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8-SEP-1932

AUGUST, 1932

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E. H. PARAMESWARAN, M.A., L.T.,

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BRAMANIAM

THE SCHOLAR

VOL. VII

AUGUST

No. 11

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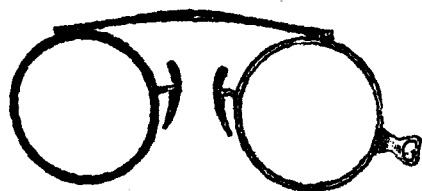
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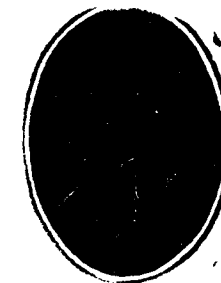
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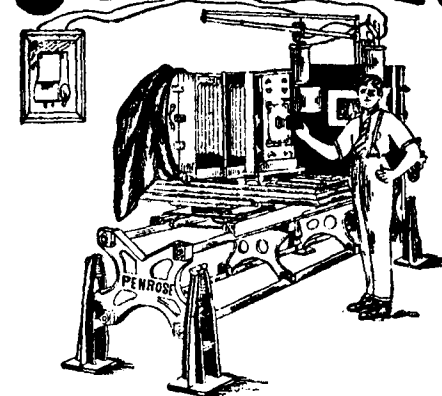
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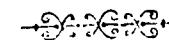
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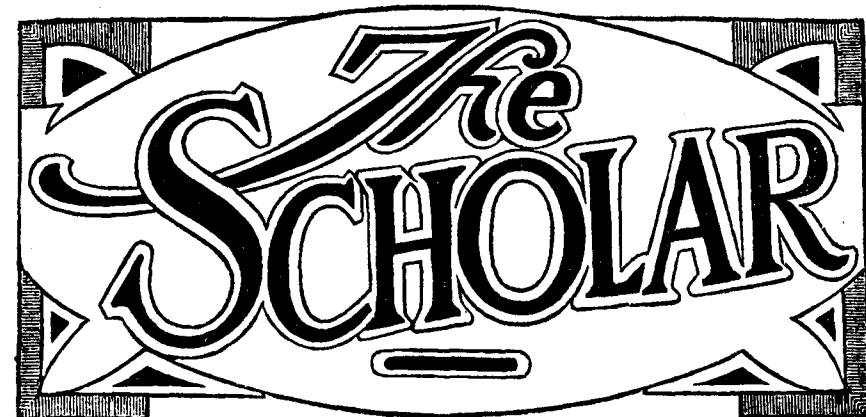
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VOL. VII

AUGUST

No. 11

The Divine Cowherd.

By P. G. Krishna Aiyar, B. A., L. T.



DAY and night, when I am awake or asleep, the charming figure of Lord Sree Krishna floats before my mental vision with a clearness which is beyond imagination and far beyond expression. To me, the Divine Cowherd Lad is not a mythical hero. He is an embodiment, an incarnation of the great Lord that creates, protects and destroys. The circumstances of His coming into the world, and the environments of His early life, bristling with the innocent and playful mischiefs and freaks, so common and so natural to little children, combined with His marvellous feats of miracle, fill my mind with the idea of the supernatural and the natural. In him is found a happy blending of the human and the superhuman, the simple and the complex, the chaos and the cosmos, the material and the spiritual!

His fascinating figure entralls me; the figure with its flowing black curly hair done up and ornamented with the multi-coloured peacock feathers with the ear-rings and their pendants, shining and dangling to and fro, as though marking time to the shakes and nods of His well-formed head; with the golden chains and necklaces inlaid with many coloured gems of the first water, glittering with starry lustre on his sky-blue breast; with the golden beads and anklets tinkling round the waist and about the

lower legs with such rhythmic harmony and above all, the figure, dancing to the melodious tunes of the happy 'Murali' on which He himself plays with such easy charm, glides before my wondering eyes with a celestial lustre and heavenly beauty, all its own, and leads me on and on into the regions of ecstatic trance. And for a moment, I forget myself, my surroundings and everything, and feel myself one with the supreme *Ananda* which flows in an unbroken stream from the darling lad. Would that I were the blessed 'Murali' into whose heart He lets flow the charming melody of his divine breath, or the no less blessed necklace which embraces and kisses His marvellous breast where rolls the boundless universe! How I wish that I had been born a cowherd lad or a bird or a beast; or a tree, even a shrub, enjoying the presence and the company and the sublime contact of the wonderful Yadava Prince in the sacred bounds of 'Brindaban'! Oh! it were heaven to play with Him, to skip, to jump, to frolic, to swim, to run, to sing, and to dance in His company. With the child Sree Krishna by my side, I would tend the cows, punish the wicked, and help the helpless; I would swim under the water, run on the earth and fly up into the air like the kite which sails in the heavens, with a joy and happiness and lightness of heart, which only His comrades could have known and felt.

While the idol of my heart is in the world, He keeps himself away from it. He is here, there and everywhere, and alas! nowhere. He is with you, with him and with me, but with none of us. What a wonder! He appears formless, but possessed of all forms. He hears, and hears not; sees, and sees not; He starves, and the whole world feels the pinch of starvation. He dines, and the world's hunger is appeased. He laughs, and the sun shines. He frowns, and the clouds roll on with terrific lightning and bewildering thunders shaking the Earth to its very foundation.

He loves the cow; He tends her and pats her, bathes her and feeds her and fills her with untold happiness. To Him, the cow is the embodiment of all that is best and noblest. In beauty and symmetry of form, she has no equal; in bestowing upon others, even her life-blood, the life-giving elixir of milk, freely, unhesitatingly, impartially and in boundless measure, to friends and foes alike, she stands on an eminence which is higher than the highest, and nobler than the noblest ever met with in the world. Karna of great 'Bana' fame, and the great 'Kalpataru' of the Devas are nowhere near her.

To Him the green meadows where she grazes are more attractive than His 'Vaikunta'; and the blue waters of the Jumna where she bathes and drinks, more sacred than the Holy waters of the Ganges.

The boundless universe is His plaything. He lifts it on his little finger. He turns it, and shapes it as He pleases with marvellous ease and agility. At His command, empires rise and fall, convulsive changes take place on the face of the earth, old continents sinking bodily deep into the bosom of the oceans, and new ones rising up from their unsounded beds. Old civilization and the old order of things change yielding place to new; desert wastes become smiling fields, forests change into Imperial capitals, and flourishing cities decline into fierce wilds. Through all these cyclic changes of the universe, the name and figure of this Divine Cowherd Lad stands like eternity unperishing and imperishable, sending forth a thrill of love, of joy and of *Ananda* in the hearts of every devoted Hindu. Sree Krishna is indeed synonymous with love and *Ananda*, pure and holy.

The Divine Cowherd Lad tending the cattle of 'Gopavati' and His brother 'Balaram' with the plough in his hand symbolise the occupation of Puranic India. They were the protectors of agriculture and cattle-farming, and they have shown to the world upon what the economic prosperity and the happiness of the Indian masses really depend.

Oh, prince among children! Thou that charimest the whole world with the melody of the 'Murali'! Sit on the throne of India's heart and lead her on to love and to happiness and to still greater happiness and endless Bliss, even as thou wert leading on thy devoted Gopa comrades at 'Brindaban'.

17660

The Poetry of Edith Sitwell.

By K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, M. A.

I



THE Sitwells are as formidable a literary family as the Powyses. There are three of them—Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell—all children of Sir George Reresby Sitwell, himself no mean devotee of letters. Miss Edith Sitwell is the most brilliant as she is certainly the most widely known of the three. Her poetry and criticism have been bitterly assailed by the many and quite enthusiastically cheered by the select few. But for fifteen years past Miss Sitwell has been holding her own with an admirable pertinacity, and now it may be said that all opposition to her has almost broken down.

Miss Sitwell's first book, *The Mother*, containing three poems of undoubted promise, appeared in 1915. *Twentieth Century Harlequinade and other Poems*, for which her brother Osbert was partly responsible, was published in 1916, and it included plenty of delightful nursery and nonsense verse. In the six issues of *Wheels* (1916-1921) and *Clown's Houses* (1918) appeared more of her early poetry, and it was apparent that she was about to cross the indefinable borderland that somehow separates the best accomplished verse from authentic poetry. Of what she wrote after 1920—and that is the more important and the more enduring portion of her poetry—she has made a judicious anthology, and in 1930 Messrs Duckworth issued it with the rather misleading title *Collected Poems*.

Besides poetry she has done some superb criticism also. It is enough to mention here her monumental work on Alexander Pope and her brilliant little essay *Poetry and Criticism*, published by the Hogarth Press.

II

I am certain that not less than ten million Indians habitually talk and write to one another in English. A very large percentage of this number know their Shakespeare, Scott, Macaulay and Tennyson at least as well as an average Englishman. But of the splendid and varied works of modern writers, the educated Indian is blissfully ignorant. Conan Doyle, Gilbert Frankau, Edgar Wallace and, of late, Bernard Shaw have stirred some enthusiasm in certain special circles. That really is all.

This would not matter much if our Bright Young Men devoted their leisure hours to a diligent study of Tamil or Telugu or

Sanskrit, and if the most gifted among them helped to sustain the procession of our national literature. But by far the majority of them do nothing of the kind. They read English newspapers, they talk a kind of hideous English peppered with vernacular idioms, they correspond in English, and they while away their time swallowing English catchpennies or seeing American Movies and Talkies. In the presence of their "illiterate" parents they are either uppish or ridiculous. Our excellent Universities make of our youths incredible anachronisms in their village homes.

Obviously, then, it is not national sentiment that stands in the way of our educated men studying twentieth century literature. It is laziness rather. I must not omit to mention here that the few lucky Indians who have been to England and back are more "modernist" in their tastes and to them names like D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, and Edmund Blunden are not evocative of wormwood. But they are a mere handful, and with prudence, keep their tastes and ecstasies to themselves.

Widespread as is the indifference to tendencies in modern literature, it is most marked with regard to poetry. Of the work of such genuine poets as Humbert Wolfe, T. S. Eliot, Sturge Moore, Martin Armstrong, Edith Sitwell, Peter Quennell (to name a few at random) our "scholars" and "professors" practically know nothing. The more clever among them do not stop with being ignorant; they go further and say majestically that they see no reason why they should tackle modern poetry—for is it not plain that it is all rot? That without ever looking into one of the innumerable dainty volumes of modern poetry!

It is irrelevant to say that there is no Shakespeare or Milton among the moderns. It is equally irrelevant to prophecy that many of the poets I have named above will not be read one hundred years hence. The point is that our modern poets, just because they are living in our own times, have an urgent message to give us—a message whose extreme urgency and intensity cannot be equalled by any of the poets of the previous generations. They are placed in circumstances, adverse or favourable, much as we are, and they react to stimuli very similar to those we ourselves receive. The difference is they are able to clothe with the magic web of language that abstract equilibrium of stimulus and response. And we who read the poems are either relieved of the present strain or acquire an invulnerable armour of defence to withstand any of the slings and arrows which are always there to daunt us.

To be content with the literature of the past, however magnificent, is to live wholly on condensed milk, fruit juices and distilled water preserved for decades together. It is almost like transferring your affections to a perfectly fashioned doll, merely because your own children are not quite charming. I hope this Chinese Wall of conservatism will soon be demolished, thus reviving our drooping literary enthusiasms with the breath of inspiration wafted from our modern poets.

III

But to return to the subject of our study—the works of Miss Edith Sitwell. To say that in her best poems she is hardly surpassed by any other living poet is to say little; to point out that her experiments in the transference of sense values have opened out new avenues of poetic expression is not after all to say much more; but to identify Miss Sitwell with the *zeit-geist* of the post-War world and her best poetry with the distilled essence of the ravings, the bravings and the cravings of this our Age of Interrogation is, if not to say all, at least to say enough.

The world to-day is one vast net-work of complicated and mutually dependent national patterns, the enormous strain of whose very elaboration every moment threatens to break it. The measure of its complexity and apparent efficiency is also the measure of its inner ugliness and of our own helplessness. When my great grand-father wanted to commit one of his off-hand poetic concoctions to writing, he plied his scribbling needle with dexterity on a palm leaf parchment, and a century hence the letters glisten and converse to a modernist's discomfiture. But when I have anything to write, I use a pen of American make, filled with British Swan ink and on paper made in Norway. I know there is no going back. What I desire to emphasise here is that when we take for granted the modern world with its multiple complexities and vulgarities and shams, we must take modern poetry too in its equipage, for poetry is merely the projection on language of conditions of life and states of mind. It is foolish to expect T. S. Eliot to write like Dryden, or Edith Sitwell to coo like Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The business of poetry may be to give pleasure, but it is not a facile emotionalism we are after. When the assault of seething, roaring, ravenous life around is gripping us every moment, it is surely silly to drink doses of Tennysonian complacency or Arnoldian "sweetness and light"—and so forget all. James Joyce's and Gertrude Stein's verbal perversities, the puzzling work of the Imagists and the Islanders, the subtleties of E. E. Cummings, of Herbert Read and of Ezra Pound and the innovations in poetical texture introduced by Edith Sitwell are all interpretative, in varying degrees and

with varying successes, of the modernist's unceasing tussle with his surroundings and of the seeming futilities of existence. Doubtless a considerable part of modernist poetry is a hard nut to crack; but the best of it, though it taxes our energies, does not confound our wits.

IV

It is to little purpose that some critics pretend to find in Miss Sitwell's poetry the evocation of the eighteenth century. It is to still less purpose that Mr. R. L. Megroz, that fine poet and critic, emphasises the influence of the French Symbolists, particularly Baudelaire, upon Miss Sitwell. It is not thus that she will be understood. It is of the tumultuous present-day that she sings, though there is in her poetry a delicate suspension of the echo of the passionless and changeless experience of ages. As Mr. Charles Williams remarks: "It is the whole world and not one period which she draws up before us: draws up from where it lies 'deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns,' and hangs it right up like a two-dimensional, yet opaque curtain, with all those colours and shapes and sounds and feelings changing places and slipping into the other, so that (in what is becoming her most notorious poem—*Aubade*) 'the morning light creaks down again.'"

That brings me to a consideration of Miss Sitwell's theory and practice of sensory transferences. "Modern poets," she says, "are discovering an entirely new scale of relationship between the senses. Our senses have become broadened and cosmopolitanised. They are no longer little islands, speaking only their own narrow language, living their sleeping life alone. Where the language of one sense is insufficient, they speak the language of another." In the physical world we know that all energies are one, and any one of its manifestations could be transformed into any other. Human sensory impressions, being only mental registrations of reactions to the assault of one or other of the forms of energy, must also be capable of an ultimate synthesis. And so they are. There is nothing far-fetched or conceited about such expressions as dawn chattering, or creaking or moaning; light falling heavy, squaling, being thin or fat, or having "full-voiced bellowings;" talk seeming "spiral bars of shunting light," child's prattle glittering or gleaming like the glow of the ascending sun; vapours smashing with a heavy thud or coffee tasting thin. Some of these images are Miss Sitwell's, and they are happy ones. If it is valid to say that life can be rounded with sleep, or that lips can enkindle with their love the breath between them, it is equally within the poet's competence to achieve his object and perfect the poetic portraiture of his emotional experiences by resorting to sensory transferences.

The so-called poetic licenses, the subtleties of diction, the various figures of speech and the external trimmings of patterns and rhymes are there to facilitate the full and accurate translation of the causes, the course and the conclusion of the poet's emotional disturbance. Laura Riding and Robert Graves have shown in their excellent *Survey of Modernist Poetry* that even the surface juggleries of the "free verse" of Mr. E. E. Cummings are merely an elaborately implicit commentary or punctuation to make the understanding of the poems, if difficult and puzzling at first, correspondingly as accurate and complete and final.

In a word, Miss Sitwell has evolved a new idiom peculiarly suited to the conditions of her time. She will not accept wholly the Miltonic or the Wordsworthian diction. So far she is indeed an anti-traditionist. She thinks with her brother, Mr. Osbert Sitwell: "You cannot write well in the idiom of the day before yesterday." Even traditional verse forms require a little manipulation. Miss Sitwell's work is full of such technical experiments—"studies" as she calls them "in the effect that varying and elaborate patterns of rhymes and assonances and dissonances have upon rhythm." And at least a dozen poems in *Facade* and not a few of the stanzas in *Prelude to a Fairy Tale* read the better—and their emotion impinges the more surely on our poetic consciousness—for these daring and mostly satisfying experiments.

V

Miss Sitwell's world is the present-day world. On the surface there is dirt, beastliness, a fatal efficiency. There are flowers, fauns, apes and wood-nymphs; there is plenty of fruit—strawberries, grapes and apricots, plums and pears; there are dances of many kinds, and some characters dress themselves with the frigid elegances of former ages. It is a world highly coloured, cloying our subtler sensibilities; there are concrete objects, more thrilling or detestable sensations than wiry involutions of thought. Besides the beauty of the verse, of the inner beauty of the subject matter there is very little. Miss Sitwell evokes a pageant of strange, impossible, tantalising world-pictures, depicting the manifold ironies of existence and gazes on, understanding and humiliated, as in an incredible cinema show.

The terrible burden of misery that sits upon mankind to-day, caught helplessly in the clutches of an extraordinary artificiality is one of the major themes of modern poets. Thus Herbert Read:

Nature has perpetual tears
In drooping boughs,
And everywhere inanimate death
Is immemorial.

But I have nought that will express
The grief I feel
When men and moods combine to show
The end of this—
This mental ecstasy all spent
In disuniting death;
And the years that spread
Oblivion on our zest.

And thus the late D. H. Lawrence, addressing his fellowmen:

You who are twisted in grief like crumpled beech-leaves
Who curl in sleep like kittens, who kiss as a swarm
Of clustered, vibrating bees; who fall to earth
At last like a bean-pod: what are you, oh multiform?

Not very different is Miss Sitwell's lament contained in her *Elegy on Dead Fashion*:

But far are we from forests of our rest
When the wolf Nature from maternal breast
Fed us with strong brown milk.....these epochs gone,
Our eyeless statues weep from blinded stone;
And far are we from the innocence of man,
When Time's vast sculptures from rough dust began,
And natural law and moral were but one,—
Derived from the rich wisdom of the sun.
In those deep ages the most primitive
And roughest and uncouthest shapes did live
Knowing the memory of before their birth
And their soul's life before this uncouth earth.

And in the poem on Mademoiselle Richarde, written in couplets which recall Goldsmith, Miss Sitwell exquisitely brings out the pathos and futility of the lives of those who are destined to be the servants of others more opulently placed than they. "Poor unloved creatures," exclaims Miss Sitwell, "whose existences,

Were spent upon the surface of another's
Life: the Darkness seems like their own mother's
Touch; they are so used to fireless life, so old
That they would scarcely know the grave is cold."

Again and again the problem of inequality and misery is stated; but there is no solution, the cumbrous, monstrous wheels of society move on unheeded, crushing and mangling their victims with indifference. The poets state the problem, heave a sigh,—which finds an echo in every reader's bosom.—and all is over.

VI

If Miss Sitwell's most individual work is to be found in the twenty seven poems of *Facade* and her thirty eight *Bucolic Comedies* it is in *Troy Park* and *The Sleeping Beauty* that her distinctly beautiful and memorable passages are found in

abundance. The six poems in *Troy Park* are all exquisite, and each line seems to be born inevitably of the impulsion of the prevalent emotion. There are reminiscences of childhood, expressed with quiet warmth and touched up with the unaffected glow of Miss Sitwell's art. One critic indeed goes so far as to suggest that her poems of childhood are her best. In *Troy Park* and *The Sleeping Beauty* and some of her minor poems are scattered vivid emotional recollections of childhood, which one reads again and again with delicious gustation till they stick to one's memory and become a part of that extraordinary fabric. Here are just a few:

And there were haunted summers in Troy Park
When all the stillness budded into leaves;
We listened, like Ophelia drowned in blond
And fluid hair, beneath stag-antlered trees.....

We walked like shy gazelles
Among the music of the thin flower bells.
And life still held some promise,—never ask
Of what,—but life seemed less a stranger, then,
Than ever after in this cold existence.....

.....of air—so dear in the round leaves
They look, this crystal sound scarce grieves,
As they pelt down like tears fall'n bright
From music or some deep delight.....

Our nurses called to us, their faces lovely
As that dove-soft hour we call good night;
Africa and Asia spoke: "Oh never
Must you wander far into the forests....."
Yet as they spoke, the old worlds died like dew—
Life was so beautiful that shadow meant
Not death, but long peace, a lovely lulling.....

"Come softly and we will look through
The windows from this avenue.....
For there, my youth passed like a sleep
Yet in my heart, still murmuring deep,
The small green airs from eternity
Murmuring softly, never die."

I have found it necessary to quote as many as five extracts (and there are scores as significant besides) in order to still the insipid cry that modern poetry has neither purity nor refinement of sensibility. In such supremely beautiful passages "the perspectives of music," to quote Mr. Williams again, "become perspectives also of time and sadness. Now opening into a lovely depth, now closing up into a brilliant superstices, the poems..... are all an evocation of, and a lament over, *le temps jadis*".

VII

There is another attack usually levelled against Miss Sitwell's poetry. Mr. Geoffrey Grigson (and he is one of many) complains

that one of the "major faults" in her longer poems is 'incoherence, an eminence of part which interferes with the structure of the whole. The design is muddled.....and I conclude that the muddle is the muddle of an insufficiently imaginative and intelligent mind.' And again: "The verse of childhood has one drawback. It lets through too often what Miss Sitwell the modernist should be anxious to hide—Miss Sitwell the traditionalist, Miss Sitwell the permanent adolescent of 'perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.'" Then he triumphantly concludes: "This phase of her work constantly shows itself, sometimes with success, but too often soiled with a sixpence-at-Woolworth romanticism."

This is, even where it is not uncourteous and rude, merely beating the air. It is true that the world of her childhood is a strange, remarkable faery world where curious things could, and do, in fact happen. It is equally true that intermittently the harshness and grotesqueness of the world we actually live in break into the serenity and impossible gaiety of that other world. But this is deliberately done, and even then there is no confusion, strictly speaking, no repulsive incoherence. Miss Sitwell is the romantic creator of the one and the grim magician that raises up the spirit of the other. She is always there in the background, and you are to distil what meaning you will out of the exhibited antithesis of what might have been and what is. She does not care to shout at the top of her voice the conclusions which to any intelligent and introspective mind must be obvious. The failure to understand this has led so excellent a pair of critics of Poetry as Laura Riding and Robert Graves to write: "Miss Edith Sitwell's poetry is, perhaps, the clearest instance of the romantic caricature of language that critical classicism is obliged to take under its wing." What exactly do they mean? It is anyhow a silent warning to us not to take critics always seriously.

It is, however, fortunate that one critic of poetry, at any rate—and he is one in the front rank of modern poets—has admirably hit the nail on the head and miraculously preserved the finger. Says Sir Henry Newbolt: "Outside this scene of the Sleeping Beauty's palace or of Troy Park in Victorian England she is standing with us at her own childhood. We see it now with the two realities of the near and the far off: the groups and figures have not only the picturesque but rigid chinoiserie of the child's close and sometimes terrible faeryland, but a pathetic significance only visible by the grace of an unchildlike compassion."

Miss Sitwell is still in the prime of her womanhood; that the blessed feminine in her will do yet greater things in poetry. I have not the slightest doubt.

A POEM

He came and held me by the hand ;
He came and took me to a lonesome Land ;
He smiled ! He gave me graciously a Flower,
And said:— " This be my gift to thee. "

He came and sang to me a Song ;
He came and bade me look at yon Star !
The meaning of the Flower and Song and Star
Unto Himself He kept, then smiled,—and left !

I know not much ;
But this I know
His Love is still the Light
On the pathway of my life.

And so with music in my heart
I go from place to place,
And sing to multitudes the Song
That He hath taught me in the Inner Shrine.

—T. L. Vaswani.

Fountain of Bandusia.

By T. B. Krishnaswami, M. A., B. L.



HIS is the hour when the Goddess should present herself and confer on me whatever boon I ask for, or I should dash my head against these rocks and perish, bearing with my life, with my death, the testimony to the futility of *Tapas*, discipline or *Yoga* ; I shall keep chanting the *Soundarya Lahiri* !". So spoke the yogi, who through many long years of penance had sought the favour of Goddess Durga, at the Panchavati or Garden of five trees—Asoka, Amalaka, Aswatha, Bilva and Vata—near the Gollapalli cave, in the valley of the Heaped-up-Boulders, a couple of miles east of Krishnagiri Rock.

Years ago the spot was a Mohametan cemetery, and its convex surface attracted a yogi who, after the manner of the great Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, planted the trees and performed penance under their shade. On one side of the grove, mounting on an escarpment, much hidden in the soil and moving as on an elephant's back, we reach a cleft in the rocks through which a cool breeze blows and fans the face. Crawling through the narrow passage we come upon a cave or recess with the canopy of a single rock held up by huge boulders all around. Through the crevices the sunlight comes peeping in, in flecks and broken bars, and a lambent and mellow light, such as the Lotus-Eaters love, shimmers all over.

All yogis have an open space and an enclosed one for the performance of penances ; such an enclosed space may be seen at Kandal, Ootacamund, at the *Ashram* of the Onkaraswamigal. Performing penance in the open space, one diffuses his energies and mixes with the immensity all around ; but in the enclosed one, one draws within oneself, like the tortoise within its shell, all one's energies, winding oneself up like the mainspring of a watch to gather the power, the force that one has to transmit to the world. Such a power-house was the cave, known as Gollapalli cave, forming part of the Panchavati, where our yogi was performing his austerities and propounding his ultimatum in the manner set forth. Tigers had sought a lair in the cave, but they could not stand the steady gaze of the sanyasi's eyes and fled, leaving him the sole occupant thereof. Shepherd boys occasionally strayed in, to seek shelter against sun and rain, but kept themselves at a respectable distance and in reverential silence, gazing on the man who stood on one leg or sat stiff like a corpse,

gazing not on the tip of the nose but at a point between the brows that seemed to blaze with a lurid radiance. Others had come here and performed penances or pretended to, but most of them failed as the shepherdesses grazing cattle in the vicinity came peeping in like *Menakas* to spoil the tapas of the young *Visvamitras*. Some of them entered domestic life; others were eaten up by tigers for their wickedness; only this man survived, and he was at the last stage of desperation.

Will the Durga appear, or was the man to perish? We do not know and cannot be certain. A bright-eyed shepherdess appeared at the time when the sanyasi was about to immolate himself and said: "Do not look for any miracles in these degenerate days of decaying faith, and do not throw uselessly away God's gift of life. What boons can any Goddess give you higher and nobler than a wife? Why do you with this asceticism insult your mother and all womanhood? Why don't you marry and shoulder the difficulties of domestic life and in it realise God? The family is the perfect temple. In it one realises God as father, mother, husband, wife and child. Lose yourself in the love of another and you realise God. What higher boon do you seek than God-realisation?"

"Avaunt, thou temptress! Seek not to ruin me with your blandishments. I have turned my back on worldly pleasures."

"You have turned your back on God also? Perish unpitied."

She spoke. He closed his eyes in horror, stunned by her speech, and when he opened them, she was gone.

Was he to pursue her for further illumination, or was he to pursue his own course of conduct, steadily and strenuously adhered to through so many years?

He seemed to see a vision, and in the ecstasy thereof, with arms outstretched towards another shore, moved forward regardless of the obstructing rock and fell dead. Was his life a success or a failure? Did he reach the goal of his ambition or die in sight of it merely?

Blood gushed out in a stream, or was it cool, clear water *splendor vitro*, clearer than glass? The joy on his face showed his life had not been wholly a failure. He had not solved the problem of asceticism, but he gave up his life with such a joy that he must have seen God face to face. Out of his strength came sweetness, even as honey from the lion's jaw. So is it always, the strength of the mighty turns into sweetness that refreshes the world.

Does buried Caesar bleeding make the rose more red? Does Mumtaz Mahal dying, reissue from the enclosing earth in the spotless purity of radiant white marble, in that blown bubble that hovers between the sky's blue and the river's? Why are tombs held sacred and even iconoclastic Mohametans offer worship at the spot where their saints—the *Paigambaron*—lie? Is it that power cannot pass away into airy unsubstantial nothing? Does beauty beget beauty and goodness goodness? What is this new transubstantiation, the blood of a saint turning into a perennial spring of cool refreshing water, like the sustaining bread and wine in regard to which churches have differed and martyrs burned at the stake?

The sanyasi died with the ecstasy of the vision radiant on his face, and a cool fountain that was never there before has sprung up, at which man and beast refresh themselves and bless the memory of Him who so gave Himself away for the benefit of his fellow-beings. So that it comes to pass that whoever visits the cave to-day finds in the centre, issuing from under a big boulder a spring of cool, delicious water such as is rarely met with in the vicinity. Either because you have exerted yourself to reach the cave and find water refreshing, or because on the way obeying a natural impulse you have picked up and munched a goose-berry from the *Phyllanthus Emlicus* or *Nelli* tree and, therefore, find the water very sweet, as you will in such circumstances find any water sweet, or simply and plainly because the water is by nature so, the fact remains that the water is very sweet, as even those avar whose tongues have been thickened with betel-chewing and whose taste has been vitiated by the use of tobacco. Like the fountain of Bandusia, the water is more transparent than glass; the fierce hour of the burning dog-star cannot touch it; it affords a refreshing coolness to the oxen wearied with the plough and to the grazing cattle.

*O fons Bandusius splendor vitro
Te flagrantis atrox hora Caniculæ
Nescit tangere, tu frigus amabile
Fessis vomere tauris
Præbet et pecori vago.*

The Eternal Bride.

By An Incognito M. A.



HE came into the world in wild stormy weather. It was twilight; it had been raining all day long; darkness had covered the earth; thunder and lightning were in the sky, and they came chasing one another in terrific glee; it looked as if there was warfare in heaven; it was in such an hour of mad turmoil that she first saw light.

The men and women who went to see the new-born child returned home happier and healthier. They said she was more like a chaste thought than a physical being. They said one of those lightning flashes in heaven had become embodied as a child.

She had dark curly hair and wide eyes, a broad forehead and a strange unearthly look.

Her childhood was a fountain of joy. She was the pet of everybody. She was the child of every home. They said in her village: 'She has too much in her to remain monopolised by one father and one mother.'

The cows on their way to the meadows paused for a while before her house to see her at play. The calves regarded her as their sister. The sheep and the dogs thought it a privilege to be patted and hugged by her.

These arms of mine have carried her along the roads numberless times. Many a long hour have I remained with her, listening to her prattle. Day by day I have watched her growth and found in her an infinite variety, an exquisite charm.

Her parents named her Dharini. But she had, like a goddess, a hundred other names. Everyone insisted on calling her in his or her own way. I remember an old and pious lady who named her after that ideal of womanly chastity, Uma. A set of boys who envied her locks called her Sukesî. A group of girls named her Indu. The women of the working class simply called her, 'mother'. I always called her Urvasî, —the Urvasî not of vulgar imagination, but as visualised by Tagore.

The gods gave her beauty; they gave her intelligence, but in the natural perversity of divine dispensation they gave her no fortune. Dharini's advent into the world coincided with the ruin of her once prosperous family. As Dharini grew more and more graceful, her parents grew poorer and poorer.

The men and women in my village had a genius for finding out causal connections. They always said that the death of a mother-in-law at her eightieth year was influenced by the new-come daughter-in-law. They also said that the disastrous failure at the examination of the newly-wedded student was to be traced to the young wife. (In this latter instance I agreed with them, saying that the young wife was certainly responsible for the catastrophe, as she made her youthful husband devote more hours to thoughts about her than to his studies.) They also said that Dharini's ruling star was a very bad one. Beauty united with misfortune—that was their picture of poor Dharini.

And to add to the misery, Dharini was growing rapidly. She was now fourteen, the age that makes or mars our girls.

We all were sorry to think of Dharini's impending departure. We were sure she would be married in the coming summer.

Her parents searched far and wide, but they could not find a husband for their daughter. Her beauty was known to everyone, but all dreaded to take into their homes such an ill-starred girl. They wanted at least a fat dowry to compensate them for their courage in wooing misfortune.

Wherefrom could the penniless parents pay a fat dowry? They were in utter despair and consumed with anxiety, for they wanted to save their faces before society—a society consisting of idle women, gossip-loving crones, unemployed men. An unmarried girl of fourteen was an eyesore to this society.

Only Dharini kept smiling on. She often said, 'Don't you worry, dears; some one will help us this year.'

* * * * *

It was a new-moon night. Dharini's parents were fast asleep, tired after the day's work and with anxiety. The daughter alone kept awake for a long time, singing strange woodland songs. Then she dressed herself in her finest clothing and covered her body with garlands of wild blossoms.

The night was dark. It was again raining. There was not a sound, save the monotonous roar of thunder and the pouring of rain. It resembled the night of Dharini's birth.

Next morning Dharini was found floating in a well. She seemed to be lying on a bed of green. There was a smile on her lips, and her face was bright as it had never been before.

'They took her up tenderly and lifted her with care.'

A letter was found in her tresses:

For the poor and the helpless maids, for girls whom society will not help, there is only one way. I have chosen to tread that way.

For girls to whom poverty is the only dowry and virginity the only jewel, there is only one Bridegroom.

He does not ask for a dowry; He does not demand riches.

He is the Eternal Bridegroom, knowing no decay, no falling off in love.

In His realm there is no social scandal. In His land those that cannot help at least refrain from mocking. In His Kingdom there is no fear of social ostracism.

Like the heroines of old, I have chosen Him in Swayamvara.

Brides on earth have their death and their decay.

But I am the Eternal Bride.

* * * *

Her parents have built a temple for Dharini, and there they deck her image with flowers every day. If any one asks them what they do, they say: 'We celebrate the eternal wedding of our daughter.'

—

Secrets.

By The Poor-Man-Humbugged.



happened to see recently in the hands of a friend a book called *The Secret of Success*. The common curiosity of man in me, coupled with the desire of one who has not been much favoured of success, to know the secret made me snatch the book from him. My friend, much to the regret of both of us, had not mastered the book. He was, therefore, as reluctant to part with it as I was eager to possess it. His kind regard for me, however, made him give way to my impetuosity. So with the treasure up my sleeve, I hastily turned home building unwonted castles in the air.

Soon I entered my study and without even undressing opened the book and plunged headlong into it. For several hours I lay under the spell of the secret. With great avidity I swallowed page after page, and chapter after chapter of the book, and at length reached the last word of the author. It was sundown then. The pretty lamps had begun to peep through the thresholds of the village houses, and to wink their good-bye to the departing lord of the day; while the vociferous temple-bells were busy inviting the world-worn man to the peaceful Feet of The Lord. They awoke me to the world. I closed the book with a sigh, and sat erect on my arm-chair when a new light broke into me. I said, *Vive master!* and rose from my seat.

A secret is a big cipher. It is at once worthless and invaluable. Leave it alone, it is worthless and useless. But tack it on to something, it adds infinitely to the value of the thing to which it is attached. It is a curious creation, something to conjure with. Keep your hand closed, and you hear your neighbour's heart beat at it. Open it, and he cares no more for you. Darkness allures man to peep, and sometimes even to leap, into her bosom, because she is the repository of secrets. Secrets are most precious things. They are, therefore, kept from common eyes and communal hands. Secrecy is the keystone of the universe. The creator, creation and the creature are all secrets. The world is full of secrets. And secrets are all very fascinating.

Man is naturally fond of secrets. The first man was bewitched by a secret. His progeny hunt after them. Does not man incessantly and untiringly peck and scratch at Nature, and pry and probe into her hidden secret? He has been doing so from the dawn of time. A man goes ardently after secrets every moment of his life and unwittingly reveals, and also leaves behind him, many rare secrets.

And what is the end of it all? Seizing the secrets of Nature, man hopes, sooner or later, to set the globe spinning like a top in the palm of his hand, and singing like a bird to his immortal glory and eternal delectation. He is busy at it now. Meanwhile, our secret-mongers find it good business to help people to all kinds of secrets.

Secret dealers are not few now-a-days. From the poor ragged street-juggler to the pompous peripatetic miracle-maker there are several classes of them. And each has its own coterie, clients and customers too. And no wonder; for the mystery-mongers claim a divine pedigree. They trace their descent to the Archangel. What if some envious gods and some erratic mortals call him The Fallen? He is yet great indeed and divine. He was the first secret-dealer. He sold his secret to the first woman. He has numerous posterity. And his progeny multiply in proportion, and sometimes even out of proportion, to the population and puerility of the world. The Oracle, the Astrologer, the Necromancer and the Wizard are his medieval progeny. The Occultist, the Orientalist and the Mystery-maker are some of his modern offsprings. The secret-monger who sends out his 'mystic wares' in smart 'paper boats' is perhaps the latest issue of the ever extending genealogy. He has become the great commoner of the present republic of mystery-mongers. He is also the cleverest and the most successful of the realm. He knows his business well, and better than his brothers. He pockets his premium in advance of his opening his stock in trade. He keeps neither samples nor show-rooms. But he sells his stock with much alacrity and assurance.

The book market to-day is flooded with books of secrets. "Secrets of Science," "Secrets of the Mind," "The Secret of Power," "The Secret of Love," "The Secret of Life," and "The Secret of Success" are only a few of them. No subject appears to have escaped the attention of these secret-makers. They seem to have unravelled all the secrets of the universe, and snatched the mystery of Mother Nature. All the secrets of birth and death, of life and work, of mind and matter, and of creature and creation are now in the market. And our secret-mongers, true to their lineage, are philanthropic also. Although the hard days they live in would not permit of their going so far as their ancient forefather who gave his secret gratis to Eve, they are considerate enough to place their stock within the reach of all. Most of them, however, content themselves with a few shillings a book. Secrets are really cheap now-a-days. Any one can have them, and many go in for them. One apprehends that all the secrets of the Almighty Creator and the infinite creation will soon be broadcast.

Let Him, however, take care of himself. What we feel is a little concern for our old friend, our bookseller. He sells "The Secrets of Trade". Whether it contains the secrets or no, it augurs not well for him. The secrets of his trade and those of the authors he presents will, however, soon be out. What will become of his business then?

Shelley once said that just as an unsuccessful thief becomes a thief-taker, an unsuccessful author becomes a critic. But is it not pressing the analogy too far to say that he who cannot understand the ordinary commonplace things of daily life and experience, trumps up a secret in everything and turns out a secret-seller? A puerile mind cannot make a prophet. Our secret-sellers are not entirely devoid of secrets. They do certainly know some secrets, and also how to make use of them. Otherwise, how could they send out these books in such large numbers and through successive editions into the world?

Of the untold secrets of the universe, there is one which is the most ancient forbear of secrets. All secrets are born of it. It is the greatest secret—the Secret of Secrets, and that is the secret one learns from the book of my master. And that secret, my dear reader—I shall whisper into your ears—is that we are all fools. Man is foolish enough to think that he is wise, and not wise enough to know that he is foolish. Do we not hear the heavy footfalls of foolishness every moment of our lives? Man lives and moves, eats and drinks, seeks and strives, wills and wives, struts and shines, and dwells and dies in and through and with his foolishness. And he is ever proud of his wisdom. But he has not the wisdom to study or understand himself.

This is the ancient secret on which the world runs. This is the secret of all success in the world. My foolishness gave 'my author' success. One man's foolishness makes another man's success. That is the sure secret but for which 'my wise author' would never be able to keep the wolf from his door. And that is the secret that persisted through the multitudes of pages of his book and dawned on me when I closed it and laid it down.

'My author,' however, is the arch-secret-monger. And before I bid goodbye to him I must express my thankfulness to him for having opened my eyes to this invaluable secret, which I ever possessed but never knew. My sage master has taught me the Secret of Secrets. And so to him and to all his sapient brothers and friends and followers a long and warm ADIEU!

Diamond Cut Diamond.

By F. H. Aldhouse, M. A.



GENERAL Sir Brockley Bull-Biff, K. C. B. had been in his prime a warrior bold, in battle much delighting. During the Great War he had fought with a pro-German native King somewhere in Central Africa and had defeated him with great courage; capturing both the misguided dusky monarch and his gold arm-chair. The prisoner was sent to Ceylon, and presumably the Chancellor of the Exchequer had the chair minted into sovereigns.

The War being over, Sir Brockley retired from active service, though he was still 'Adviser' or something at the War Office. He was now, in his old age, Churchwarden of St. Cyprian's, Buckingham Square, London. "And I make 'em sit up, Sir," as he truly said. He was ultra-conservative, ultra-erastian and ultra-orthodox in everything. There were two ways, he held, one right, one wrong and he was always on the right side. When he met a 'wrong 'un' as he called anyone who differed from him, he had a way of looking at them under his eyelids and saying "Haw! haw!" softly under his breath. Only that and nothing more, but none the less that person knew Sir Brockley regarded them as so bad that they were positively putrid and should be cremated or otherwise disposed of without unnecessary delay.

Lady Bull-Biff was (believe it or not) even more military in her ways than the General. She was perfectly dressed, coiffeured and painted and powdered; and had a frozen manner which either developed into snubbing or gushing according to the company. She regarded her own 'Set' as IT—all others were, as she said, 'Commonalty,' and she could convey it to them without words.

I was acting *Locum Tenens* at St. Cyprian's, having come to relieve the Rector, an old college friend who was recovering from an illness, my own small Irish parish being minded by an elderly retired clergyman during my absence.

"The Bull-Biff's are a little overwhelming," I was told, "but keep off the subject of Ireland and all will go on satisfactorily. Sir Brockley simply *ramps* if you mention that island. He once had fishing rights on a river there, and believes the Sinn Fein people interfered with the salmon. He was rather unsuccessful in his angling. But keep off that subject and all will be well."

I did, but the General was determined to say what he thought about the 'distressful country,' and the very first time I saw him

began: "It's a dem place. Sir, yes dem it. I'm glad the Rector says your family comes from Norwich (they did—one hundred and twenty years ago). I can't endure a dem Sinn Feiner myself. Once had fishing in a dem river called the Boyne. Rotten sport, some dem trick. I'd put every one of those dem rebels against a wall with that dem ruffian De Valera in front and shoot 'em all, every bally one. And that's not the half of it....."

"I think, dear, Mr. A is so glad to be away from such a spot, he'd like to forget about it," Lady Bull-Biff interrupted. I saw the General's further reminiscences were too intimate, in his wife's opinion, to be imparted. I was glad to get away from such a pair of prancing Philistines. The Rector had, however, told me there was one weak spot in their social armour; they both adored their orphan grandson young Brockley who was at a Preparatory School.

"A real nice kid," he said.....

In the Rectory there is a glass extension over the pillared porch, and I liked to read there, and at times rest my eyes and watch the busy world below in that roaring London Street—for though the Church was in a quiet square, the Parson's residence was in a main artery of S. W. 5. I looked out one morning and saw the General's Roll's-Royce drive up to my door; Lady Bull-Biff got out and I at once felt something must be wrong. Either Sir Brockley was ill or some domestic trouble had happened to bring her at 11 a. m. I went down to the drawing room and Lady Bull-Biff instead of asking me to 'listen to my tale of woe' as I expected, began to beat about the bush in a way that showed she wished to break whatever it was, gradually.

"We adore dear Ireland, don't we, Mr. A," she said "So green, so romantic, isn't she?"

"Quite, Lady Bull-Biff," I agreed.

"My husband really loves the sister isle, you know, he sometimes talks as if he didn't but that's all his joke. So we all appreciate the delightful, quaint original people and that charming Mr. de Valera, don't we Mr. A?"

"Quite, quite," I assented.

"You really *are* Irish, Mr. A., though of English descent, and you understand all the magic and attraction of Inis Fail and its Enchantment?"

I noticed Lady Bull-Biff laid great emphasis on Enchantment, but my reply was "quite, quite, quite."

Lady Bull-Biff now got down to business.

"There are so many wonders in Ireland," she said pointedly.

"Animal, mineral or vegetable?" I enquired. "Or just the land itself? I see one of them interests you greatly."

"You're so sympathetic, dear Mr. A.," Lady Bull-Biff said. "I see you anticipate my thoughts and words. We had a son, Timothy, he was not a bad lad but too, too affectionate in ways. He had a way with him, and used to pay considerable attention to any pretty girl he came across. Only just pleasant deference to good looks, but still it was calculated to raise false hopes in their hearts. Dear Timothy *could not* be made to see that. It was wrong of him to—to flirt, for it was flirting, I'm afraid. Well, he went over when his father took that fishing in Ireland, and he did what he always did—he flirted. There were two very pretty girls, one a Miss O'Blareaway, daughter of Cannon O'Blareaway of Ballymuddraget; and the other a Miss Frances O'Donel in the locality. Timothy most wrongly flirted with them both at the same time but, of course, neither of them knew he was only being pleasant in his ideas of pleasantry."

"The General was too much taken up with his fishing to notice. Oh dear, Mr. A. those two girls took Timothy *seriously*. He got engaged to both of them. Wasn't it just too, too bad?"

"Quite," I agreed.

"In spite of everything I and his father could do, he ultimately married Doreen O'Blareaway. She hadn't a penny to bless herself with, Mr. A., and she *didn't* belong to our set, but there you have it—they were married. Then that horrid person Miss O'Donel did an awful thing. She imagined she had been jilted, though poor Timothy only had been nice (nace—she pronounced it) to her. The day they returned home, that hussy, for she is nothing less, called. Our butler most foolishly let her in, both Timothy and his wife came in and the creature knelt down on her two bare knees and cursed them, Mr. A. She said—'I invoke the water and the fire against you. You have broken my heart, may they break your hopes! Death and disaster and disappointment be ever on you.'

"Horrid of her! But the strange coincidence is that dear Timothy *was* drowned, his ship being sunk by a submarine and Doreen, his wife, *was* burnt when the Zeppelin bombed her hospital. That was twelve years ago. We felt it was *weird* at the time, but what brings me to you now is that our grandson Brockley, who is at School, has just had a series of accidents in *all* of which fire or water played a part. It seems to be all beginning over again. Only this morning we heard he set his bed on fire last night and scorched his hands and face. As soon as Sir Brockley read the Head Master's letter to me at breakfast, I said at once: 'I shall go to that dear Mr. A. He's Irish, he'll know what to do.

Something *must* be done at once.' And my husband quite agreed. So I appeal to you, do something without delay. That *horrible* woman, she must be quite a witch. Oh Mr. A., what *do* you think?"

"I take a very serious view of what you have told me, Lady Bull-Biff. But you know a priest is a wizard in a manner of speaking. He is a match for any witch. Is this Miss O'Donel in London, do you know?"

"Oh she is, she's in a private flat in Cromwell Road not far away. Will you see her?"

"I will," I said, and the Roll's-Royce left me within a few doors of the flat and drove away.....

"He broke my heart. He tampered with my affections. There's a curse on him and his. He and that woman have got their deserts. The boy will not escape."

"You are right, Miss O'Donel. There is a curse and you are behind it," I said. "The boy gave you no provocation. Please say 'God bless him' before I go. If you refuse, I shall know what to think and what to do."

"Do you threaten me?" the young woman asked.

"That's as you please, Miss O'Donel. 'He has digged and graven a grave, and has fallen into the midst of it himself.' If you read your Bible you will remember that text."

The girl advanced on me—for a moment I thought she would have struck me, but she merely looked at me, a red light burning in her eyes. I know what to do in self-defence in such cases; the bolt directed by her will fell harmless.

"Do what you can, Mr. Parson," she sneered.

"I will," I answered, "look to yourself..."

I was speaking to the caretaker in the garden of the flats.

"Nice garden you've got," I said. "Do you do all the work?"

"Most of it, Sir. Sometimes a lodger will take a fancy to do a bit of planting, but it doesn't last long. There's a lady in the second floor who placed some bulbs in that bed, a week ago—a Miss O'Donel."

"By the way," I said, "would you mind looking to see if I left my umbrella in your office?"

The caretaker went off scenting a reward. The moment he left I used his spade on the flower bed. He was five minutes away.

"I couldn't find it, Sir," he told me.

I gave him half-a-crown.

"I recollect I didn't bring it with me," I told him.

He didn't notice that the flower bed was freshly dug.....

That afternoon, as dust was falling, I opened the tin box I had dug up at Miss O' Donel's flat. There was a most realistic wax figure of a naked boy. "Real hair, his own, she followed him to a hairdresser's," I said to myself.

I held the wax image in my hand and recited over it St. Patrick's ran against which the powers of darkness are powerless:

Today, in this fatal hour
I place all Heaven with its power
And the sun with its brightness,
And the snow with its whiteness
And the fire with the strength it hath
And the lightning with its rapid path
And the sea with its deepness
And the rocks with their steepness
And the earth with its starkness,
All these I place
By God's Almighty grace.
Between myself and the powers of darkness.

Strengthened by that mighty invocation, I broke the wax figure in two and threw it on the fire. As the blaze rose from its melting I pointed the little figure of my left hand at it. "The ill wish to the ill wisher," I said in Gaelic.....

* * * * *

From the *Evening Microphone*, Saturday, 4th March 1931.

A sad accident occurred this evening in a flat in Cromwell Road; a young Irish lady was making tea on a gas stove when her clothes became ignited. Though hurried to the Brompton General Hospital, she succumbed from shock.

* * * * *

From Lady Bull-Biff to Rev. A. A.,
Grangemore, S. W. 6.
7th May, 1932.

Everything has gone so well with our grandson. Dear Mr. A., how can we ever thank you.

With kindest regards in which the General joins me,
Yours most sincerely,
Marcia Bull-Biff.

The Taming of Emu.

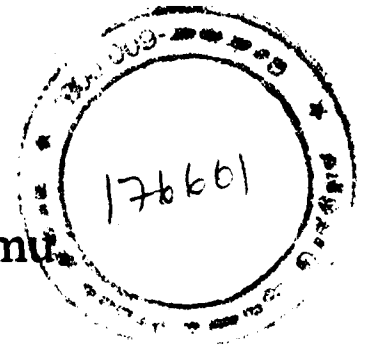
By Easwaran Unni.



ELU was a rough, tough, up-to-snuff Nair of five-and-thirty. For about a dozen years he had been valet to an English official—and a nice cushy job it was—and had saved enough to start a little business of his own. The first thing he did after starting his business was to fall violently in love with a pretty, saucy, peach-cheeked, dark-eyed girl named Emu. Her people lived from hand to mouth, doing odd peddling jobs to keep the wolf from the door. But Emu held her head very high, and would look at none save 'quality folks'; for, was she not employed in a European Convent? Kelu thought the world of her and could see no faults. To him she was the dearest girl on earth, the fairest of the fair, and all that sort of thing. So he married her and set up housekeeping in a snug little cottage.

Emu knew no more about work than she knew about Dimethyl-metabenzic Acid. And she did nothing but strut and gad about in her lilac sari as proud as a peacock. For some time Kelu did not murmur as he was 'plum foolish' about her. He would get up and cook his own breakfast without a whimper. But by and by, his good nature was bled white, and one night he favoured Emu with a piece of his mind. Emu made no fuss, for when his mind was made up Kelu could be as stubborn as George the Third himself. So she mended her ways for a little while, but soon adopted a policy as startling as it was effective. In Kelu's own words: "She would be fixing dinner, an' all of a sudden she'd flop over an' roll her eyes an' take on till she went plum off in a trance." At first Kelu was scared out of his wits; but by and by, he began to suspect that she was 'playing possum,' as she had fainting fits only when there was hard work to do as on washing-days. The local medico seemed to oscillate between apoplexy and epilepsy, and after a good deal of professional hems, favoured the invalid with some pink powder which did her no earthly good.

Then Kelu called in his cousin Kotha to wait on Emu and to do the household work. From that day forward Emu lived like a queen till Kotha went on a visit to her father's. When Kelu came home that evening, his wife was lolling on her bed, and there was no supper. Kelu uttered not a syllable. But when Kotha came back that night, he asked her to go out in the kitchen with him as he wanted to say something serious. He shut the



door of Emu's room, making believe that he hated to disturb her. But Emu got up and listened at the keyhole, as he knew she would.

"Kotha," said Kelu, "I've given up hope about Emu ever gitting well. I can't 'ford to keep hired help, so I'm going to send her to the hospitul."

"And wot are you going to do?" asked the woman.

"I'm going to marry again," replied Kelu. "I don't like single life. I'm going to be mighty careful nex' time I marry, an' git a wife wot can work an' keep my house jest right. I want a gal wot can cook an' wash and wot ain't lazy. Your style jest about suits me, Kotha. You ain't got a lazy bone in your body an' you are a heap purtior than pore Emu. Wot does you say to marryin' me?"

Before he could get the last word out of his mouth, the door burst open, and Emu jumped out, clenching her fists till the knuckles shone out white under the strain. She grabbed Kotha tight by the arms, and jammed her head against the wall. And had not Kelu pitched in and rescued Kotha, Emu would certainly have choked the breath out of her.

"I'm turrible 'fraid you're going to have them fits," said Kelu, "'cause you're exercisin' yourself too much. Lemme help you to bed, honey."

Emu screamed and scratched; but when she saw it was of no avail, she fell to begging.

"I'm cursed, Kelu, 'fore God, I'm," she told him.

"I ain't never going to have another fit the longest day I live. If you'll jest gimme one more chance, I'll cook your victuals an' wash your clothes so good that you'll never have one word of fault to find."

Kelu pursed his lips in thought for a while, as though he did not believe her. "All right, Emu," he said, "I'll give you one more chance an' if you work as good as Kotha here, I won't marry again, but if yu ever has another of them fits, Kotha is going to step into your shoes for certain."

You may not believe it, but Emu was cured for good. She quitted her former ways and learned to cook and wash and sew as well as others. She kept her house neat as a pin, and gave no cause for Kelu to call in Kotha any more.

Musings on Mangoes.

By P. G. Sundara Rajan, B.A.



HIS morning I tried to purchase three mangoes and failed. The pity was I was just short of six pies to the price and the obstinate vendor refused to compromise. These commercial people have no respect to other's feelings. In despair I dismissed the man with as much dignity as I could assume and consoled myself like the fox in the fable: "Perhaps, those fruits are not good, for aught I know." Still the failure on my part set me thinking, and I have been brooding over it all day.

When you come to think of it, however, a mango fruit—or any other thing for that matter sugar-cane, for instance—does seem to lack something when purchased for money. The proceeding is so prosaic, you know, that one feels that all the juice has run out by the time one has concluded the bargain. For me, nothing like a stolen mango; stolen from a garden where a watchman is mounting guard. To aim a stone at a bunch of half-ripe mangoes, catch them ere they fall down and run headlong, clearing ditches and jumping over bushes to escape the enraged gardener and to sit down under the shelter of a ruined wall to have a hearty bite, may not be what you would call the fashionable way of tackling a mango. But personally, I have always preferred it, since it seems to enrich the taste: at any rate, one must have the proper atmosphere to heighten the effect. What can be more unnatural than the sight of a mango fruit deprived of all its wild glory of verdant bloom and sliced into bits, lying on a plate waiting patiently for its doom; while the human gourmats gore the mutilated fruit with their polite remonstrances to one another? As a matter of fact, these mango-eaters, when once the ball is set rolling, would compete among themselves unashamedly and take large handfuls of the pieces. "Hypocrites!" would be the unspoken thought of the fruit, if Sir J. C. Bose is right. This just shows that the primitive impulse in every man asserts itself when it comes to one's providing for one's stomach.

Again, it is this instinct that makes the undeveloped types of humanity earn their living by hard work of a hazardous nature as the burglars are wont to do. Laziness can hardly be the reason for the behaviour of the professional highwayman, who, risking capture and conviction, indulges in brigandage. Put him in a comfortable place with ample food and clothing; still he would not relish his surroundings as he does his natural inclinations unless his instinct is thoroughly rooted

out. He likes the stolen goods better than the earned comfort. In like manner, perhaps, the stolen mango fruit seems to be better to the average urchin and to the abnormal adult, whose impulses, far from being extinguished, are only repressed. A poet would go to the length of declaring that fruit tastes better when stolen because it becomes filled with the ecstasy of liberation, like a fair lady of old when 'Knights were bold'. But the person who steals a mango in these days will have to bear the full consequences, considering that there is no serpent to tempt him on to whom the blame could be transferred.

Talking about atmosphere, a grove beside a river is an ideal setting for a mango-hunt; and that too when the fruit is attacked by the two and thirty gleaming instruments in the mouth of man. True, some of the juice is likely to be wasted, as it has a tendency to run down the forearm and develop into a miniature cataract from the elbow. But if one has the dexterity to twist the elbow in time and stretch the tongue simultaneously, there need be no occasion for either waste or complaint. It was while I made my first attempt at this acrobatic feat that I injured my upper lip in the somewhat violent contact that resulted. Yet, do you think that I missed the portion of the juice that was the cause of this ill-fated attempt? I hasten to assure you that I did not. You know, my left hand was free, and mention of the other hand reminds me how one has to use both hands when one is lucky enough to get one of those big mangoes with the small nut inside.

The existence of the nut inside the fruit was a source of grievance to me in my early days and continues to be so sometimes even now. After all, why should mangoes have nuts? So much waste of juicy pulp, making the disillusioned mango-lover gnaw at the nut in desolate disappointment. One can understand, for nobody ignores the fact that there must be something to ensure reproduction, if there is a nut of reasonable size, about that of a banyan fruit. Thus I argued, when I wrote an essay in my school-days on the uses of the mango tree, pointing out this nut as a serious defect in the otherwise good mango fruit. For a long time after that, I was not able to understand why my teacher read my essay aloud and then roared with laughter. Be that as it may, one thing is certain. If the time does actually come when everything could be produced in a laboratory, as our scientists would have us believe, I intend taking out a patent for a device that will produce nut-less mangoes.

Returning to the topic on hand, and especially to the question of atmosphere, a true artist, such as I am, would prefer unripe mangoes to ripe ones, as the former alone would convey a more

realistic impression in keeping with the rough nature of the landscape in the picture. I remember one occasion when, with some other urchins, I knocked off with one stone a bunch of four unripe mangoes from an overhanging branch above a river-bed, more by virtue of accident than by vigour of aim. As we grabbed the scattered mangoes, we heard a stir inside the grove, whereupon we took to our heels and sped along like the horses at the Grand National; only, in a more disorganised manner. I often think, when I look back upon that race for life that, had there been an impartial referee witnessing our dash, we would have been surely sent up as entrants for the hurdles item in the Olympiad. We stopped only when a herd of indifferent buffaloes blocked our way, and sat down at the wayside to share the spoils. Just then we caught sight of the watchman of the grove we had robbed, coming from the opposite direction. I inwardly promised two coconuts to the local God Ganesha on condition that the man passed us without detecting our crime; which, thanks to the deity of the elephant-face, the man precisely did. (I remember that promise only now, and I have a vague feeling that my failure to keep my promise has been the cause of the stubbornness of the fruit-vendor. Something to do with retribution, I think). When we thought over the unachieved possibilities that would have been the result of the gardener's absence if only we had not been too frightened, we began accusing one another of cowardice.

With all this atmosphere, the picture of the day lacked one essential, namely, salt, the indispensable requisite for an unripe mango. After that lesson, of course, we were careful enough to carry with us a small packet of salt whenever we went out during the rest of the season. But the reaction was a sad one. We did so well with the mangoes on certain days that we were unable to enjoy the more crisp edibles at home—things which require all the strength of the teeth, unimpaired by the effect of sour mangoes. This does not mean, however, that we omitted the item entirely from the programme. Speaking for myself, I may tell you in confidence that I managed to eat those hard things by moistening some on the tongue for a while and by reducing some to fragments. This latter process is done by putting the things inside a piece of cloth, generally one's towel, and then banging the whole thing against some hard surface. Of course, the cloth will be slightly damaged. But, as the saying goes, no gains without pains.

When we come to consider the mango tree, as a whole, it has a lot of advantages, as a schoolboy's essay would conclude. Other things apart, a mango tree is always a good place to play hide and seek if the players take care to avoid the armies of red

ants which runs the humans close in their love of mangoes. Then there is the leaf. One fine morning, when the town-dweller happens to be away from the stronghold of civilization and misses his tooth-brush and paste, (which he has purchased on the firm conviction that his favourite film-star is using the same material according to the advertiser's gospel) he will thank his Maker when a lonely mango leaf floats down the river, beckoning him to utilise it for his dental toilet. There are numerous other things that could be said in favour of the mango and the tree; not the least of them being the savoury mango pickles which make us swallow inordinate quantities of cold rice, which we would not dream of doing under ordinary circumstances. But deep thoughts for a fellow who has been beaten hollow in the art of higgling by a mere fruit-seller is rather a difficult affair.

The Life Force.

By R. K. Chinchlikar, B. A. (Hons.)



T was a memory very bitter to recall, a sight extremely painful to witness. A young husband was laying his dead wife on the funeral pyre!

Every one's heart was filled with pity. None dared to look at the broken lover; none uttered a syllable. All were mute.

Stunned at the sight, each one directed his eye and mind to the adjoining, smooth-going river, the bright sun, the funeral monuments and the work of the servants.

Minutes followed seconds. The servants showed their quickness.

The more experienced and the old made up their minds and got up from their places. They asked the young man to be a bit calm, with the set words of pacification, and began to proceed with their cruel task.

The young man looked for the last time at his beloved form.

The complexion had become the more yellow-white, the eyes shut, the nose tilted a little, the hair and dress disordered, and the body lay coy and cold.

He knew. He understood perfectly that this was not his honey-tongued, magic-eyed, tender wife—and also that she would never come back again to her former place. Not only this—but this most loved delicate form was presently to burn into cinders and in a couple of hours—ah! the irony of Nature—it was to be reduced to a heap of ashes!

The thought chilled him to the marrow of his bones.

They set him aside, as if he were a boy and lifted the lifeless body of the young girl.

The young man could not restrain himself. He burst into tears—wild tears. Rushing forth, he embraced the form and kissed it for the last time in his life.

His sense had been fatigued, like a mad man he stood. Taking a last view of the ever-cherished sweet face he quickly covered the body on the pyre with fuel. Again he took out the fuel, looked again, more intently than before for the last time—and with a heart harder than stone placed fire by his own hand over it—sat aside with tears, slow cries and the aching in his heart—much too stupified to do anything.

His friends and relatives gathered around him. He was reduced to the position of a child. They pacified and consoled him for a short time, advised him to take courage, as we are asked many a time to do.

The pyre burned.

The sun was shining, the river was flowing. With his hand touching the burning pyre, he sobbed forth:

"Thou wast myself as it were. With thee my life has ended. Go to Heaven and wait for me there. I'll follow thee. United together we would never, never---part!"

The wind blew strong and the flames rose high. A crackling sound was heard. He was taken home by his friends---weeping, giddy.

* * * * *

Two years after, a man of twenty-seven was seen floating on the river with his lovely bride of twenty in a single pleasure boat. Chance brought them, unconsciously, to the cremation ground, where the remnants of a fire were burning. The girl was struck with horror! She left the oar, approached the man, placed her head on his broad chest for courage and begged him to turn the boat.

The man too was disturbed a little, for he faintly recollected that two years back he had come there for his first wife's funeral.

He felt a sort of shame before his young wife.

He could not understand it himself. Not that his grief was false, or that he was a hypocrite on that occasion! But he was puzzled! Little did he know that it was some unknown bigger life-force that pushes every one to fulfill its purpose---that ever ease-seeking life-force which fills the worldly gaps with fresh hopes and brings about that eternal compromise between man and his circumstances and leaves this life a mystery!

Sadhana, True and False.

By Swami Jagadiswarananda.



THE word 'Sadhana' exerts a charm over all Hindu minds, young or old. Hindus of all stations of life, of all shades of opinion from dim antiquity have thrown around the word a halo of mystic divinity. Every Hindu dreams of a period in his life, when free from all earthly pursuits, he would devote himself entirely to its practise. So soon as he secures a little leisure out of his work-a-day life, he begins his search in the vast forests of the Hindu scriptures and also runs after men of yellow robes to get a key to Sadhana. The present writer, clad as he is in his professional ochre robes, has come across a lot of people who are eager enough to learn the esoteric Sadhanas and secure easy and speedy success. The questioners are taken by surprise, and they can hardly tolerate, much less accept, when the simple principles of Sadhana are explained to them. And poor Sadhus are nowhere if they cannot monger any miracle or tell of some supernatural Sadhana of a mysterious nature; as if Occultism is the acid test of spirituality. The deplorable result has been that young enthusiasts, misled by the religious quacks, have become premature invalids and averse to religion and anything pertaining to it. Instances of this are becoming almost every day occurrences. The other day a young man came to me with a scarlet face, and just like a brain-crack said: "I have been practising yoga, but as my Guru who is now in India has instructed me to practise *Pranayama* four times a day even after meals, I am getting nervous weakness, and my head reels after every sitting of *Pranayama*". "The crude and corrupt view of Sadhana," says a great sage, "is the result of Buddhist Tantricism in Hinduism, and modern Yoga as well as Theosophy, in spite of its wonderful contributions, have aggravated this."

It is evident to the intelligent reader that when Religion, which was a vocation of life with the ancient Teachers, has become a profession in the modern age, such disintegration is inevitable. Though Religion and life are inseparable, it is by no means a profession for a livelihood. Apart from these esoteric water-tight compartments of Sadhana, there is another extremity called conventionalism. If you do not practise such and such a ritual, you are irreligious, you are an atheist.

Once I met a young man in the Colombo beach and asked him: "Where do you come from, please?" "I am Sir, a Jaffanese Saivite," came the prompt reply. "Are you then not a Hindu?" I said. "No, I am a Saivite," reiterated the youth.

The same case applies to all religionists. A Ceylon Buddhist will tell you that he is a Hinayanist, not a Buddhist, to make clear that he is not a Mahayanist. A Christian catholic will prefer the latter name more than the former one, to avoid the implication of Protestant. It is the religious Sadhana, more than its philosophy, which widely differs and creates differences in society.

The fact is every religion is founded on a simple but profound experience of life, and when later generations lose sight of the simple truth, they devise and develop according to their capacities a complexity and variety of Sadhana, esoteric and exoteric, conventional and real, which bewilders the neophyte and makes him a one-sided fanatic in the path of life. The principles of true Sadhana are to-day covered under the heaped up weeds of latter-day accretions. But in order to practise true and proper Sadhana, one must always keep those principles always in view; then and then alone Sadhana and its constant companion, peace, will be comparatively easier to practise. That is why Swami Vivekananda said: "80 per cent. of the people who practise Religion are driven mad, 15 per cent. of them fail and only the remaining five per-cent. realise the Truth."

We are not here in the least attacking any sect or any particular ritual or custom, for all these have a proper place in the *Sadhhak* life; they protect the spiritual plant like a hedge from all external injuries. But what generally happens is that they are accepted by an overwhelming majority as an end in itself, instead of a means, overlooking their true significance. And the great majority who take up the religious life is bound down to one or more of them at the expense of Truth and their goal. The scriptures prescribe spiritual wandering—to Holy Books, to Holy men, and to Holy places, as a remedy for this mental congestion. The rituals and ceremonies, mantra and other paraphernalia hamper their spiritual progress more than they help. But a real truth-seeker by the practise of his inherited discipline will evolve a new system of Sadhana best suited for himself. For though Truth is the common goal, every man has a religion of his own.

But in all Sadhanas two things are most essential: Divinity of man and spirituality of life. These principles must be believed with whole-hearted *shradda* and sincerity; for they are, as it were, the greatest common factor of all Hindu Sadhanas. As Swami Vivekananda said: "Each soul is potentially divine. Manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, internal and external. Do this either by work or worship, psychic control or philosophy—by one or more or all of these, and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, rituals or temples, books and churches are but secondary details."

In Tagore Land V The Century of the Child.

By N. Lakshmanan.

The flute is sweet,
And the guitar dulcet:
So they say who have
Not heard the babbling
Speech of their little ones—

The Maxims of Tiruvalluvar.



ON the eve of his departure to Bengal, after the strenuous South Indian tour of 1919, Poet Tagore was resting for a couple of days in the culture-centre of Mylapore as the guest of Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, the grandson of Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar. With characteristic love of reading, Mahakavi Rabindranath was found to be perusing book after book on South India, past and present. Thurston's volumes on *Castes and Tribes*, K. V. S. Iyer's *Historical Sketches of Ancient Dekkan*, M. S. Iyengar's *Tamil Studies* and T. Lakshmana Pillai's *Essays*—to name only a few among the many—went into the Poet's sanctum with amazing rapidity. One of Mr. T. L. Pillai's *Essays* was on Christ and Tiruvalluvar. The Poet was agreeably surprised to know that the temple dedicated to Saint Tiruvalluvar was not far off from Luz; and Professor K. Subramanya Pillai, who led the Deputation¹ on behalf of the Mylapore Tiruvalluvar Tiru Kural Association explained to Tagore, three years later, the glories of Tamil literature with special reference to the sacred Kural. The Poet evinced keen and sympathetic interest in the cultural achievements of the Tamils. He was quite familiar with the newly-translated book *Maxims of Tiruvalluvar* by V. V. S. Iyer, the widely-travelled and versatile scholar who died under tragic circumstances.

Saint Tiruvalluvar was a child-lover, like Tagore and the Sage of Sabarmati, and like the great Galilean who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God." This trait of the immortal Dravidian is in tune with his mind and art, for, as Dr. G. U. Pope said, he is the bard of universal man².

¹ The deputation waited on Poet Tagore on 8-10-1922 at Ranganatha Vilas, the residence of Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, M. L. C., the present President of the Madras Corporation. Swami Rudrakotiswara, Mr. Sundaramurti Pillai, ex-M. L. C., the present writer and others formed the deputation.

² The latest interpretation of Tiruvalluvar is by Rev. H. A. Popley: *Heritage of India Series*.

Men and women of God-consciousness are invariably child-lovers. As Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri says: "The paintings of the Madonna and her child in the West, the beautiful story of Krishna's boyhood in Gokula, the description of Parvathi's girlhood and Sri Subramania's boyhood as found in Kalidasa's *Kumarasambhava*, the delineation of Bharata in Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, the description of the little child in *Silas Marner*, and innumerable other instances will occur to all. The inspired invocation to the child in Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* is full of beauty and truth In our religion the realisation of the child's place in our spiritual economy is vivid and full. A religion that worships God as child in Vinayaka, Subramanya and Balakrishna cannot be charged with any lack of appreciation of the beauty of the child-soul"³. Islamic scholars often remind us of Saddi's lines: "Remember the day when you were born. All were laughing but you were crying; lead such a life that when you die, others should weep while you go laughing." *Paradise lies at the feet of the Mother* is a verse from the sacred Koran quoted by such persons as Syed Amir Ali, Sister Nivedita and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. And the Indian Sappho's touching poem on the lonely child is now accessible to a larger audience through the record of the Columbia Gramophone Company. Mr. George Henry Paine's book *The Child in Human Progress* gives a historical survey of the position of the child from the earliest up to the present time. As Mr. Payne says: "The best friends of the child-Jesus, the Jewish Prophets, and Mohammed—lived centuries before the humane theories that they preached had a living existence. In this connection it is germane to state that the theory that philosophy and religion go hand in hand with humanity, is shattered by the fact that Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, and Gautama affected, apparently, not a single jot, the ancient attitude of insufferance toward the undesired children."⁴

Mrs. Browning's poem *The Cry of the Children* and Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* awakened the conscience of the people all over the English-speaking world. Madame Montessori's epoch-making book *The Montessori Method* and Miss Ellen Key's *Renaissance of Motherhood* and *The Century of the Child* are classics of their kind and serve to focus attention on the needs and achievements of the age⁵. The twentieth century bids fair to become the century of the child. But the pace of progress in child welfare is not satisfactory even in the fast-moving New

³ K. S. Ramaswami Sastri: *Sir Rabindranath Tagore*, [1916] P. 246.

⁴ Cited in "the Indian Social Reformer", P. 147, November 10, 1918.

⁵ Cf. "More has been written about the child in the last fifty years than had been written in the world in all civilized times up to the beginning of this half century"—G. H. Payne.

World. Dr. Jacobi, in a foreward to Mr. Payne's book *The Child in Human Progress* says: "Altogether our country has been disrespectful to its best possessions, viz., the children. There was until a few decades ago not even a professional teaching of the children's diseases in our medical schools. There were few children's hospitals or wards in hospitals until a few years ago, even in the largest cities. Society, law, humanitarianism did not mind children..... It seems to take a long time before this republic of ours begins to work out of the ruts of semi-barbarism". But it is only fair to add that some of the American Universities, financed by philanthropists and captains of industry, have undertaken systematic research into the manifold problems of child-welfare in comparatively recent times, though Mr. Upton Sinclair, the author of *The Goose Step*, would not admit so much as that.

The basic problems of life are more or less the same all over the world. The curse of "the double dose of original sin" is not the monopoly of any one country or race. "Among the working classes in England infantile mortality is rather high (though nothing like ours) and nurses have been provided by the local authorities whose business it is to visit expectant and recent mothers. Of one such nurse a story was told by Mr. Harold Cox during the course of a debate before the Royal Colonial Institute in March 1914. The nurse was telling the mother how to bring the baby up—not to feed it with kippered herrings and the like. As soon as she had gone, the mother turned round and said to a neighbour, 'Like her impertinence.....telling me how to bring up babies when I have buried ten.' We may learn something from this perhaps."⁶

In recent years, some of the Western countries have considerably reduced the incidence of infant mortality. As a result of various legal measures, improvement in general sanitation, diffusion of knowledge and philanthropic work, the tendency has been towards a considerable fall in the infant mortality of Western countries. As Dr. Ruth Young says, the maternity and infant welfare work in the counties of England is naturally less developed than in towns and cities, both because public opinion is less advanced, and because in rural districts the infant mortality is lower, and the population being scattered, is more difficult to make provision of a suitable kind. Practical difficulties are perhaps greater in India than elsewhere. Referring to the work of training and supervising the indigenous *dais* or midwives, Dr. Ruth Young says in her lucidly-written book: "Most of the schemes are as yet quite inadequate to meet the needs of the cities they are dealing with, and the rural areas have

⁶ P. K. Wattal: *The Population Problem in India*, P. 27.

practically not been touched; still they are beginnings, and have great possibilities of future development"⁷. Another authority says that interest in the claim of the rural areas has only recently been aroused.⁸ All over rural India trained midwives are few and far between. About the unclean habits of the barber midwife, a well-known Registrar of Co-operative Societies of the Punjab says in his travel diary that "the evil cries to heaven... must make angels weep"⁹. In my Tamil pamphlet on child welfare I have pointed out that in the rural parts of the Madras Presidency trained midwives are conspicuous by their absence. No useful purpose is, therefore, served by the campaign against the indigenous midwife. It was once a fashion to rail at the middleman and the money-lender in India. The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India has discouraged this tendency¹⁰. There is thus some need to clearly understand the significance of what Geddes says of "Conservative Surgery" in science as well as in life.

The progress of science in Western countries is marvellous indeed. The latest invention that is just beginning to be used in some of the maternity hospitals in London is an electric apparatus which can foretell in the next room that in such and such an hour the child will be born. The celebration of the Baby Week in India is useful in focussing attention on problems of public health, with special reference to weak babies and underfed mothers. But superficial remedies won't help to solve long-standing complex problems. Ignorance and poverty are the two greatest curses of India. To a large extent, the Baby Week movement, if and when properly conducted, can dispel ignorance, but it leaves almost untouched the problem of poverty. Mr. K. Natarajan is realist enough to say: "We have made no secret of our opinion that the Baby Show, organised under high official auspices as the Baby Week, is like Mrs. Partington's famous attempt to map up the Atlantic"¹¹. A Doctor who has considerable experience of child welfare work says that poverty as a cause of infant mortality undoubtedly

⁷ *Maternity and Infant Welfare in India*, (1920), P. 175.

⁸ Col Walker's preface to "Welfare Problems in Rural India" edited by Captain A. P. Pillay, published by Taraporevala, Bombay.

⁹ M. L. Darling: *Rusticus Loquitur*, 1930, P. 349.

¹⁰ Linlithgow Report: "We deprecate easy generalities suggesting that every ill from which the cultivator suffers is traceable to the existence of hordes of rapacious and unnecessary middlemen. Such statements disturb confidence, while distracting attention from faults in the system of marketing which are capable of being remedied or removed. That abuses exist is, however, beyond dispute." Para 320. As for the money-lender: "In the present state of India, he is a necessity and, that being so, his calling will not be abolished by making it illegal....." Para 363.

¹¹ *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay, February 23, 1924.

ranks high. "It is directly related also to other causes, e. g. bad housing, want of hygiene, improper feeding. Poverty reacts in the first place on the mother.....Many babies in Madras, for example, are fed on rice water, because milk is so expensive and scarce.....Poverty keeps the whole standard of life low; many millions in India are living on a sum of money insufficient to meet their actual physical needs"¹². The study of the problem of infant mortality opens many vistas of thought and action. Writing under the caption "Social Reform Politics," Mr. K. Natarajan says: "Indian Social Reform, instead of being discussed as a matter of Shastric interpretation, is now gradually extending to large parts of civic life. We are beginning to test the efficiency of administrations, municipal, provincial and imperial, by their success or failure to raise the standard, mental, moral and physical, of the average man, woman and child. To take one instance: "Infant mortality," says Mr. Pooley in his *Japan at the Cross Roads*, "is the most sensitive index we can have of social welfare. It measures mercilessly the intelligence, health and right living of parents, the morals and sanitation of communities and Governments, the efficiency of physicians, nurses, health officers and educators." We say that a steadily increasing number of Indians are beginning to look at politics as a means of advancing great social ends, and not as a means merely of substituting one "cracy for another."¹³ The Child Welfare movement in India, in spite of certain obvious limitations of finance, is all to the good of the people. My own active work in this field points to the need of a well trained and devoted army of Welfare workers.

In some parts of India, especially in the enlightened State of Mysore, birth control has been discussed as a question of practical politics. It is necessary to study this delicate subject with an open mind. It is yet too early to jump at any conclusion, seeing that Mahakavi Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi hold conflicting views on this important subject.

¹² Dr. Ruth Young: *Maternity and Infant Welfare in India*, (1920), P. 156.

¹³ *The Indian Social Reformer*, August 10, 1919.

Adult Education.

By R. Narayanaswami, M. A.

"To be literate is to possess the cow of plenty."



Y 'Adult Education' is meant the after-school education, the education that adults have in their leisure time. Education, it must be remembered, does not end with the school or college. It is a life-long affair; and in fact, every new experience or thought felt by us contributes in its own way towards educating us. Dr. B. A. Yeaxlee speaks of education as 'that multiform and inexhaustible thing'. And in these days of utilitarianism it has been judged to be one of the foundations of democracy.

The predominant aim in Adult Education is the development of free men and women, capable of realising and discharging their personal and social responsibilities to the community to which they belong. Though it is true that Adult Education is not strictly confined to the needs of any particular section in a community, it is the masses generally, those toiling millions that have to work for their daily bread even from an early age and that cannot afford any school or college education—it is these that need Adult Education most. Adult Education strives to effect the using of their leisure to the best advantage by affording them education of diverse kinds during that period. In a negative way, it obviates mis-spending of leisure.

One of the most notable advantages Adult Education has over school or college education is that if the adult student submits to discipline, it is at his own free will and choice. And as Adult Education is nearly a process of development of powers through experience and thought, there is absent in it the unreality and abstractness of the class-room education.

For Adult Education to be successful, there is the need for comprehensiveness in the syllabus of instruction, i.e., the subjects taught should cover the entire field of human activity. It should touch life at all points, and the people who teach should be those who genuinely represent the various aspects and organisations of life. Further, as the ordinary man dislikes highly technical and detailed and obtruse points which he cannot understand without a rigorous exercise of the mind, it is essential that only elementary and informal types of instruction ought to be emphasised.

On the need for Adult Education in a country like ours it is perhaps needless to dilate. The percentage of literacy in India is awfully low, millions of the people are sunk in poverty and ignorance. A peculiar problem with us is the civilization of the outcastes, the so-called 'depressed classes', who are looked down upon by Hindu orthodoxy as 'untouchables'. The enervating climate under which he has to live his daily life dries up the tendency, if any, for the average Indian to learn things. This is one of the reasons for the so-called 'lazy indifference' attributed to the Indian workers generally by Westerners. What one writer terms "the social redemption of the new industrial centres" and the further education of University degreed men, who are merely crammed with a more or less alien knowledge are two other important items of work to be tackled here. Above all, the growing nationalism and the demand for self-government make the need for Adult Education all the more imperative and urgent.

Regarding the methods of imparting instruction to adults, it has to be borne in mind that no particular method is final or sufficient and that it all depends upon the people and circumstances. The attainments and temper of the people receiving instruction, the time of instruction, the leisure available and the finance forthcoming have all a direct bearing on the method chosen. A suitable combination of methods allowed by circumstances would secure the best results.

Adult Education classes might be organised in centres where the people show an inclination to take lessons regularly. Of course, these classes are popular only with that section of the community which is at least literate to an extent and earnestly desire improvement. The majority of the people, however, are as a rule averse to disciplinary attendance at classes, and they require other means to be approached. They can be easily and most effectively appealed to by dramas, cinema shows, exhibitions, museums and other visual demonstrations of an educational variety. If only the reading habit could be engendered in the people—and it is exactly this that we aim at as our chief means in Adult Education—there is no dearth of ways through which to mould the mind and outlook of the nation as a whole. Opening of Reading Rooms and Libraries, wide distribution of leaflets, organisation of periodical lectures, illustrated whenever possible by lantern slides, by men versed in various subjects, Study Circles, Discussion Groups, Evening Clubs, Debating Societies, Summer Schools, etc. etc. are some of the methods of imparting education. Of late broadcasting has come to be a prominent means of instruction. The chief defect in the use of these

mechanical devices is the absence of touch between the instructor and the instructed.

Excursions, tours and travels have their own place in any scheme of Adult Education, and they ought to be encouraged very much in a country like India, where the conservatism of the people is proverbial.

America has made great strides in the field of Adult Education. Private and official agencies there vie with one another in educating the masses, through every imaginable method and the literacy percentage there is very high. Among Western countries, Denmark in particular is noted for its efficient 'Adult Education High Schools' functioning in all parts of the country. The other European countries are one by one copying the Danish model. In India, however, the Government are absolutely apathetic in the matter. Education is a Transferred Subject in the Provinces, yet the progress made in the field of Adult Education is almost next to nothing. "Lack of finance" seems to be the eternal shelter of the Education Ministers. If really Government care for finance, let them spend forthwith all available sums on education, for education is literally the foundation of democracy and is its real finance. It would be well also to have an Adult Education Department in charge of an Adult Education Officer, whose duty it would be to co-ordinate and promote all Adult Education activities in each Province.

To the Y. M. C. A. branches all over India, to the Servants of India Society of Poona, and to the Madras Library Association we owe a deep debt of gratitude for the work they have been doing in the field of Adult Education. The World Association for Adult Education, London, founded by Dr. Mansbridge in 1918 is a valuable international agency disseminating much useful information.

Patriotism and love of service are ennobling virtues, and here is a vast field for display of those faculties. Will the Teachers' Associations in all cities and towns, big and small, take upon themselves this sacred task of educating the adult and earn the abiding gratitude of our future generations?

Indian Nationalism.

By N. Mahadeva Iyer, M. A., L. T., Dip. Econ.



HERE is no standard of measurement to define adequately the concept conveyed by the term nationality. The possession of a home-land, a language and racial purity sometimes made a people conscious of their unity, or political affinity. The national name, flag, and anthem might produce emotional effect and revive or intensify the vitality of the groups of men. Yet the most powerful factor of nationhood is essentially non-logical and spiritual in character. It portrays a deliberate impulse to association, which marks off those who enjoy it from the rest of mankind. This indefinable sympathy to habitual association is the embodiment of common history and tradition won by corporate effort. A sense of kinship which unites men into oneness emphasises our difference from other men. Our social heritage and political consciousness become distinctly our own, just as we lend our peculiar tone and character to our homes. We gain an art and literature, decidedly separate from those of other nations. The chorus of Athenian civilization was cast upon the fullness of citizenship and on the unmistakable identity of the interests of the State and of the individual. The civic law and institutions of Italy enforced the tradition of reverence attached to the mysterious sound of "Rome". If we repeat the argument, England alone could be proud of Shakespeare and Dickens. So we again argue that there are unique qualities in Kalidasa and Valmiki from which they typify the nationalism of India.

Nationalism as a quality operating towards group separateness is based upon the instinct of gregariousness. The solidarity it implies had exhibited great survival value when wandering nomads hunted for luxuriant feeding grounds or for comfortable dwelling places. The groups with a powerful instinct for the herd clubbed together, triumphed in the struggle for life, and finally sought permanent possessions of their own. The primitive wars and victories over their enemies increased their affection towards their settled homes and evoked traditions which re-acted upon their descendants. War had been a factor of long-standing influence and an invariable concomitant to the development of vigorous group-vitality. The indigenous tribes of India mingled with the invaders of Asia Minor, Persia and Mongolia, to form an Indian entity in politics and culture, while the English invader over Ireland was so much absorbed by those over whom

his suzerainty was extended, that the assimilation of the Irish and English culture was long delayed. All these racial movements were ultimately based upon an economic purpose, a sort of unconscious internationalism in commerce and finance. Yet this group life, which resulted in the formation of a village community, passed over the timidities of States and strengthened the spirit of nationalism. Modern polity is full of deductions from past history and centuries of civilization. Egypt may become the poorer for the disappearance of British administrative ability, but the Egyptians prefer autonomy to profiteering. Canada would perhaps increase her economic resources and efficiency by incorporation with the United States, or by a closer domination of British statesmanship, but she steadily cherished her dominion autonomy inside the most powerful commonwealth of free nations. Similarly, the elimination of England from India, it may be argued, will certainly, if it comes within some near period, result in wholesale anarchy for a time. Yet there are thousands of educated Indians, to whom the idea of Indian-created anarchy is preferable to a British-created peace. If economic depression and speculative failures would feel the pulse of "Buy British goods," this phenomenon will have its counterpart in "Buy Canadian" or "Buy Indian," in other political entities of the world. The desire for a self-willed executive or a self-willed legislature, and the successive creations of moral ideals such as Indian thought and Indian opinion, are processes of conscious logical abstractions, which must correspond to historical fact. Patriotism, the love of one's own country, may stray the inexperienced politicians into devious paths, yet it is the starting game in political education. Psychological analysis reveals an automatic emotion of affection, and a genuinely instinctive expression of kinship with the chosen group, seeking autonomy even if it involves economic sacrifice.

Nationalism is almost a new force in history, for, in its aspiration to nationhood it can hardly be dated earlier than the first partition of Poland. The great Polish prophets were able to present a moral or political idea with intense emotional force, without stiffening it into a personification. But the voice that the Russian autocrat heard was not that of an abstraction, having spiritual force, and therefore he failed to smell the savour of Polish assemblies and their legitimate aspirations. The suppression of this national State by the autocracy of a military despot, the Czar, almost synchronised with the assertion of national independence in America, and the appearance of national sovereignty in France. Each of these ideas shot like a political dynamite, over-throwing the medieval notions of theocracy and universal

monarchy. At first the forces of the French Revolution threatened an European rather than the national movement. But the opposition of the reactionary forces of Europe stimulated in the minds of the French a consciousness of special destiny to which the strength of nationality offered a refined hue and culture. It was victorious in Napoleon, but in its very triumph, the political prophet kindled the flames of nationalism in the revolted and defeated forces. Thenceforward a new gospel was preached over the peace of Europe and other civilised continents. It might as in Italy move forward in the name of democracy, or as in the subject peoples of Turkey colour its nationalism in a religious or sentimental garb. Modern tendencies imply the absolescence of political "Fundamentalism," which the Americans call a crude form of authoritarianism. The ancient Brahmin, the Chinese Mandarin and the Western priest were the exponents of tradition and advocates of authority. Even if they honestly believed that their status was delegated to them from another world, it was their own authority which was maintained by their advocacy. Parallel arguments would no longer support the thesis of the self-chosen expert to exercise the domination of one nation over another. Elimination of national affinity had been found to be politically inexpedient, economically ruinous and morally unsound. Therefore, in the political philosophy of the XIX century the doctrine of nationalism became a thesis, that States composed of different political units were monstrosities for which no apology could be devised. The ardent sympathy of Victorian England with the Italian crusade against the domination of Austria was a fervid appeal to realise the democratic theory of Government in which the Nation-State was the final unit in the development of human organisation and in human allegiance.

But the full realisation of this final polity was beset with two colossal counter-tendencies—the modern warfare and the complicated structure of the industrial order. Modern industrialism thrives under the canopy of world markets and foreign competition. The Lancashire Cotton Mill spins to drive out the Indian village pedlar, or against the Japanese or Chinese hawker. Yet no nation can consume the whole volume of its own production, and consequently is compelled to throw her surplus goods in foreign markets. In any given industry the group of manufacturers can minimise foreign competition by means of protective tariffs, or by favoured-nation clauses and commercial treaties. As power extends, nationalism is unconsciously transformed into imperialism, which in recent years is absorbing the main economic currents. The romantic penumbra of patriotism is exploited as in the South African wars, to consolidate the interest of some

favoured group—the English mine-owners and shareholders of diamond quarries. The ideals of self-sufficiency, the special protection of an infant industry, the privileged position of the manufacturers vital to national safety and other economic phenomena, are involved in the solution of political or administrative problems. India demands special protection that she may develop her home industries, which will otherwise be stifled in the stern conditions of an open or international market. Secondly, the art of modern warfare demands the Nation-State to direct the organisation of all her resources, against the dangers involved in war. Its destructive character is so great that every national unit is ever alert to maintain armament firms and ship-yards and ammunition factories, far beyond the expenditure justified by her resources, and impoverish thereby the national organisation. In the fear of safeguarding national boundaries it must exercise control of natural resources with a view to having access to commodities like wheat, coal and iron and other basic raw materials essential to the successful conduct of war. But when each of its neighbours does the same a competition in armament of power endangers the maintenance of peace and provokes an atmosphere of universal discord, inducing the smaller States like India into alliance with the bigger Powers that they may gain security by their collective strength. The distribution of Nation-States intensified the explosiveness of the powder magazine in 1914 and dragged Indian passivist temper to be forged in the anvil of national and racial animosities.

Among My Books.

By R. Bangaruswami.
Desmond MacCarthy



AMONG the present-day votaries of Literary Journalism Mr. Desmond MacCarthy occupies a position of leadership and authority. Gerald Gould, Ralph Straus, J. C. Squire and Robert Lynd are all of the same age and are as important as Mr. MacCarthy, but none is more popular than he. Mr. MacCarthy is a born writer with a verve for letters. He has a mind properly attuned to criticism, and a memory well trained to serve his ends. His tastes are refined, his thinking clear, and his exposition quite lucid.

His voluminous output might stagger the ordinary man and make him wonder at the fecundity of the journalistic brain when cooled by the favourable wind of fortune. As Editor of the *New Quarterly*, and *Life and Letters*, and as contributor to the columns of a number of journals, the quantity of his writings has swollen so much, he says, that when he resolved to collect them he found had written more than he could read!

Readers of Mr. Desmond MacCarthy—recently two volumes of his essays have been published, *Portraits* (Putnams/7 sh. 6d.) and *Criticism* (Putnams/7 sh. 6d.), and a few more volumes are soon to follow—would not fail to be struck with the scholarship and critical acumen that penetrate through his writings. Certainly he is not brilliant. He does not startle you with meteor-like intellectual flashes at every stroke of his pen. His criticisms do not possess the rapier-thrusts of T. S. Eliot's or the mystic glow of Middleton Murry's. He does not dip his pen in the ink of insinuating satire or incandescent sarcasm as the late Mr. Lytton Strachey did when he wrote his essays or painted his portraits. There are no subterfuges, no covert allusions, no secondary meaning in his language. Everything is unfolded in a simple, delightful language that can be easily read and understood by any man or woman of average learning. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy has pulled *Criticism* from its high pedestal and has made it available for all and sundry. He has made commonsense and not cold intellectuality the ruling prince in criticism. He stands for sympathy and fairness. The critic's duty, he thinks, is to interpret and not to frustrate. He says:

A critic is one who has been given a pass-key into many rooms in the House of Art on condition that he does not dwell in any one of them. His

part is to open a door, examine the furniture of the room, and compare the view from its window with those to be seen from others. He must stay long enough to see what the owner of the room saw—then he had better move on. He is a creature without a spiritual home, and it is his point of honour never to seek one. And his use? His use is that, thanks to an imagination above average strength, though of course weaker than the artist's, he is better able than the ordinary reader to interpret creative experience; while his visits to other rooms enable him to know things about the work he is examining which the creator of it, who has never shifted from his own window, cannot know. The critic's first obligation is to permit himself to be absorbed in the vision of a writer, responding to it with all his emotions, and then to compare that vision with those of other writers. . . . And one of the main functions of the critic, when he is expounding the literature of the past is to put the reader at the point of view from which its contemporaries saw that literature, at the same time, of course, judging it from his own and confronted by contemporary literature to show its relations to the world to-day.

Mr. MacCarthy is a critic true to his own standard. But somebody said of him that he is "generous in praise". There is an element of truth in the statement. He tries to see and discourse upon the good points in a writer before picking holes in his or her language, or discovering flaws of fact or reasoning.

Now and then Mr. MacCarthy expresses himself with a sparkle of originality or a glitter of genius. He thinks that Mr. T. S. Eliot is "a poet who constantly looks over his shoulder to see how far he has travelled, and he is always searching the path before him for the footprints of predecessors". David Garnett is to him "a Peter Bell of letters" and Mr. Aldous Huxley "an Anatole France, only far more learned, who has not attained to the suavity of indifference".

His portraits—sometimes the wall which divides a few of his portraits from a few of his criticisms is not quite clearly visible—are miniature biographies reflecting the three qualities dear to him "knowledge of human nature, genuine curiosity, and a desire to be fair." Some of his studies, like those on Asquith and George Moore, are tinged with personal reminiscences which afford pleasant reading.

Two of his recent writings which I like most were contributed to the *Sunday Times*. One was an appreciation of Oscar Wilde on the occasion of the issue of an omnibus volume of his works and the other was on Lytton Strachey soon after his death.

If, as Hugh Ross Williamson said "Youth is the time for criticism, age for creativeness," it is time for Mr. MacCarthy to devote himself to the production of creative works. But Criticism or Creation, one hopes, Mr. Desmond MacCarthy would continue to preserve a uniform standard of soundness and excellence in the years to come.

Songs of Sri Ram Prasad.

By Swami Jagadiswarananda.

XXIV.

Now I shall challenge my father Shiva and take away by force my Mother's feet from Him. I have found out a fault with Bholanath (Shiva) which I will disclose to one and all. Being my father, how is he justified in holding my Mother's feet on His breast? If I see Him, I would ask Him why He pretends death after having stolen away my Mother's feet. How does He also claim my Mother's property which the son ought to inherit? If He desires His own good He should hand over the treasure of my Mother's feet to me. Again when I speak ill of Shiva, it rebounds on my own self, as when somebody spits in the air and the spittle only soils his own body. Nevertheless, Rama Prasad does not fear anything as he is always shielded by the fearless feet of the Mother Durga.

XXV.

Oh mind, I have no time to din into your ears the same thing always. Moreover, you do not care to understand anything either. When Death will come and bind your hands and feet, where will be your family, house and other possessions to which you are so much attached? It is the decree of Fate that when you will take final leave of your aunt, uncle and all other near and dear ones, they will present you with pieces on torn cloth and mat as well as broken part of earthen vessel in the cremation ground. Rama Prasad says: "Oh mind, don't pin your faith to fellowship and wealth of this earth, as none of them will accompany you to the grave."

XXVI.

Now I have decided something very wise. A mystic has taught me this truth. I have met a man of a mysterious country where there is no night. Now Day and the Dark have become equal to me, and I have made

my sandhya barren now. Sleep has left me for good, and I am wide awake always. My eyes are now sleepless finally. I have returned sleep to Him whom it belongs to, and I have lulled sleep into slumber. Prasad says: "I have kept Bhakti and Mukti on my head. Now as I have realised that my Mother Shyama is no other than Brahman, I have thrown over-board all Karma and Dharma.

XXVII.

Oh mind, why do you want to make a pilgrimage to Benares? The feet of my Mother Kali is the mine of all kairalya (liberation). All the three and half crores of Tirthas (holy places) reside at the holy feet of Kali. If you obey the mandates of the Shastras and perform the syndhya upasana regularly without fail, there is no necessity of trudging to Kashi. It is enough, oh mind, if you meditate in the lotus of the heart, on the blessed Feet of the Muktakeshi with four hands of Bara (boons) and Abhya (blessings). Rama Prasad says that he will enjoy from his house the holiness of Kashi through the grace of his Mother.

XXVIII.

Can you tell me, oh brother, what a man becomes after death? Every one is eager to comprehend the truth of this mystery. Some say that men become ghosts in the Preta-loka and others that they go to Heaven. Some say that men attain Saukya and others opine that they enjoy Sayujya. The Vedas guess that man is like the portion of the sky contained in the earthen pot, and death means the destruction of the pot only. Again others hold that hereafter is nothingness or void, but the ultimate truth is that the five Bhutas have built this tabernacle of body, and when the time comes they all return to their primal source. Rama Prasad says that man becomes what he was, like a bubble that dissolves into water.

Book Reviews

Hiranand—The Soul of Sindh. by Dayaram Gidumal. Price Rs. 2/8 Printed at The Young Builder Press, Rambaugh Road, Karachi.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of the life of Hiranand Showkiram of Sindh by his great friend and colleague, Dayaram Gidumal. The author is a well-known writer and scholar of Sindh. He is very versatile and wields a facile pen. He writes the biography of his friend as a matter of duty. And his hero not a little deserves the consideration.

Sindh may now claim to be one of the forward provinces of India, and may even boast of ancient glories. But she had her own dark days. The early years of the 19th century found Sindh in a sunken and degenerate condition. And in the middle of that century rose a star in the country which shed the light of its soul on her and elevated her to her place amongst the advancing provinces of India.

Born of noble parents, brought up in an atmosphere of sound culture, educated in the premier city of India and inspired by the spiritual giants of his time, Hiranand Showkiram disinterestedly devoted the whole of his energy and resource for the uplift of the men and the enlightenment of the women of his country. To him his country was his God.

This biography of Hiranand beginning with a description of the poor state of Sindh at the time of the birth of the hero and giving us some valuable information about his reputed ancestry, takes us through his life and career at some length. His early days in Sindh, his education and life at Calcutta, his journalistic career at Sindh and at Karachi, and his memorable work for the dissemination of culture and alleviation of human distress are all set forth faithfully and clearly. Although we see little of Hiranand at his office, we clearly discern the march of his soul, and feel the pulse of his heart beating for his God and his country.

From his very boyhood we see that Hiranand was very intelligent, industrious, and piously inclined. His character and virtues steadily grow in strength and dimensions all through his life; and every step in his life reveals his godliness and selfless devotion to the cause of his country.

The two great spirits that inspired the life of Hiranand were Keshub Chandra Sen and Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. Both these loved him much, and the former brought him up in his own house like any child of his. Hiranand was a staunch Brahmo. But his creed was as catholic as that of Keshub in his last days.

Simple in life, strong in character, generous in mind, selfless and godly in outlook, and concentrated in all his undertakings and efforts, Hiranand soon after his educational career readily and quietly took up the cause of his country and sacrificed his life for her. He gave up all happiness and glowing prospects and preferred an endless struggle amongst obscure masses and illiterate women to lift them up at least one inch in life. The life of Hiranand is a beacon to our young men. How much would they befit and benefit our country if our young men will, instead of running away from schools and colleges and jumping with a wild hurrah to perilous politics and peurile sensationalism, only study and mould their character, and

devote their lives to works like those of Hiranand! Hiranand died at the age of thirty. But in the short span of a few years he did for his country what another would take a long century to do. The secret of his success was that he gave his heart and soul to his country and worked for her in the silence and sweetness of love. Sindh to-day shines with his heavenly light.

The book under review is very interesting and instructive. The story of a spotless life of strenuous work and selfless devotion is here told in a plain simple way. The leaves from the diary and letters of the hero, given in appropriate places in the book, put us in close touch with him. The authors of the present edition have taken much pains to get first-hand information about the early life of the subject. In spite of some technical defects as a biography, it is a book that ought to be read by every young man and every Indian. We hope that it will inspire many young men to walk in the foot-steps of Hiranand and shed glory on our country.

Noble Indian Women by T. B. Krishnaswamy, M. A., B. L.
Published by the Teachers' Publishing House, Madras. Price as. 10

The Hindu's home is his temple, just as the Englishman's, is his castle. The Hindu woman is the highpriestess of the domestic sanctuary. Her greatness is not so much in her worldly accomplishments as in her spiritual culture. Her parts and prowess are not of the blatant or battling type. She wears no pretensions, and has no Soul for sentimentality. Her happiness and heroism are in spontaneous love, disinterested service, and solemn suffering. She is one with her husband, and lost in her children. Simple, sweet and generous to a degree, she is built of divine character, adorned with severe purity and filled with unending love. And she is adored as the Mother of all happiness and prosperity.

The dozen lives chosen for the *Noble Indian Woman* well illustrate the ideal of Indian womanhood, and the esteem in which India holds her women. Some of these personages may be puranic, but some are decidedly historical. And their stories make an effective reply to the blind criticism and perverse constructions of the lives of Indian women.

The author of this book is a well-known writer and educationist of South India. He writes the book with his usual facility and grace of expression. But it is to be regretted that he has allowed some inaccuracies to creep into his narratives. The reason given for putting Sitha to the ordeal is not correct. There are similar errors in other sketches also. It will do well to correct these mistakes. It is also desirable to furnish the sketches with some details of the 'events' and 'actions' so as to bring out the character of these notable women pointedly and vividly. The personalities, as they are drawn, are anything but substantial.

In his enthusiasm for the moral greatness of these women the writer flies off at a tangent with the supposed allegorical nature of some of the stories. The delineation of the figurative sense of these characters and their accounts, apart from its correctness, detracts very much from the value of these sketches. Man is moved more by the doings and sufferings of his own kindred in flesh and blood than by the pains and performances of the phantasmic figures of fairy tales and the abstract entities of figurative stories depicting moral greatness.

The book with its short, sensible forward by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, is, however, interesting; and will, we hope, be widely read.

P. M. Hari.

Sri Ramana Vijiam (TAMIL) by Swami Suddhananda Bharati. Published by Swami Niranjanananda. Secretary, Sri Ramana Asram, Tiruvannamalai. 374 pp. Price Rs. 1-4-0.

Of the Godmen who trod this planet, the latest was Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Speaking of him, his great disciple, Swami Vivekananda says: "The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Chaitanya, one who would see in every sect the same working, the same God, as well as God in every being.....and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart, into existence, and such a man was born, and I had the good fortune to sit under his feet for years.....".

Equally and remarkably great is the saint of this book under review Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. The Paramahansa of Dakshinেশ্বর and the Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai are indeed the supreme manifestations of one and the same self. It is a rare blessing to have in our midst at the present age such a Maharshi who is a beacon light unto one and all, who is a centre of a spiritual world impulse, and who can make man rise above the storm and stress of this life.

The renowned author of this book, Swami Suddhananda Bharati, has done his work wonderfully well. His wide culture and deep understanding have enabled him to realise the beautiful truths and the lessons of the Saint's life and teachings. His command of language and power of expression are unique. When he deals with the glorious presence and the silent but sure effect of the Maharshi, he rises intuitively to sublimity, and also elevates his readers to his level. The Maharshi's perfect self-control, perpetual calmness and divine grace to all alike, are exemplary. His cardinal teaching is "Know thyself"; and in fact, he helps us to know ourselves as to what we are in reality, and not as we falsely imagine, think, or appear to be. Here again, like Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Ramana literally and effectively imparts religion which is nothing short of self-realisation. The numerous devotees at his Serene and Sacred Asramam at the classical Arunachala (known as Tiruvannamalai) bear eloquent testimony to this fact. The book closes with a soul-stirring call to all who thirst for peace and joy to have their fill of nectar at the Master's blessed feet.

This is an inspired work. Its brilliant descriptions, learned discourses, and philosophical disquisitions are an excellent treat to the soul of man. It is an invaluable treasure.

The book is finely illustrated and well got up. It has quite a wealth of apt and beautiful quotations from authors, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western. And yet, it costs so little, to be within easy reach of all.

V. Venkataraman, B. A., L. T.,
Srivaikuntam, S. I. Ry.

Pratap or Maharashtra Nattu Mankai. (மகாராஷ்டிர நட்டு மங்கை) by H. Nellayya, B. A., Printed at Stanley Press, No. 3, Barber Street, Colombo. Price Rs. 2.

Pratap, an ambitious military adventurer of Malwa, as preliminary to his campaign against the Maharatta country, makes a secret visit to Ratnagiri, the seat of a Maharatta chief named Chandrasekhar. He happens to have an accidental look at Kamalam, the fair daughter of Chandrasekhar is so enamoured of her that he and his confidential secretary device an immediate

plan by which they could get at her. Kamalam herself, hearing of the valour of Pratap, has in her heart entertained a secret love for him; but she is at a loss to see how her alliance with an enemy of her mother country could possibly be agreed to by her father. Pratap, disguised as a woman-wanderer under the assumed name of Ranjana, meets Kamalam in her anti-chamber but does not reveal his identity. Ranjana cleverly disillusions Kamalam of her suspicions about Pratap conquering the Maharatta country and by slowly working upon her weak mind lures her away to Malwa, where they celebrate their marriage and live as husband and wife. But, Pratap has all along been making preparations for a *Coup-de-main* against the Maharatta country. Kamalam comes to know of his evil designs. She begs, advices and remonstrates with him not to pursue that abominable course, but fails in her attempt. When Pratap actually marches to the Maharatta country, she also accompanies him and frustrates his attempts to wreak his pretended vengeance on the Maharatta and finally herself joins the Maharatta army in the disguise of a soldier and fights side by side with Ratnasimha, the commander of the forces, against Malwa. Ratnasimha relentlessly fights Pratap, who falls down to the ground. But when Ratnasimha drew his sword to kill Pratap, Kamalam snatches it away from him. She tells him that it is unbecoming of a soldier to kill the opponent after he has surrendered. Ratnasimha at first enraged, recognises her identity and grants her wish. Pratap takes a lesson from the magnanimous conduct of Ratnasimha. A final reconciliation takes place and the two provinces get along amicably in peace and plenty.

This in short is the plot of this romance. The author has in Pratap painted not an ideal hero, but one who is subject to the several failings of humanity. Probably as an anti-thesis we have also the ideal Maharatta soldier of the Indian Middle Ages in Ratnasimha. Kamalam, the ideal heroine is at the beginning very much troubled by a conflict of emotions—the duty to her birth place and to her father, and the duty to herself. Though temporarily the latter triumphs, the duty to her country gets the better of her and she acts accordingly. This conflict of emotions is so very skillfully woven through the plot and such critical situations are created that the reader is enraptured and made anxious to jump at the line of conduct the heroine adopts.

The plot, the characterisation, and the moral it inculcates, all make this romance well worth perusal. The writer is a master of simple and chaste Tamil. We commend this publication to the Tamil reading public.

Rathnathinnu Kittya Sammanam. (ரத்தநதினு கித்திய சம்மனம்)
(சுரு சுருஷாயிடு கம்) by P. S. Madhava Menon, Vadavanoor.
Price annas 8.

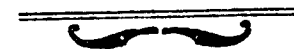
We are unable to see if the author intends in this short story to portray anything that commonly takes place in Nair Tarwads. If he has any such intention he has badly failed in the attempt. If he wants only to portray something imaginary, we have no quarrel with him, for he has displayed some keenness of imagination in the narration of his story. The author seems to wield a facile pen; but in several places accuracy in the usage of words and clearness of thought are sacrificed for sound. There are several quotations in the book, some of them inappropriate and entirely out of place. In spite of these short-comings, the author shows traces of a bright future for him in the book making line.

M. S. K.

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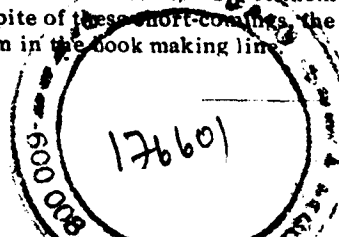
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