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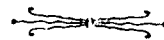
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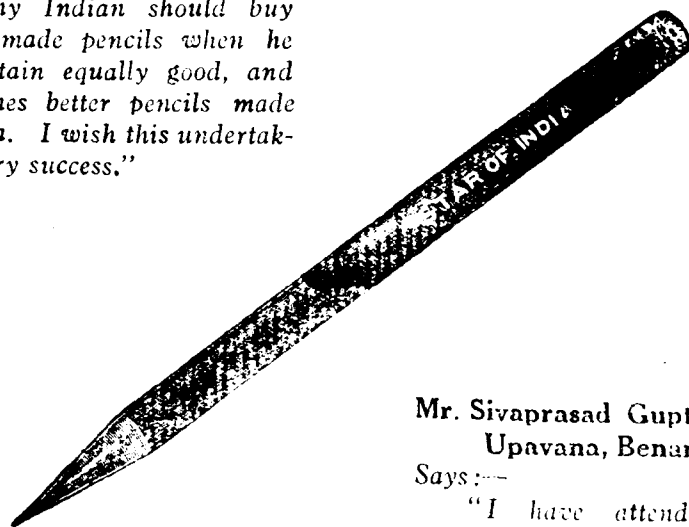
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President of the 42nd Indian  
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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Savitri and Satyavan

By A. V. V. Subba Rao.

# The SCHOLAR

VOL. VII. } OCTOBER 1931 { NO. 1.

## Greetings.

**I**N beginning our seventh year of existence, we send out our cordial and sincere greetings to the readers and well-wishers of *The Scholar* through the medium of this Annual Number. Knowing as we do the acute economic distress, which has laid its blighting hand on all alike, we feel particularly grateful to them for their continued support.

The only redeeming feature in the otherwise murky horizon that is with us now is that the state of war which was prevailing at this time last year in the political field has fortunately run its course, though it has not yet brought in its wake a permanent settlement of the outstanding political questions, which only would direct the energies of our best men and women towards constructive channels—such as broad-basing our educational frame-work on a foundation genuinely national and all-embracing in its scope and outlook—instead of concentrating them on the mere fight for political rights, which is not, after all, an end in itself but is only the means to an end. But if we may safely conclude, in the light of the efforts at settlement taking place at the Round Table Conference in England, that there is not much to despair of in this connection, the situation has worsened in other directions. Far from recovering ever so slightly from the economic depression which made itself felt even last year, the economic position in the country has assumed much bigger

proportions, both in volume and extent. The result is that Government and people alike have been compelled to re-act to the situation and retrench, and the extent to which Government has gone, or proposes to go, can be gauged from the fact that its retrenchment proposals have invaded even the sacred precincts of Education.

A distress so unprecedented in its magnitude and effects even on the most well-established institutions has naturally told most heavily on *The Scholar*, and in a greater degree this year than it did in the last. Several of our esteemed and regular advertisers, who have been giving us their support since the inception of the journal, have found it necessary to withdraw their support this year and so has a certain number of our paying subscribers. In the result, the present Annual is slightly smaller in bulk and much less ambitious in aim than what its predecessors have been, for which we express our sincere regret. But even going a little beyond our means, we have endeavoured to see that the Annual does not lack in variety, interest or in technical improvements, if it has unavoidably to fall short to some extent in the matter of content. No retrenchment has been thought of in the pictorial section and a number of short stories and light matter has been provided, in order to add to the variety and interest of the Number. On the technical side, we have changed into Indian feather-weight paper with this new volume at some extra cost on the production side and also renewed the types, changing them to a size smaller than that of the types hitherto used. We hope the net result has been to make the Annual more attractive and entertaining than were the previous productions.

We regret that, in view of the economic situation, we have not been able to stabilise the position of *The Scholar* in the manner we had forecasted last year; particularly, we have been unable to push on with the scheme to wipe out its deficit and create a fund to serve as a nucleus to enable the uninterrupted production of the magazine in an improved form by raising life-subscriptions. We must necessarily wait for better times to move in the matter any further, but may we hope that such of our kind well-wishers as have already enlisted themselves as life members will help us by redeeming their promises of payment as early as they can?

In these hard times, when it is necessary to effect the utmost saving in all possible directions, it is not perhaps quite wise to make appeals for support involving a little personal sacrifice. But precisely on this account we feel we must make a special

representation to our readers and the educated public. For, economic distress will go, as it came, some time or other. But a magazine cannot be run without interruption if people would make it the first victim directly any retrenchment is considered to be necessary or inevitable. Those who have anything to do with the conduct of journals know that it is more easy to start a magazine than to keep it going, and unless there are a sufficient number of readers to give their support to a journal, it must eventually come to grief. We have so far not lacked this support in an adequate measure, and we are making this representation only because we do not want to risk a possible waning of interest through any failure on our part to remind our supporters of their duty to the cause for which the magazine stands. Having justified its existence by running for the last six years, we venture to hope that *The Scholar* has established its claim for the continued patronage and support of the public.

*The Scholar* is primarily a magazine for the young, and the purpose of its existence will be adequately fulfilled only, if it helps in the measure it can the expression of the nascent urge that is pulsating throughout the land. We have made this appeal several times in the past, and we gladly acknowledge that the response so far has been neither inadequate nor discouraging. But we hope that the response will be much greater in the coming days, when we are on the eve of momentous changes affecting our whole course of life and the future of our Motherland.

We venture to hope that, despite the handicaps that we have mentioned, this Annual Number will be found by our readers sufficiently interesting and entertaining. We are aware, and are gratefully conscious of the fact, that this result is largely due to the valuable help rendered by our several co-partners in the task—our contributors, our artists, our advertisers and all those obliging friends and institutions who have helped us in their several ways and enabled us to make this Number what it actually is. There is only one form of return which we can make for their appreciation of our work, and that is to deserve in the future to the greatest extent we can the patronage that they have been giving us.

## The Task Before Travancore

By P. J. Thomas, M. A., B. Litt., Ph. D.

**I**N several important respects, Travancore is ahead of the rest of India. Its land is fertile; where else in India could a cultivated area of less than two million acres support an agricultural population of more than four millions? Its peoples are physically fit and intellectually alert, and in education they have left far behind nearly every other people in Asia. Even in Europe, few countries can claim such a high proportion of university graduates to literates. The reading habit has taken hold of the common people, and nowhere else in India are the vernacular newspapers so numerous and popular. Nor is Travancore economically undeveloped. Its total foreign trade in 1928—29 was Rs. 21 crores, which is about Rs. 45 per head of population, while for British India it was only about Rs. 16 in the same year. The finances of the State are also in a comparatively prosperous condition. Travancore has a revenue of Rs. 2½ crores, of which direct taxation (land revenue and income-tax) represents only just above 19 per cent., while in the Madras Presidency nearly 30 per cent. of the total revenue is derived from land. Although the expenditure of Government has been extravagant on certain occasions, the normal budget of the State shows a commendable concentration on nation-building services, 21 per cent. of the total revenue being spent on education, 21½ per cent. on public works, and only 7 per cent. on the Royal family (figures are for 1928—29). This latter fact is particularly noteworthy to those acquainted with Indian States in the north, and confirms Mahatma Gandhi's estimate about the simplicity of the Royal household in Travancore.

But the trade depression has hit Travancore hard. There has been a decline of more than 50 per cent. since 1929 in the price of most of the staple products of the West Coast, and in some the slump has been even more pronounced. There is perhaps no other part of India which has suffered as much. Not only is this impoverishing the people day by day, but great inroads are being made into the revenues of the State. It is certain that collections under excise, income-tax, customs-duties and registration, which constituted in 1928—29 nearly 44 per cent. of the total revenue, will show greater reductions in the current year than in the last; and there will also be reduction in other items like stamps, forests and even land revenue.

In the present connection, I am not so much concerned with the State fisc as with the fisc of the people. During the years 1925—'29, commodity prices ruled high, much money came into the country, and banking institutions of all kinds rose like mushrooms. While there are only 30 Indian joint-stock banks in the industrially advanced Bombay Presidency and 29 in the Punjab, while throughout British India joint-stock banks number only 710, there are more than 250 joint-stock banks in the small State of Travancore, which in point of area is not even ½ per cent. of India and in point of population 1¼ per cent. As for chit funds, their name is legion. With the slump in prices, banks do little business, chits are in arrears, and the debts of the people contracted in times of high prices now sit like a mill-stone round their necks.

What is the way out? Indeed, the unlinking of the rupee from gold has brought about some improvement in prices, but that is a temporary advantage, a passing phase; and manipulations of currency can never create any lasting benefit. The secular trend of world prices is downward, and although there may be improvements in individual prices, any return to the price-level of 1920—'29 cannot be expected in the near future. And by the time prices revive, the nature of international trade will have undergone substantial changes. In the past there has been a steady demand in Europe and America for the food-stuffs and raw materials of India: jute, wheat, oilseeds, tea and coffee; but the demand is now weakening. That is partly due to over-production and the dwindling of the world's purchasing power, but it is also due, in great measure, to changes in demand. As it is pointed out in a memorandum just published by the League of Nations on the *Nature and Course of the World Economic Depression*, the demand for the ordinary food-stuffs and raw materials is becoming stationary, but a specialized demand is growing, in which preference is for more refined goods like artificial silk, electrical and motor goods and other products of typically 'twentieth century' industries. The larger countries of the world have all got their own primary products, and both U. S. A. and Russia have devised means of producing them cheaper than the rest of the world by the increasing use of mechanised methods and by organised methods of management. Thus, the future may lie with a self-sufficient economy, in which international trade may diminish in importance and shift in content.

If such is the trend of world development, the best that India could do is to develop her internal market, which is potentially one of the greatest in the world. She may also specialize in the production of such articles as jute and tea, in which India holds a

virtual monopoly. Sooner or later, the internal market of India is bound to grow and absorb much of the goods produced in the country. As for Travancore, it has the advantage of possessing several products which are still in great demand outside; her pepper, ginger, arecanut, turmeric and cardamom will always find purchasers both within and without India; her cashew-nut has found an eager market in U. S. A. and rare minerals like ilmenite and zircon are bound to sell abroad in increasing quantities. There are also in the country other rare products which may meet some other new demand. But these are mostly small lines of business in which only a few are interested. Cocoanut and the products of coir yarn form the mainstay of our coastal population; and rubber has recently come to occupy a somewhat similar place in the interior. These two products, along with pepper and tea, form the backbone of our export trade. The demand for copra and cocoanut oil has dwindled owing to the increasing use of palm-oil and groundnut oil, and the future of cocoanut is gloomy unless a drastic cut is made in its cost of production. There is yet much room for expansion in the trade in coir yarn and matting, and the loss in copra may be made good partly by the increasing profitability of coir yarn when the market revives. Rubber is one of the commodities whose demand is growing and will grow. While raw rubber sells at 2 annas per pound, rubber goods imported into the country sell at prices not much below those which ruled when raw rubber sold at one rupee or more. In such circumstances, there is a clear case for the starting of rubber manufacture in Travancore. With the establishment of a strong Federal Government, which is ready to support national industry against powerful kartels and combines, by tariff and other methods, a rubber manufacture in Travancore is bound to become profitable, and that is a field which ought to attract ambitious capitalists.

Travancore is in several ways fitted for industrial pre-eminence. It has an enterprising people and its artisans turn out good mechanics when properly trained; Labour is not dear and will become highly efficient with increased opportunities of training. Travancore roads are good, and means of water communication are abundant and cheap. There is no coal, but a cheaper and more efficient form of power is available, if only running water is harnessed, and such resources are more abundant here than anywhere else in India. Two factors, however, are deficient: capital and organising power. An abundance of cheap capital, both long-term and short-term, is one of the prime essentials for industrial advancement. In a country where, in spite of the existence of numerous banks, hardly any capital is available for

less than 12 per cent. interest, it is not possible for industries to prosper, and industries managed with such dear capital cannot compete successfully with those in countries where ample capital is to be had at 3 or 4 per cent. A lowering of interest is the essential preliminary to economic progress, and steps must be taken early for that purpose. As for enterprise, it is a plant of slow growth. Captains of industry are indeed born, but without a suitable environment, their growth is likely to be stunted. Several Travancoreans have shown a real capacity to organise big business, and given encouragement, they are likely to attain to a stature not far below the best that the West can show.

It is, therefore, time for Travancore to make a leap forward, and in this Government must really be the mentor of the people. Although several industries have been started in the State by private initiative, Government has done little to help them. There is an Industries Department and some provision for State-aid, but what is non-existent is an active policy of industrial development inspired and controlled by the State. In view of the rapid increase of population (in the last decade the increase has been 27 per cent. as against 10½ per cent. for India), in view also of the growing unemployment among the educated classes and the gloomy prospects of our export trade, the present policy of *laissez faire* (or is it weak benevolence?) puzzles all those who are interested in the future of Travancore. It was by pursuing an active industrial policy that small States in Europe, like Belgium, Holland and Switzerland, which in several respects resemble Travancore, have come to occupy prominent places among industrial nations, and Travancore can follow in their wake, if its Government and people pursue a similar policy, and may thus be for India what Ruhr is for Germany and Lancashire for England.

To conceive and carry out an active industrial policy in the present circumstances of Travancore, we need at the head of our Government a ruler who has ideas and a will, who combines courage with resourcefulness, who can take a detached view in regard to the communal bickerings of the country, who will make the economic development of the country his prime preoccupation. May God vouchsafe to the young Maharajah now entering the throne the blessing to become such a ruler and to make Travancore the 'model State' in the Commonwealth of India!

## Some Neglected Elements in Indian Education.

By N. S. Subba Rao, M.A., *Bar-at-Law*

**I**T is a common-place that the system of Education in India at present lacks certain vital elements; to mention a few instances, the care of the body, cultivation of the artistic sensibilities of the pupils, and a vocational bias—all these are either lacking or present only in an inadequate and fitful form. I shall take another opportunity of drawing attention to the latter two, and in the paragraphs that follow I shall confine myself to the essential needs for a proper development of the physique of the pupils.

Briefly, if there is to be a sound mind in a sound body, the following are essential:—

1. Medical Inspection of pupils in educational institutions, with adequate arrangements for After-care;
2. Arrangements for Physical Culture;
3. Instruction in food-values.
4. Sex Education.

Starting with the first, it is obvious that, unless care is taken that the pupils in our schools are inspected by competent medical men, who will prescribe necessary treatment for those suffering from any illness or deficiency, every day spent in the school and every ignorant attempt at Physical Culture will spell disaster. A well-organised School Medical Service ought to be an integral part of the country's educational system.

There is a gratifying growth of interest in development of body among the students of our country, though those that play games and attend to physical development in our schools and colleges are yet a small proportion of the total number. The country has lost its old tradition of Physical Culture, and the national games are becoming a matter of memory, while it is obvious that the means at our disposal will not suffice for more than a small proportion of pupils in any educational institution to play Cricket, Football, Hockey or Tennis. Besides, these games do not develop the body so well as certain well-known systems of Physical Culture. Accordingly the Education Departments in our country must enlist the services of experts in the several systems of Physical Culture, indigenous like Asanas, Surya Namaskar

and foreign like the American and Swedish systems, and get them to train as rapidly as possible a large proportion of teachers in our schools. It must be made an essential part of a teacher's duties, unless he is incapacitated by illness or physical defects, that he should train a certain proportion of the pupils of the school in one system of Physical Culture or another. A large number of private institutions are springing up all over the country, and it is both economical and socially desirable that these institutions should receive liberal grants from the Education Departments.

In some parts of the country, for example in Mysore, Medical Inspection of school pupils has been in operation for some time, and though the data are neither large nor complete, a startling conclusion has already emerged that a very large percentage of pupils suffers from malnutrition. It is true that the cause of this is to no small extent economic, but it is also true that this result has come about because of insufficient attention paid to food values in the country. The education of the public in this vital matter must no doubt be undertaken by other agencies, but it is equally important that the rising generation should be brought to understand the importance, for example, of vitamins and, for instance, the futility and disaster of eating the fashionable milled rice. I should assign a course in dietetics a very prominent part in high school education. I shall not in this connection make more than a passing reference to what may be called cultivation of "Table Manners and Taste" in eating. That will more appropriately be treated when I come to speak of Esthetics!

There was a time when even a reference to Sex Education in schools would have roused bitter controversy, but much has happened in recent years, and there is general agreement that, instead of the haphazard and furtive methods of sex knowledge which are all that are available to our adolescents, there should be some systematic, open, and reverential treatment of the subject. I am aware of the difficulties and delicacies of the subject, but it is imperative that Sex Education and Social Hygiene should be taught to either sex. The approach which has been generally accepted is through Biology and allied Sciences, that is to say, the course in Biology must be the warp on which the course of Sex Education is woven. Biology should be a compulsory subject in all training institutions.

## New Guinea.

By Isabel Robertson, M. A., (New Zealand).

**T**HERE lies to the north of Australia an island but little known even in these days when airmen are constantly flitting across the impenetrable forests of Darkest Africa and the limitless plains of Asia—the island of New Guinea, the largest island in the world. It is in latitude about as far from the Equator as Ceylon, but to the south instead of to the north. But whereas Ceylon, the "Pearl of the Eastern Seas," is world famous for her beauty and wealth, New Guinea is a land of savagery and death, where a few backward tribes struggle for a scanty living. It is difficult to account for the difference between the countries save by the theory of evolution, the one country being prepared for a black race, the other for an Aryan race. Ceylon is an earthly Paradise, New Guinea quite a good understudy for the other place. Nearly everything there is hostile to man. In the sea he may be poisoned by coral scratches or by the sharp spine of some shell-fish, or attacked by shark or alligator; in the forests the plants are thorny, the berries poisonous, the flowers smell like carrion, while the number of insects that bite one is endless. Everyone has malaria every year. There are few food plants, the yam, cocoant, banana, and taro being the chief food of the inhabitants.

The people are considered among the most backward in the world. Till recently they were cannibals. All those not in touch with white men still eat human flesh. They have no native culture, no written symbols, no legends of a historical nature, only a few fairy stories. In Arithmetic they count on their fingers, one, two, three, two and two (4), one hand finished (5), and so on up to 20 which, being the full number of fingers and toes, has the cheerful designation "one man dead". Then they begin on some one else's fingers and toes. In short, they are a primitive people.

Yet primitive as they are, they have a polity of their own, and quite a good one it is, a form of village communism. The land is mostly very mountainous, but along the beach and at the river mouths is a narrow strip of rich garden land. This belongs to the village. About one sixth of it is enough to supply their needs in any one year, so after a season's tillage the ground lies fallow for four or five years, while other land is used in turn. The village itself is placed near some spring, close beside the beach,

the thatched houses nestling beneath the shade of beautiful tropical trees, each house surrounded by the owner's cocoanut palms. The houses are not close together as in Indian villages, but are about ten yards apart. Primitive life like this is never monotonous; the varying seasons of the year bring their varying occupations. In the wet season, Christmas to Easter, every one has influenza and malaria, and the fishing nets are mended, weak places being taken out and replaced by new string. The old string is used for playing cat's cradles, which they weave on fingers and toes in a bewildering variety of fascinating patterns. When the rains are over, garden work begins for the new season, and in the sea whitebait throng the mouths of the streams for a week or two. During those weeks all the coastal Papuans (so called from their frizzy hair) are busy netting them and tying them up in leaves ready for cooking. The mountain Papuans then descend to the beaches and barter their goods for a share of the fish. At all times during the year, a certain amount of hunting and fishing goes on. Sometimes all the women go fishing for a day, and with the catch they next day prepare a feast of fish for the men. Another day the men will go hunting and next day return the women's hospitality. As the dry season is drawing to a close, towards the end of September, the long, coarse grass of the lower hills is fired, the lizards, snakes, birds and bandicoots flee in terror before the flames, round the edge of which the villagers stand waiting to spear them. Now, too, the river has sunk to a narrow trickle in its wide stony bed, so one day the whole village turns out and builds a low stone dam across the shallow river turning it to the other side of its bed. Below the dam the fish are left flopping in the dry river bed but are not left flopping long. Lastly, the dry monsoon dies down and a magical stillness descends on sea and land. This is the season when the flying fish lays her eggs fastening them to drifting twigs and seaweed. All the men and boys, taking branches to support them, swim out to sea collecting the eggs (gelaruru). So calm is the sea that they do not hesitate to venture a couple of miles from the shore, and they come back with good store of gelaruru for the evening meal. Then the fire is lighted before the doorway beneath the dark mystery of the night-hidden trees, the cooking pot is filled with daintily prepared food, and while it cooks, the family gather round enjoying the cool, soft air of evening and the near approach of the evening meal. Then is the time to descend to the village, join a group of one's friends round their fire, add one's food to the common stock, and when the meal is over, listen to fairy stories, or stories of the cannibal days of their youth, while the moonlight silvers the cocoanut fronds and the phosphorescent wavelets lap the creamy coral sands.

In these communities everyone has a sufficient share of the common land to grow his food, and everyone can build his own house and make his own clothes. There are no divisions into rich and poor, great and humble, all are equal. Of what civilised community can one say as much? Then has evolution failed? Wait till I put the shadows in the picture. Every man has a sufficient share of the common land—then the population cannot be increasing? No, infanticide is practised. Unwanted babies are exposed—a slow, cruel death. Then sometimes the crop fails, and the whole village is reduced to living on roots and berries from the forests and the scanty spoil of fishing and hunting. Some of the fairy stories reveal the grim struggle with hunger in these famine years—for instance, the story of the Talking Bananas. One year the taro crop had failed and the bananas alone, of course, could supply food for a month only, then would come slow starvation till the next season's crop was ready. In the house on the outskirts of the village lived a man, his wife, and their six-year old son, Iaku. They decided that their best chance of preserving their life lay in taking a long and dangerous sea trip to a relation in a yam growing district, who would be sure to give them a supply of yams to take back with them. They thought it would be best to spare the child the voyage. He would not be afraid to stay by himself: New Guinea children are used to long days alone, and for food he could have the last bunch of bananas—a fine big bunch. Now Guinea children do not eat greedily. It should last him till well over the time of their return. But there was one very real danger for little Iaku. If the neighbours knew he was alone, they would kill and eat him. He knew this, but it was one of the ordinary risks of New Guinea life, just as motor accidents are with us. To protect the child they had recourse to magic, they laid a spell on the bananas so that when they were spoken to they would reply. Then off they went. Iaku spent his days playing about as usual, and at night returned home, ate a few bananas, and went to sleep. In the house nearest to Iaku an old woman lived alone. After a few days she said to Iaku, "Aren't you all alone?" "Oh, no," said the child, and called out towards the house, "Au rava!" (My people!) and the bananas answered, "Tauwai weka!" (Here we are!) So the old woman passed on. Day by day she questioned the child; he called to the house, and the bananas answered. But every day the answer came more feebly as their numbers were reduced. And still his parents did not return. At last no voice answered the child's call, for the bananas were all eaten—and the waiting woman's time had come.

Even seasons of plenty had their dangers. Then neighbouring villages gave feasts to each other. They are not slaves to the

calendar or the clock in New Guinea. Village A. would invite Village B. to a feast "one day this week". Village B. would take several days to work itself into the real festive spirit, and then set out. Meanwhile all hands in Village A. were preparing food—pigs, vegetables from the gardens, fish, and whatever the hunters could kill in the forests. If Village B. arrived to find Village A. comparatively empty, they would as likely as not kill the few hosts they found at home, and take the bodies away for a cannibal feast. This had happened to a village a few miles from us about ten years before, most of the young girls of a village being killed and carried off. The result was that when the boys grew up there weren't enough wives to go round, and the men were constantly stealing each others' wives.

New Guinea was the last of the Pacific Islands to be annexed by a European Power; therefore, there was no Government, and this made it the last refuge of the piratical traders who were driven out of the other Islands by advancing civilisation. They would soon have enslaved or killed all the Papuans; so to prevent it Australia annexed the Eastern portion—there was a Dutch Settlement in the West. England refused to countenance the annexation but Australia persisted and hoisted the flag three times before England gave in—this happened some 30 years ago. Since then the Papuans' interests have been protected. This is done by various means, e. g., the Churches have had separate districts allotted to them and have been asked to establish schools, and the Missionaries soon stopped the exploitation of the natives by the rascally whites. But the churches have not enough money to enable them to extend through the whole land, so magistrates are stationed where there are no Mission stations. They do simple medical work, put down murder and cannibalism, and keep peace between the tribes. This is done effectively enough along the coast, but the white men have not yet penetrated much beyond the coast—no country is more impenetrable than New Guinea, the interior consisting of precipitous mountains covered with a dense tangle of tropical forest. So cannibal feasts are still held by the mountain men. When a magistrate hears that a village is specially addicted to such practices, he makes a raid, captures as many as possible of the offenders, tries them, sentences the guilty ones to a couple of years' imprisonment, and sends them off to gaol at Samarai. Here they become civilised, are taught cricket, and pick up some English. It is a quaint sight to see a working party of cannibals out with their warders. Suppose they have to tidy up the road, they drift to the nearest tree, sit in its shade, and do what the climate impels them to do—sleep. Meanwhile the warders do the work, they are responsible for getting it done—and it's done, so everyone should be satisfied. Why teach the prisoners cricket? Why, to get

sufficient players for the local team, of course. This team consists of the bishop, the vicar of Samarai, the publicans and store-keepers, and the best players among the prisoners. When the steamer comes in, it gets up a scratch team of crew and passengers, and there is a game. By the time a prisoner has served his two years' sentence he has become very friendly with the English, is proud of understanding their ways, and goes back to his district as a village constable, a duty he performs excellently. No more cannibal feasts in his district! There is no bad feeling about going to prison in New Guinea. Visiting one's Papuan friends in prison is part of the ordinary social round of the Missionary or planter when he comes in from the back districts. He gives them news of their relations and sees that the prisoner is well and comfortable.

The Labour laws are good. No man *needs* to work as he can maintain himself on his share of the village land. Money is not needed in a New Guinea village. So the white planters can obtain labour only by making the work popular. A labourer can be signed on for a year only, he must be fed, clothed, and cared for in accordance with strict regulations laid down by the Government (as a rule he is better treated than the regulations require), there is a minimum wage, and at the end of the year the man must be paid off (1) in cash, (2) in the presence of a magistrate, (3) in a district where there is a store with goods at ordinary market prices, and lastly, his employer must arrange for his passage back to his own village. But what really makes the system a success is the fact that the planters have the pioneering spirit in their blood. They are not spending a few years in the country while they feverishly try to amass wealth, but are settled there for life. Very little money suffices them, and very little time among the comforts (?) of civilisation.

Lao Tze, the Chinese philosopher, says that the governing of a great nation resembles the cooking of a little fish in that it should be very lightly done—we people of the Pacific Islands could tell him that the same is also true of the governing of small nations.

## Kaikeyi—A Sketch.

By Shrimati K. Savitri.



It is said of Shylock the Jew, in *The Merchant of Venice*, that he was 'more sinned against than sinning'. Verily, one feels these words may be applied with, perhaps, more truth to the character of Kaikeyi in the *Ramayana* than to that of Shylock. For Kaikeyi, when we try to understand her, excites in our hearts not so much of ill-feeling as of pity,—pity for all that shows her as only too much of a woman. If, reading about her, we think it fit to speak severely of her, it may be because we obey more a deep-rooted convention than exactly our own natural impulses. The conventional mind would neither think of finding fault with the character of an accepted hero, nor would it be moved to defend that of one universally branded with infamy. The unfortunate Kaikeyi has mostly an unjust criticism levelled at her at the hands of her readers.

Can we conceive the idea for a moment that, unpardonable as her conduct is, she might bear comparison with Lady Macbeth, the woman whose inordinate ambition prompted her, as the very devil, to an unthinkable crime? Yet even she, consumed by the cruellest of mental anguish, becomes but a creature full of tragic pathos in the end. We see plainly that Kaikeyi has none of the strength of mind of this remarkable woman. On the other hand, she is simple, and easily led, just as she was by Manthara.

It would be only quite fair to suppose that she serves but as an instrument in the hands of Fate, which has decreed the fulfilment of a great purpose through her. For, if we reflect, we would be justly inclined to say that Kaikeyi is no more mistress of her actions than a mere child could be. Indeed, how does she appear to us when we first come upon her? Does she strike us as a scheming, ambitious woman, biding her time? Far from it; she is seen through, as she fundamentally is, at a glance. A life of supreme ease and enjoyment is hers. She has the pride of youth, beauty, and the exclusive possession of the King's undivided love. Like the innocent child that sits amidst her favourite toys, Kaikeyi cares and asks for nothing more, until Fate arrives in the shape of the ill-chosen friend, Manthara.

When we behold Kausalya, the mother of Rama, no longer in the flower of her youth, abstaining from all worldly pleasures, and happy only in the devotion of her son, we become aware of the vast difference between her and the youthful Kaikeyi. For Kausalya the bed is not always made of roses. Her path being never

so smooth, she is able to put a restraint upon herself, and repose her faith in God. Kaikeyi, on the contrary, has sailed gaily through life with the most delightful sky overhead, with not a speck of dark obscuring her bright horizon. No wonder, therefore, when the companion of her childhood in extreme agitation seeks her, she presents herself as a fair vision of smiling ease and self-complacency. Happy in the knowledge of her beauty, and surrounded by every kind of luxury conceivable, she is lost to everything else. And in her attitude, so full of a graceful languor and indolence, we find her true character as it is.

Upon this peaceful atmosphere Manthara breaks even as a dark, angry cloud, bursting on the horizon, threatens to blot out the sunny calm of the landscape. This woman, who seems not a whit inferior either to King Richard or Iago in her fiendish energy and cunning, would tempt a veritable saint in Heaven. What work is it for her with Kaikeyi, whose simple faith in her friend utterly forbids her judging for herself?

As Manthara beholds the young Queen reclining in blissful ignorance of the coming event, she is beside herself with contempt and indignation, and she bursts out:

"Awake, O fool! Knowest thou not the danger that lies in wait for thee? Thou art vain of thyself and thy riches, but knowest not that they may disappear even as the river gets dry in the summer's heat."\*

Thus rudely addressed, Kaikeyi, a little dismayed, asks her friend why her face is lost in such profound grief. The evil-minded Manthara, still more sorry for her friend's sad want of perception, proceeds to point out to her the gross injury that is being perpetrated on her innocent head by the old King, whose treachery she, with her unquestioning faith in him, has no suspicion of. The temptress is frank enough to own that her very fortunes depend upon the Queen's welfare, and if anything befall her it should undoubtedly cause her own fall also. She concludes, then, with a warning that she should make haste to save herself and her son, Bharata, before it is too late.

Even such words as these fail to awaken the placid intelligence of Kaikeyi. So free from taint is her heart that she is as yet incapable of appreciating the disinterested devotion of her grief-shaken friend. It is the most joyful news about young Rama she has heard now, and in consequence her heart rises full in grateful happiness towards the messenger, whom she rewards with a jewel of great value. "I am, indeed, overjoyed, Manthara," she says, still incorruptible and noble, "Thou can'st not bring me a more

\* (Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 7, Slokas 14-15).

welcome news! I see no difference between Rama and my own Bharata. In fact, Rama is more devoted to me than he is to his own mother. How is it that thou lookest so crest-fallen at this moment?"<sup>1</sup>

It is thus the good Queen looks upon the impending peril, until Manthara proceeds to try yet one more stroke. "I can but laugh at thee, Kaikeyi," she says. "How ignorant art thou of the harm that is done to thee! Seest thou not that everything is lost for thee, if Rama be crowned King? What! Wouldst thou be content to serve like a dependant, when Kausalya plays the proud Queen-Mother? Thou knowest, Queen, thou hast, in the strength of your possession of the King's love, treated her indifferently all the while. Will she not be biding her own time? Wilt not thou as well as Bharata be disgraced, then, in the eyes of all?"<sup>2</sup>

This way of putting it, indeed, hits the mark at last. The force of this line of argument is irresistible. It goes straight home. Thus, the poisonous reptile finds its way into the heart of the fair flower, and leaves its deadly venom there in the soft folds of the inner petals. Jealousy for her rival's glory,—alas, only most natural in a woman,—being once kindled in her breast, Kaikeyi is but too quick, after the fashion of her sex, to picture the rest to herself. The horror of her situation, in the event of Rama's getting the crown, stares her so in the face that she entirely loses her apprehension. Does not the proud, beautiful woman dwell eternally in terror of obscurity more than anything else?

It is not so much her love for Bharata as her dread of her rival's getting the better of her, which transforms the sweet, generous and indolent Kaikeyi into the most obstinate and wrong-headed woman. By this time such a change is effected of the whole bent of her mind that she is actually ashamed she could not see so well into things as her friend has. She appeals to her for counsel in what way the evil might be averted. It is obvious to us how alien her present attitude is to her own guileless nature, since, like a child, she requires regular coaching for her new role at the hands of her loyal companion. The fact that she has to be reminded even of the King's promises to her in the past must render her as blameless as the Poet himself designs her to be.

Indeed, if there was no Manthara to instigate her, we know that Kaikeyi would no more have dreamt of doing wrong to Rama than his own mother. Her simple loving soul would have been very far from having attempted to break all sense of decency in order to assert her own legitimate claims.

<sup>1</sup> (Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 7 Sloka 35).

<sup>2</sup> (Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 8, Sloka 73).

"Doubtless, the good Queen ever bent upon my welfare is urging with the King for more favours in my behalf," \* says Rama to Sita, when he is told by Sumantra that his presence is desired by the King and Queen immediately. Here the dramatic irony is complete. In what contrary light surely do those words of Rama place his step-mother? Will it be idle to suppose that if the helpless Kaikeyi were not destined to join hands with the ill-favoured Manthara, she would have certainly been far more in her element with the occupation that Rama so glowingly pictured to himself, than the one she actually undertook?

Owing to the irony of fate she is thrown into malign hands, and, unhappily for her, all the original nobility of her nature failing to come up to the surface at a very critical time, she falls easy victim to a misguided course. There lies all the tragedy about Kaikeyi. Her trust in her friend is so implicit that she never once shrinks from her task to the end. It is only when Bharata, to her utter dismay, denounces her with all the wrath of a wounded lion, that she could be brought to her senses and to realise her pathetic situation. Surely she pays too high a penalty for what, owing to misplaced confidence, she has thoughtlessly committed. Deeply mortified, and reduced to the humblest frame of mind, her fair head is bowed in silence for ever.

The Poet, by drawing the character of Kaikeyi with such sympathy, no doubt, points out to us the fact that none could be so wholly blameworthy in this world. Viewed in this light, even Manthara escapes part of our censure. For does not her loyalty to her mistress redeem her to a certain extent?

Thus, it is more as a tragic figure than otherwise that Kaikeyi appears in our eyes. When we witness how she is rated by all those around her, we feel her punishment is indeed much greater than her crime.

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\* Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 16, Slokas 16-17.



By Abul Hassan.  
From the collection of Mr. Sitaram Shah, Benares.

Bullock Chariot  
(Indo-Persian School)

## Poem.

Thousand eyes with thousand views,  
Thousand hearts with thousand loves  
Am I.

As the sea, that receiveth  
The clean and the impure rivers  
And heedeth not,  
So am I.

I have no God, nor the beliefs thereof,  
I have no dogmas, nor the bondge thereof,  
I have no religion, nor the fear thereof,  
I have no Kingdom, nor the pomp thereof.

Deep is the mountain lake,  
Clear are the waters of the spring,  
And my love is the hidden source of things.

Ah, come away,  
Taste of my love  
And, as of a cool evening  
The lotus is born,  
Shalt thou find the desire of thy heart.

The scent of the jasmine fills the night air,  
And out of the deep forest  
Comes the call of passing day.  
The waking shadows disturb the peaceful morn.

The Life of my love is colourless,  
The attainment thereof is the freedom of fulfilment.

Krishnamurti.

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## The Release of Life.

By Krishnamurthi.



LIFE is a process of development through choice; and it is so whether one be young or old. Youth and age both have their illusions. The old have the illusions of concealed superstitions, in which they take refuge from the conflict of life. The young of to-day have very often no belief at all; they are in revolt against all the orthodoxies. But this revolt can itself be an illusion because it is, too frequently, only a concealed self-indulgence. Orthodoxy of any kind involves discipline, and the revolt against authority can be merely the revolt against this. So that both young and old have their own special illusions—that of the old being found in the comfort of superstition, that of the young in a comfortable unbelief. In the old this leads to stagnation, in the young to aimless revolt. When you strike at the root of illusion through choice and through effort, you are liberating that life which is truth. It is not a question of attaining something; merely one of releasing that which is already there. By freeing life from illusions you are enabling it to function freely through you, and so you are establishing in yourself that perfect serenity of thought and purity of emotion which belong to freedom of life. To strike at the root of illusion, you must first know what its root is. It is desire. Find out what your secret desires are and you will know what it is which is creating your illusions. But do not seek to kill out desire, for desire is life. Seek only to desire truly—that is, to desire from the point of view of the universal life, not of the separate life. When you can do this, you will have attained the kind of desire which does not breed illusion.

To seek to reach truth by destroying desire is like destroying the roots of a tree and at the same time expecting it to yield cool shadows, fragrance and green leaves. If you destroy desire your very growth as a human being is destroyed. The problem is to keep and intensify desire, while preventing it from seeking satisfaction in illusion. Once you can do this, then your desire is free. With most people there is a conflict between desire and the means of self-realisation which they impose upon it, and so, instead of desire ending in happiness—as it should—it ends in sorrow. And when this happens, desire at once seeks comfort. That is to say, frightened by its own outcome, it seeks a refuge from itself and in this way sets up an illusory standard of

spirituality. With such a standard nearly everybody is contented, not realising that it does not stand for the fulfilment of life, but for the very negation of this fulfilment. The spirituality which flows from life shows itself spontaneously in conduct. Where the spirituality is merely an escape from life, there is always a conflict between it and conduct.

There are three stages in the evolution of desire. In the first stage a man thinks he will be happy if he has a house, a car, books or money. I am not condemning this stage; it is a natural first attempt to formulate a true longing which the person concerned does not yet understand. What he is really seeking is a beauty and a happiness which are impersonal; but he does not realise this and quite naturally interprets it as a quest for personal possessions. But such a quest involves envy, greed, hatred and exploitation of others, for it has to be achieved at others' expense, and being of this nature, it must sooner or later bring disillusionment.

The time must come when a man discovers that through possessions happiness can never be attained; and, when he realises this, he usually enters the second stage of desire, the transference of the longing for possessions into the realm of subtler things. Here desire takes the shape of grasping at spiritual comforts which shall protect him against the conflicts of life. Just as he wished for riches, and so forth, to protect him from the struggle of physical existence, so now he reaches out for guides, gurus, authorities, in order to save himself from conflict at a higher level. But this in turn must prove illusory, for the only escape from conflict is by conquest. And so the second stage of desire also is relinquished, and he enters upon the third. (Please remember that these stages are not real divisions. Life itself cannot be subdivided in this way. It is merely for convenience that I speak of them.)

The third stage seems at first like pure negation, because it is the giving up of all attempts to find happiness in anything outside oneself—whether this be in external physical comforts or in such external spiritual comforts as Masters and teachers. But if we have the courage really to enter it we shall find that it is positive, not negative. To eliminate all desire for external help is to liberate the true desire, which is for the help which can only be found within oneself. This is what we are really seeking all the time, but do not know it. It is the real meaning of the quest for external help. When desire is thus freed, life itself is freed. For such desire is nothing else than life.

True desire is pure being, it is the highest truth, the highest spirituality, the absolute. It is the blending of love with intuition, it is God, it is everything.

To liberate your desires, therefore, you must first see clearly the kind of satisfaction which they demand, and then test this satisfaction in the light of intuition; that is, see what value it has in relation to pure being. Then, surely, you will see that there can be no true interpretation of desire which makes its satisfaction dependent upon another. Only in and through yourself can you realise pure being, so that it is only by your own efforts, by your own continual choice and achievement, that you can reach the real fulfilment of desire—that fulfilment for which life, manifesting as desire, really longs.

There is only one test for all your ideas and emotions, and that is whether they belong to the world of the lasting; but to apply this test means that you must think and feel for yourself, which is the last thing most people want to do. You must have an independent outlook on life; your thought must be original, not merely mechanical. The key to the highest reality is independence—independence of thought and action and feeling. However difficult this is, you must practise it without shrinking.

To grow is to struggle, and what you have to struggle for is not something for your separate self, nor is it a matter of cultivating this or that special quality. It is simply the release of life. The question to be asked is: Does it flow spontaneously from an inner impulse, depending on nothing outside itself? Only in this way is the highest truth attained. All else breeds disorder, confusion and sorrow. It is confining life within cages or at best substituting one cage for another.

So, the happy man is the man who has found his own truth—not the truth of another—the man who is following the voice of his own intuition which is the voice of the Eternal within him.

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## Education of Human Emotions

By N. S. Rama Rao, M. A. (Cantab)



VERY writer or speaker and every propagandist espousing a cause or an idea nails his colours to the mast and stands sternly by it. He neither moves forward nor is retreat possible for him. He refuses to see the other fellow's view-point. It might be very admirable military tactics, but when this attitude invades the field of Education, things begin to look a trifle intriguing. Especially the India of to-day has so many educational cults of a conflicting nature and the prevailing confusion is further confounded by the invasion of a variety of theories advanced by half-baked pedagogical experts from the West. The problem of Education in general and ours in particular is beset with the sin of bewildering complexity. We are living in an educational jungle, dark and miasmatic, where every leaf is struggling to be a branch and every branch a tree. West-Suezian nations each of them claims to possess "the best and greatest living exponents of the educational problem living in the world to-day". There is no science at the present age which is more discussed by this priesthood than the Science of Psychology, theoretical and applied. Believing as they do in the Christian doctrine that "man is born in sin," their psychological theories have their roots in Sex and Fear. Taking this as their starting point, they trace out human behaviour to either or both of these causes. And their theories of Education are formulated to exorcise the complexes arising out of the influence of these two malevolent deities.

We consider ourselves fortunate in having no Indian experts in Education, although we possess in our literature knowledge of Education of a very high order and second to none. Unfortunately for us, this knowledge, most valuable to us and to the rest of the world when revealed, still lies buried in our scriptures mixed with many other things besides. Education in ancient times was directed towards the correct understanding of Life. I hear some one say, "It is so even to this day." True, but only in theory. I request the gentleman who interrupted me to visit any University in India and say with his hand on his heart that the education imparted and controlled by it is not sterile. Universities have been factories where the standardised unemployed are manufactured. What is there and who is there to teach the quest of the "Holy Grail," the search of the sublime instincts in man and his own greatness?

There is revulsion in the minds of an increasing number of Asians from this arid culture that is imparted to us. The pendulum has swung too much in one direction, in the direction the products of whose culture after fully enjoying the so-called "good things of life" still ask questions, "Is the Human Race Getting Anywhere?" "Is Life Worth Living?" If this does not indicate the sterility of Western culture, what else does is beyond me. The East is now awake. It views with suspicion and great concern the mental and moral wrecks of modern Education and faces about to the forest Seminaries of ancient India where Pupil and Teacher lived in close communion with Nature. The effort of the Teacher was solely directed to bring out everything praiseworthy in his Pupil. He fitted the Pupil not only to the life of the world, but he also gave him a strong robust sense of independence and taught him to understand the inwardness of "From the Unreal lead me to the Real, from Darkness lead me to Light, from Death lead me to Immortality."

But we should not forget in spite of our disappointment and disgust at what passed for education and culture, that Forest Seminaries as of yore are an impossibility now. There are neither teachers nor pupils willing to be secluded for years in a peaceful spot if such could be found. Modern age demands contact with life and its many and varied activities and not isolation. In ancient days, the Teachers, embodiments of Life, lived in isolation, and pupils journeyed thither, and now Life itself has become the Teacher and is everywhere, on the mountain-top as in the market place, in the desert waste as in the dancing stream. Education has for centuries now appealed and stimulated the mind of man. There is much self-seeking, narrow individualism to-day. The future of the Human Race would indeed be a sad one if the present soul-less system of bringing up our young continues for long. Mind culture has had its innings and failure is writ large on its achievement. "The stomach and pocket view of life" has to be abandoned once and for good if we have the welfare of our humanity at heart. Our hearts need as much culturing as our minds. There is much Knowledge in this world and much violence also is done to Truth, because man does not understand the why and wherefore of his own being. This supreme knowledge, a knowledge that brings untold happiness, cannot be imbued by mere intellectual feats. Man is a composite animal. He has both heart and mind. The latter has assumed monstrous proportions and the former has atrophied. That is why the gulf between professions and practice has so widened. All good educationists should narrow down this gulf by stressing the education of human emotions as much as they stress the culture of the mind.

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## **Over the Tea-Cup.**

By Dr. A. R. Poduval.



N introducing before the fastidious reader a subject whose only recommendation is its familiarity, I consider it necessary to offer some preliminary remarks.

I am rather fortunate in having my sanctum located on the verandah of the second storey of a decent building in the town. From the corner where I have established myself, I can command an excellent view of the street, and the traffic below—the multitudinous figures foreshortened as they pass up and down; the cars and the buses, with their human load, and the dust-devil they raise in the trail. A benign Municipality has allowed these clouds of dust to rise like a mist pervading the whole atmosphere, and the landscape, seen through this thick envelope, is considerably subdued into a mystic and romantic softness. The shafts of the setting sun striking against it throw up bars of golden light, and give to these atomised cumuli, the transient glamour of a sunset on the hills.

Freed from work, no better spot can be imagined for an observation post. When the schools are dismissed, one of the mighty streams of boys and girls flow along the street; and a friend of mine who happened to see the sight had no hesitation in saying that “the scenery was excellent”. He meant, I am thinking, the scenery presented by the girls rather than the boys. Familiarity, in my case, instead of breeding contempt, has only produced expectation. I am in the habit of viewing the prospect with that philosophic calm, which only custom and a cup of tea have the power to bestow.

A cup of tea! I mean a cup at a time; for there is nothing so provoking for a repetition as a cup of tea. There is inspiration in it. I have an authority for what I say. Mr. H. G. Wells has found inspiration in a cup of tea; and I remember to have read somewhere that his best books were written with the tea-pot beside him. That beverage has extraordinary potentialities—generally for good; for I have never yet read that, after partaking of a cup of this beverage, a man proceeded to do a murder or commit a felony. I am not here thinking of the faddist, who finds in tea some chemical stuff that would unfavourably act upon the mucus membrane of his stomach. He can please himself with water in my town for at least six months of the year, if in the dry season he would migrate elsewhere for a sufficient quantity of his favourite drink.

For more than two centuries, beginning with the poet Cowper, we have had quite an amount of eulogy bestowed on tea. "The cup that cheers, but not inebriates." Well, my readers may ask me if there is so much of inspiration in a beverage that merely cheers, without directly stimulating the higher centres of the brain. Of course, they mean the cup, or better, the glass or pot that brightens the eye, quickens the imagination, and partly or wholly removes the curb on conscious acts. I really cannot be expected to pass an authoritative opinion on that beverage that they have in mind. All that I can say is, that the latter stuff, so far as I have seen its action on other individuals, has a tendency to make a man go sprowling about, instead of inducing him to sit in a place to philosophise on the destiny of the Universe.

Over a cup of tea—or several unconscious cups—I have found that happy medium between sedation and stimulation, so essential for deep and sustained thought. I made this discovery nearly twelve years ago, when I was in London. I used to frequent the "Chinese Restaurant" in Piccadilly, a fashionable place though somewhat costly, where the most thought-provoking teas are made. The effect came on me insidiously, but none the less distinctly perceptible. In those Oriental rooms, where the soft, subdued light of the electric lamps diffuses itself among gossamer curtains, fanciful tapestries, and other furniture toned down into harmony, the Chinese tea blends with the feeling of the general atmosphere of the rooms. The roar from Piccadilly comes up like a distant water-fall, and merely tends to heighten the sombre charm of this Chinese oasis in the midst of the London wilderness.

But it takes sometime and practice to discover the same inspiring influences in a cup of Indian tea. When you know that the best Indian tea goes to England and what you drink here is second or third rate, or some other leaf cut and blackened to look like tea, you can very well understand the slow onset of these influences. Nor can I definitely say that every cup of tea wherever made is capable of conferring the same mental stimulation. I am sure that my cup of tea has that special faculty. It is made—it does not matter who makes it—always by the same person, and she does not desire that her name should appear in print. Once I asked my tea-maker how she manages to put these germs of inspiration into her tea, and she simply said: "Scold the pot."

You can very well understand why I object to the tea made in hotels and restaurants. They cannot afford to 'inspire' the tea they make, for fear of losing custom. For discrimination

comes with inspiration, and no keeper of such houses can very well afford to bless what he produces with any quality that would tend to discriminate between good and bad.

Not the tea alone, but the utensil in which it is served has a considerable effect in enhancing its charms. It is superfluous to remark that I am partial to the procelain cup with a slight outward curve on the rim, which easily fits into the line between the lips. The cool edge is felt first; and then the warm tea. You don't get a shock when your lips touch the rim. I have to emphasise on this point; for several times have I jerked back, as if an electric spark had passed through me, in drinking tea from a metallic vessel, whose edge was like hot coal, though the liquid in it was exceedingly lukewarm—like certain individuals we know of, warm on the first touch, very cool on closer contact.

And now, having introduced the reader to the source of my inspiration—perhaps an exclusive one—he may be prepared for what is to follow. I have only omitted to say one fact, which may offer a partial explanation of the brain-wave that my cup of tea sets in motion. It is the fact that the contents of my cup invariably contain millions of golden dust—thanks to the Town-Council—churned into that impalpable form under the feet of the hundreds of intellectuals who pass along the street. Perhaps this dust has something to do with the stimulation of mental faculties.

I have lately observed that "Satyagraha" is not an exclusive privilege of men, but even animals may be sometimes induced to adopt it. From my post of observation, I have very often noted a whole family of goats going through the process. They take their position right in the middle of the road, standing and ruminating or lying down and resting. They have grown fearless, callous to the rush of buses and cars, and would not budge an inch from their respective places. The vehicles have to change their course, not they. It appears that they have been denied their prime privilege—a grazing ground—and they adopt this measure as a protest.

But, what has made me think deeply about is the destiny of the individuals who pass along this street; the mass of humanity that go up and down right through the thick of the dust, and vanish into mere shadows in the distance. And conspicuously among these are the younger generation of boys and girls from the schools—the girls particularly for preference—who hardly realise how much they gain and how much they lose, during the impressionable years of youth.

Considering that the brain-wave on Education that first came to me is inseparably connected with my post on the verandah and the prospect before me, it is not surprising that I should sometimes be set to brood on what Education is doing for them. And I have thought of the numbers of women who have been profited by Education, especially English Education. I am asked to believe on reliable authority (by Mrs. George, Inspectress of Schools, Cochin State) that English Education has made Mrs. Sarojini Naidu a poetess, and Mrs. Gandhi a well,—a Mrs. Gandhi. I can't put it better, for I do not think that Mrs. Gandhi had an English Education at all! But I have positive proofs that modern education has made school-mistresses and inspectresses, a few doctors and fewer lawyers. This in itself ought to be considered a grand achievement, because it tells us what some women can do.

It is awfully nice of some women who can speak with authority to champion the cause of School Education for our girls, on the principles at present followed. It gives them something to do before they come to the years of discretion. People who have been paid to be loyal to their cause naturally ought to be in the fore-front of this propaganda. When they tell the little girls to look at themselves, presiding over various points in the educational machinery, as Inspectresses and School-mistresses, with hundreds of students bowing before them, who can resist the temptation:

Hope springs eternal in the human breast  
Man never is but always to be blest.

Man, of course, includes woman.

And once this charm of position and salary vanishes, once they find that educational investment is a losing bargain, our schools will begin to get depleted. Education for Education's sake, as everybody knows, is a grand idea with one drawback; very few people believe in it.

That reminds me of a farmer acquaintance of mine, who told me that his younger generation has changed the plough for the printed page. He seriously apprehends that English Education of the modern type has an inveterate tendency to paralyse the limbs for active work. At present, the older generation to which he belongs, till the soil, plough the ground, grow the seed, and from the proceeds feed a whole family. A touch of English immediately induces the children to look on manual labour with disfavour. I think modern School Education is too dignified a business to bestow a second thought on such mean work. And then he proceeds to say, that when he gets old and disabled, or

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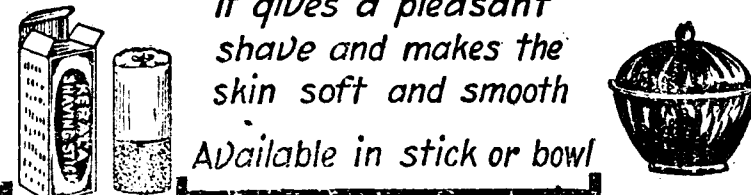


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dies off, he would have his children who have not been taught any job that has hitherto fed the family, wandering about for Government jobs, which have already become very scarce. On a modest calculation, there is no room in the Services for more than 5—7 per cent. of the Eligible. But granting a certain amount of luck (for luck is a thing man always hopes against hope), the little they get will hardly serve to cover the expensive habits that Education confers on them. And so the family cannot be fed. And there shall be want where there was none before. The fields and the ploughs will be deserted, and little men and women will be wandering about in the cities like people who have lost their way in the world.

I agree with him; but the silly farmer cannot conceive of the dignity it gives him to have a family of children who can repeat like a gramophone what all things happened in the year 1759.

## Asha Devi's Consent.

By N. R. Deobhankar.

I

**N**OW is the address getting on, father?" asked Hemanto as he entered Justice Chakraburti's study and approached his littered table. "Aren't you going for your drive?"

"Yes, presently. It's these introductory frills, you know, that take time. Once you get to the subject matter, it's smooth sailing. Of course, the Science Association does make rather a critical audience."

"I wish I had your zeal for astronomy," murmured Hemanto, perching on the table and nearly knocking down the celestial globe. "But I can't bring myself to revel in Vernal Equinox and Baily's Beads and Bode's Law." Then he added, smiling: "Fancy two Presidential Addresses being fashioned under this very roof. Mother is quite excited about hers."

"Has she heard from the Social Conference people, then?"

"She thinks it's as good as settled. --Am I interrupting your work, father?" he asked abruptly, with evident nervousness.

"You know you are, my boy, but what's the matter? Out with it."

"You said you would not open the subject of--of my marriage, until I myself--"

"Yes, of course, and I haven't, have I? Nothing has been farther from my mind at present than a marriage in the family. Well--perhaps that would not be quite correct. Bimal is practically one of us, and I may have thought of her future lately. But as to you it will be time enough in a couple of years when you are 25 and are able to--"

"Yes, oh yes," assented Hemanto hastily, fidgeting with a mariner's compass and distinctly ill at ease.

"Perhaps, it's your mother who is in a hurry," proceeded Mr. Chakraburti. "It's a woman's hankering to queen it over a daughter-in-law, I suppose. But leave it to me, Hemanto. I think I can manage her. And now if you don't mind, let me proceed with--"

"But it's not that, father," faltered Hemanto. "I have no--I mean, it's not mother. I want--I want your consent for marrying, father," he burst out at last.

"Consent for marrying?" repeated Mr. Chakraburti surprised. "By all means, if you wish it, my boy," he added slowly. "I had no idea you felt that way. Who is at the bottom of this inspiration—who is the girl?"

"It's—our Bimal, father."

"Our Bimal?" repeated Mr. Chakraburti, not fully comprehending.

"You don't disapprove, father, do you?" asked Hemanto anxiously. "I know you are fond of her."

"Of course I am, but—I never thought of this, I don't know why. What does she say? Have you asked her?"

"I think she has no objection, father."

"What about your mother? This will be a big surprise to her, I am sure. And you know she doesn't like surprises."

"You said you could manage her," smiled Hemanto.

"That was quite a different proposition, young man. She may or she may not view *this* idea favourably. Let me think. Yes, you had better speak to her about this yourself to-night. You needn't mention our chat. Afterwards we shall see.—And now I really must push on with my address."

Bimal was barely eight when she lost her father, a school master, ten years ago. This was the second and minor calamity that had darkened her tender years, the first and major one being the death of her boy-husband six months before. Binaya Bala, the mother, found herself homeless and utterly unprovided for in the city of Calcutta. After an year of struggle and privation, a kindly neighbour recommended the mother and daughter to the notice of Mrs. Chakraburti, who was known to be wealthy and generous and whose husband was then a rising barrister. Asha Devi readily offered them shelter, partly because she was touched by the widow-hood of the two and partly because she wanted somebody to look after the household. Their refined bearing soon won for the two dependents the position of relations, and Bimal learnt to address Mr. Chakraburti as uncle and Asha Devi as aunt. And to-day after nine years, Binaya Bala was ruling the household, and Bimal was studying in the College like a daughter of the house. Mr. Chakraburti was now a judge at Dacca and Asha Devi an energetic leader of the Women's Movement. They were both popular in the town. Their only son Hemanto was studying Law.

## II

When Asha Devi came up on the terrace that night after dinner, her husband pushed aside his telescope and pulled up a chair for her. "Hemanto says it's definite about your president-ship," he remarked.

"It's as good as settled, and I expect the formal request any time."

"I thought there was some correspondence about it in the press lately. Somebody was evidently canvassing for Mrs. Banerji."

"Yes, I know," she replied, tossing her head. "They can have the Collector's wife if they want. I'm not thirsting for this honour. If they are for making themselves ridiculous it won't break my heart."

"She may not be a University woman like you, nor such an orator, but a correspondent waxed eloquent over her wide travels—"

"Any fool can travel who has money—especially money robbed from the dumb tax-payer. Fancy giving free passage "home" to those whose home is India."

"—And her social charm."

"Which means smirking at the Cantonment officials and feeding their wives with chocolates and cakes."

"They married their daughter out of caste, didn't they?"

"And made a virtue of necessity when no Brahmin youth would have a girl with such a nose for a wife."

"Anyway, there is one point which Mrs. Banerji has scored over you, my dear. She has passed the acid test of re-marriage which you haven't, though obviously it's my fault that you have not been a widow."

"How *can* you talk so flippantly?" she demanded. But a smile escaped her in spite of her displeasure. "Do be serious for a while," she pleaded. "I want to talk about Hemanto."

"Why, what's wrong with him?"

"It's some silly notion.—He wants to marry Bimal."

"Does he, the young rogue?"

"But it's so ridiculous."

"Young blood, my dear, young blood. But—er—how is it particularly ridiculous? We can't sort of dedicate him to a temple, make a Bhikku of him, against his will, can we?"

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## ASHA DEVI'S CONSENT

33

"Don't be tiresome. What I mean is that he must make a better match. You know how Barrister Chatterjee's wife has been dropping broad hints. Their daughter, or any one of a dozen others as well connected, can be had for the asking. But Hemanto has no ambition whatever. He takes after you."

"I haven't married so very badly, after all, have I? If he does half as well, he'll be lucky."

"Flattery won't serve you this time," she smiled.

"Bimal has no rich connections. But you have brought her up as your own. Isn't that a great thing? What a fuss you made when she entered College? Her mother didn't feel half so proud. I own I hadn't thought of her as Hemanto's wife, but then parents are proverbially blind. Let's be thankful, my dear, that he hasn't brought home some flashy doll from the mission school for our blessings."

"How sly she has been about it all!"

"They have been the first to tell you—at least Hemanto has, hasn't he? What more do you expect? Come, my dear, don't be so hard. Think of the days of my apprenticeship to your father. You didn't confide to your mother the moment you felt an interest in me, you know."

"Well, its no use arguing," said Mrs. Chakrabarti, having no argument to offer. "I love the girl. She came to us a pale, timid child of nine, and I have watched her grow into a pretty girl of eighteen with rosy cheeks and laughing eyes. And I am anxious that she should marry happily. But *this* is impossible. I have told Hemanto how I feel about it, and I have told you. If he likes, he can of course have his way. This is not an age when mothers are indispensable for weddings."

"Nor fathers, for the matter of that," said Mr. Chakrabarti, recognising the red flag. "Do have a peep at Saturn which I had in focus when you came up. No wedding problems there. It's a pity though. What a capital place it would have made for love-making, with its nine moons!"

### III

As the week wore on, the Chakrabarti home lost its cheerful atmosphere, and Asha Devi was not any the less unhappy because it was mainly her doing. Nor was her mood improved by the uncertainty about the Presidentship on which she had set her heart. The offer she had counted upon had not yet materialised, and there were more letters in the press supporting Mrs. Banerji. Mr. Chakrabarti alone remained serene and smiling, devoting his leisure to his astronomical address and commandeering Bimal for painting his diagrams.

Asha Devi and Bimal had withdrawn to their rooms after morning coffee; and Mr. Chakraborti and Hemanto were still lingering in the verandah overlooking the garden, scanning their post, when Asha Devi burst in with the morning's *Progress* in her hand.

"Do you see what lies they are circulating?" she exclaimed with indignation.

"What's it, mother?" asked Hemanto. •

"Read this," she pointed to a paragraph. It was evidently a veiled reference to her rejection of Hemanto's suit and an insinuation that the widowhood of Bimal was at the root of her opposition. It read:

Dear Sir.—It is with keen interest that I have followed the correspondence in the columns of your esteemed paper regarding the Presidentship of the Social Conference. Let me freely admit that I have been till now, like the majority of your readers, for the enlightened wife of Justice Chakraborti-Shrimati Asha Devi, B. A., whose services to the cause of reform are so well known. But it has been whispered quite recently that, in a situation affecting her intimately, her attitude has raised serious doubts as to her loyalty to those views on widow remarriage which she has professed so ardently and preached so long. Personally I cannot believe this to be true, but in a matter of such vital importance to our cause, one has no right to be swayed by private opinion. I would, therefore, urge the Provincial Committee to ascertain the truth of this matter before committing themselves to a choice of such momentous significance.

Yours

"Disinterested."

"Confound his impertinence," exclaimed Hemanto flinging aside the paper. "What business have people to poke their noses into our private affairs?"

"This is the price one pays, my boy," replied Mr. Chakraborti "for enjoying the public's favour. Your affairs are theirs."

"I don't care a pin for this wretched presidentship," said Asha Devi on the verge of tears, "but it hurts to be so maliciously misrepresented. You know that my objection was not on this ground."

"Of course, we do," replied Hemanto stoutly. "I wonder who has been carrying tales."

"I did speak to Sashi Sen-Gupta at the Club, but it was in strict confidence. How could she go and gossip about it in the columns of a daily rag?"

"It may not be she, after all," remarked Mr. Chakraborti. "You have no idea what long noses these press-sleuths have."

"But is no one going to expose this outrageous libel, whoever is its author?"

"You are too thin-skinned, my dear," said Mr. Chakraborti. "The writer accuses you of nothing wicked, and he seems to have taken a fairly impersonal stand—."

"Impersonal indeed," snapped his wife.

"You leave it to me, mother," declared Hemanto warmly "I'll give the gossip-monger a bit of my mind even if it takes a full column."

"A column!" exclaimed Mr. Chakraborti with sudden animation. "I could get you a handsome apology with just two lines," he added with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

"Why don't you then?" demanded Mrs. Chakraborti.

"Well, here goes to please you," he replied and scribbled a few words. "Send this to the Editor under your signature and see what happens."

This is what the mother and son read over his shoulder:—

*Justice and Mrs. Chakraborti announce the engagement of their son, Mr. Hemanto Kumar to Shrimati Bimala Devi Bhattachari.*

For a moment they were both speechless.

I say, that's a great idea," exclaimed Hemanto, brightening up. "I never thought of that as a silencer. What do you say, mother? Do send it on," he pleaded.

"Ah, Hemanto, are you hit so hard?" she asked, drawing him to her side and looking fondly into his eyes. "Let it be as you wish, then," she said with a sigh. "I have been dying to make it up with you these three days but hadn't the courage. No mother yields up her son to a young woman without a wrench, my boy. And the jealousy is often more intense where the rivals have known each other. There,—" she concluded, wiping a tear. "You can laugh at me, if you like, but do not let Bimal hate me. Tell her all," and she left the verandah greatly overcome.

#### IV

A week went by after the announcement of Hemanto's engagement during which congratulations poured in from all sides and the Presidentship of the Social Conference was offered to and accepted by Asha Devi. There was a happy excitement and a great bustle in the Chakraborti household.

Mr. Chakraborti was at his desk with Bimal and Hemanto standing by his chair on either side.

"What letter you mean, Bimal?" asked Mr. Chakraburti.

"The one by that horrid 'Disinterested'."

"And what are you trying to insinuate, little puss?" he asked pinching her ear. "You seem to know more than is good for you."

"I do know more than is good for you, uncle," she retorted with a ripple of laughter. "Look at this, Hemanto," she said handing him a crumpled paper. "You know I have been doing uncle's diagrams here. I wanted a piece of paper to wipe a brush a few days ago, and I picked this up from the waste paper basket."

"I say!—it is father's hand—and a draft of that very letter! You mean it was father who—"

"Hush!" interrupted Mr. Chakraburti, snatching the tell-tale paper as he saw Asha Devi enter, and coolly tearing it up. "Ah, here you are," he addressed his wife imperturbably. "I was just going to narrate to these love-sick people the origin of that beautiful Aryan custom of the bride-groom showing the Pole star to the bride on their first night."

"You and your stars are like Mr. Dick and his King Charles' head," laughed his wife. The other three also joined heartily as the joke was not all on her side. "Do talk of mundane affairs for a while," she continued. "The Social Conference begins the day after these two are married. I thought we might be at home to the whole gathering one day as part of the marriage reception."

"Splendid idea," assented Mr. Chakraburti, "but why not my Science Association too? We meet the same morning."

"Do we want that bald-headed, be-spectacled crowd, Bimal?" asked Asha Devi.

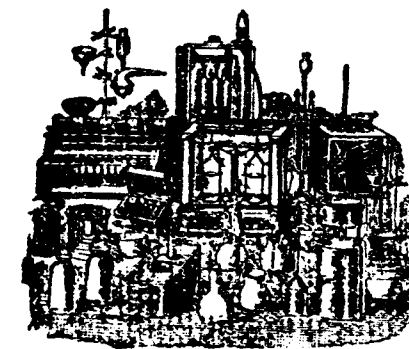
"Do let's put up with it, aunt. One of them at least is not so very bald, you know," she added playing tenderly with Mr. Chakraburti's grey hair.

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Unmortal moment is the bliss thereof:  
'Tis grief that yearneth every way to reach  
Remembered rapture by remembered love.  
Love takes no count!—Forget the tale, fond lover,  
To-day the hours are freighted with pure gold,  
And when the golden days of love are over,  
And nought remains but as a story told,  
With benediction of that grace sublime,  
Life shall unfold love's page a second time.

*Govinda Krishna Chettur.*

## The Stolen Silver.

By T. K. Venkatraman, M.A., L.T.

14



“DID you hear the news?” exclaimed Gopu, as he came into my room, and threw himself violently into my best cane-chair.

I was absorbed in the perusal of Louie's book on “Primitive Society,” but when Gopu is about no work is possible, and I shut up the book with an air of resignation. Readers of this journal have already made the acquaintance of my friend, Gopu.\* He is, or, at least professes to be, a “born detective” whatever these words might mean. Like the usual detective of fiction, he has the greatest contempt for the police force; but if he is reminded that his own achievements are not exactly marked by brilliance, he loses his temper. I am a fellow who is averse to unpleasant scenes; and hence I steer clear of this topic in conversation.

“Did you hear the news?” repeated Gopu, extending himself in the chair and unconsciously rubbing on the cushion all the dust which covered his feet. “Mr. Narayanan's house was broken into by burglars last night, and his silver vessels have been stolen.”

I remembered Mr. Narayanan. We were at school together, and Narayanan, though not very smart in class, was very good at cricket. His perfect command of pitch and break and his beautifully easy action formed the envy of all of us. I dimly recollect that he never progressed beyond the School Final. Then some rich relative of his died, and as a reversioner, Narayanan came into the money. Followed a time of prodigal debauchery. Like many young men of the present day, Narayanan took to Western methods of life, including its vices. His bungalow of white marble near Adyar was crowded with the rarest furniture money could buy—gilded mirrors, priceless tapestries, Sevres vases, figures in bronze, curtains of French silk, magnificent candelabras, and bric-a-brac gathered regardless of cost. The garden was full of fancy grottoes, where rare orchids of varied hues flowered in luxuriance, and beautiful lawns surrounded by statues. The dinner table groaned under its burden of gold and silver plate, and the rarest wines served in crystal bowls flowed like water. Narayanan was a splendid host, and several times I had visited him, though I never used to share his Westernised meals. Many a time had I met him in a friendly

\* See the Scholar Annuals for 1929 and 1930.

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game of chess, and shared his laugh at me as he, with a triumphant cry of "checkmate," watched my gaze wandering from Knight to Bishop, and Bishop to Castle in vain search for help. But all that is now only a sad memory. Narayanan ran through most of his fortune. His splendid bungalow and the bulk of his furniture and property went to his creditors, and he is living now in a house in the next street—a sadder and a wiser man—on the property still left after the smash.

I was very much grieved to hear of his new misfortune. I gathered from Gopu that Narayanan, who is a bachelor, started for the theatre that night, leaving the house in the charge of his only servant—a Nair youth. But the only car which remained with Narayanan had become a ramshackle thing which jumped and jolted even on the smoothest tarred roads, while the valves wheezed and squealed at every movement, and the sides of the rickety bonnet clashed intolerably. Before Narayanan had gone halfway in this ancient car, it stuck up somewhere and stopped dead. After vainly trying to revive it, Narayanan got some help, propelled it into a garage, and returned home on foot. When he returned, he was surprised to see the door ajar, the Nair servant disappeared, and along with him his silver vessels which were kept locked up in a bureau. The police had been informed, of course.

"What do you think of all this?" asked Gopu. "Of course, the obvious thing," I replied. "The servant walked off with the vessels. I believe it is only a matter of time before he is taken."

Gopu cast upon me the pitying look which he reserves for fools. "I am surprised at you, Balu," he said "you do not notice this very important thing. This Nair servant had been, for a very long time, in the service of Mr. Narayanan. He had been left alone in the house on numberless occasions. All along, he had been faithful. Mr. Narayanan even now cannot bring himself to believe in that man's guilt. We may dismiss the hypothesis that the servant was the offender. If we look deeper, which the police never do, the whole sinister truth flashes vividly before us."

What do you mean?" I burst out.

Gopu smiled. "You may well feel puzzled," he said. "To pierce through this tangle of circumstances needs a powerful intelligence which I humbly claim that I alone possess. I want you to remember carefully that Mr. Narayanan was a millionaire some time ago. You will understand that a millionaire is the *bête noir* of the Communists who are likely, therefore, to resort

to any means—fair or foul—to destroy or at least impoverish the wealthy classes. It is my well-formed opinion that there is a powerful Communist focus in India which works in secret and whose malign influence radiates on all sides."

"I gather," I interrupted, "that, according to you, the burglary in Mr. Narayanan's house ceases to be a mere larceny, but must rather be regarded as an act of vengeance taken on Society by infuriated Communist elements, and thus, it becomes an episode in a war which would have catastrophic effects on modern civilisation—the terrible strife between the Haves and Have-nots."

"You are quite correct."

"Well, granting the truth of what you say, the Communists must be idiots when they attack a man like Narayanan who has long ago ceased to be a millionaire and who cannot even be called wealthy now."

"My dear, Balu," said Gopu "what you have said just now only increases the strength of my hypothesis. Remember that the fame of Mr. Narayanan's wealth had travelled all over India, and even now, though he has lost most of his money, he is still a *rentier* living on the income of the property left to him. An attack on him, according to the Communists, would really be an attack on Plutocracy personified. I have not the least doubt that Mr. Narayanan must thank his stars that he was not at home when the event happened, for the perpetrators of the outrage aimed, not only against his money, but also against his life."

"How do you know that?" I exclaimed.

Gopu made a gesture of impatience. "You forget the fate of the Nair servant," he said. "The criminals found this faithful servant at the house. Possibly, he made resistance, or he was surprised, before he could do so. I do not know whether he has been slain, but there is no doubt that the assailants removed his body—alive or dead—and took it with them. The police will soon find his body, or what is left of it somewhere, if they make a careful search."

"But, Gopu," I interposed, "why should they remove the body of the servant?"

My friend replied with a careless nod. "There must be some deep purpose in it. How should I know the tortuous methods of the Communist mind? I am going to apply myself to this problem, and I dare say that I will be able to throw light on the whole episode in a few days. I think I have got a clue down Mylapore way, and very soon, you will see me in the limelight as

the superb genius who, by his daring intuition and marvellous penetration, frustrated the audacious plot of the Communists in this city."

So saying, he rose and left, and I turned with relief to my book, amused at the curious mental twist of my friend.

## II

Two days later, I met Narayanan in the Club. He made no reference to the loss, but lead me straight to the billiard table. He took his cue, chalked it carefully and called out "you break". I started the game and made a few cannons, when Gopu suddenly rushed in and interrupted the game. "I bring you good news," he actually shouted out to Narayanan. "Balu alone knows that I applied myself to the problem of the theft of your silver vessels. I was sure that the police would go on a false scent, but I did not want to speak to you until I progressed towards the unravelling of the affair. I guessed from the very first that it was a Communist outrage, and this suspicion was strengthened when I saw two bearded up-countrymen whispering together in a coffee stall in Mylapore. I followed them secretly, and located that they lived in a small house near Thousand Lights. This morning, I watched their house as usual, and followed them into another coffee stall. I seated myself at the next table, and was listening to see if I could hear scraps of their whispered conversation. You can imagine my thrill of delight when I heard one raise his voice a little and say something about the concealment of the silver. Immediately, the other frowned and made a gesture of warning, and the two subsided again into whispers. I followed them as they went out, when suddenly one of them turned ferociously upon me and asked me angrily why I was following them, letting me know that they had observed my movements from that morning. I made some stupid excuse and slipped away. But my suspicions were confirmed, and I have informed the police instructing them to raid the house. I hope they will recover not only your vessels, but discover clues about the disappearance of your servant, and papers relating to Communist propaganda. I am sure that, hereafter, my reputation as a brilliant private investigator will have to be acknowledged even by the police, and as for your silver vessels, you may take it that they are practically in your hands."

Narayanan looked strangely at Gopu.

"My dear sir," he said, speaking slowly as is his wont, "they are already in my hands."

Gopu's face worked queerly. "Already in your hands?" he stammered.

Narayanan seated himself on the edge of the table and said: "The fact is that my servant who had remained faithful to me till now had been gradually falling into bad ways. The toils of a woman had involved him in a labyrinth of debts and difficulties. He succumbed to temptation and decamped with my silver vessels that night. He is now in police custody, and my vessels have been recovered from the Marwari with whom they had been pledged."

I was wondering what Gopu was going to say, when Sub-Inspector Varadan entered the room. He bade everybody good evening and, nodding to Gopu, said, "The birds about whom you gave information have been taken into custody."

Gopu's face brightened, but before he could say anything, Mr. Varadan turned to us and said: "For long, we had an eye on these fellows, as we had reason to think that they were implicated in a scheme to smuggle silver from Pondicherry. We got positive proof only to-day just before Mr. Gopu came to us with his curious story of the Communist plot, and I did not want to spoil that by assuring him that we had already decided to take the men into custody on other grounds."

I turned to speak to Gopu, but he had slipped away secretly.

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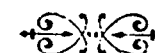
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## Lytton Strachey.

By K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.



LYTTON Strachey was thirtytwo when he published his first thesis, *Landmarks in French Literature*. His previous literary work had consisted of a few discerning and original studies of some English and French Masters. In 1913 his essay on Madame du Deffaud appeared. Already Lytton Strachey had discovered the true bent of his genius and evolved the appropriate medium of its expression.

Lytton Strachey was born on March 1, 1880, a son of the late Sir Richard Strachey. In his portrait of Carlyle there is an allusion to his grandfather, Edward Strachey, "an Anglo-Indian of cultivation and intelligence". In the fulness of time he was educated at Cambridge: as we learn from his study of Sir Thomas Browne "he has known.....few happier moments than those in which he has rolled the periods of the *Hydriotaphia* out to the darkness and nightingales through the studious cloisters of the Trinity". Presumably, what he studied he enjoyed, and naturally it became in due course an integral part of his intellectual make up. Sometime later, the University of Edinburgh conferred upon him the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws.

The bibliography of Lytton Strachey's works is not an imposing one. In this respect, he stands almost alone among his contemporaries. The late C. E. Montague also wrote very sparingly. And he, like Lytton Strachey, wrote memorable English. When one ponders over the few items of the bibliography, one regrets that they are too few: and yet one feels a salutary satisfaction that these are all masterpieces—Strachey's more indubitably so—and that these are assured of a safe enough voyaging through eternity.

After the publication of *Landmarks in French Literature* and *Madame du Deffaud*, the Great War intervened. But Strachey was quietly working at a new book. Across the murky horizon of 1918, when one was either wholly disillusioned or wholly frenzied, Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* flared up like a most dazzling rocket. It became in a trice the talk of the English-speaking peoples; became a record best-seller. It gave English Literature, quite unexpectedly, something definitely new.

Three years later *Queen Victoria* appeared and won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for 1922. The same year Strachey's biographical and literary essays, covering a period of about twenty

years' literary activity, were brought together and published as *Books and Characters*. S. P. B. Mais said that it is the only book of criticism likely to be read one hundred years hence. *The Times* said the same thing but less explicitly: "Mr. Strachey's is perhaps the finest critical intelligence at work in English Literature to-day."

Three years passed. In 1925 the honour of the Leslie Stephen Lectureship was conferred upon Lytton Strachey. He selected as his subject Pope, even though another lecturer of the same foundation, Prof. J. W. Mackail, had discoursed on the same subject six years earlier. It is the rule that foundation lectures are pitifully disappointing: however, Strachey's *Pope* is one of the very few splendid exceptions. In but thirty pages of packed brilliance and scholarship, Strachey ably establishes his point,—that the heroic couplet was Pope's criticism of life. What exquisite thrill one experiences, what true illumination one gets as he reads aloud the few but luminous pages of his lecture!

Three more years passed. With *Elizabeth and Essex*, which was published in the autumn of 1928, Strachey seemed to hint that he had more or less done with the Victorian era. Exhibiting as it did the full maturity of his powers, this Tragic History was hailed with a chorus of praise in both the continents. Eminent critics of the standing of Desmond McCarthy and J. B. Priestley considered it an asset to Literature no less than to History. The ill-tempered vituperations of Charles Smyth in the *Criterion* and the quieter protests of Christopher Hollis in the *Dublin Review* passed almost unnoticed.

Meanwhile, stray studies, book-reviews and short biographical sketches from the pen of Strachey were being featured in *Life and Letters*, *The New Statesman* and *Nation and Athenaeum*. In the spring of this year these were reprinted and issued as *Portraits in Miniature* by the firm of Chatto and Windus. The price is six shillings per copy.

Lytton Strachey has peopled his works with a multitude of very human persons. In his earliest complete work, *Landmarks in French Literature* he executed the portraits of Saint Simon and Voltaire who live and breathe in its pages. *Eminent Victorians*, beyond revivifying the lives and reenacting the existences of Manning, Dr. Arnold, Gordon and Florence Nightingale, brings to life also many others—Newman, Sidney Herbert, Gladstone, Evelyn Baring, Lord Hartington—who all live, energised by that Promethean heat, which is the art of Lytton Strachey. In *Queen Victoria* again the stage is crowded with so motley a crowd as their Majesties George IV and William IV, the long succession of Premiers from Melbourne to Gladstone, uncle Leopold and

the incomparable Prince Consort, Baron Stockmar, Baroness Lelizen and the too playful Edward, Prince of Wales. In *Books and Characters* and *Elizabeth and Essex* it is the same story: Voltaire, Frederick the Great, Madame du Deffaud, Lady Stanhope, Mr. Creevy, Rousseau, Henri Beyle, Philip of Spain, the brothers Bacon, Elizabeth and Essex themselves—what a real world we move about! And the latest book of all is frankly a collection of portraits, portraits which display within a very small compass the curious and vanished existences of the heroes he has chosen.

The technique of Lytton Strachey is an incredible amalgam of the best things in Saint Simon, Voltaire, Racine, Johnson and perhaps even Macaulay. In Victorian times the art of biography had sunk to its lowest level. Biography meant eulogy; weaknesses, however numerous, foibles, however ridiculous, were not to be hinted at: the portrait was to be one with the prim respectability so characteristic of the age. Biographers were expected to cast their subjects—however conflicting be the facts of the case—into Theophrastian models of character. Dr. Arnold, the model school-master; General Gordon, the Christian General; Cardinal Manning, the saintly prelate; Victoria, the august queen; Florence Nightingale, the Angel of Mercy: it was thus biography dealt with the ancient Victorians. But Strachey chose to regard them as persons, not types: in so doing he but followed the same example of Dr. Johnson in the *Lives of the Poets*.

Saint Simon too taught him a valuable lesson,—Saint Simon who "excels in that most difficult art of presenting the outward characteristics of persons, calling up before the imagination not only the details of their physical appearance but the more recondite effects of their manner and their bearing." Strachey's descriptions of his heroes are, accordingly, always striking, and they make an unforgettable impression on our minds. Choosing the examples at random from *Portraits in Miniature* alone, we see Sir John Harington "with tossed-back curly hair, a tip-tilted nose, a tiny point of a beard and a long ear-ring"; Muggleton, "tall, thick-set, vigorous, with a great head, whose low brow, high cheekbones and projecting jaw almost suggested some Simian creature"; Mary Berry who sat "bolt upright, in her black wig, with her rouged cheeks, her commanding features, and her loud conversations, garnished with vigorous oaths"; Madame de Lievan, whose long gouty leg and her "too pronounced features were somehow fascinating"; Gibbon, "a little figure, extraordinarily rotund.....surmounted on a top heavy head, with a button nose planted amid a vast expanse of cheek and ear, and chin upon chin rolling downward"; Macaulay, "the short square

man"; Froude the colour of whose eyes " was neither brown, nor blue, nor black but red "; and last of all, Creighton, " spectacled and bearded, with swift clerical legs," whose " voice—a competent, commanding, yet slightly agitated voice—says sharply 'where is my black boy?'"

Macaulay, notwithstanding his " coarse texture of mind," his " itch for the obvious and the emphatic," his " middle-class Victorian complacency," was an artist and had " a supreme sense of the narrative form". This capacity for narration was worth acquiring and Lytton Strachey acquired it. Speaking of Macaulay's *History* he says: " It presses on, with masterly precipitation, from start to finish. Everything falls into place." All this is equally true of *Eminent Victorians*, *Queen Victoria* and *Elizabeth and Essex*.

To Racine's influence is perhaps traceable Strachey's acute sense of form. Even in his miniature portraits one is aware of a perceptible wholeness: where they are minutely detailed, one's curiosity is roused, but the picture preserves its balance. Wit, irony are both there, though delicately blended with the narrative. The Voltairean grin is chastened into the Stracheyan smile, which occasionally—as when one reads of the sad end of Dr. Colbatch with " *Arrogat*, my lord" on his lips—takes one to the verge of tears. Everything is as it should be.

Lytton Strachey's style is peculiarly suited to his purpose. It is fundamentally an erroneous and perverse view that Charles Smyth took when he said that to Strachey the adjectives in little bundles "do duty for a style". On the contrary, "the pervasive irony which runs through every line and is the spirit of Lytton Strachey's prose" is the effect of the deliberately chosen adjectives and qualifying phrases. Take "indefatigable" from—"his father's first wife had been a natural daughter of her own indefatigable sire"—and you take away its sting. Some words occur in his pages more often than others: 'strange,' 'curious,' 'inevitable,' 'profound' and such that suggest wonder, surprise or strength. It is also a fact that most of Strachey's heroes are rebels,—they are romantics having more of the Don Quixote or the monkey in them than of the Deity. Again and again, the problem of death is stated; again and again he describes how his characters embarked on their final voyage. And his style is everywhere supremely competent. The wriggles of a soul, its lacerations, its languishings, its persistent longings, all are portrayed with a subtlety and a force that unerringly carry conviction. And so too with its riotous intoxications: then is Lytton Strachey's style a frenzied feast indeed!

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## First Class Tickets for Luggage & Third Class for Men.\*

By K. S. Venkatramani.



RUE to his word, Rangan arrived at the Egmore Station in a high grade Buick taxi. He had already booked in the morning his passage to Tranquebar, taking a first class ticket. In a fit of modesty he gave his name as plain R. S. Rangaswami on the reservation ticket. He purposely withheld the magic letters I. C. S., as he had a feeling that without the trappings of office his personality would not come up to the ordinary requirements of the designation. He now travelled alone even without a *chokra*, for the worship of Rajee must be with undivided devotion.

But Rangan was not totally devoid of personality. True, he had not a fine physical presence, a fair complexion and a symmetric and stately build. But he had a kind of intellectual presence whose magnetism was felt by those who could respond to it, a very cultured few. That was the chief quality that pulled Rajeswari to Rangan even beyond the seas. It was as a Socialistic preacher that Rangan found his full stature, and it acted as well as a preliminary incentive to a keener study of the I. C. S. curricula. He had the magic, suffusing glow of sincerity, which all born orators develop at the tip of their tongue like the fireless glow—the glow-worm does at the tail.

Otherwise Rangan looked a very common man, dark in complexion, awkward and shuffling in gait, tall and thin, though with an ungainly but distinguished countenance. But it was his voice that had the redeeming gift. Its timbre was sweet and attractive. It had a converting touch. But these are qualities not felt at the first sight but only in the intimacies of conversation. So Rangan, now no more an orator but an administrative head, felt the need to assert and proclaim his dignity, of belted peons and the flowing toga robes of attendants, who went about in front fussing and hissing. For Rajeswar Bai's sake he hurried up to Madras all alone, even without a cook.

The moment Rangan touched the 'second class' flight of steps, he was besieged by a ragged army of porters. He had developed recently a considerable habit for heavy luggage, though in his student days he was famous for travelling light—in fact,

\* A chapter from Mr. K. S. Venkataramani's new novel, "Kandan, the Patriot" to be published in book form early in November.

except for the dhoti he wore, he had nothing surplus to carry home after the vacation. The Egmore third class entrance was full of such vivid memories for him. But he quickly turned away from this plebian scene of his earlier years. Of course, the ragged army of porters was unaware of the august presence of the Assistant Collector.

Rangan, who knew well how to organise and present the case of a trade union of porters if the call came, knew nothing of the highly skilled and diplomatic negotiations required to settle a reasonable charge for his luggage with these hungry men. He stood still besieged by the clamours of the army. He had other matters of importance weighing in his mind. Meanwhile, for every little bag, like ants from an ant-hole, came running in crowded confusion porters, black and fair, young and old, moustached and clean-shaven. Every one took hold of an article unceremoniously and claimed special appointment, some by virtue of gesture, some by a wink of the master's eye, and some more audacious than the rest by express call by name.

Rangan found it impossible to quell this riot of co-operation, and resigned himself to his fate, which would after all mean but a rupee more for these poor fellows. Were not his early Socialistic doctrines worth that much at least in this critical hour?

Porters are generally a shrewd lot taught in the rough school of railway station life with its fine variety of experiences, from generosity to meanness, from sterling honesty to vile trickery. They found out his name and class; he had already been spotted in the morning as a possible prey, and his pedigree traced sufficient for their purposes, except for the I. C. S. for which there was no warrant about him. His luggage safely found its way to the first class berth assigned to him. But Rangan's transit seemed less easy.

Rangan was faced with a real problem. Rajeswari Bai was travelling, and he must find for her a berth along with him. Now he regretted that he had not used in the morning the magic words I. C. S. Now to declare to the Railway menial officers that he was an I. C. S. just to secure another berth was to court an enquiry.

Then the Assistant Collector in mufti approached the ticket-collector on duty at the entrance to the platform, standing at ease with a serenity and sourness patented only in Railway service and asked him very gently, "May I see the station-master?"

"No, you can't see him," came the abrupt reply, like a shot from a toy air-gun.

"Why not?"

"Why not! I say you can't. He's very busy."

"May I go in?"

"Yes, if you have a platform ticket—one anna, please; put the nickel-piece in the slot and pull out a ticket this way." The ticket collector directed the Assistant Collector as to how to put a penny in the slot and learn the intricacies of the latest improvement.

Rangan searched his pocket for a nickel piece but found only a four anna silver bit. "I haven't a nickel piece, collector. But here's a four anna silver. Please hav't."

Rangan slipped the coin with a faint smile. The ticket collector understood the kindness, and took the silver bit, stealing a glance all over, especially towards the doors of a room marked, "Station Master's Room". He became gracious all at once.

"Very well, sir, please come in. I'm at your service. The station master is a very big man—an European. I'll do my best to put you in the way."

"Thanks. What is your pay, Mr. Ticket Collector?"

"Twenty-five rupees, sir, and I'm a family man with five daughters and three sons; and we have to somehow make both ends meet."

"Yes, I quite see your misfortune. Just help me a little. I've taken a first class to Tranquebar by the Boat-Mail."

"First class to Tranquebar! Then where is the need for a platform ticket, sir? I am so sorry—"

"It doesn't matter at all, a few annas, Mr. Ticket Collector. I want another berth in the same cabin. A lady is travelling with me, and I must find her a seat at all cost. Would you kindly arrange?"

"I'm glad you have come a little early. I'll do my best and let you know in five minutes."

Rangan, the Assistant Collector, slipped a rupee into the spacious hands of the ticket collector, whose grateful fingers closed in joy on the rupee with a falcon's speed. The ill-pared nails scratched on the thin skin of the Collector a trail of comradeship in an hour of need and service, and established a real union of hearts between the two collectors.

There was immediately a significant moving of menial officials. It was the signal for a windfall somewhere, like the fall of a ball of rice for the crows. For the rupee, deftly represented

as only half, had to undergo five shares for the fulfilment of its mission.

The Boat Mail has always a crowded traffic. There was no extra I class berth available to manipulate easily. But soon it was found that a fat Chetti was travelling first in the same cabin. He was always easy material to negotiate with in these matters where fundamental rights were concerned. It was at once decided, of course exparte, by the menial Railway gods that he should either travel second class by Boat Mail or first class by the next train which leaves an hour later.

For money-lenders are usually the meekest in the world, though they are the most courageous in matters calling for affidavits. For usury kills the red corpuscles in the blood, though it increases the deposit of fat very near the heart.

The Chetti, who had arrived clear half an hour earlier than Rangan, was solemnly appraised of the difficulties in the way of his travelling first class, as a 'dorai' wanted to travel first class with a lady. The final choice was put before him: the second class or the next train.

The Chetti readily consented, saying humbly, "First or second is the same to me, sir. I buy first for prestige—a little place in any corner of the Boat Mail, I pray, will do for me. I have to attend to-morrow my grand-daughter's marriage in time, and the second train goes too late for the occasion."

Rangan was overjoyed with the value of his rupee. Happy and fluttering, everything ready, he was waiting eagerly at the portico, craning his neck and drying his eyes to sight Rajeswari Bai. He fancied he was already rolling at forty miles an hour in the luxurious first class cabin of the Boat Mail with Rajee by his side. Meanwhile, every hooting car that came grinding at the foot of the flight of steps raised his hopes. Time fled painfully, and his eyes dimmed with disappointment. Still only fifteen minutes left! Rajee is not the soul to break her words or change her mind.

He thought he heard her voice emerging from the crashing din and hellish noise at the entrance to the third class gate, where a raging crowd was fighting for every inch of standing space as if in a battle-field. He quickly ran up to her.

Rajeswari Bai came by bus which ran late as it burst its tyre on the way while it leisurely canvassed for custom. On her arrival, even the few things she carried, a little bag and a small bed, were annexed without her consent and without any ceremony by a crowd of porters, who now quarrelled among

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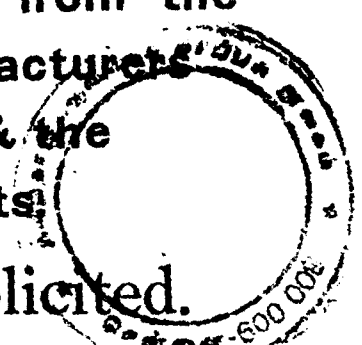


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## FIRST CLASS TICKETS FOR LUGGAGE 51

themselves as to who first touched the luggage, and who should have the right to carry. It is always a difficult point, which even the International Court of Justice at Geneva or The Hague cannot decide after all the evidence in the case. For hungry hands fly to their food with the same velocity.

Rangan was delighted. "That's not the way, Rajee. It is the wretched third class entrance, the same as ever, a little hell on earth in India. Here it is—our way to the first class entrance. I've booked first for both of us."

The Assistant Collector turned a little with an air of authority to the shouting, unruly lot of porters who had not yet decided the subtle question of who touched first. "I'll cane you, rascals, you feller there, take up the things," and Rangan pointed to a broad shouldered Atlas who seemed to have just come to see what the matter was. The last called was the first chosen.

"No, no, Ranga, I carry my own things—there is not much. Besides I am travelling third." There was decision in her voice and eyes.

"Travelling third, hell, it is here Rajee. It is not England, Rajee, it is hell; slime, spit and filth. Travelling third, you who filled the P. & O. boat with your royal luggage and trunks, and travelled first class in a first class ocean-liner, to travel third in the S. I. R. Are you mad? You will suffocate yourself. I've booked first class for both of us, a single cabin, and it is waiting ready for us."

Rangan entreated her in vain. Rajeswarini did not move an inch. "I'm travelling third, no doubt about it. If you want my company, go and take two third class tickets to Tranquebar."

## II

But getting a third class ticket at Egmore Station is an acrobatic feat which some enterprising firm may well turn into a motion-picture for the joy of the world, of course after paying for their rights to the South Indian Railway. Rangan knew it, and remembered his agility in his younger days to glide like an eel through sweating masses of men.

Just in front of the third class booking office window stands a stately revolving iron cage six feet high and divided into four folds. One should pass through this cage to secure a ticket.

There was already a heaving, raging, cursing, sweating crowd of old and young, struggling for their way to the sacred cage that issued the pass to Heaven. The lord of tickets sat on the other side careless of the woes of mankind—amidst heaps of

silver and copper pieces thrown in hollow discs. He seemed a veteran of seventy years, and his *namam* was faint, being wet with the oiled perspiration of ages. He had long ago ceased to wipe off this running brook as it proved to be a perennial stream. He was sick of the toiling crowd before him, and recently he had calamities of his own. His daughter was widowed, and he applied for leave which could not be granted, as no relieving hand suitable to such a big station as Egmore was available. Just the previous day in the Boat Mail issue he had lost one rupee, eight annas and three pies. The thought of loss still racked him, for it meant to his family the loss of so many measures of gingely oil.

The crowd in the cage was getting thicker, and by sheer excess of weight the revolving cage refused to move. For the booking clerk had fallen into a conversation with an old friend of his from his own village, whom he had not seen for several years. His friend had now exercised the privilege to call on him in his own sacred room and take the ticket from within as a demonstration of his special intimacy with the lord of tickets. He went on talking leisurely of health, wealth and climate, and making prolonged enquiries of sundry trifles. The booking clerk, sick of this damned work for ages with no chance for promotion, stopped his work at the dating machine, stretched his legs out, and chattered at ease.

Only five minutes more for the train to start, and the first bell rang. It was death-knell to the frightened sheep in the pen, and they redoubled their god-given bleating devices. But the lord of tickets chewed the pan, and rolled his tongue with the new-comer, occasionally digging out a particle of nut in between the aged teeth.

Rangan had just arrived within the cage, and loudly protested, "What does the booking clerk do there,—sleeping?"

The booking clerk crashed in reply, "Who are you, 'durai'? What did you do till now these 55 minutes I have been giving tickets—sleeping?"

But Rangan's words had some effect, though not immediately. For he began to pull out tickets once again, and the familiar click of the dating machine carried joy to Rangan's heart and to the crowd in the cage.

But with the sheer excess load of men the revolving cage refused to move and no new-comer was willing to go out and lower the load. So one by one, as soon as he had taken a ticket, scaled the height and leaped out. Rangan saw the prospect with dismay. Rajeswari was standing a little off, lost in melancholy.

Rangan's turn came in a couple of minutes of suffocation. He got the ticket, looked high and prayed to his family God, the Lord of the Seven Sacred Hills at Tirupati, scaled the cage with trembling hands—muttered a curse on the British Raj, and leapt to the ground with no greater injury than a twisted wrist, a crushed toe, and a neck that refused to revolve its usual swing of freedom.

"Dear Rajee, look at this. You won't plead for Swaraj. Such a thing is unknown anywhere else in the civilised world. Even after fifty years of Railway service if we can't learn even to fall in a line and form queues—we are unfit to take a step in advance. Anyhow, the booking clerk is scandalous—I shall report him to the Agent as soon as I go to Tanjore. I'm glad I had this experience, though it's frightful."

Rajee interrupted: "Let us catch the train first — then there is plenty of time to think of remedies."

A little away from the horrid cage stood a constable in Khaki shorts and red turban, listless and laughing, chewing gum, pan and tobacco and spitting all over the marble pavement. Occasionally he varied his ease by casting eyes on some fair passer-by. Rangan went up to the constable and complained.

"It is none of my business, sir, to form queues. This sort of thing goes on from day to day. I've orders to catch only thieves and pickpockets."

"The whole thing is wrong, Rajee, no tinkering. There must be some deep inner purging. Some Mussolini or Napoleon India needs at this critical hour. These chronic things can't be cured by fasting, but must be cut open and cured by surgical knife. Mild measures are no good, sheer waste of time and energy at the most critical period in our history.

"Let us catch the train, Ranga. This is hardly the place for preaching or for political philosophy. Let us move on quickly. There is barely a minute. Let us discuss things in the train, if we are so lucky as to catch it for all this adventure."

Rangan hurried, elbowing his way in the crowd, pushing aside a few, young and old, quietly forgetting his own sermon on the mount. Rajeswari silently and quickly followed him, with her luggage in her hands.

## Hogenakal.

By. T. B. Krishnaswami.

And rising, wets with misty showers  
The Birks of Aberfeldy—Burns.



HOGENAKAL is 10 miles west of Pennagaram, 29 miles from Dharmapuri and 71 miles from Salem. Pilgrims, tourists and shikars frequent this spot, eight miles within a deep forest and on the banks of the sacred Cauveri. At a spot called *Brahamagundam* the waters descend down a deep chasm and the "misty showers" shot up, have the appearance of smoke, and hence the name *Hogenakal* or Rock of Smoke.

Issuing out of the chasm, the river forks into two and dashes down in many cataracts, the mildest of which is fit for a delightful bath and the wildest dashing down in a tremendous cascade deafens the ear and wets the face with spray even at a distance of thirty yards. The river is full of crocodiles and fish of various sorts. Otters also abound. Amongst the rushes in mid-stream, herons and water-hens make their nests. Peacocks abound in the forest, also sambhur and cheetahs. Packs of wild dogs run about and the hunter, who fails to get big game, shoots for consolation one of these miserable creatures and goes home highly gratified. The most favourite spot for hunters is on the bank of the *Sanat Kumar-nadhi*, a tributary of the Cauveri. There at the foot of a tall tree, a sort of fence is made of branches and of dead leaves, and the hunters take shelter—"motionless and still". Presently, the dead leaves crumble under the weight of an animal which begins crunching the leaves or cropping the grass, a sound heard distinctly and far in the absolute stillness of the night. Then the shikar aims and fires, or the animal scenting danger sends forth a trumpeting sound and flees away leaving deep and heavy foot-prints, proportionate to its height and weight.

Coracles ply in the river and the temple on its banks has five big *standingams* set one behind the other in an impressive row in a long and narrow hall. Pilgrims worship here at eclipse time and in the sacred 'Tula' month when a bath in the Cauveri anywhere from its source to its mouth is considered highly efficacious.



The Cauveri, with a coracle plying.



The Water-fall

## Around & About Ceylon.

By G. Venkatachalam.



**CEYLON** is a land of eternal charm, an island of perennial summer. From its palm-fringed coasts to the cloud-covered peaks, it is one mass of rich ever-green vegetation, which makes the island a veritable garden of paradise. The tall erect arecanut palms that grow so stately and form such attractive avenues for road-sides, the heavy-fronded cocoanut palms, bending in every possible angles and casting slender shadows over the shimmering turquoise blue of the sea, the closely and thickly cultivated rubber trees which cast magical shadows over the ground, letting in bits of fugitive lights here and there, the age-old virgin forests that practically cover over half the island with their invaluable timbers, and the thousand and one variegated varieties of flora that abound in those forests, add not only to the beauty but to the wealth of the country.

Spices, tea, coffee and rubber plantations, for which Ceylon is so famous, are the natural result of the fertile soil and the abundant rains available there. Coast-lines are great fishing centres, and some of the interior places, especially the district of Ratnapura, contain gem mines which have supplied the world from time immemorial, precious stones of incalculable wealth. Even to-day mining is carried on in the old primitive way, and the gem pits still continue to supply the world's markets with their easily-gathered treasures. Pearl fisheries in the north still bring fortunes to speculators; the elephant hunters are sure of their ivory in the great tuskers that roam majestically about the forests. Lying at the cross-roads of the high seas, Ceylon is an important commercial port and a chief emporium for world's goods. But, alas! all the wealth, beauty and glory do not belong to the people and are not for their enjoyment.

Situated near the equator and exposed to the monsoon rains, it is rich with luxurious tropical vegetation, and the scenic splendour of some parts of Ceylon, especially the hilly tracts about Kandy and Nuwara Eliya (Up Country as they are called), is something indescribably beautiful. The coasts, especially in the east and south, with their fantastically bent palms silhouetting against the redness of sun-set skies or bathed in the mellow whiteness of the cool moon, have a romantic fascination that is irresistible.

Colombo itself is a delightful city with garden houses, open spaces, smooth roads, and attractive suburbs along the sea-side

up to Mount Lavinia, the tourists' favourite resort. Kandy and its sylvan surroundings are ever fascinating and are ideal places to reside, both in hot and cold weather. Negombo with its backwaters affords a pleasant change to tired city dwellers who go there to soothe their nerves in the surf-swept beach. The gardens of Peredanya and Hagkala are two of the finest botanical gardens in the East and their locations are simply superb. The hill-stations of Nuwara Eliya and Haputhala possess ideal climate and attract visitors in large numbers during the summer months. Jaffna in the extreme north and Galle in the extreme south have their own attractions, both historical and natural.

Ceylon is motorists' paradise. Long, well-metalled and well-preserved roads run all through the island from coast to coast, and some of the finest natural scenery can be seen along these drives. The drive through the thick jungles near Mihintale in the evening times, the morning run through the shady road between Hapbarne and Minneriya lake, the winding roadway between Kandy and Aluvihara, the delightful rides round about Kandy above the lake, the smooth motor road with its changing panorama between Colombo and Kandy, the mountain ghat roads between Hagkala, Bandarawella, Diatalawa and Haputhala and also the ghat climbing at Genigathene, and the most delightful drive from Ratnapura to Waga, through Avissawella amidst palm groves and rubber plantations with the distant Adam's Peak and its foot-hills to the right—all these are some of the unforgettable experiences of motoring life in Ceylon.

India and Ceylon are one; and notwithstanding the twenty-mile sea that divides the mainland from the island and its present form of alien Government, the two countries have been intimately connected together from the very dim past and form part and parcel of the same culture and civilisation. Rama's conquest of Lanka to recover Sita, Vijaya's adventurous visit to the island and his subsequent founding of a ruling dynasty there, Mahinda's mission to introduce the faith of the Buddha in Ceylon, the repeated invasions of the Damilos (Tamils) and their political and marriage alliances with the Cingalars (Sinhalese) are but fragments of Indian history relating to Ceylon. Even to-day one can see, underneath the superficial veneer of Western life and culture that surround the daily life of the educated people, the Indian origin of their castes, customs, names, manners, costumes, ceremonies and in their arts, literature and religion. In fact, in the future United States of India, Ceylon ought to be a self-governing unit—and that's the only future politically one can honestly envisage for the island.

The people themselves, in spite of their mixed and confusing Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, Buddhist and Hindu names, are the descendants of early Indian settlers, and though seemingly Westernised in their life and deportment, they are still orthodox and caste-ridden. The Sinhalese are an easy-going and pleasure-loving people, generous, simple-minded and kind-hearted. Cut off for several centuries, from their own culture and traditions, and superficially influenced by the religion and culture of the West, they have been lacking a real cultural background for their life. The present awakening in India is having a strange reaction on the minds of the young, and the tendency to-day is to look to their great Motherland for inspiration and guidance.

The Tamil settlers, like the Brahmins of India, are exclusive, proud, clever, enterprising and caste-bound. They hold high positions in every walk of life and have contributed greatly to the material and moral progress of the country. The present estrangement and mild antipathy between the two communities ought to disappear quickly if Ceylon wishes to emancipate herself from her thralldom and advance towards her destined goal. What the Hindu-Muslim problem is to India the Tamil-Sinhalese problem is to Ceylon, and the rising generation of both these communities ought to steer clear of this dangerous communal shoal. Young Ceylon, Beware!!!

Lanka's past was great and glorious. Wise and powerful kings reigned long over the island. Mighty cities flourished in the dim past, whose wealth and splendour rivalled with the glories of Memphis, Persepolis, Babylon, Kashi, Avanti, Malwa, Ujjain and Kanchi. The introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon by Mahinda, the transplanting of a branch of the Bo-Tree at Anuradhapura by Sanghamitta, the rendering into writing of the sacred Buddhist scriptures at Aluvihara and thus preserving the texts of the Lord's teachings, are some of the interesting events valuable to students of religions. The pious and religious-minded Devanampia Tissa, the wisest and the greatest of Lanka's ancient kings; the tolerant and liberal-minded Tamil King, Ellala, who reigned over Ceylon for forty years nobly and well; the heroic and chivalrous Duttugemunu who dreamt of a united Ceylon; the cruel but clever Kasyapa; the poet-king Wijaya Bahu and Parakrama Bahu, the great and the most powerful of them all—these are some of the greatest names that adorn the pages of the history of ancient Ceylon, as great as any in Indian history or that of any other country. The great book, *Mahawansa*, which gives an almost amazingly accurate account of the past history of Lanka, is also the student's guide to the wonderful monuments that are still the glory of Ceylon.

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The archaeologists' spades have effected wonders in Ceylon. The long-lost cities of the past, whose memory was only in the imagination of the race and in the moth-eaten leaves of *olas*, and which for centuries were covered under thickly grown shrubs and ever-expanding forests, have been brought to light and recovered for modern man by the united efforts of the road engineers and archaeologists. To-day, the ancient cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, though desolate and in ruins, cast a magical spell and transport you in imagination to those far off days when men created beautiful monuments not for their personal glory but for the love of their religion and the service of their Gods. Their past splendour shine brightly even to-day in their ruins. What magnificent achievements in ideal town planning, enduring architectural structures and pleasing sculptural arts they reveal even in their fragmentary nature!

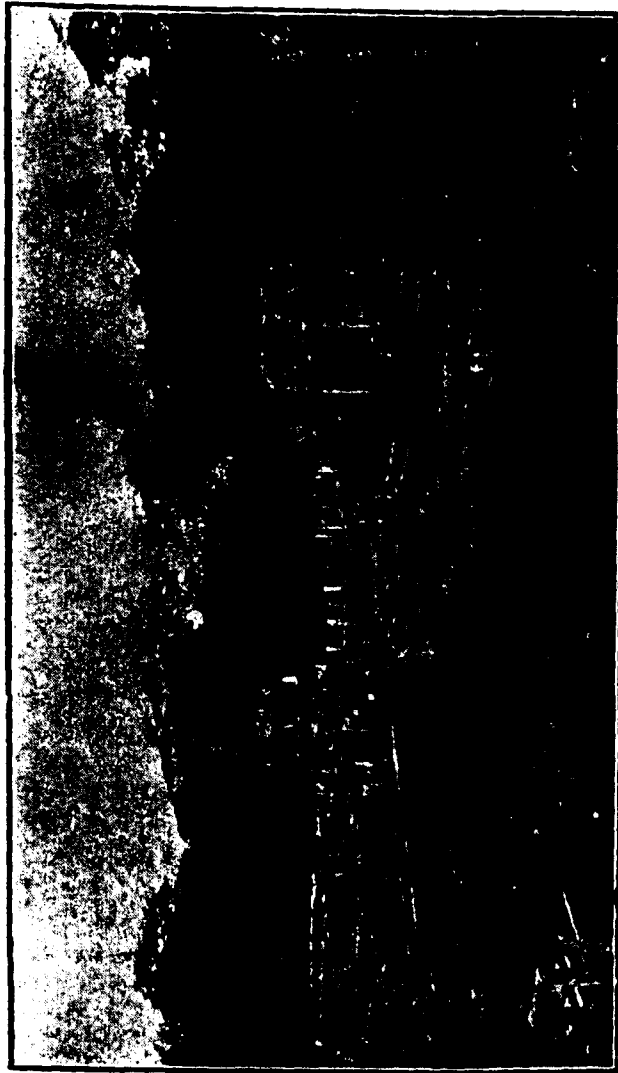
The greatest and the most beautiful of these old cities is Anuradhapura, the city *par excellence* of ancient days. It must have been a wonderful garden city of unique charm and beauty. As your eyes survey the magnificent ruins, now lying pell mell all around you, from some eminence near by, preferably from the top of the Ruanweli *dagoba* (now under restoration and, therefore, reachable), your mind reconstructs, with a little aid of artistic imagination, the wonderful town planning of the city and the place of the respective monuments there. You then visualise an immense city of spacious parks and green gardens, cool tanks and quiet *mantapams*, palatial mansions and sculptured shrines, sky-soaring *stupas* and magnificent monasteries, intercepted by long and broad avenues and roads. The towering *dagobas* of Abhyagiri, Ruanweli, Lanakarama and Thupurama, with their gay-coloured crowds of monks and worshippers and their chanting of prayers, ringing of bells and incense smoke, stand like Guardian Angels, watching over the fate of their beloved city. The stately little *mantapams* with their chastely chiselled pillars and exquisitely wrought moonstone steps are filled with gay youths and pretty maidens, who besport themselves under their shades with songs, music and dances. The forest of stone pillars that stand yonder and which was once a gorgeous Brazen Palace, ten storeys high and built lavishly in gold, pearls and gems, baffles all attempt at reconstruction. The sacred Bo-Tree, which was brought all the way from Budhagaya and planted amidst such great pomp and show, attracts an increasing number of devotees from all over the island. The city thoroughfares are busy with humming life and the bazaars are full of beautiful wares, gem-set jewels, golden ornaments, brass vessels, ivory works, coloured cloths, scented flowers, fresh fruits

and honeyed sweets. Soon you wake up from your sweet reverie, as if in a dream, and your eyes behold all around scattered ruins of stone structures, mutilated statues, broken pillars, plastered stupas, and dried-up tanks. The vanished glories of Anuradapura relive in the imagination of the race only, and their glories are still preserved in the folk-songs of the people.

Near by Anuradhapura are the sites of Mihintale, the historic spot where Mahinda met the great king Tissa and converted him to Buddhism and which was also the last resting place of the former. Mihintale is a lovely spot of sun-lit tops and shadowy glades: interesting relics of old Ceylon are seen scattered about the whole hillock and a pathway of stone-cut steps leads to the crest from where you can command a fine view of the surrounding countries of forests and lakes. Isurumuniya is another interesting place close to Anuradhapura, and is considered as the oldest rock-cut temple in Ceylon. It contains some excellent relief carvings, the most striking of them being the seated figure of a rishi with a horse's head behind. It is a powerful work of art. The Elephant *Pokuna* (Pond), like the Naga *Pokuna* at Mihintale, is a clever relief carving in stone, at once striking and original.

But the most important and the most valuable series of monuments, from the point of view of art and architecture, are to be seen at Polonnuruwa, a city that has been the favourite capital of Tamil and Sinhalese kings alternatively and a city dear to the heart of Parakrama Bahu the Great. Few monumental remains of ancient cities, either in Ceylon or in India, cover such a vast field and reveal so many varieties of architectural structures. From Potgul Vihara at the far southern end, where is to be seen the powerfully carved figure of a rishi, mistakenly identified as Parakrama, to the Demala Mahaseya at the far northern end, which is a mixture of Dravidian and Sinhalese architecture, the city is rich in magnificent ruins of temples, viharas, chaityas, chambers, palaces, pavillions, tanks, storeyed mansions, square and circular buildings, a conglomeration of Aryan, Dravidian, Cambodian, Assyrian, Sinhalese and other types of architecture too bewildering for words.

The most striking and the most unique of them all are, of course, the *Vata-da-ge*, the circular chamber with statues of the Buddha on the four cardinal points and of rich ornamentation in the exterior, the *Lankatilaka*, a cathedral-like structure, imposing and awe-inspiring, the *Gal Vihara*, a remarkable gallery of statues of the Buddha in sitting, standing and sleeping posture and executed in the most realistic manner, and the *Demala Mahaseya*, which contains excellent ornamental carvings and fragments



The Wata-da-ge, Polonnaruwa

[To face page 59

of fine fresco paintings, better than those of Sigiriya both in quality and extent.

There are other singular specimens of stone-cutters' art scattered all over the place, like the basement stones of lions and elephants, moonstone steps, the huge stone book, *Galpota*, the lotus-stem pillars and the ingenious Lotus Bath, but the most elegant and perfectly designed building in the whole city is the Siva Devala, a pure South Indian temple dedicated to Siva, and which contained those exquisite bronze images of the saints Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, Manickavasagar and of Nataraja. It is one of the finest and finished examples of South Indian Temple Architecture anywhere to be seen. The Archaeological Department ought to preserve that monument in a more careful manner than they are doing at present.

Ceylon's two most famous rock-cut caves are Sigiriya and Dambulla, between a distance of ten miles, which are both interesting and instructive to students of art. They contain fresco paintings of classical character and reveal their Indian origin. The dozen or more figure studies that one sees to-day in an inaccessible corner of the rocky bluff of Sigiriya show characteristic features of Ajanta paintings, but they have been badly varnished, painted and re-painted by the jealous copyists of modern days that they look mere apologies for the old painting. The frescoes at Sigiriya are at an inaccessible place, right on a crevice on the face of a rock with a "death ladder" of iron leading to them. The female figures are all boldly drawn and resemble Ajanta figures. The frescoes at Dumbulla are more decorative and rich in colourings. Here too modern vandalism has played havoc with their colourings by being varnished and repainted, but there are certain fragments of good ones on the back wall spaces of the rock. One can get plenty of *motifs* for decorative art from these paintings, and one can also trace the origin of Kandyan decorative art-crafts to these earlier works.

Ceylon is rich in skilled art-crafts. Kandyan decorative works can compare favourably with any decorative arts of the world, and in certain respects even excel them. There is a close resemblance between the Kandyan art and South Indian art, only the former is richer and more finished. Students of art in Ceylon ought to go in for inspiration to these sources and recreate their native arts, which will be second to none in the world. The present bad imitative art of Ceylon should, sooner or later, give place to their own indigenous style and method, and this will be an unique and valuable contribution to the world's art. Ceylon is in the throes of a new birth and with the birth of a New Ceylon there would be a renaissance of art also.

## Charles Dickens\*

By F. H. Aldhouse, M. A.



THE latest life of the great British Novelist is described as a portrait in pencil, and has somewhat the style of an impressionist picture; look into it closely and you react to the artist's mood, but if your glance is superficial, a blurred image is all that remains. If the modern school of psychologists wish to understand a writer, they try to find out how much he inherited from his family, what was his environment, and last but not least, what are the mental complexes under which he labours. As to family we are told:—"Old Mrs. Dickens, it seems, would tell you the most wonderful stories if you stole up to her own particular room in the big house. Fairytales were her favourites, but she could also give a queer sort of History lesson which was not like a lesson at all, and she could make you laugh." This old Mrs. Dickens figures later in her grandson's story "Bleak House" as Mrs. Rouncewell; she had been housekeeper in Crewe Hall, and Mrs. Rouncewell occupies that position in Chesney Wold. The novelist's father, immortalised by him as Wilkins Micawber, could also "tell the tale," in his own way, particularly when he wanted to borrow money, so we have an ancestral tendency to romance which reaches its apogee in Charles. He "a very queer small boy," to use his own description, began first "to take notice" when his family were living in Chatham. He was a pretty boy and precocious. He was initiated into the delights of "showing off" at a dangerously early age; we hear of a dining table being used as a primitive stage, upon which the boy would be invited to sing and recite. Here we have a key to subsequent tastes and aptitudes. And we note with interest that this very queer small boy's favourite reading was "Don Quixote," "The Arabian Nights" and "Robinson Crusoe". Charles, in spite of his lively nature and good appearance, was delicate and had a recurring illness (possibly obscurely nervous in origin) which haunted him all his life. Here, for this was almost certainly inherited, we have the great writer's family record as a factor in his mental make up. His environment in early life (he was born in 1812) was the England of the great French war-period, a world of strong contrasts. It had its stately homes, its "Chesney Wolds" its "Dingley Dells," also its appalling slums

\* Dickens: A Portrait in Pencil by Ralph Straus. London; Victor Gollancz Ltd. 14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

as described in "Oliver Twist," where Fagin and his circle pig along, and in "Bleak House" we have the dens where Joe tries to hide from being continually "moved on".

Now as to complexes, perhaps the earliest and most hateful was his work as a bottler of boot-black for James Lamert, at Hungerford Stairs. His father's difficulties were to land him and his family in the Marshalsea Prison, and Charles, a lodger with Mrs. Roylance (original of Mrs. Pipchin) was to endure, as he tell us, "real agony of soul". Later, when the clouds rolled by, Love's young dream, in the person of Maria Breadnell, was to leave the indelible wound of unrequited affection on the heart of Charles. She was "a little dark beauty, with eyebrows with a tendency to meet over a pretty and pert nose". We see her as Dora Spenlow in "David Copperfield," the charming girl-wife; we also see her as Flora Finching, the anything but charming widow of later years, "the lily become a peony". None the less she was in her earlier form of youthful beauty to haunt the Novelist's mind. And later he was to make the fatal mistake to create a complex, which should dominate him till the day of his death; he was to fall in love with two sisters simultaneously, Catherine and Mary Hogarth, and to marry the wrong one, Catherine. Mary was to die while still hardly more than a child, and to make her re-appearance as Little Nell in the "Old Curiosity Shop".

We have, therefore, in Charles Dickens hereditary environment, and his early mental impressions, the basis on which the Novelist stood, the stuff from which he wove his dreams. His characters are composite photographs of his own experiences, but are also original beings with a life and character of their own. Neither Dora Spenlow nor Flora Finching are unreal or unindividual; they live and have a most vivid existence; though both are studies of the same woman at different times of life. And so with all his characters: Sam Weller, Betsy Gamp, Pecksniff, Noddy Boffin, &c., &c., will live while the English language lives—and longer. It is unnecessary to follow Charles Dickens through his wonderful dream life. There will be favourites amongst his books for different readers. But we may say, with truth: "He nothing common did, or mean." Had he found a form of Christianity really liberal and beautiful, which would have informed the higher side of his nature, he might have done even better work, for he was a religious man in his heart of hearts. Charles Dickens died before his powers were waning as a writer, worn out by the lecturing to which he devoted his later years. He lies in Westminster Abbey. His thoughts, his hopes, his laughter are immortal.

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## Nonsense & Nothing.

By K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri, B. A., B. L.

**I** am going to utter nonsense and to say nothing. You may ask me why I should be so long in saying nothing and so jubilant in uttering nonsense. That is because nonsense is greater than sense and nothing is the greatest of all. I am an expert in Rhyme, without Reason and in Nonsense without Rhyme. So do not look for Rhyme or Reason here. This essay will begin nowhere and end nowhere. If you want a beginning, a middle and an end, or the major and the minor premises, or *pratijna* and *hethu* and *drishtantha* and *nigamana* and what not, do not come here, please. This is Liberty Hall. It is the home of unchartered freedom, full of the lightness of chance desires.

The first thing that I was taught and believe is that I am descended from apes. The wise men of Gotham were my teachers. They came with a banner with a strange device yclept "Biological Biogenesis". No one knew what it meant, least of all themselves. It does not matter very much, because they say that the first man came from the last monkey many millions of years ago. Probably, the wise men were present at the birth and the christening. Some wiser men came later with another banner with a stranger device "Abiological Abiogenesis". They taught that monkeys came from mud. This is likely to be true as we are all—including teachers and taught—very muddled and muddy in our minds. Then about the evolutionary process. Just as the giraffe pushed its neck and the elephant shot out its trunk and the ant-eater prolonged its tongue, man thrust out his mind. One of these days he will thrust out (if he has not already done so) his mind so far out of him that it will leave him, and he will lapse into monkeyhood and eventually become mud once again. That is called Reversion.

We have thus finished Biology and what not. This wonderful evolutionary product creeps like a snail unwillingly to school with his tear-smudged (euphemistically called shining) morning face. He is advised to learn something of everything and everything of something. In this attempt to rest a cone on its apex, he manages to learn nothing. For this great work he is rewarded by being called B. A. A wag says that "B. A." is an abbreviation for "Big Ape" and that the title is given to assure the world that the small ape has grown into a big ape. I do not believe what he says. Do not believe him either. His tongue is always in his cheek. I wonder how he is able to eat keeping his tongue in his cheek. A bit of internal acrobaticism, I suppose! Another

wag pointed out that the ears have grown much longer in the course of evolution and hence that B. A. may stand for "Big Ass".

The B. A. then becomes a B. B. (Big Bureaucrat). He begins in his turn to oppress smaller apes and infant apes. But the funniest thing that he does is the way in which he makes laws. All the apes sit together and choose the funniest wide-blinking owl as Speaker because he should never speak. Whenever disorder comes (it never comes or goes but is always there) he says "order, order". Whenever he feels a doubt—and he is always full of doubts—he goes to the Mother of Parliaments. The Mother sends her Speaker to help him. Then the elder Speaker takes the younger Speaker to Edward the Confessor. Both confess and come back. The elder Speaker then imparts to the younger Speaker how to dodge rotten eggs and apples which are generally hurled at Speakers on important occasions of national ceremonial, just as rice is thrown at or after wedded couples.

After making laws he tries to set Labour on its feet. He starts the game by kicking off the finance ball. The franc jumps down and the mark disappears and the pound jumps up and down and the rupee is beaten black and blue. He reconstructs everything by taking everything to pieces and by asking the Pied Piper to come from Hamelin and play the pieces into wholes. But the Pied Piper does his work just as he did in regard to the children of Hamelin. He pipes the pieces away from sight altogether. Then our world-improver goes to his scripture for guidance. The scripture contains only one story and one moral. The story is about the unmarried man who upset a boat. The moral is—Go thou and do likewise.

After creating such a commotion at home, he throws his gauge of battle in the international arena. He flies in his aeroplane called *Megalomania* and loops the loop and makes impossible parachute descents and trans-atmospheric ascents and exhibits superhuman stunts before a gaping world. He electrifies the Dark Continent until it becomes bright and darkens the Bright Continent until it becomes dark. He cuts off the Chinaman's pigtail and tacks it on to his pig-headed brother. He snatches the tomahawk and the pipe of peace from the Red Indian and flings the pipe of peace into the Atlantic and hurls the tomahawk at the Japanese B. A. The latter, to avoid the blow, commits *hari-kari*, lest the world should think he is not a *Samurai* (whatever that may have been). I had a talk the other day with Marshal Tempest and Field Marshal Bomb. They are sure that the decimation of man is easier than the decimation of man's ancestors. I asked them if they would give me a chance, because I was an expert in gassing (of a different sort). They said

that my gas was sufficiently expressive but was not sufficiently devastating and that anyhow they would consider my application when a vacancy arose in the ranks of such arch-gassers of the day as Shaw and Belloc and Chesterton. I darkly hinted to them about starting a tearing press propaganda against them if they did not take me and give me a distinguished charge. They muttered something about suppressing the Press and about Pride's Purge and what not. I shall purgate their pride one of these days. See if I do not.

I am now getting busy with other universal problems. What do you say, Mr. Scientist? You say that Man is a spendthrift of energy and that coal and iron are almost gone and that even Electricity may give out before the century is over. You ask me what Man may do then. It is all a Chinese puzzle. Are you sure about your figures? I beg your pardon. Figures are your forte. You must be right. You never get out of them. What shall we do? Harness the tides? But the tides are erratic, you say. Then harness the sun's rays. How to do it? You say that light is too swift to put harness upon. Why don't you ask the Pegasus riders who, I learn, are the first cousins of circus riders? You say you have not the honour of their acquaintance. Then blow up and disintegrate the atom and steal the stored energy. You say the atom is too tough and resists even the X, Y and Z rays. Why don't you issue a questionnaire to Edison and Raman and Bose? You say that you have tried that also. I do not know what to do. Why don't you try complete birth-suppression, so that there may be no need for any form of energy at all.

My mind now takes a bolder leap. I scan the radiant depths of space. What are "the greater and the lesser light?", Mr. Caliban asks. You do not know. The greater light is but the top light in the suburban show-room of the Chicago Electric Company. It is the Company's advertisement bulb in the top floor. The lesser light is the smaller and softer bulb of the same Company in the first floor. The top of the sky-scraper of the Company is above the greater and the lesser light. Do you see that, you blooming savage? Fall down on your knees and worship. Do you see that red bulb there? That is the most wonderful of all. It is called Mars. All the civilised nations read and work by that light. It colours all their thoughts and words and actions. Do you see that dazzling yet soft sweet bulb close by? That is called Venus. When there is time left over—very little is left over—after killing, there is a sound of revelry by night and all goes merry as a marriage bell in that glory which is softer than the Sun and brighter than the Moon.

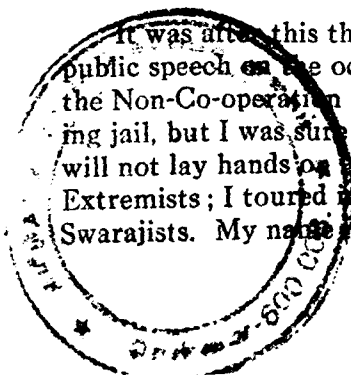
traceable; in fact, in the official world, my being signified my village.

The foundation had been laid well and the super-structure was easy. Very easily I became the President of the local Co-operative Union and of the Panchayat. Both the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and the Registrar-General of Panchayats (as he was then termed) made a special mention of our village in their annual reviews. I do not deny—at this distant day—that in both the above capacities I managed to appropriate for myself a small annual sum; but I was intelligent enough not to let others suspect it, and in truth my management of affairs was certainly far above the average standard of those days. I was not super-human; I was not a public worker with inherited riches; I had to live and 'public work' was my profession; I felt no pricks of conscience if, in doing great good to the villagers, I also did some good to myself.

From being a prominent citizen in the village to a seat on the Taluk Board was an easy affair. In the Taluk Board again, I was the best educated and, to use a phrase of the constitutionalists, I was the keystone to the Taluk Board arch. The administration revolved round me. The President was ignorant of English, and as I had to explain to him the technical and legal flaws in many of his acts, I easily became his confidant. For a time I was the Deputy President of the Taluk Board, but finding that there was not much chance of improvement in that line, I fished for some spicier office and became the President of the Divisional Council of Public Instruction.

I made much noise in that office. I sent long letters to Government on the need for a change in the educational policy, moved lengthy resolutions on several problems of the day, dared to differ from Government officials in the interpretation of legislative acts and rules, got the Governor and his Ministers to preside over functions etc.—By the way, my drafts of long letters and resolutions were naturally awfully full of mistakes, but we had a graduate typist who was expected to correct and type our drafts. For this double work of correction and fair-copying, he was given an additional allowance.

It was after this that I became a politician. I made my first public speech on the occasion of Gandhiji's incarceration during the Non-Co-operation movement. I was not enamoured of entering jail, but I was sure that on such an occasion, Government will not lay hands on me. I took care not to lean towards the Extremists; I toured the district championing the cause of the Swarajists. My name frequently appeared in the press. Villagers



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