to God:—"Mother! I am going to see a scholar. But you know Mother! I am absolutely devoid of learning." Ramakrishna was always so simple, so artless! The talk between the Pandit and the Saint was stimulating. The Pandit put learned questions. How beautiful, how truly philosophical the answers of the Saint! Wisdom is profounder than learning.

A German theologian, Ruemmer, rightly urged that the "Great Secret of the Saints" was humility. It was the secret of Ramakrishna. He spoke of his "simplicity and illiteracy". His "illiteracy" made all the more transparent his illuminated heart. His simplicity was the simplicity of St. Francis. Like Krishna, Ramakrishna loved children. Like Jesus, Ramakrishna blessed them. Like Francis, Ramakrishna communed with birds and nature. He had the non-attachment of a child, the gentleness of a child, the sweet unconsciousness of a child, the loving naturalness of a child, the utter unconviction of a child.

And in his heart was such tender love for the poor. He would eat of the leavings of beggars in the temple. He would sweep, as a scavenger, the dirtiest place. One day he was travelling with a rich disciple, Mathura Babu, to Benares. On the way they halted for a day in a village. Ramakrishna saw the poor people there. His heart was filled with sadness. He said to his disciple:—"You are a steward of the Mother. Feed these poor people to-day and give a piece of cloth to every one." The disciple calculated and hesitated. It would cost so much. Ramakrishna wept and said:—"I must not go to Benares. Let me stay with the poor people here." He went and sat among them. The disciple was moved. He fed the poor. He ordered out cloth for them. And he and Ramakrishna resumed their journey to Benares.

The greatest need of modern civilisation is, SIMPLICITY. So much of our life is a dance of trivialities and superficialities of pleasures and sensations,—a dance of death. The child-like spirit is absent. Calculation-consciousness is growing. The disease of being "prominent" and "great" is spreading. The Creed of Ambition is popular with the nation's Youth. Therefore I plead with them for a new study of the life and message of Ramakrishna. Standing one day on the roof of the Dakshinেশ্বর Temple as the bells rang and the conch-shells sounded for evening worship, Ramakrishna in the strength of his simplicity cried at the top of his voice:—"Where are you, my boys? Come unto me! O ye that are young, I cannot bear to live without you." In that voice was the anguish of a holy heart. Is the Voice stilled? It rings, I know, in some hearts. May it ring in million hearts! And may there be some who may so aspire and so live to-day that in the years of their manhood they may, Vivekananda-like, take Ramakrishna's message to the nations! The days are darkening. India is in agony. An eminent man spoke some time ago of "bankruptcy of Science." Many there be to-day who feel sad at the bankruptcy of "Civilisation." The world's greatest need is,—GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS. India, the first born of the nations of the morn, India has for ages taught the truth that the soul of civilisation is,—God. To this Ancient message of India, Ramakrishna calls you, youngmen! "Come unto me," he says, "I cannot bear to live without you." How many will hearken to the Message? How many will live it? How many will take it into the politics and life of the Nation? One thing I know. The problems of to-day will not be solved without the light of the Ancient Wisdom that sees in all religions the One Eternal Self and in all nations the One Spirit of Divine Humanity.

CONTEMPORARY FRENCH LITERATURE *



BY L. V. RAMASWAMI AIYAR M. A., B. L.

It has been rightly said that in France literature reflects life and culture much more intimately than in other European countries. Says Ernst Robert Curtius, a sympathetic student of French literature: "We can—perhaps—sufficiently grasp the genius of England from the ethico-political perspective: Empire, church, sects, "games", social structure etc. The typical features of English race-genius, however, are not to be found in Shakespeare or Keats; but we cannot understand France politically or socially, much less from the purely human standpoint, if we leave out literature, if we do not visualise its central unifying function in all spheres of French national life and if we do not read French classics and read them just as Frenchmen themselves do." Literature in France is civilisation and hence a national possession treasured by the intellectual; the politician and the peasant alike. More politicians and public men are engaged in literary activities in France than in any other European country. A literary *penchant* is a recommendation rather than a disqualification for public fame and political greatness. Few politicians in England combine public work with literary activities. The Morley-type of politician—the exception in England—is the rule in France. Birkenhead's literary activities have provoked resentment in England. In France, on the contrary, politicians write novels, and novelists conduct political propaganda. The English view is that the literary man, as an artist, has no business at all with politics or even with contemporary social problems; if he dabbles in them, he is so much the less an artist. Wells and Galsworthy are every day being blamed for lowering the artistic quality of their works through their treatment of topical problems. On the contrary, from the time of Louis XIV literature and public life have in France remained bound together in intimate union, the one mirroring, and being mirrored by, the other. In the last century Chateaubriand, Lamartine and Hugo were, in one way or other connected

* *Panoramas des Litteratures Contemporaines; Litterature Francaise* par Bernard Kra, Editeur, Paris (19'7)

with public or governmental life. Today, Claudel is a poet and an ambassador—a dualism of function which provokes the ridicule only of the Anglo-Saxon cartoonist. Maurras and Barres who have attained literary celebrity are public men. Rolland and Barbusse discuss the burning questions of the hour without any fear of damage or injury to the artistic worth of their works.

The average Frenchman is proud of his literature and of his literary heritage; classicism commands, and will continue to command, respectful admiration, in France. England may have a great Shakespeare, other countries may have other great literary men but the Frenchman is still proud of his literary tradition. "Enough of Shakespeare, enough of Ibsen, enough of Tolstoy, enough of Maeterlinck—Let's get back to France, *Que diable!*" Look at the very legitimate pride that tingles in the following sentences of Sainte-Beuve, referring to the classical humanist tradition of France: "Descended from the Romans, or at least infants by adoption of the Latin race, we have to welcome, understand and never to desert the heritage of these masters and of these illustrious forefathers. This tradition consists not merely in the *ensemble* of memorable works which we have collected together in our libraries for study; this tradition has influenced in a great measure our laws, our institutions, our manners, our education, our customs and our origins."

Order, precision, clarity and amiability are the qualities that give French literature an individual *timbre* of its own. These have been treasured up in France through the course of centuries. The Romanticist reaction of the 19th century did not fight against these qualities but merely set up a reaction against the mechanisation of these noble qualities which, be it noted, at once mark the writings of the Pleiade, of the grand *ecrivains* of the 19th century, of the best Romanticists of the 19th century and of the modernists of today. Romain Rolland than whom a more individualistic writer does not exist in France, execrates haziness, vagueness and exaggeration. Of all the 19th century Romanticists, Hugo alone indulged in swollen rhetoric even while creating epics of the Empire and of the Revolution and seeing great visions of the future and of humanity. "No

French author," says Curtins, "ever forgets that classical humanism is a racial inheritance and even when he does not think about it, it exerts a contributory influence on him."

An excellent account of the tendencies and personalities of present-day French literature has been brought out by the Paris publisher Kra in the "Panoramas of contemporary Literature" series. Within about two hundred pages, the author has, with remarkable clarity and unique conciseness, described the central personalities round whom present-day literary activities have grouped themselves in France.

French writers, as the author of the book tells us, have always excelled in prose. This is only to be expected from the great *flaire* they have for logic and precision. Rivarol, the aphorist seems to have remarked: "Prose wins an empire for a language, poetry is only a luxury." Baudelaire's testimony is more direct: "Lyricism is only an accident with us; its creation has been slow and laborious." French poetry, naturally, differs from Anglo-Saxon poetry in that logic, precision and clarity rigorously control the French writers' flights of imagination and prevent them from winging off to the regions of metaphysics. While pantheism and transcendentalism are dear to the poetic minds of Germany, the most individualistic of French writers does not get beyond the region of the logical and clear analysis of the mind and its moods.

These facts are briefly referred to in the introductory chapters of Fay's book which then proceeds to discuss a few important personalities of modern times. Following upon Romanticism, a crop of new literary movements arose in France: the Paranassians, the intellectualists, the naturalists, the symbolists, the Cubists and the Dadaists. The tendencies of prose and of verse are of course carefully to be distinguished, but each one of these movements may be roughly described as almost exclusively one of poetry or almost exclusively one of prose.

Intellectual certitude and scientific exactness were sought to be imported into life and literature by Renan and Taine about the middle of last century. "Science and Humanism offer a sufficient religious fund," was the view of Renan. Taine

applied this canon to literature while Renan carried it to religion and sociology. All works of art, according to Taine, are essentially material products and so they should be judged in close relation to the influence of environment, of *milieu* and of race.

Naturalism, popularised by Zola, Huysmans and Manpassant, was also based on the influence of scientific certitude. Every novel in the opinion of this school, should be thought out as a scientific experience. It should furnish a commentary on social life just in the same manner as Biology explains physical life. Despite their talent and their genius, says Fay, the naturalists have failed to inspire the tastes of upper French classes who are the custodians of literature. "Naturalism was only a brief episode in the history of French literature," says Fay,—a remark with which many students of French may be inclined to disagree.

Cubism and Dadaism were only eccentric literary fashions of post-war times; but the symbolists of a previous day have been the most powerful and influential in the sphere of modern French poetry. Symbolism is the most individualistic of all recent modern literary movements. The chief traits of this school of writers amongst whom were the celebrated adventurers Rimbaud and Verlaine have been described as being formed of an aspiration which is essentially primordial and vague, of the voluptuousness of the unknown and the pleasure of abandoning oneself to the joy which neither our spirit nor our body could measure but which nevertheless dominates us all.

Chapters are devoted in Fay's book to Paul Bourget, Anatole France, Maurice Barres, Marcel Proust, Paul Valéry, and André Gide. A perusal of this book carries conviction to the reader's mind that the French literature of to-day, as the author says, is like a strange Kaleidoscope. "If we were to draw a literary map of France just as we draw maps of dialects, races or agricultural productions, we would see in it all the colours of the rainbow." We should only add that all this multi-coloured variety is not without an underlying unity of its own and that this unity is furnished by the characteristic qualities of French racial heritage.

BROWNING, THE PRACTICAL MYSTIC

BY K. S. RAMASWAMY SASTRIAR, B. A., B. L.



ORD Rosebury once said well: "The mystic who is also a man of the world and of intelligence is the most powerful person it is possible to find in human life." Browning was such a mystic even as Tagore is in India today. Lord Morley pointed out a similar remarkable fact in his biography of Cromwell and showed how the higher type of believers in the doctrine of predestination showed not supineness of will-power but a wonderfully moulding and assertive and creative power of the will.

Browning has a clear vision of divine immanence and knows and proclaims the divinity of the human soul.

"Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whatever you may believe.
.....To know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without." (Paracelsus)

"God is seen God

In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod"
His clear and triumphant affirmation of the supremacy of the human spirit and of its kinship with God is one of the most admirable traits of his forceful genius.

Browning has realised and taught how potential divinity has manifested and evolved itself in the universe. He says:

"Thus He dwells in all,
From life's minute beginnings, up at last
To Man—the consummation of this scheme
Of being the completion of this sphere
Of life; whose attributes had here and there
Been scattered o'er the visible world before,
Asking to be combined, dim fragments meant
To be united in some wondrous whole,

BROWNING, THE PRACTICAL MYSTIC 445

Imperfect qualities throughout creation,
Suggesting some one creature yet to make,
Some point where all those scattered rays should meet
Convergent in the faculties of man.

.....
Hints and previsions of which faculties
Are strewn confusedly everywhere about
The inferior natures, and all lead up higher,
All shape out dimly the superior race,
The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false
And man appears at last" (Paracelsus)

He sketches out also the line of human evolution when he says in the same great poem:

"For these things tend still upward, progress's
The law of life, Man is not man as yet.
.....
When all Mankind alike is perfected,
Equal in full-blown power, then, not till then,
I say, begins man's general infancy."
"Leave Time to dogs and apes!
Man has Forever!" (A Grammarian's Funeral)

This magnificent vision of the orient of man was always an abiding presence in his soul and is an abiding grace in his poems.

The root of his robust optimism is now clear. The world has a divine source and a divine immanence and a divine destiny. Man's limitations and failures are but the rungs on the ladder of self-realisation and self-manifestation. "On the earth the broken arcs; in the heavens, a perfect round!"

(Abt Vogler)

Failures are a discipline leading to Perfection.

"There shall never be one lost Good! What was, shall live as before,—

The Evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound."

His belief in the immortality of the soul is thus a natural and necessary corollary of his central doctrine. What is divine and eternal cannot die. Further, our very failures and

imperfections and our sense of them attest the certainty of our successful realisation of perfection through constant and continued endeavour.

"Then life is to wake, not sleep,
Rise and not rest, but press
From Earth's level, where blindly creep
Things perfected more or less
To the heaven's height, far and steep."

Browning shows to us that the body also has a share in the fulness of life. Legitimate enjoyment in the right spirit is the best liberator of the soul through the disciplines of self-restrained joy,

"All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul."
(*Rabbi Ben Ezra*)

But the soul is higher than the body and
We must through the body to the soul.
"From first to last of lodging I was I,
And not at all the place that harboured me."
(*Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangan*).

Thus the true function of the body is not to imprison and enmesh the soul or to lure it away from its goal but to be the means of its highest self-realisation in knowledge and love of God.

He shows further that wisdom and love must go hand in hand. Paracelsus, the follower of the path of knowledge, says there to Aprile, the follower of the oath of Devotion:

"I, too, have sought to know as thou to love,
Excluding love as thou refused its knowledge,
Are we not halves of one dissevered World,
Whom this strange chance unites once more?
Past? never;

Till thou the Lover, know, and I, the knower,
Love; until both are saved." (*Paracelsus*)

All the discards and battles among the faiths of the world have been due to over-emphasis of works or knowledge or love. Browning shows how the harmony of duty and knowledge and love is the only means of our spiritual salvation.

In short, his teaching is the fulfilment of man in love—the realisation of the God of love in everything.

"There is no good in life but love—but Love!
What else looks good, is some shade flung from Love!
Love gilds it, gives it work" (*In a Balcony*)

"For life, with all its yields of joy and woe
And hope and Fear.....
To just our chance of the prize of learning Love"
(*A Death in the desert*)

"I shall behold thee face to face
O God, and in Thy light retrace
How, in all I loved Thee, still wast Thou"
(*Cristmas Eve*)

"To the All-great were the All-loving too!"
(*An Epistle of Karshish*)

Thus the main practical teaching of Browning is the need for endeavour for growth in spiritual realisation through sacrifice—the test being inner gain and not outer success. This must proceed till it leads us to God—Love and God—realisation, when guess is crowned with vision, doctrine becomes truth, yearning becomes fulfilment, and imperfection becomes perfection.

"Correct the portrait by the lining face,
Man's God by Gods' God in the mind of man."
(*The Ring and the Book*)

SPIRITUAL ARDOUR

"Men may wrangle for ever about abstruse theories and sooner dispute themselves out of charity than into truth; but our wills have at present a larger capacity than our understandings, and our love to God may be very flaming and seraphic when after the greatest elevation and soar of thought, our conceptions of Him are but faint and shadowy ... Other gifts and graces, Whether intellectual or moral, come indeed from Heaven; but they often leave us upon earth. Love only elevates us up thither, and is able to unite us to God. 'Tis this indeed that gives us the strictest union with Him in this life; by faith we live upon God, by obedience we live to Him, but 'tis by love alone that we live in Him...

"'Tis not the sophistry of cold logicians that shall work me out of the belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the sweetest entertainment of life, the passionate love of God. Whatever some men may pretend who are strangers to all the affectionate heats of religion, and therefore make philosophy a plea for their indevotion, and extinguish all holy ardours with a syllogism, yet I am firmly persuaded that our love of God may be not only passionate, but even wonderfully so, and passing the love of women".

—John Norris.

PROGRESS OF SCOUTING

—Need for introspection—



BY K. R. R. SASTRY M. A., B. L.

SCOUTING has come to stay in this country; and the temporary annual grant of Rs. 10000 in the Madras Presidency, the appointment of two full-time organizing Secretaries, and the tours of the Provincial Chief Scout and the Provincial Commissioner have done not a little to popularise the movement. Can any one still opine that scouting is as popular as it should be with the masses and the leaders of the Presidency?

SCOUTING NOT POPULAR—WHY?

With the experience as a Scouter in charge of a Rover Troop for over two years and the responsibility of a discriminating critic, one has to remark that with the added Governmental support, *the movement has not yet secured the approval of the political workers of our country.* The transitional stage through which India is passing is the parent of many a want of understanding, among which perhaps, this is one. Nowhere has Sir Robert Baden Powell said that a righteous cause as winning the freedom of one's country through legitimate means, should not be the burning passion with the youth of a dependency. While such an ideal should ever be held aloft by the rising generation, all are agreed that an *active* participation in politics is not the realm of immature youth.

Other causes which make scouting positively unwelcome at certain specified localities veer round the *character* of the Scout-master. That the drill-master belongs to the species of the Tamil Pandit and Sanskrit Munshi in our High Schools deserves to be remembered when certain Head Masters in their wisdom leave scouting to the drill-sergeant. *The higher the status of the Scout-master in the school, the greater are the possibilities of good scouting.* If the scout-master were to misuse his position in a petty Taluq Board Election, if an influential scouter were to use the dull among his scouts for his physical comforts, surely the knowing public are bound to take such scouting at 90% discount.

If the names of a few scouts are mentioned loosely, that scout-master may take it that such a troop will have to die unmourned, unwept, and unsung.

ARE SCOUT-TROOPS FOR MERE DISPLAY?

The question seems to have risen up after a particular incident in a forward District, *as to the propriety of welcoming every boss with a guard of honour.* Surely the founder would never have intended the cream of the youth of a country to be used to further the material interests of the scouter. Unless the visitor be *an officer in the scout world*, the scout troop should not be used for "guard of honour". Certainly, distinguished visitors and superiors can witness the scout-display but they are no more entitled to be welcomed with the guard of honour than any other lay visitor, literate or illiterate. It were good if the Provincial Association gives such a ruling in the matter.

SCOUTING AND PARENTS.

Has scouting been properly appreciated by the parents? Is there sufficient vernacular literature in the country to popularise it? Have the *heroes from our history*, been adequately tapped for the purpose? Has an *Indian setting* been given to the movement? All honour to the Honorary Scout Commissioner of India who has succeeded in including "*service to the country*" in the Promise. The above-mentioned questions are pressing for an answer?

SCOUTING AND SCHOOLS.

Has scouting been as actively helped as it should be by the Heads of institutions? The relation between assistants and head-masters has not been everywhere very cordial; some head-masters are jealous of a rising assistant who works zealously as a scouter, and not unoften have I heard specific complaints from some assistants that their Head-masters are lukewarm in their support of this humanitarian movement. That the better a teacher is for his having undergone scouting should be realized by old head-masters; and a combination of *tact* with zeal will very often enable an assistant to bring round indifferent head-masters to his views.

SCOUTING AND DONATIONS.

Many a parent often takes the scouts as "*sepoys living on donations*". The rules of the Association are perfectly clear; and

the speech of Mr. Hall I. C. S. (Madura) against a donation from the District Board to an essentially *voluntary* movement, is quite welcome. The more a scout learns through his hobbies and skill to earn his way honourably, the greater will be the prestige of the movement.

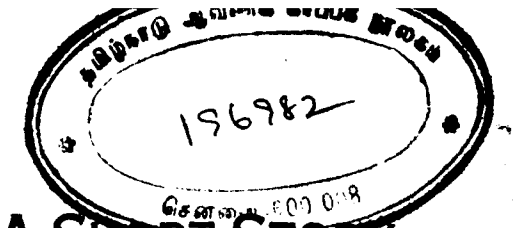
Scouting which has "Caught on" should be made *to stay* with us. If this great movement can be properly run as a real *training in citizenship*, if the scout-master will take to his work with a religious faith that is expected of us in sacred shrines, if scouting can be conducted as a truly *Indian* institution, if this movement is *actively* helped by heads of institutions, and if scouts will ever hold aloft the banner of *self-reliance*, then, and then only can the movement *stay* in critical south.

—:o:—

INDIA

O Rama's hero sons, from snowy peak
Of far Kailasa to the turquoise seas
That wash the isle of Lanka, are you then
Fallen to such a poverty of soul
You cannot rise again?
Awake, take up your strength, and seek
With joyous confidence the Goal
That Honour shows you. Seize
The hour of destiny, rise and advance
Enrolled as warriors to free
Your ravished land. On eastern mountains see
The flaming stars of dawn; the night
Is almost spent; the paradisaic light
Of early morn is near; the daily dance
Of sunbeam on the temple pools and gates
Rich-carved with many statues is begun.
How long in needled chains will you endure
The bitter taunt of women and the sneer
Of low-born conqueror? Lo, the Sun
Of Freedom leaps upon the hills,—it waits
No longer in the grayish caverns of the dawn.
Run forth to greet it; in the morning clear
Your chains will vanish if you be but pure
In the justice of your Cause. Then, shorn
Of its woman-weakness, hand in hand
Shall company strong Gods your sacred land.

Duncan Greenlees.



THE CONQUEROR: A SHORT STORY

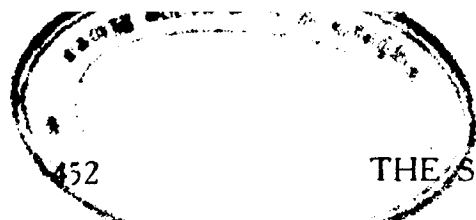
BY M. S. RANGANATHAN

Farewell, sweet Revenge!
I needs must part from thee;
Angels sweeter call to me,
Though through rugged paths.



AGERLY he awaited her sight. The midday fury of the sun had spent out and an exhilarating warmth had succeeded. Roses seemed to blush and modestly hang back from the gentle kisses of the evening breeze. The peaceful homeliness that pervaded the scene overcame Vijaya, and a sweet longing softly stole over him. He came, a little more, out into the open, straining his eyes in the direction of the house. Suddenly with a muffled oath, he sank back into his former retreat.

Blind to his surroundings Vijaya gazed stupidly into vacancy with tearless eyes. His sorrow was too great for tears, his despair too deep for utterance. His mind was in one great tumult. Countless conflicting thoughts passed through it rapidly. In bitter contrast to his present state, recollections of his joyous youth crowded his mind. He had been extremely happy, had passed many a moment of ineffable joy with his adored Leela, his playmate from childhood, the pride of his heart, and the apple in his eye. But adversity, like the snake in Adam's Paradise, had crept into their spotless life. His charity had gone too far. Left in his teens the master of vast riches, he had spent almost extravagantly in giving to others. Cash on hand being exhausted, he had borrowed blindly, to help many a struggling poet and starving bard. His creditors had grown clamorous all on a sudden, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he had kept himself away from the Prison-house. He had been forced to sell all his estates to pay off the debts and had been finally reduced to penury. But none had known of his destitution except his one friend, Sundar, whom he had loved above all others, save only Leela. Sundar had stood by him throughout his misfortune, and had been to him even as the shade in the scalding sun, to the footsore traveller.



For the sake of Leela, Vijaya had been prepared to endure all and sacrifice his all. Loath to sully her honour, lower her position devoiding her of her luxurious comforts, and force her to stint in money-matters, he had fled the country. To keep up his own family honour he had, with the help of Sundar, managed to keep afloat a rumour to the effect that he had been waylaid, robbed, and murdered, by a set of Thugs, whilst going on a pilgrimage to Kasi. The truth had been kept away even from Leela, who in time had come to think of him as dead, like all others.

Meanwhile, out in a strange land, he had toiled doggedly, cheered by the image of Leela. The unconquerable hope of being joined to his adored angel had sweetened his relentless work. And at last, after seven long years of herculean labour, he had amassed enough wealth to live decently with his Leela. Having laboriously gathered the fruits, he had returned home to taste it. But alas, God willed it not! The fruit was cruelly snatched from his hand, very near his mouth.

On the very day of his return, he had rushed with an yearning heart to agreeably surprise his Leela, but by the grim irony of fate, had been surprised instead. Hoping to hold her close to his heart at last, he had witnessed another embracing her. What he saw in the garden path that led from the house, had struck home deep into the inmost recesses of his heart and been engraved on his mind as on rock, for eternity. The scene glared before his mind's eye, and out of the utter confusion that filled his mind, this one picture stood out, clear and vivid—his lovely Leela arm-in-arm with Sundar! the man he had considered his best friend, to whom he had secretly entrusted the care of his dearest Leela!

That friend had failed in his trust! He had proved weak and false, and had carried off his best jewel, his precious jewel, the jewel that was to him more than his own life! His angel had turned out to be but an erring mortal! The realization was too much for Vijaya. It had come as a stupendous blow, when he was least prepared. Indeed, for whom will it not be so? To have one's golden idols shattered, to live to see one's sole, and heart-to-heart, friend prove false, to see one's angelised

sweet-heart in another's bosom and that other, the treacherous friend! To feel that the seven long years of misery and inhuman toil had been lived in vain, idle hope! Is this not enough to strike any man stark mad?

That hour of tormenting and bitter thoughts, appeared to Vijaya as ages and ages of tearing pain. At last, mastering his feelings by an almost superhuman effort, he rose, a strange lustre in his eyes, and a calm determination written large over all his features, and slowly walked towards the still lingering couple.

Peace, in the atmosphere had gone. The wind waxed strong and hissed among the branches of the Asoka. The sun was fairly on the way to set. His crimson rays lit up the whole garden into one fiery redness. Ahead, it seemed, that the bloody waters of the River of Fate, were breaking into froth and wailings among the dark rocks. The blood-red water of the river seemed to be flowing in torrents, through meandering paths, flooding its banks at every turn.

Like an avenging angel, clothed in the redness of the sun, appeared Vijaya to Sundar. Sundar cowed down before his cold, penetrating gaze that scorched like eyes of fire. Leela instantly knew him. She gasped and whispering under her breath 'Vijayam!', fainted into the arms of the bewildered Sundar.

A moment Vijaya stood regarding his lost-love. Gently he bent over and lightly kissed her marble cheeks. With a dignified mein he tore off his clothes, and burned them before Sundar's eyes. Scattering the ashes in the wind, he exclaimed slowly "Tell her", "it was but an illusion", and turning back plunged into the growing darkness.



MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU'S POETRY

BY S. SIVARAMAN, B. A. L. T.,

"The great dawn breaks, the mournful night is past,
From her deep age-long sleep she wakes at last!"



CENTURIES of invasions and wars made our ancient land, which had once been in the full blossom of life, droop and lose its colour and fragrance. The self-consciousness that makes a land hold its head high and display its own strength was humbled by long subjection or insecurity. The wine of joy which can course through every vein of a country, which can make the little man great and the great man greater, and which can infuse vigour into all the arts of peace, was scarcely felt nationwide, though here and there a great soul drunk with the nectar of a Higher World and a Higher life poured forth into immortal song and delighted his own province. The whole country, however, seldom beat with life as a single organism.

But Peace with its olive branch and the contact with a great nation of the West have brought their own blessings. We have had leisure to look within ourselves into the bygone past, when we were a mighty and progressive people shining in a world that was grovelling in darkness all around, and to peep out into the far West where younger nations are holding revels and pushing their standards farther and farther into the kingdoms of Nature and Man. So has a sacred thirst to rouse ourselves and become once more a great nation possessed us. So have architects arisen, bent on building a Greater India on a plan that shall combine whatever is best in our own ancient land where the Sun rises and whatever is best in the lands where he sets. The names of those builders are many, and they are being written in letters of gold; and they are swelling as fast as the floods of June in the broad rivers of India's plains.

In this sweet labour the women have not lagged behind. Though in the gloomy age of India's history women were ignored and kept in soul-killing bonds, yet, thanks to the new dawn, the divinity of Woman is being recognised slowly yet

surely, as once it was recognized in the golden ages of antiquity in our own soil. We have again entered into the threshold of a kingdom where Woman extends her helping hand to Man and lends him the Fire and the Yearning to achieve. The Genius of Time is tearing asunder the bonds of women and gathering them to the call of his bugle which is mighty as the conch of Arjun on the battle-field of Kurukshetra.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is one of the greatest among that illustrious array. Her part has been to sing at the Festival of the Birth of Greater India and she has performed it in most melodious numbers. Her poetry, published in three volumes entitled "The Golden Threshold", "The Bird of Time," and "The Broken Wing", inspire every son of Mother India whether he follows the Avatar Krishna or the Prophet Mahomed or the Saviour Jesus, whether he dwells in the land of the rapid Indus or the broad-bosomed Ganges or the modest, blushing Cauveri.

In his introduction to "The Bird of Time", Mr. Edmund Gosse says how Sarojini Chattopadhyay's earliest poems were a mere imitation of English models without individuality and repeated Anglo-Saxon sentiment in an Anglo-Saxon setting. He adds how he advised her to try to portray the heart of her own country and to catch the tunes of the hills and plains of her own Eastern land and offer them to the world. Honour and thanks to him who pointed out the right path, for rich indeed is the harvest she has brought home.

Mrs. Sarojini's poetry does indeed unfold the heart of India. She sings of the palanquin-bearers who are gay and proud of the spotless bride above their shoulders and "bear her along like a pearl on a string," of the wandering singers, who pass ever singing, whose lays are of "happy and simple and sorrowful things," and to whom "the voice of the wind is the voice of their fate," of the Indian gypsy "who drinks of life at Time's forgotten source; of Indian weavers who weave now the robes of a new-born child, now the marriage-veils of a queen, and now a dead man's funeral shroud, and of the coromandel fishers who, in their own simple way, have realized the Hindu perception of the Oneness of the Universe and the Hindu ever-present feeling of God and shout,

"The sea is our mother, the cloud is our brother,
the waves are our comrades all.
What though we toss at the fall of the sun
where the hand of the Sea-God drives?
He who holds the storm by the hair will hide
in his breast our lives."

In a "harvest hymn" the worship of Surya, Varuna, and the Earth by the farmers is described with perfect sympathy, and one feels how remote the true spirit of such worship is from crude and superstitious forms of Poly-theism. The closing stanza admirably harmonizes the worship of Many with the worship of One:

"Lord of the Universe, Lord of our being,
Father eternal, ineffable Om!
Thou art the Seed and the Scythe of our harvests,
Thou art our Hands and our Heart and our Home.
We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute,
Grant us thy succour, thy counsel, thy care."

The poem on Sutte gives expression to the Indian wife's utter loneliness when her husband is parted and her unwillingness to survive him.

"Life of my life, Death's bitter sword
Hath severed us like a broken word,
Rent us in twain who are but one...
Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone?"

The poem, "Damayanti to Nala in the hour of exile" admirably brings out the devotion of the Indian woman for her husband and makes us understand the renunciation of a Sita and a Draupadi, in whose eyes the loss of kingdom and home had shorn none of the glory on the brow of their lords. Says Damayanti,

"O King, thy Kingdom who from thee can wrest?
What fate shall dare uncrown thee from this breast,
O God—born lover, whom my love doth gird
And armour with impregnable delight
Of Hope's triumphant keem flame—carven sword?"

In the poem "To a Buddha seated on a Lotus," she ends with what every true Indian heart yearns after, the attainment to the Lotus Throne of the Lord. The "Song of Radha the Milkmaid," "The Flute-Player of Brindaban", the "Hymn to Indra, the Lord of Rain", "Lakshmi, the Lotus born", "Kali the Mother," give a very sympathetic picture of the Hindu Religion. "Kali the Mother", has in addition, a dramatic beauty of its own.

great poet gives voice to the aspirations of the people amidst whom he or she lives, and Mrs. Sarojini does so. She gives utterance to the love of the motherland with which the hearts of young and old throb in every part of the country. She also proclaims the gospel of brotherhood. She calls to the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian and the Parsi to realize that they are all sons and daughters of one Mother and that they are all kin. She trumpets to them to achieve that Unity through service, the service of Mother India. Her poems, "To India" and "Awake" are an eager imploration to the Mother to wake and an impassioned declaration of service and sacrifice in her cause. "The gift of India" commemorates the charity of the motherland and her offering of blood in the fields of France. The poem on "Imperial Delhi" pays a tribute to the greatness of that city from prehistoric times and exclaims how it still remains a proud symbol of the country's greatness.

Further, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's poetry reveals a deep appreciation of Islamic culture, which is a vital Sadhana for the realization of Brother-hood. The "Ode to H. H. The Nizam of Hyderabad" contains many tokens of admiration of the great Islamic civilization. The "Imam Bara" describes the sad procession from which breaks the wild cry of pain, "Ali! Hassan! Hussain!". The "Prayer of Islam" is a sweet and simple poem in praise of God, with some of the Arabic names of the Creator woven into the lines. The poem shows how little the great religions of the world differ in essence from one another. One realizes how all are seeking One Father and how silly it is to quarrel about the paths.

A lyric poetess who has shared so intensely the feelings and aspirations of her country could not help expressing her own experience of love. Many indeed are the poems of love she has written, and they are all melodious and full of lyric passion. Her loving and marriage were romantic and more like to that in the West than to the usual marriage of a Hindu girl, yet her poetry reveals a devotion to her lover and worship of him which is peculiarly Hindu and which is shared by every Hindu wife.

O Love! my foolish soul and sense
Have lost all vision save of you,
My sacred fount of sustenance

From which my spirit drinks anew
Sorrow and solace, hope and power
From life to life and hour to hour.

Not only did humanity, her country, and her lover lay claim to her poetic gift, but Nature too came in for hers. Mrs. Sarojini is a lover of nature, especially nature in the Spring time. There are no less than ten songs of the Spring-time in the "Bird of Time" and no less than six in the "Broken wing." In "Ecstasy" she breaks out,

"Shall we in the midst of life's exquisite chorus
Remember our grief
O heart, when the rapturous season is o'er us
Of blossom and leaf?
Their joy from the birds and the streams let us borrow
O heart! let us sing
The years are before us for weeping and sorrow.....
To-day it is spring!"

In "The Call of Spring" she invites the children to enjoy the Spring time, for

"O'er hill-side and valley, through garden and grove
Such exquisite anthems are ringing
Where rapturous bulbul and maina and dove
Their carols of welcome are singing."

After reading her poetry, one feels as if he has heard the maina and the passionate koel sing in March woods and seen the crimson gulmohurs and jasmine sprays and ivory lilies unfold before his eyes.

Thus does Mrs. Sarojini fulfil her poetic mission. She has endeavoured to enter into the hearts of the common Indian folk and portray to the world the simple beauty of their lives. She has caught the ideals which actuate the manhood and womanhood of India and given expression to them in the sweeter harmony of poetry. She has proclaimed the brotherhood of Hindu and Mussalman and Christian and dreamed of a Greater India. She has revealed the beauty of the Indian earth and sky and made us love its flowers and woods and birds. She has, in a word, dedicated her lyre to the service of Mother India.

May God grant that many more women of India rise to the poetic eminence of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu!



AN ADVENTURE IN AN AUTOMOBILE

BY

M. SIVARAMA MENON, B. A.



GETTING down from a rather overcrowded railway train at P—I gave my ticket to the stiff-necked official standing at the gate and forced my way out. In a moment with that unerring intuition which characterizes the community,

half a dozen bus-conductors pounced upon me pulling me this way and that; and for some time I was frankly apprehensive that they might tear me limb by limb. In such a situation however it is impossible to oblige more than one at a time, and so I followed one of my captors after shaking myself free from the grip of the other gentlemen whose disappointment would have manifested itself in a Niagra of abuse against myself and the lucky conductor had not the laws of decency forbidden them from doing so. I was hastily conducted to a rather tidy-looking four-wheeler and invited to take my seat by the side of the chauffeur who beamed upon me with an air of understanding as I settled down on the cushioned seat with a sigh of profound relief. But imagine my dismay when I suddenly realised that my suit-case was missing and that it was taken from me a few minutes back by one of my too obliging conductor-friends and carried to another vehicle. On hearing the news the chauffeur was frankly sympathetic and he instantly sent his assistant to get back my suit-case. Meanwhile I made a rapid survey of my environments with the result that I realised that the car, tolerably decent-looking from outside, was really a rickety, rotten assemblage of decayed and decrepit parts. While in a flash there arose in my memory the well-known line of Shakespeare that "All that glisters is not gold," my sometime-silent friend the chauffeur treated me to the best possible specimen of motor-car slang which I ever had the privilege of hearing. "The car is a Chevrolet" (he pronounced it chavaralet) he began, "the strongest and the fleetest of the great automobile family," and then he entered heart and soul into a passionate panegyric on his beloved car which was wound up with the energetic and profound remark that hare-brained

millionaires who spend 40,000 on a Rolls Royce would do well to go in for Chevrolet cars which were by far the best of the four-wheel fraternity

He had barely finished when I felt myself lifted into space by a stab of pain under me. The involuntary start made my head strike rather violently against one of the iron bars by my side. I was instantly cognisant of the fact that I had unceremoniously seated myself upon a prosperous colony of respectable bugs who had, for some years, been the permanent occupants of the car and were thus perfectly justified in chastising all persons who had the impudence to intrude upon their domestic felicity. I have ever felt a warm admiration for, and a deep sympathy with these tiny gentlemen and on one occasion had even gone the length of writing an elegy on a bug which I had crushed under my heels in a moment of involuntary indignation.

No more, alas, no more with cautious tread,
The dear old bug shall leave his darksome lair
To taste one ruddy drop from my body bare,
To sting me into life when the Siren Sleep
Enthralls my soul, no more his dear head peep
From the cosy folds of my old easy chair.

So runs my mournful verse. Ever since that memorable event I have been a sympathetic admirer of the dainty bug.....

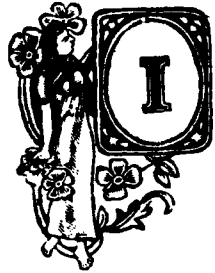
My reflections were cut short by the return of the conductor who had gone to get my suit-case but alas! he came empty-handed with the disappointing announcement that the individual who had taken my suit-case was no conductor at all but a very clever thief who had taken advantage of the situation to do the amiable service of relieving me of a burden, the suit case—for ever. What could I do? I had to attend school that day and except my travelling costume which I wore I had packed all my dress inside that suit-case. To be unable to attend school because one was suffering from an accidental loss of dressing materials, was a circumstance that would certainly have appealed to my sense of humour, had the sufferer been any other individual. But now I was sick at heart. I remembered the inauspicious sight of a bundle of firewood which I had met at the gate of my house and the anxious warning given me by my venerable Karnavan which I had poo-pooed with civilised contempt and swore never more to disdain the wisdom of grey haired octogenarians.

A throb, a quiver, a few unearthly shrieks from our four-wheeled monster and an initial Bur! Bur! from the horn—and the car started with all the energy that it could summon from its tottering frame. After negotiating half a dozen serpentine curves and traversing as many ruts filled with mud that took especial delight in spoiling the best holiday attire of the passer-by irrespective of caste, creed or sex, the car emerged upon open space and was picking up speed on the smooth and even road when horror of horrors! there came a hissing and an explosion, which in the overstrained condition of my nerves, had the effect of a volcanic eruption on my imagination. The car came to a dead stop and out jumped the chauffeur and the conductor. After examining the tyre for full fifteen minutes the chauffeur "rubbed his sagacious nose", and with an apologetic air and engaging smile requested us to get down from the car for a few minutes. Then from out the profundities of the car's cosy interior tumbled out a motley crowd which gave me an idea of communal representation creeping into every aspect of public life. Mopla and Ezhuva, Nayar and Nambudiri rolled out in indiscriminate confusion. Tiny imps there were, rending the air with their shrieks and scratching the bloated bosoms of their matrons, who appeared apparently unmoved by the accident and got down from their cosy corners only after the repeated entreaties of their comparatively tiny husbands.

It took full half an hour for the chauffeur and the conductor to repair the punctured tyre and at last, with perspiration pouring down their faces they got into the car inviting us also to do so and the rejuvenated automobile once more started on its drunken progress with all its former gruntings and groanings that sang celestial music to the ravished ears of its devoted owner.

It would take volumes to describe all the details of the epic progress of that car over booming bridges and under perilous passes, the hair-breadth escapes we made from many imminent disasters which were nothing inferior to those that befell the Argonauts or Ulysses. Suffice it to say that when we got down at our destination, we had all the limbs of our body intact, so that in spite of the loss of a suit case with all my clothes inside and a few scratches and bruises on my face I breathed a fervent prayer of thanks-giving to the Great Preserver.

THE COCONUT TREE IN THE TRADITION OF THE SINHALESE



IN the surroundings of Weligama, a small village inhabited mostly by fishermen between the towns of Point de Galle and Matara, there is a gigantic rock of granite hewn in the image of an ancient Prince, 18 feet in height, named Rottah-Raja. The story goes that this prince was told by God, through a mission, about the palm tree. This religious prince was all of a sudden attacked by a disease of the skin covering his whole body with white scales so that the population took to sacrifices hoping to reconcile Maha-Yaka, the great demon, who they thought was the cause. But the Prince refused to attend these ceremonies, believing in a higher power, into the care of which he would deliver himself. At that time the coconut palm was not existing on the Island of Ceylon, and even to-day travellers through the section of Kandy find but very few of them.

One day, the suffering Prince having done his religious service with the utmost care, and having sacrificed the finest flowers in accordance with the law of Buddha, fell asleep not to awake for several days. In his dreams he saw a beautiful stretch of water and drank from it, and found its taste salty and bitter, although the colour of it showed a beautiful green when seen from near by and a blue colour from a distance.

The shore was framed by a wide girth of trees the like he had never seen before. They did not look like the trees of the country with many branches, but with a long, smooth trunk showing only on the very tips a big bunch of large leaves. After awakening from his long sleep and deeply impressed by this strange vision, the Prince continued in his fervent prayers and sacrifices, convinced that a miracle from the Almighty God would heal him. Soon after this a sacred serpent (Naga) made its appearance, raised its head and looked at the Prince and then drank three times of the water contained in the

cup belonging to the Prince and then withdrew with its eyes fixed firmly upon him into the bushes. The Raja (Prince) took this for a proof of Buddha's good will. And again the Prince fell asleep and saw the same vision and furthermore he saw an old man whose face was shining like the moon. It was Maha-Suddodana, Buddha's (Prince Sidhartha's) father, who spoke to him thus: "Not knowing the sacredness of the ground upon which God's favourite tree is casting its shadows, thou hast forgotten the reverence due to Him by all beings and are resting under another tree, and that is why God has punished thee. But he has sent the snake as a sign of His goodwill and thou shalt enjoy health and a long life if thou obey His commands. I am bringing thee His message. Yonder! down to the South, is the help, and a trip of a hundred hours will take thee to those trees thou hast seen in thy dreams. Go there, eat the fruits of these trees until the moon has changed three times, and thy disease will be cured. After having regained health, do not forget to pray and to sacrifice to Buddha, by whose favour and pardon thou hast regained thy health and who will prolong thy life, filled with happiness."

It was a powerful voice that spoke to him, like a thousand tom-toms ringing together and the sound of it lingered in his ears long after he awoke. Firmly believing that invisible powers had promised him protection and that it was his duty to carry out what they had ordered him to do, he prayed for strength to be able to obey Ossah Pallah, the creator and master of all gods and demons and of the face of the earth. He assembled his men who were living around him in green-huts made of branches and trees, and told them the order he had received, and then he started out with them, not before sacrificing and praying again, for the South through woods, crossing rivers and climbing mountains, in a straight line, as Maha-Suddhodana had told him. They travelled for a hundred hours and strange to say, without fatigue and then enjoyed the marvellous sight of the vision in his dreams, now laying before them in glorious reality. Under leaves protected from the hot sun there were fruits as big as they had never seen them in their country, shining in all colours imaginable.

No human being could be seen, but a multitude of wild beasts, such as leopards, bears, sloths and elephants. To climb

the coconut-palm was not known then and so the men used fire to fell the trees, and after one hour's time one of these big trees, the most beautiful product of nature of the Indian land, came down with a terrific crash. From the rich foliage there crept numerous creatures, snakes, scorpions, millepedes, coloured bugs, tarantulas and other spiders, even rats were jumping from leaf to leaf accompanied by "lenas" a sort of squirrel. They had quite some trouble at first in opening the nuts, but the Prince's belief was stronger than his hunger. He then stepped toward the beach, watching the waves rushing furiously on to the root of the palms which grew best where no other tree could stand the salty contents of the water. Taken by surprise at the sight of the wide ocean he had never seen before, he bent down to taste the water, which tasted exactly as that tasted in his vision. But he was full of hope to free himself from his awful disease before the moon had changed its light three times, and to be forgiven for his lack of reverence for his holy Bogawath. They continued to live on the new fruit, the Prince, because he wanted to strictly obey Buddha's order, and his men, because they had to and could not find any other nourishment. The water of the coconut was sweet and pure, like the crystal water of their mountain springs at home, while the meat of these nuts was cooling and nourishing.

Time went by and the Prince's health improved from day to day, for the white scales on his skin disappeared and a feverish warmth in his body told him of his near recovery. Thankful to his sublime saviour, he did not forget to fulfil his duties imposed upon him. He and his men carved his picture on a huge rock, as it is seen today, as a sign of his new birth and to preserve it for coming generations.

Soon after this multitudes of the Highlanders immigrated to the coast, as the Rajah had told them about the miraculous strength of the coconut, convincing them that a cultivation of these trees would bring forth an inexhaustible source of individual and national happiness.

This is the tradition of the Sinhalese concerning the discovery of a tree which is found today everywhere in the tropics, most plentifully, however in the vicinity of the ocean and nowhere better than a few feet above sea level.

The coconut palm is strictly bound to the tropics, beyond which it loses its beauty and fertility. On the Sandwich

Islands, just at the border of the tropics, this tree looks poor and the crop is also comparatively small, so that in olden times the nuts were very highly valued and only the male inhabitants were allowed to eat them, being the preferred class, as in all barbarous countries; the women were not allowed even to touch them. This was the law for centuries until the wife of a chief was brave enough to defy this law, challenging publicly the anger of the gods, thus procuring for her sex the use of this fruit they had had to refrain from for so long a time.

The figure appearing on this rock is highly artistic and proportionate, and the place it stands is where coconut grows most fertile and in mysterious variety.

The dream the Prince saw could have been rather of Sri Vishnu or Nathadeva instead of Buddha's father Siddhodara who directed the P. to go to S. I am of opinion, as was once said by Dr. A. Nell, that the very image on the rock is of either Sri Vishnu's or Nathadeva's the guardian god of Buddhism in Ceylon as it is quite apt to be engraven.

The author of this story in the "Carefree" was the famous German chemist who lived for about 8 years in Ceylon experimenting on coconut as man's best and only food. He latterly bought a coconut island called Kobakon in the South Seas and invited many an eminent enthusiast friends of his in the coconut doctrine to colonise it; but when the recent war broke out in 1914 they dispersed. It is said the author yet pursued his living in the very same way but years afterwards the Chambers Journal reported him dead.

There is yet one in Ceylon, an English artist called Robson who is a survivor of the lot, hale and hearty, growing younger in his seventies, day by day. He has mightily improved upon the science and he ferments the scraped coconut soaking it for 24 hours in coconut water. A friend of his after getting to know about the merits of the coconut (the fermented) had been curing hundreds of cases of malaria and even baldheadedness etc. in its internal as well as external application of its fermented water which is like Moru of curds. I myself have been long experimenting on it to effect a chemical change on my blood cells; but occasionally with a change to fruits which seemed necessary.

(From "A Carefree Future" by August Bethmen and August Engelhardt. Foot notes by C. Nagahawathe.)

THE CHARM OF COURTALLAM.



BY V. H. SUNDARAM, B. A.

ABOUT three miles away from Tenkasi, lies the famous sanatorium, "Kuttalam" or better still "Courtallam", to use the appellation of the European Civillian, who discovered in the Mountainous region, an excellant "health resort", to distinguish it from its namesake in the Tanjore District. Situated as it is about 500 miles on the southern arm of the deep bay in the Western Ghats, the region shares all the charms of the Malabar scenery, wedded to a salubrious climate almost throughout the year, thanks to its geographical situation. There are really few rambles in this country that combine all the beauty and the inspiration of hills and forests, lakes and waterfalls, so charmingly as the Courtallam hills. There is an annual rainfall of 58 inches, which is more than twice the average for the district of Tinnevely. Courtallam, as it is reported, had long been a favourite rendezvous of the Europeans, though they are seen few and far between only at recent times. Durings the months. June to September, when Madras is no better than a "frying pan" and the people long for relaxation, "fed up with work, their brains experience a sort of Midsummer madness". Thank God, Courtallam affords a haven of refuge to all visitors rich and poor alike, who cannot afford to have Ooties and Simlas of the rich.

During the "season", you find almost all the railway carriages crowded with visitors, from far and near, eagerly awaiting the station, Tenkasi. A few minutes' ride in a bus takes you to this "blessed spot" through a sloping road, on either side of which, you find, wide stretches of paddy fields, fringed on their sides, with palms and mango-trees. As you approach nearer, you hear the ceaseless and drowsy hum of the falls. You at last arrive at the Falls, where you behold a vast silvery cascade dashing over a precipice, underneath which you see a large crowd enjoying a bath. You stand gazing at the showers of "sky rockets" exploding as they fall, till you tremble in every nerve. Amid the grandeur, beauty and sublimity of the scene, you are awe-struck to recognise, how frail the mortal is!

You stand within the spray, right in the very arc of the rainbows formed. The bath exhilarates your spirits, quickens the circulation of your blood and gives a fine glow over the body, and what's more, increases your appetite. Several times you bathe, to your heart's content, the water never injures your health; you never even catch cold. With a gloomy countenance, men go over there, afflicted with bodily diseases, but they return healthy and well.

The river Chitra-nadhi or the beautiful river as the name connotes, the chief tributary to the Thambiraparni, runs its course through the Kuttalam hills and precipitates itself after a succession of beautiful falls, the most conspicuous among them being, the Thenarivi or the "Honey falls" as the name suggests, the Shenbaga devi Falls coming next, and the last the Kuttalam Falls. Below the last precipice, the waters dash down on a trough 'carved out of the rocks' by the magic hand of Nature which goes by the name 'Pongumakadal' or the boiling sea as it appears to the onlookers. You find huge boulders of rock perched on the cliffs, which form natural caves. Nothing can be more delightful than a casual stroll through the forest-hills, to trace the course of the stream. Few forest pathways are more beautiful, winding in and out in bewildering curves and corners under the green-shade of the trees when some time the gleaming sun's rays fall on the ferns, making the whole woodland one vast fairy scene' to use the expression of the English poet. The witchery of the scene is beyond all words! A lovely spot, it is, that still escapes the destructive hand of civilization, and its picturesqueness not sacrificed to utility. You come to the Shenbagadevi Falls, a mile up the foot of the hills. You go further up two miles as your feet never get wearied in the bracing weather. You see the famous Thenarivi, a magnificent cascade falling down from a height of 100 feet through a vertical cliff, chimney-shaped to view. There is perfect solitude! The loveliness of the moorlands, the shade of the forest glades, the perils of the rocky crags, meet on that spot. You feel around you

"The spell of life's rare silences the calm
Hush that succeeds the palpitating sound
Of the world's psalm."

You lapse into introspective state, drinking in the beauty and revelling in the grandeur and awed by the sublimity of the scene.

The other falls of lesser importance are the "Five-falls" and the "Kattaruvi". The scenery there also is no less enchanting, a place a camera-man would not for the world like to quit, after a visit once. The water of the stream is said to possess great curative effect and has been scientifically testified to this virtue. Running as it does through its course through forests abounding in medicinal herbs, the water has come to possess the curative effect. Other than these causes, Kuttalam is celebrated for its temple, situated very near the Falls, with several fine Mantapams, scattered over the area surrounding the Falls.

No account of Courtallam would be complete without mentioning the famous Temple, to which the place owes its name, where a large concourse of pilgrims flock together at festival times. The presiding Deity of the place is the "Lord of the Three peaks", as the genesis of the word "Kuttalam", being "Thiru Kutchalam", the mountain of the three peaks, hallowed by the memory of the sage Agasthya. It requires an effort of the imagination to believe that Agasthya, 'the shortest figure' was chosen curiously enough by the gods to set the balance right when that region rose up on the occasion of the marriage of Siva. Many are the stories, as wonderful as they are incredible given currency to, pertaining to the history of the temple and its environment.

Whatever may be the name by which the place is known whet her Thiru Kutchalam, Thirukuttalam, Kuttalam or the Europeanised Courtallam, the "blessed spot" never loses its charms, a Mecca it is to the 'Hindus', a Mecca, worth while a visit to the Naturalists due to its botanical importance, and an excellent sanatorium, nay a sanatorium to the invalids and a happy health resort to the 'tired officers'.



REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MALAYALAM SELF-TAUGHT

(In Malayalam and Roman characters) By Wickremasinghe and T. N. Menon. E. Marlborough & Co., London—Price 3 sh. net.

MESSRS Marlborough's "Self-Taught" series of books enjoys a well-deserved reputation amongst the great confraternity of globetrotters. The collection is growing year by year, the object of the publishers being to provide handy books on all the important languages of the world. The books, however, are not intended for researchers or special students, but for travellers, traders, missionaries and all foreigners who have, in one capacity or other, to deal or live with natives. The books so far published, eminently fulfil the purpose for which they are intended. Messrs. Marlborough have been scrupulously careful in the selection of the authors, and as far as possible, they have pitched upon distinguished men who speak the particular language in each case as their mother-tongue. Amongst the authors of the books on Indian languages, we note such conspicuously prominent names as Sunit Kumar Chatterjee, Syed Ali Bilgrami and Zilva Wickremasinghe—names that sufficiently guarantee the scholarship (within the limits of the scope of the series) and the accuracy with which the several books have to be written.

The latest addition to the series is a book on Malayalam Self-Taught written by Wickremasinghe and T. N. Menon. The usual features of the series are all here: (a) the alphabet and the pronunciation (b) Vocabularies of words that would interest travellers etc. (c) a synoptic account of the essentials of grammatical forms and (d) conversational phrases and sentences.

Thimm's system of phonetic notation is adopted for transliteration, as in all the other books of the series. This system is sufficiently accurate and scientific but, we are inclined to think, a little too complicated. The symbols employed for ഞ and ഞ are rather clumsy. As transliterations in English script are also given, no confusion arises regarding the sounds, however. The symbols for peculiar Dravidian sounds ഉ, ഓ, ങ and alveolar ന (as in നന്ന, നന്ന) are recognised and carefully distinguished. We may, however, point out a few defects and errors that mark the phonetic transliteration.

Amongst the vowels, the neutral *e* is given, but its occurrence in unaccented or unintoned syllables of words is not recognised. In unaccented positions, Malayalam ഉ ഉ and ഞ ഞ assume neutral values which, though slightly different amongst themselves, may for convenience sake be represented together by the neutral *e* എന്ന, ഉന്ന, കൂട്ട, for instance, have neutral vowels in the second syllable except in pedantic enunciation.

The value of *ae* (as in *man*) exists in the first personal singular, *ഞാൻ* and in words with initial *ഞ* like *ഞായർ*; this is not evaluated, though the sound has been recognised in *ഞെട്ട* etc.

Short *ə* has been described as having the sound of the vowel in "pot". This is evidently wrong. Its correct value is that of the vowel in "owe" without the length and without the short post-glide characteristic of English.

Amongst the consonants, we miss the palatal *ക* which occurs in *ചെക്കരിക്ക*, *വാഴക്ക* etc.

Inter-vocal *ക* has often the fricative value; this is not referred to.

ത is described as being equivalent to the sound in "with;" this is incorrect because the Malayalam sound represented by this symbol, initially and when doubled, has a plosive value, while the English sound is a fricative.

The sound *ററ* is confused with *റ*; the two sounds are entirely different though in the history of the language there has been a great deal of mixing-up of the symbols for these two sounds. The individuality of *ററ* should not be missed.

The affricate *ച* is identified with the sound in "church", this is slightly inaccurate, for the plosive element in the Malayalam sound is different from that in the English affricate.

Quite appropriately, the value of inter-vocal surds in Malayalam has been recognised as being midway between the purely surd and purely sonantal values. In common colloquial speech, this is the value given to intervocal plosives; in careful or deliberate enunciation, however, pure surd values are given. This is one of those differences that mark off Tamil from Malayalam.

The section on grammatical forms is just sufficient to enable the foreigner to understand the main structural peculiarities of the language. The terminology employed in this portion has been approximated to that used in European grammars. This facilitates the study of forms for the European student—*വാർ* and *മാർ* in *ഭാഗ്യവാർ*, *ശക്തിമാർ* etc. have been wrongly suggested as being of Sanskrit origin, they are on the contrary purely Dravidian.

The slight defects pointed out above do not in any way mar the usefulness of this excellent little manual for those for whom it is primarily intended. We can unhesitatingly recommend this book to all those who desire to pick up a conversational knowledge of Malayalam.

Indians ignorant of our language could, with great advantage, use the book as an introduction to Malayalam, while missionaries, travellers and foreigners generally who have to stay in Malabar for purposes of trade or business would find the book indispensable.

L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Gama Challenged:—Mr. Yess Paterson, who claims to be the champion of all champions of the world in wrestling writing from Paris, has asked the Pioneer to publish a challenge to the Indian wrestler Gama, who recently beat Zobysco.

Decline of the Rice Eating Races:—The downfall and retrogression of Asian races is largely ascribed to their rice diet by Mr. Matsumna. The retrogression of India great in olden days and famous for her culture is in his opinion, entirely due to the rice diet of her people. He points to the Hindu race as the model of a decadent civilization and says, "Lack of proper amount and variety of vitamins in the food, needed for the proper growth of brain power, have brought about this deplorable result."

Chino-japanese War—There has been fighting at and near Tsinanfu between the Japanese forces in China and the Chinese. The incident has created a very bad situation. The Japanese are sending more troops for the protection of their Nationals and interests in China. It remains to be seen what developments the incident will lead to.

Trouble in S. Africa—The arrest of African Labor leaders, which has been cabled from Johannesburg, is a portent of considerable significance. The Native population of S. Africa enormously outnumbers the European settlers, attracted by the country's agricultural and industrial riches. The "reserves" of land assigned to the Natives are altogether inadequate for them, and the major portion of cultivable land has been appropriated by the whites. In factories and mines, skilled occupations are banned to the sons of the soil by the Color Bar Act just brought into force. Even in the other lines of work, steps are being taken to cripple their power to improve their position. The Native Administration Act, introduced by General Hertzog, is being used against the I. C. U., which is the strongest Native Labor Union in the country. Only a few days ago a Native was given for the first time, the death penalty for

a rape, a crime which, for a European, does not involve the same consequence. Every day the lot of the Natives is being made more intolerable.

Parsee Cyclists:—Messrs. A. K. Hakim, J. P. Bapasola and R. G. Bhungara, three out of the six Parsee Cyclists have completed their world tour and arrived in Bombay recently. Their adventure consisted of successfully terminating a trip of 53 months through 27 countries of the world. They have crossed the four deserts of Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Sinai and are also the first cyclists to cross the Rocky Mountains in America. They hold the world's record for a Globe Cyclist by covering 171 miles in 16 hours.

Adventures like these will surely go a long way to show that Indians are not lacking in the spirit of sportsmanship in spite of all the handicaps they suffer owing to their being a dependent country.

Race of 3,400 Miles:—The great race across America, started on March 4th from Los Angeles to New York, a distance of over 3,400 miles in which 200 runners represented various nationalities, is expected to be won by South Africa's greatest runner, Newton. He has been leading from the start and did the seventh lap of thirty-one miles in four hours. On March 11th he covered 230 miles in 35 hours and two days later he won the ninth lap leaving the remaining 150 runners, out of 200 starters, many hours behind. If Newton wins he will secure a prize of 25,000 Dollars.

Reorganisation of The Medical Services—In violation even of the recommendations of the Lee Commission on Superior Civil Services, the Government of India has issued a communique regarding the reorganisation of the Indian Medical Service. The Indian Medical Service will consist of 302 Officers, of whom 212 will be Europeans and 90 Indians. To provide employment for these 302 officers, 227 posts are required. Of these, 59 posts are available under the Government of India and 178 posts under Local Governments. In the Provinces, 112 posts are reserved for Europeans and the remaining 66 posts will be open either to Europeans or Indians. Under the Government of India, 31 posts will be reserved for Europeans and 28 posts thrown open to officers of either race.

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| 4. — — I S E | : To hoist |
| 5. H — R — E | : A quadruped |
| 6. — — E R T | : Public |
| 7. S — H — L — R | : An English monthly |
| 8. — O I — O D E | : The leader of an army |

Example A—R—L : (A month) APRIL

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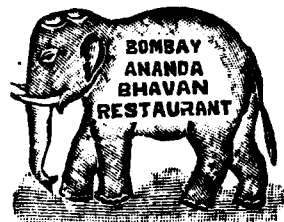
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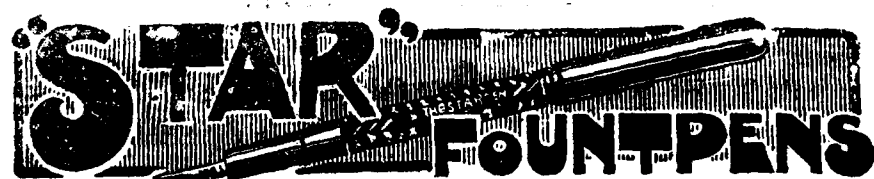
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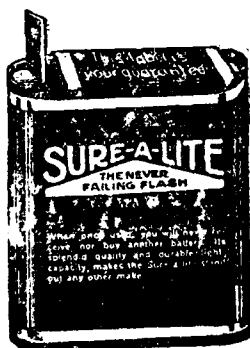
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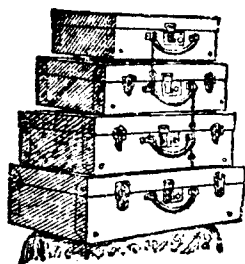
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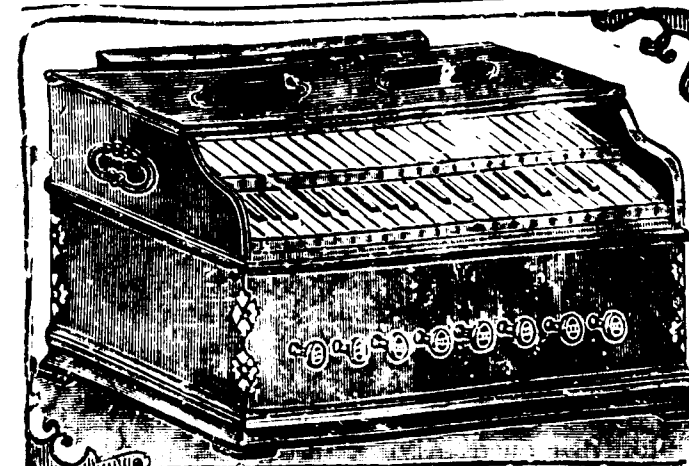
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