

TRIVENI

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Renaissance

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PHILOSOPHY, OCCULTISM, LITERATURE & ART.

EDITED BY ANNIE BESANT, D.L.,

President, Theosophical Society.

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TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Editor: K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO, B.A., B.L.

... he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!

—THE SONG CELESTIAL

'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the elect. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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ILLUSTRATION

J. Krishnamurti

(From a Sketch by K. Ananda Mohan Sastry).



J. Krishnamurti

*From a Sketch by
K. Ananda Mohan Sastry.*

'The Triple Stream'¹

THE ASHRAM

Eighteen years ago, soon after his return from South Africa, Gandhiji founded the Satyagraha Ashram. It was the first tangible expression, on Indian soil, of his yearnings after a purer and a more exalted life. The present writer has vivid memories of Gandhiji's address to a students' gathering at Madras, in which he 'poured forth his soul' in an effort to outline the ideals of the Ashram. It was not yet in being, but one could sense the coming of a new era in Indian public life, when service to the country was to be not the pastime of an idle hour but the surrender of everything held dear. The body, the mind, and the spirit of the worker were to be disciplined with the utmost rigour; all thought of self was to be eliminated; suffering was to be courted and cheerfully borne. Since its inception, the Ashram has, in the main, justified the hopes of its great founder. Around him have gathered men and women inspired by his ideals, and prepared to follow him to the ends of the earth. The Gujarat Vidyapith, the All-India Spinners' Association, the Anti-untouchability Board, and other important organisations took their birth at the Ashram. In fact, the Ashram has functioned as the life-centre of Modern India.

Today the Mahatma feels that he must give up even this. Thousands have lost their all in the struggle. Why then should he not voluntarily surrender the Ashram—the last little bit of possession that, by any stretch of language, might be called his? It is in this frame of mind that the decision has been taken to disband the Ashram, and to permit the inmates to offer Satyagraha. Truly does this illustrate a great spiritual truth—that to win all, one must lose all.

¹ 1st August.

BACK TO PRISON

From the Sabarmati Ashram to the Sabarmati prison is just a step. It has ever been so in Gandhiji's life. At dead of night the Police wake him up. With the mark of *kumkum* on his forehead, and the praise of a true *Vaishnava* on his lips, he goes back to prison. Events have moved with lightning rapidity during the past few weeks. There were acute differences amongst the Congress leaders assembled at Poona last month. But all were agreed that the Viceroy ought to be approached with a view to explore the possibilities of peace with honour. The Viceroy summarily turned down the simple request for an interview. It is doubtful if, in the present temper of the Government, any useful purpose would have been served by an interview. The Government, however, put themselves in the wrong by refusing even to have a frank talk about the *impasse* in Indian politics. The Congress is a rebel organisation; it must lay down arms, and ask for forgiveness. Lord Willingdon is not a blunderer like his predecessor. He will rule with a firm hand, and save India for the Empire. The present is the darkest moment in the long history of Indo-British relations. For the Congress as well as for the Government, the supreme test came last month. It was open to the Congress, acting on the advice of tried workers from every province, to have called off civil disobedience unconditionally, without any reference to the attitude of the Government. That would have enabled the nation to gather fresh energy, and to re-organise its forces for constructive work in diverse fields. For, except as a symbol of protest against the continued obduracy of Government, the resumption of civil disobedience is not likely to achieve any objective results. Government on their side could have taken the opportunity offered by the Poona resolution in favour of an interview between Gandhiji and the Viceroy. The love of prestige overpowered the love of peace. Else, the conditions prevailing at the time of Gandhiji's return from the second

Round Table Conference might have been restored. But it is idle to speculate. Perhaps the time was not ripe for peace; and war—albeit non-violent war—has been resumed.

A CREDITORS' MEETING

If the Congress has not achieved its object, neither has the Liberal group at the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Every attempt to improve the White Paper scheme, in a sense favourable to Indian aspirations, has proved futile. An unending series of diehard witnesses, representing the Services and other vested interests, tendered evidence, the main burden of which was that Indians could not be entrusted with even the power provided for in the White Paper. The Indian delegates were put on their defence and virtually called upon to make out a case for further reforms. Mr. Jayakar compared the Committee to a creditors' meeting, and well might he so term it. India is to get nothing out of the whole show, except on condition of safeguarding all possible and impossible interests. Dominion Status is not to be thought of. Everybody is now concerned to save the White Paper scheme from the onslaught of the Churchill group. Sir Samuel Hoare was thanked profusely, because he stood up like a hero and defended the White Paper. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru left England even before the adjournment, and is resolved not to go back. He envisages for himself a life of obscurity as a provincial lawyer. For the time being, the Government may congratulate themselves on having put out of action the Congress as well as the progressive group at the Joint Parliamentary Committee. But is it wise to render powerless the only elements that stood between the country and the terrorists?

MR. SEN-GUPTA

Death on the field of battle was what the Kshatriya warriors of Ancient India coveted most. To do one's duty and to fall fighting in a great cause, is the path to everlasting glory. The entire Indian nation mourns today the passing

away of an illustrious leader. He was a State prisoner till death freed him. Mr. Sen-Gupta gave up his all, that the Motherland might achieve freedom. Sacrifices like his are rare, even in an epoch of great sacrifices. He is now gathered to the band of heroes whose memory is a priceless possession of the race—the Lokamanya, Motilal, and Chittaranjan. His life is a symbol of what India is passing through. Her sons are not in the seats of power; they voluntarily elect to fill the prisons. It is a situation which the British rulers of India cannot contemplate with any pleasure or satisfaction. If the leaders of thought, the wisest and best in the land, feel instinctively that the prison is the only honourable place for them, the men in authority ought to pause and think of other remedies than strong and yet stronger measures.

THE TELUGU ENCYCLOPÆDIA

The late K. V. Lakshmana Rao was engaged on a most important piece of work when he was snatched away prematurely. The *Vijnana Sarvasvam* was meant to be his greatest contribution to Telugu culture. For several years after his death, there was no one with the requisite resources and vision willing to continue the task. But Mr. K. Nageswara Rao, whose hands were full with many other undertakings of public usefulness, came forward most nobly and offered to publish the Encyclopædia. Assistants like Somasekhara Sarma and Velala Subba Rao have given of their best to make it a literary success. The first volume published recently is a monument of labour well-spent, and of devoted and minute attention to every aspect of knowledge. Mr. Nageswara Rao has put himself to considerable trouble and expense, and has spared no pains to make the Volume attractive. Coloured plates of the Ajanta frescoes and innumerable illustrations add to the value of the publication. We understand the second volume is in progress, and we have no doubt that every effort will be made to bring out the later volumes in rapid succession. The Andhras ought to

be grateful to Mr. Nageswara Rao for this, as for many other benefactions.

THE FRONTISPIECE

When Mr. J. Krishnamurti visited Ahmedabad last February, he was the guest of Seth Ambalal Sarabhai. Mr. K. Ananda Mohan Sastry, art-teacher in Sethji's private school, sketched Mr. Krishnamurti as he was giving a talk. We reproduce the sketch with pleasure. Young Ananda Mohan Sastry is a highly talented artist who received his early training at the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala, Masulipatam. Later, he worked with Mr. K. Venkatappa, the great Mysore artist. Two of Mr. Sastry's paintings were exhibited recently in Paris, and won encomiums from connoisseurs of art. The present sketch which 'takes' Mr. Krishnamurti in profile and brings out prominently his uplifted hand, is in Mr. Sastry's best style.

The Dream-Lover

By TIRU-VALLUVAR

(Translated from the *TAMIL* Kural by K. Srinivasan)

1. How shall I welcome the Dream,
The Dream that comes with the message of the Beloved ?
2. If I beg my eyes and they go to sleep,
I'll fly to my Beloved and tell him all my woe.
3. He comes not to me ; still I live.
I live because I dream and dream of him.
4. Kind, kind is the dream that seeks him out for me,
Him, who comes not to me when I lie awake.
5. Sweet indeed was our meeting on that day,
Sweet too are dreams that make those joys relive.
6. If cruel waking doth not intervene,
The Beloved who came in dream would never depart.
7. Why comes he and haunts me in my dreams,
Who comes not to soothe my agony in the waking hour ?
8. I dream ; he comes and clings to my arms.
I wake ; he runs and hides in my heart.
9. She alone complains, " He comes not to me,"
Who meets not her Beloved in her dreams.
10. " He has left her," say these village folk ;
They see him not rushing to me in dream.

A Poem

By J. KRISHNAMURTI

As out of the deep womb of a mountain
Is born a swift-running stream ;
So out of the aching depths of my heart
Has come forth joyous love,
The perfume of the world.

Through the sunlit valleys rush the waters,
Entering lake upon lake,
Ever wandering, never still ;
So is my love,
Emptying itself from heart to heart.

As the waters move sadly
Through the dark, cavernous valley ;
So has my love become dull
Through the shame of easy desire.

As the tall trees are destroyed
By the strong rush of waters
That have nourished their deep roots ;
So has my love torn cruelly
The heart of its rejoicing.

I have shattered the very rock on which I grew.
And as the wide river
Now escapes to the dancing sea,
Whose waters know no bondage ;
So is my love in the perfection of its freedom.¹

¹ From *The Song of Life*, by special permission of the Star Publishing Trust, Ommen, Holland.

Krishnaji: An Impressionistic Sketch

By G. VENKATACHALAM

The morning mists lie softly over the grounds; the grey huts peep through the white veils; the trees and shrubs are silver-clad; and the rosy-fingered dawn touches the eastern sky with its mellow warmth. The last trills of the awakened birds are silent; the glimmer of the Morning Star is faintly visible; the tall palm trees are silhouetted against the steel-grey sky, and there is silence everywhere.

Soon the day is aglow with silvery whiteness and the mists are fast disappearing; the veiled objects are taking definite shape and form. The green patches of the shrubs, the grey thatched huts, the dark-green foliage of the plants, the multi-coloured dresses of bright-eyed boys and girls, who move swiftly hither and thither on some joyous errand, all take on a festal appearance.

There is stir of life now where a moment ago was stillness. The laughter of happy children rings through the noisy shouts of the boys, and the girls' songs make the air melodious. The morning is fresh and cool, and the camp-ground is alive with young servers and helpers, who assume their respective posts and duties.

The venerable, white-haired President of the Theosophical Society, the wisest, the noblest and the gentlest of women, who for over eighty years loved and laboured with a heart young, fresh and free, a mind keen, alert and clear, and a body as vital, energetic and active as the youngest member in the colony, lies now in a room upstairs the Headquarters building, bed-ridden with a malignant illness, attended lovingly by the gentle-mannered Jinarajadasa and white-robed Miss Wilson, two devoted pupils and comrades.

Further up in a spacious storeyed-room, spotlessly clean,

elegantly furnished with just a simple, plain mat, a white *diwan*, a couple of pictures and a statue of the Buddha, Krishnaji is talking animatedly to his friends. The eastern breeze blows gently over from the river; the song of a boatman, silhouetted, like a bronze statue, against the pink-flushed sky, is faintly heard.

The hum of Adyar activities is audible beneath the calmness and serenity of the place. The quietness of Adyar life is seeming and apparent like the stillness of a huge Mother-Wheel in a Power House. Though the outer atmosphere is calm and quiet, the inner activities are dynamic and incessant. Adyar is a self-contained colony; its residents are pioneers in various kinds of activities. It is an international centre and, therefore, of cosmopolitan character; a place of experiment of a great ideal. Men and women, Hindu and Christian, British and Indian, youth and age try to live—Brotherhood. The mental atmosphere is conducive to, and the physical surroundings are helpful for, such a purpose.

Adyar is a beauty-spot. The river and the sea, the groves and the gardens, the paths and the buildings enhance its natural beauty. Life here is free and unfettered. Adyar activities are worldwide and cover all kinds of human endeavour, politics, education, art, science and religion.

The annual Theosophical Conventions and Star Camps are gatherings of great interest. Adyar becomes a miniature world, and the life becomes thrilling and fascinating. There is a joyous expectancy everywhere. Soon the hooting of the horns of taxis and buses, the rattling noise of the *juthkas*, the tramp of pedestrians and the shouts of cartmen, announce the arrival of pilgrims from distant parts of the world—young and old, men and women of all types and classes, in pairs, in groups and in bus-loads.

The quiet nestling village of Adyar is miraculously transformed into a miniature city, with bazaars and restaurants, shops and saloons, and people of varying castes, colours and creeds. A sturdy American woman comes jostling along with a slenderly-built Indian girl, happy in each other's company;

the dark-eyed Brahmana girl of the South welcomes in joyous rapture her fair Zoroastrian friend from Bombay; Indian boys and Australian girls wander leisurely in happy comradeship under the magic-shadows of the palm-groves. Strong-limbed boys and warm-blooded girls play and swim in the sea and run about the sands; age and youth move freely here and there, bent on their own business.

Men attired in singular fashions and styles, greet each other in friendly welcome and feel happy to be 'home' again. "Ah, you have come!" "And so, you are back again," "How nice to see you here," "What a delightful place to camp!" you hear at every turn. You feel a sense of international solidarity about these conventions and camps, and though a more exalted ideal and a deeper affinity bind them together at these gatherings, yet in the very effort to reach a higher ideal in life, the lesser one is realised.

The delegates gather under the cool shade of over-spreading trees, through which the fugitive light plays hide and seek among the branches and leaves. A thousand eager expectant faces turn in the direction of a singularly simple platform—a plain *chowki* covered with a printed cotton cloth—under the shadow of a heavily branched bamboo tree. There Krishnaji gives his most inspiring and soul-stirring morning talks, on the Way to Life, to the Understanding of Life, to the Self-realization of Life.

The vibrant, radiant youthful figure of the Teacher is all tremulous and aflame with a consuming desire to awaken the Life in his hearers. The frail body quivers in extreme sensitiveness; the dark eyes are aglow with an inward spiritual splendour. His mind is alert and keen to understand the difficulties of his listeners, and there is a wonderful love radiating from his every gesture and movement. The poised head, the chiselled profile, the attuned body, the uplifted finger and the serene smile, as he sits cross-legged on the *dais* and answers the questions of his audience, make as profound an impression as his challenging thoughts and utterances. No oratorical flourishes, no attempt at forensic skill,

no endeavour to flatter or amuse, no desire to wound or to play upon one's feelings. His words, like a mountain stream, leap from crag to crag, and one gets easily lost in their lyric cadence.

Clad in immaculate white garments of a cotton *kurtha*, a *dhotie* and a *chudder*, with a naturalness as simple and innocent as a child's, a graciousness as tender and true as a bride's, and a sweetness as fresh and spontaneous as a flower's, Krishnaji fascinates one and all. What a vision of Life Splendid is that delicate, sensitive, pure and beautiful physical form of Krishnaji! What radiant energy in that all-consuming Flame of Life, which enkindles one and all! How naturally simple, how tenderly graceful, and yet how strong and compelling is the life that has flowered into perfection!

Have you ever seen an Himalayan peak, serene, calm, pure, majestic and beautiful, lit by the golden rays of the rising sun on an early spring morning, towering high up above the mass of rolling clouds and glistening glaciers? That is Krishnaji, as he stands on the raised *dais* to read out his poems or deliver his short evening discourses, his face lit up with a golden glow from the brightly burning camp fire. On all sides are intensely agitated and mentally bewildered faces, men and women, listening attentively with attuned body and mind. The night slowly spreads its dark wings; the deepening gloom is relieved by a star-lit sky; the crescent moon hangs low on the horizon. The fire shoots heavenwards with crackling sparks and licking tongues of flame. There is stillness everywhere without and an inner silence within. A great calmness broods over the place.

The melodious Voice of the Liberated One calls to humanity to rediscover its divinity. It is a call from Life to Life—a call to Freedom, to Liberation, to Truth, to Reality. It is a challenge to all dead forms, dying faiths and decaying superstitions—a challenge to creeds, dogmas, systems, philosophies, rituals and ceremonies. It is the Voice of the Master Singer, the Supreme Artist, calling to each one to be creatively great, to be true artists in life, to be individually

unique. It is the call of the Flame to the spark to re-light itself and become the Flame :

" O Friend,
Thou canst not bind Truth.

It is as the air,
Free, limitless,
Indestructible,
Immeasurable.

It hath no dwelling place,
Neither temple nor altar.
It is of no one God,
However zealous be His worshipper.

Canst thou tell
From what single flower
The bee gathereth the sweet honey ?

O Friend,
Leave heresy to the heretic,
Religion to the orthodox ;
But gather Truth
From the dust of thine experience."

A Vedic Conception of the Poet

By NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

Kavi is an invariable epithet of the gods. The Vedas mean by this attribute to bring out a most fundamental character, an inalienable *dharma* of the heavenly host. All the gods are poets; and a human being can become a poet only in so far as he attains to the nature and status of a god. Who is then a *kavi*? The Poet is he who by his poetic power raises forms of beauty in heaven—*kaviḥ kavīṭva divi rūpam asajāt*.¹ Thus the essence of poetic power is to fashion divine Beauty, to reveal heavenly forms. What is this Heaven whose forms the Poet discovers and embodies? Heaven—Dyaus—has a very definite connotation in the Veda. It means the luminous or divine Mind²—the mind purified of its obscurity and limitations, due to subjection to the external senses, thus opening to the higher Light, receiving and recording faithfully the deeper and vaster movements and vibrations of the Truth, giving them a form, a perfect body of the right thought and the right word. Indra is the lord of this world and he can be approached only with an enkindled intelligence, *didhaya manisha*,³ a faultless understanding, *sumedha*.³ He is the supreme Artisan of the poetic power, *Tashta*,³ the maker of perfect forms, *surupa kritnum*.⁴ All the gods turn towards Indra and become gods and poets, attain their Great Names of Supreme Beauty.⁵ Indra is also the master of the senses, *indriyas*, who are his hosts. It is through this mind and the senses that the poetic creation has to be manifested. The mind spreads out wide the Poet's

¹ Rig Veda, X. 124. 7.

² "The Secret of the Veda" by Sri Aurobindo.

³ Rig Veda, III. 88. 1.

⁴ " I. 4. 1.

⁵ Mahat tad vah kavayas charu nama yad va deva bhavatha viswa indre—III. 54. 17.

weaving¹; the poet is the priest who calls down and works out the right thinking in the sacrificial labour of creation.² But that creation is made in and through the inner mind and the inner senses that are alive to the subtle formations of a vaster knowledge.³ The poet envisages the golden forms fashioned out of the very profundity of the consciousness.⁴ For the substance, the material on which the poet works, is Truth. The seat of the Truth the poets guard, they uphold the supreme secret Names.⁵ The poet has the expressive utterance, the creative word; the poet is a poet by his poetic creation—the shape faultlessly wrought out that unveils and holds the Truth.⁶ The form of beauty is the body of the Truth.

The poet is a trinity in himself. A triune consciousness forms his personality. First of all, he is the Knower—the Seer of the Truth, *kavayah satyadrashtrah*. He has the direct vision, the luminous intelligence, the immediate perception.⁷ A subtle and profound and penetrating consciousness is his, *ninyam, prachetas*; his is the eye of the Sun, *surya chakshuh*.⁸ He secures an increased being through his effulgent understanding.⁹ In the second place, the Poet is not only Seer, but Doer; he is knower as well as creator. He has a dynamic knowledge and his vision itself is power, *nrichaksha*¹⁰; he is the Seer-Will, *kavikratuh*.¹¹ He has the blazing radiance of the Sun and is supremely potent in his self-luminousness.¹² The Sun is the light and the energy of

¹ *kaves chit tantum manasa viyantah*—X. 5. 8.

² *kavir hota yajati manmasadhanah*—I. 161. 7.

³ *kavir na ninyam vidathani sadhan*—IV. 16. 3.

⁴ *hiranyapeccasa kavi gambhirachetasa*—VIII. 8. 2.

⁵ *ritasya padam kavayb nipanti guha namani dadhire parani*—X. 5. 2.

⁶ *kavir girbhah kavyena kavah san*—IX. 96. 17.

⁷ *abhi vidus kavah san*—I. 71. 10; *kavim ketum*—VII. 6. 2.

⁸ IX. 10. 8-9.

⁹ *kavir viprena vavridhe*—VIII. 44. 12.

¹⁰ III. 54. 6.

¹¹ I. 1. 5.

¹² *swatavasah kavayah suryatwachah*—VII. 59. 11.

the Truth. Even like the Sun the Poet gives birth to the Truth, *surya satyasava, satyaya satyaprasavaya*. But the Poet as Power is not only the revealer or creator, *savita*, he is also the builder or fashioner, *tashta*, and he is the organiser, *vedha*, of the Truth.¹ As Savita he manifests the Truth, as Tashta he gives a perfected body and form to the Truth, and as Vedha he maintains the Truth in its dynamic working. The effective marshalling and organisation of the Truth is what is called Ritam, the Right; it is also called Dharma,² the Law or the Rhythm, the ordered movement and invincible execution of the Truth. The Poet pursues the Path of the Right³; it is he who lays out the Path for the march of the Truth, the progress of the Sacrifice.⁴ He is like a fast steed well-yoked, pressing forward⁵; he is the charger that moves straight and unswerving and carries us beyond⁶—into the world of felicity.

Indeed delight is the third and the supremely intimate element of the poetic personality. Dear and delightful is the poet, dear and delightful his works, *priya, priyani*. His hand is dripping with sweetness, *kavir hi madhuhastyah*.⁷ The Poet-God shines in his pristine beauty and is showering delight.⁸ He is filled with utter ecstasy so that he may rise to the very source of the luminous Energy.⁹ Pure is the Divine Joy and it enters and purifies all forms as it moves to the seat of the Immortals.¹⁰ Indeed this sparkling Delight is the Poet-Seer and it is that that brings forth the creative word, the utterance of Indra.¹¹

¹ *kavayah santi vedhasah*—V. 52. 13.

² *adha nu dharmani gman*—III. 88. 2.

³ *kavi ritasya patmabhih*—VIII. 8. 23.

⁴ *kavi yajnasya vitanoti pantham*—Taittiriya Samhita, III. 55. 8.

⁵ *atyao na vaji sudhuro jihanah abhi priyani*—R. V. III. 88. 1.

⁶ *rija vajam na gadhyam yuyushan kavir paryaya bhushat*—IV. 16. 11.

⁷ V. 5. 2.

⁸ *sobhate vrisha kavir yonavadhi priyah*—IX. 25. 2.

⁹ *pavaswa manditama pavitram dharaya kave, arkasya yonim asadam*

IX. 25. 6.

¹⁰ *viswa rupanyavisan punano yati haryatah, yatramritasa asate*—IX. 25. 4.

¹¹ *arushe janayan girah somah pavata ayushak, indran gaohhan kavikratuh*—IX. 25. 5.

The solar vision of the Poet encompasses in its might the wide Earth and Heaven, fuses them in supreme Delight in the womb of the Truth.¹ The Earth is lifted up and given in marriage to Heaven in the home of the Truth, for the creation and expression of the Truth in its varied beauty, *charu chitram*.

The Poet creates forms of beauty in Heaven; but these forms are not made out of the void. It is the Earth that is raised to Heaven and transmuted into divine truth-forms. The union of Earth and Heaven is the source of the Joy, the *Ananda* that the Poet unseals and distributes. Heaven and Earth join and meet in the world of Delight; between them they press out Soma, the drink of the gods.

The Mind and the Body are held together by means of the Life, the mid-world. The Divine Mind by raising the body consciousness into itself gathers up too, by that act, the delight of life and releases the fountain of immortal Bliss. That is the work and achievement of the gods as poets.

"Where then is the birth of the Poets? Ask it of the Masters. The Poets have seized and mastered the Mind, they have the perfect working and they fashion the Heaven.

"On this Earth they hold everywhere in themselves all the secrets. They make Earth and Heaven move together, so that they may realise their heroic strength. They measure them with their rhythmic measurements, they hold in their controlled grasp the vast and great twins, and unite them and establish between them the mid-world of Delight for the perfect poise."²

All the gods are poets—their forms are perfect, *surupa*,

¹ *kavir nrichaksha abhishim achashta ritasya yona vidhrite madanti—III. 54.6.*

² *inota prichcha janima kavinam
manodhritah sukritas takshata dyam.....
ni shim id atra guhya dadhana
uta kshatrasya rodasi samanjan
sam matrabhir mamire yemururvi
antarmahi samrite dhayase dhuh—III. 38. 2-3.*

sudrisha, their Names full of beauty, *charu devasya nama*.¹ This means also that the gods embody the different powers that constitute the poetic consciousness. Agni is the Seer-Will, the creative vision of the Poet—the luminous energy born of an experience by identity with the Truth. Indra is the Idea-Form, the architectonic conception of the work or achievement. Mitra and Varuna are the large harmony, the vast cadence and sweep of movement. The Aswins, the Divine Riders, represent the intense zest of well-yoked Life-Energy. Soma is Rasa, Ananda, the Supreme Bliss and Delight.

The Vedic Poet is doubtless the poet of Life, the architect of Divinity in man, of Heaven upon earth. But what is true of Life is fundamentally true of Art too—at least true of the Art as it was conceived by the ancient seers and as it found expression at their hands.²

¹ I. 24. 1.

² The Vedic term Kavi means literally 'a seer,' 'one who has the vision,' as the word 'poet' means etymologically 'a doer,' 'a creator.' I have combined the two senses to equate the terms and bring out the meaning involved in their more current acceptation.

Men in Women's Roles¹

I. By C. JINARAJADASA, M.A., (*Cantab*)

From my standpoint, the answer to the first question as to whether there is "any inherent impropriety, from the artistic point of view, in specially gifted men appearing as women," is that anything that is abnormal and utterly against the trend of Nature must be supremely inartistic. 'Impropriety' is largely a matter of man-made standards of right and wrong, and religious practices can be found in certain primitive religions where a masquerade of men as women takes place temporarily. But the problem is different when we discuss whether any action is artistic or inartistic.

However gifted an actor may be, he can never reflect even with his finest imagination what are the subtle reactions of a woman to any situation. As yet physiologists have not been able to find out whether there is any subtle difference in the construction of the nerves of a woman which differentiates them from those of a man; but anyone observant of the reactions of men and women notes at once that they are so strikingly different that the difference is not anything superficial, but must go deep down even into the subtler parts of brain structure. A gifted man can *imitate* a woman's actions, but I have myself no doubt on the main point, that he cannot think and feel exactly as does a woman, simply because he has not the woman's sensory apparatus.

This question will be asked only in India where men of artistic temperament have never had the opportunity of seeing great women as actors. Anyone who has seen Sarah Bernhardt, Elenora Duse, Ellen Terry or Maude Adams, knows without any question of doubt that it is utterly impossible for a man, however gifted, to reveal the subtleties of life that these great actresses have revealed.

¹ Answers to the Editor's questions in the Jan.-Feb. issue of *Triumvi*.

As to the second question, whether taking feminine rôles affects fundamentally the personality of the actor, I can only reply that so far I have heard of no such adverse changes. Of course there is this proviso, that those male actors who are particularly successful in India in women's rôles may possibly belong to what Edwin Carpenter called 'the intermediate type.' If an actor who takes women's rôles shows certain habits and mannerisms usually associated with women, it may be due not to his acting but to something more fundamental in his organic structure.

In England in certain amateur Theatrical Societies now and then a woman's rôle is taken by a man. But this is done, not as anything artistic, but following some tradition of the Society, as, for instance, by the Dramatic Societies of Oxford and Cambridge, where women's rôles are taken by men. But the audience that is present, enjoys the acting not for any inner artistic revelation, but for the sheer cleverness shown by the actor in playing the rôle of an actress. Everybody goes to be fooled, and enjoys it all the more as they are fooled by the actor playing so well the woman's rôle.

II. By M. CHALAPATHI RAU, M.A., B.L.

There is nothing *inherently* improper even in the seven deadly sins. But what is the 'artistic point of view'? Is it the view of our traditional stage, or of the stage in every country East and West at the present day, or of the individual artistes and art-critics? I suppose an answer to your question depends on all three. It is improper according to our traditional drama for Oedipus to come with bleeding eyes, for Othello to smother Desdemona, for Romeo and Juliet to kiss and embrace in the balcony. It is utterly archaic according to the English and the European stage for men to play the rôles of women, except as a piece of pure fun as in the well-known farce 'Charley's Aunt.' It is useless to try to strike a mean between personal views because it is impossible and unnecessary, especially when there seems to be no one great enough to impose his view and mould our stage according to

it. A single-minded State like Russia with a point of view is able to nationalise its stage and give impetus to its dramatic art; other States are hydra-headed and many-minded and it is impossible for India to develop a national point of view in the coming days. The *Krishna Patrika's* point of view is that since the triumph of dramatic art lies in the creation of an illusion, it is not artistically improper for men to appear in the rôles of women. But it is not a long step to the view that men may appear as mountains or mice—I mean realistically and not merely symbolically—or lions and walls as the revellers did when they staged the interlude of 'Pyramus and Thisbe' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Where, then, is the limit to this illusion within an illusion, this double strain for an actor who has to play not only the part of a particular character but that of another sex and another species? The *Patrika* gives credit to the actor who bears this double strain, but we must also concede some credit to the male characters who have to bear the extra strain of imposing on themselves the illusion that the lady before them is not illusory. And what about the audiences? They too deserve credit. We are thus going back to the primitive stage, the Greek stage, the mediæval European stage, our own street drama, and the Ober-Ammergau passion play. I am not objecting to these types; for it is all right if we have the primal imagination to get into illusion easily and derive real satisfaction and not the pathetic satisfaction we manage to derive from imperfect productions with all kinds of compromises. It is hard to understand our anachronistic ancient-minded folk who want to stick to archaisms and invent art theories to justify them. The more progressive, if more sophisticated view is that the presentation should assist the audience and the actors and not draw upon their imaginations too much. That is why today they are staging *Twelfth Night* in a park, and Max Reinhardt is producing for the O.U.D.S. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the woods of Oxford. But for the highly technical stage we require such a master showman as Coehnan and a master-artist as Gordon Craig. If it is said there is no limit to the

low-brow compromises we can make in creating what is only an illusion, I can understand the logic as well as its fairness, but if a limit has to be put somewhere, I think we should put it not between man and his fellow-creatures but even at the sexes, since sex seems to be still the most primitive force which is shaping the sculpture of bodies as well as the psychology of minds, a force which is the seed of much drama and cannot yet be tamed or civilized or cast out like the devil. I am not here forgetting the force of evolution or eugenics; and, like Mr. Venkatachalam, I recognise only too well the possibility and also the desirability of human beings evolving, even consciously, into a race of hermaphrodites or sexless Shavians or god-like Uranians living unmorally in utter nakedness.

Apart from the question of high æsthetics I want to raise only two questions, which may appear unimportant to others but to me are important and quite pertinent to the problem. First, the question of love-making. Love-making pure, like Tragedy proper, is almost absent on our traditional stage, and when a lover like Dushyanta sings from his covert the catalogue of his mistress's charms, almost always contradicted by the improperly cast male-female heroine trying to blush in the foot-lights, and comes nearer, his passion seems to ooze out and he becomes a bit monkish, and in spite of all mutual attraction he merely touches her shoulder or taps her chin, or, if he is more daring, perhaps kisses her hands. It might be that our ancients did not want to be more realistic on the stage or that their love-making in real life was as pompous and ineffectual; but since I suspect the movies and talkies have affected the art of love-making and kissing in our ancient land, since there seems to be a genuine demand for more and more realism at the present day, not the realism of mere popular phraseology put into the mouths of characters but realism *outré*, I ask how far it is possible for a male-female heroine and a male-lover to kiss or embrace or put each other in an illusion. I am sure that this would appear improper and even immoral to most of those who, in

the absence of such emotional exhibitionism, see everything proper now. I should not be accused of advocating any pruriency because nothing is further from my mind, and I am aware that this sort of cent-per-cent realism may prevent most cent-per-cent females from taking to the stage. But I hate the prudery of those so-called cultured folk who put a ban on their artistic abilities, whose passion for stage-reform is only half-hearted and whose snobbery about morals is not deeper than their skin; and it was this prudery that turned a fairly good play like Mrs. Kshama Row's *Amulet*, recently staged in Bombay, from a success into a shadowy and unconvincing thing. Next, the problem of make-up. It is not too odious for me to think of the preposterous additions to the physiology of the male-female, but when I see him (or her!) come padded with an Epstein bust but without the corollary of the monumental hips, an important item of beauty in our traditions, I do not know whether to laugh or cry. I have seen these male-female actors successfully express maidenliness with face and hands, but am yet to see them as successful with their immodest, unmaidenly, and almost absent-minded legs. I saw once the unholy sight of the divine Desdemona's bust dropping down in the middle of the smothering, and the whole tragedy turned into a comedy too deep for tears. It seems to me, therefore, that for males to persist in playing the rôles of females is not only artistically improper but utterly idiotic. I would finally ask those who seem to be quite satisfied with Sthanam Narasimharao and others, who only disillusion me and are tolerable because of their singing, to imagine the difference between these artistic inversions, however able they might be, and the real women-actresses of the English and the European stages. I am not here putting forward the inadequate and cheaper parallel of the talkies, but recommend even the second-rate Salisbury Company when it comes next, or the amateur theatricals of the important centres in India.

I cannot answer the second question so easily because first-rate artistes in our country are as rare as snakes in

Iceland, and while my little experience speaks in one way the evidence elsewhere is opposite. I know the case of a man, perhaps only a third-rate artiste, who had been accustomed to play female parts and developed the female instinct so much that he would embrace us, kiss us even, and kiss very passionately the photographs of Rudolph Valentino and other Hollywood he-men. But for the last few years he has given up acting altogether, and I was surprised this year to see him, shorn of all feminine graces, behave like a member of the masculine sex. We, however, hear that Charles Laughton and Emil Jannings who are the best murderers on the stage are the gentlest of men at home, that Greta Garbo who 'vamps' about so violently on the screen is in real life a sweet stay-at-home, that Boris Karloff who acts the weirdest and ghastliest parts is a perfect gentleman of the world. My experience may not be worth much; but for this and collateral questions about introverts and extroverts, I should like to recommend to the reader the expert evidence of Havelock Ellis.

A Girl-Poet of Maharashtra

By R. L. RAU

A sixteen-year-old girl can have a philosophy of her own; an artlessness of expression which might be something of an art in itself; or even a sense of humour which might be as tender and as delicious as the youth of the young writer herself.

This is the sort of impression that one gets as one spends an idle but vivid hour going through a volume of Miss Sanjivini Marathé's poems. One is told in a little biographical note that the girl's father adds to the volume, that Miss Marathé's publication of her poems is something in the manner of a doll's wedding which Indian girls are wont to celebrate in great style and giving to it something of a real wedding touch. Mr. Marathé need not have been so excessively modest. He has done on the other hand a most sensible thing that ever an Indian parent has been credited with. For in the first instance, he has given to the Marathi-reading public something of a surprise and to his own daughter no small amount of practical encouragement.

One must confess however that the idea of an Indian parent introducing his daughter to the literary world is a tremendously exciting experiment, and such an event almost smacks of New York and its literary hubble-bubble. But then the experiment ceases to be exciting when one goes through the thirty-five and odd pages of intensely thought-provoking verse and first-class verse at that. It becomes interesting to a degree.

Now to understand the poems of Miss Sanjivini Marathé, one must try to understand the background of Miss Marathé and the processes that have led to a girl like Miss Marathé to give expression to the feelings and aspirations of an age and temperament of which Miss Marathé may be truly said to be a representative.

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Readers of *Triveni* might remember that an attempt was made by the present writer some time ago to convey through these pages something of the spirit and the reactions of certain of Maharashtra's modern poets. This group of poets have kept alive the fire of enthusiasm, and new thought they were certainly able to provoke both in the minds of their own generation of men and women and through considerably younger people whose number has now become a legion. One great thing that men like Madhav Julian, Professor Maidev, Yeshwant, or Girish did, and one feels one ought to be more than grateful to all these fine unselfish men for the splendid service they have rendered to the Marathi language, and that was, they ushered in a new ideal and new ways in modern Marathi literature. They showed to the generation of boys and girls that what really mattered in literature was the sincerity and depth of one's feelings and aspirations, and so long as these qualities showed themselves in their writings, no one need bother very much about the way or manner in which one's thoughts were expressed.

Such an appeal for sincerity and directness of expression has not come from the poets alone. The short story writers like Mr. Ghate, (I half suspect that even he has become somewhat of a back number, considering the stupendous but all the same good output of the short story in Maharashtra) and others, played a very large part in moulding the minds of the younger writers. And last but not the least, such a thing as literary criticism has come to stay in Maharashtra, and one notes with pleasure the starting of magazines like the *Prabhat* (it may interest readers of *Triveni* to know that even here the Editor, Mr. Khanolkar, is a product of Viswa Bharati and Shantiniketan!) with its definite objective at constructive literary criticism and survey of modern Marathi literature, has played no small part in the growth and development of Marathi literature in recent years.

All that means one thing; and that is, Marathi literature is growing and is being enriched every day by writers comparatively younger and fresher in their outlook, and each one,

in her or his own way, has made Marathi a very living thing, indeed. It is impossible not to feel and to be able to describe at the same time, that sense of enthusiasm, loyalty and oneness which one often feels even from so distant a place like Simla far away from Maharashtra, and by one too who is more or less an exile from that province; but let it not be forgotten that it is often the exile who knows what he has lost by his leaving his native soil; and it is the exile too who can often appreciate or appraise the true value of things which were denied him. I am afraid I am digressing. But it must be confessed that the writers of Maharashtra have neither been fair to themselves nor to their native language. What have the writers of Maharashtra done themselves to interpret the beauties of their language, the philosophy of their saints, the music of their young poets, or the thoughts of their powerful writers, to an outside world? Indeed, barring the attempts of a few selfless missionaries like Mr. Abbot or the solitary labour of a Mahadeo Govind Ranade or the attempts of a magazine like *Triveni* which has so finely stood up for a synthesis in all Indian literature and in a way helped an outside public to know and to feel one with the hundred impulses that throbbed and roused the literary world of Poona and of Bombay, one fails to discover any organised attempt on the part of Maharashtra's own writers to make their efforts known to an outside world.

Witness the movement in Bengal; witness the movement in Guzerat; witness it here in North India where every day Hindi literature and its development is watched not only by the Hindi-knowing public but by others as well.

It might be argued that it is the look-out of Maharashtra and its own people. One feels that this argument is not very helpful; for if one were to leave such things to the goodwill and pleasure of a somewhat indifferent people alone, one feels there is every danger of some really valuable or noteworthy writer remaining in comparative obscurity; or his or her genius languishing because no one cared to interpret him or her, to a discerning outside public.

That is then one of the reasons why the present writer of this brief resumé feels he owes it to himself and to the literature he has come to love, that Miss Sanjivini Marathé's work must not remain unnoticed; that she must be introduced to a larger circle of men and women, albeit outside Maharashtra, who would like to know what a young girl in that western Indian province has to say about the many interesting things in life; its mystery; its disappointments; life's little tragedies; the beauty of a sunset; or for the matter of that, the little beggar woman who comes of a morning begging not for alms but for sympathy.

Returning however to my previous theme, Miss Marathé then is a typical product of her age, its literary aspirations, its idealism and environments; where she scores in addition to all these assets, is in her unique possession of the most refreshing candour, an often disarming frankness and directness of appeal. Let me quote what appears to me to be an almost perfect little gem of a lyric. It is impossible not to feel the tenderness of it all and the sheer fun that Miss Marathé seems to get out of the things around her. One cannot, one regrets, bring out the whole beauty in a translation and that too in an alien tongue. But here you are:—

The poem in question relates to a young lady—I should prefer to say, a girl—who makes a wicked complaint that the world we live in is a horrid little world. Why? Miss Marathé tells us in the words of this girl:

" 'Tis a strange world, my dears, . . . a strange world . . . "

One goes a-walking in the forest,
Up comes Mr. Darkness;
Are you feeling cold, dear, he asks.
And asking, wraps you round with his mantle.

'Tis a strange world, my dears, . . . a strange world.

Comes now Mr. Wind wandering by,
And plays with my clothes . . .

'Tis a strange world, my dears, . . . a strange world,

Now comes the shameless ray of the setting sun,
Laughing, he touches me and runs away

'Tis a strange world, my dears, . . . , a strange world
I walk on and the birds gather around me ;
Terrified I listen ;
What songs they sing and what love they make ?

'Tis a strange world, my dears, a strange world.

Helpless, I meet my little friend the rill,
And she, good soul, keeps me company ;
Here I come now safe from the wicked horrid world

'Tis a strange world, my dears, a strange world."

That is a fairly good specimen, and one feels Miss Marathé is at her best. But one wonders if Miss Marathé can get away from this 'horrid, wicked' world so easily as that and in company with her friend the mountain rill. Be that as it may, the picture is almost perfect. Imagine a girl of sixteen making her *debut* into the great, wide and beautiful world of men and women. What must indeed be her feelings and reactions ? Curiosity, one supposes, in the first instance, then the timidity, the doubts, the experiences, and the inevitable companionship that seems to me the consummation of all our human and earthly endeavour. Miss Marathé has put down what she herself probably feels and one must agree with her that her fears, her reactions, are true.

Or again hear Miss Marathé describing a maiden. Does she describe herself, one feels like asking.

"She was the child of a creeper that grew on the edge of a forest ;
Each day she showed her brave array of flowers,
Proud of her youth and proud of her brave show.

Thus she became the beloved of all in that forest.

The bright sun came to her early and wished her first.
And with the laughter of her youth in her eyes did she receive him.

The wind of the oceans came to her sweetly rolling by ;
And shyly she bent her neck and greeted him in return.

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The King of the mountain breezes gave her the dewy pearls of a morning ;
And sweetly she pleased the royal giver by wearing them of a morning ;

Sometimes she listened to the music of the mountain rill ;
And kept tune to the music of its flowing waters.

And then one day came the bee with the song of his love.
Softly she spoke to him and covered him with her smiles ;
Shyly, shyly, from behind the pale green leaves she spoke :

'Love, I am thine.

But canst thou not wait awhile ?

When all that is mine, mine perfume, my fragrance, my beauty shall be
thine for evermore ?'

And so the bee went away hearing her ; and the little sweet maiden slept.

But alas ! what did the maid know of the love of the bee or its world ?
Who wants but the perfume and the fragrance and not her love ?

So the maid waited ; and trusted in the Lord ; the bee came not.
And one day she too passed away and fell to the ground faded, withered,
and forlorn.
And the forest forgot her."

Listen again to Miss Marathé's conception of Dawn :

"Let not these tears come into thine eyes, beloved ;
Let not these poor, sad words be spoken,
As thou beholdest my face.

Leave me, leave mine hands, beloved.
Is this the time for tears,
When you needs must be happy ?

Look around thyself for once, beloved ;
Hear the birds singing,
Listen to the blade of grass,
Watch the pair of birds flying,
Dance with the flowing waters.

Laugh, my beloved, laugh my little flower,
See who awaits you,
On golden steed,
And at your doors."

This is how Miss Marathè describes a beggar woman :

" Give me a little food, oh ye, who stay within,
Give alms to misfortune's well-beloved,
Give raiment, torn though it be, to one who is lowly and poor.

They call me a flower of the dust heap.
My first gift to me was of love,
And I wandered over the world.

Men call me names,
And nought but darkness is my lot ;

They give me the charity of coarse words and the bread of abuse.
Words that I swallow often with my tears. . . .

Still I ask of ye who stay within. . . .
One thing. . . .

Call me not within, O ye who stay up there,
And then give me the charity of coarse words.

Throw from your heights what you can give to one who is low."

All these verses have been chosen at random by the present writer. Even then they seem to show that Miss Marathè has great promise. Ideas come to her easily and her expression of her feeling and sentiment is anything but dull or unprovocative of thought.

One only hopes that this girl-poet of Maharashtra will try to keep her love for poetry in flower ; and not allow it to be crushed by her somewhat prosaic surroundings and a hypercritical literary world which is the lot of many an Indian girl.¹

¹*Kavya Sanjivini*. By Miss Sanjivini Marathe. [Publisher, G. S. Marathe, M.A., A.I.A., Actuary, Poona, No. 4.—Price One Anna.]

Mr. R. L. Rau, who writes in *Triveni*, and is one of our valued contributors, will be pleased to notice books in Marathi sent to him, in these pages. Publishers and writers interested may send their publications direct to Mr. Rau, at Dahlia Cottage, Simla W. C.

Editor, 'TRIVENI.'

Revivalism in Indian Art

By M. K. CHAKRAVARTI, M.A., B.L.

The arts of a people have always been regarded as the chief evidence of its culture. The style and excellence of painting, sculpture, music, dancing, the drama and poetry of a people are rightly interpreted as being special qualities of its cultural development. The finer elements of the mind of man very early reacted to his natural surroundings, outward wants, and inward impulses ; and out of these reactions of the æsthetic sense grew up the imitative and creative arts of the race. The whole process was originally spontaneous and unconscious, but as man became more and more capable of æsthetic and emotional exaltation, the arts became finer and more conscious. They acted upon and were acted upon by the life of the people and the two grew side by side. But the fact remained that the arts were an evolutionary expression of the civilisation of a people. It is true that the arts have not always followed the line of natural evolution of a people's life. Sometimes some of them have been left behind the others or were forced into new channels by historical and other causes. For example, the set-back given by Islam to certain aspects of the art of pictorial representation of Nature is responsible for the wonderful development of the conventional pattern as well as the plant and flower *motif* of later Persian art. Not even religion seems to have the power altogether to suppress the creative urge of the human mind for self-expression. All the prohibitions of Islam against artistic expressions of life have failed to kill art in Mussulman countries. They have only driven it from one channel into another. Art like the river will make its own bed to flow in.

Anthropologists tell us that religion is the mother of the Arts. We find that all the arts of the Jewish people centred

round the Tabernacle of God. We also see how the Greek arts of sculpture, architecture, drama, epic poetry and choric dance, all arose out of their religion. The same is true of Hindu and Buddhistic art.

This is however not to suggest that art cannot live or prosper except in an atmosphere of religion. Art is as vital an expression of our life as religion itself, and whatever its origin, it may be and has been independently developed. But one fact stands. Art is an organic growth and not a decorative embellishment of life. To be true art, art must flow out of the soil of a people's life. It may be possible to transplant an art from one soil to another equally congenial to its growth; but art cultivated in a glass-house or hot-house cannot be any thing more than a beautiful exotic. It may at best satisfy the tastes of a few, but can never be a source of joy, solace, nourishment or inspiration to the people at large.

The connoisseurs of art are sometimes liable to cut themselves off from the living current of thought, art and life, and to be imperceptibly caught in the stagnant pools of cliques and coteries, circles and societies, and so to be practically lost to the world. The so-called Pre-Raphaelites of the 19th century were a set of cultured artists of this type who formed a close society to cultivate their special style of art, but failed to leave much to inspire mankind, and left none to succeed them. The poetry of Rossetti, the paintings of Burne Jones and Millais, and the criticism of Walter Pater appeal to a limited few, because they are poets of poets, artists of artists, and critics of critics—and not of common humanity.

The connoisseurs sometimes drift into the drawing-room atmosphere, where they are first lionised and afterwards patronised by that class of people whom Matthew Arnold has called 'Philistines'. Art is set up in a shrine as a goddess; but she is, unknown to the worshippers, changed by the atmosphere into an idol of cant and artificiality; while the free appreciation of art degenerates into a kind of mysterious cult with its high priests and acolytes. The flowers offered

to the deity are changed into painted paper flowers without the worshippers knowing the fact. This is one great pitfall for connoisseurism of art and culture; and it is against this that Tennyson has warned us in his *Palace of Art*.

If genuine culture is scarce, like a pearl of great price, imitations are not rare. In the artificial lights of the drawing-room you cannot often tell the fake paper-orchid from the genuine, and the cheap artificial flower of the market from the rare specimen grown with special care in the aristocratic drawing-room. How can you? for the thing has rarely any fragrance; no flower cultivated in that way has fragrance. The snobbish philistine prizes the exotic, not because it is fine, but because it is rare and costly. The sweetness in Matthew Arnold's famous phrase 'sweetness and light' may be the sweet fragrance of my lady's clothes rather than that of her culture. The drawing-room atmosphere is therefore not a healthy atmosphere, for art or culture. The Victorian Age was imperceptibly gathering the artists and culturists of England into drawing-room societies. And if the great war has brought us anything to be thankful for, it is its effect of scattering the arm-chair philosophers and drawing-room artists of the world. Since the war there has been a perceptible tendency towards naturalness in the men and women of the new generation. Perhaps they are not so refined or reticent as their parents or grand-parents, but there is a great advantage in having a generation to call a spade a spade rather than an agricultural implement. England has had enough of that kind of euphemistic prudery and affected respectability, and not many Englishmen will regret the final exit of this aspect of the Victorian Age. Let us not regret, with all our love of art and culture, to come nearer to the soil of this earth—the common mother of us all and of our civilisation. It is more: we are like the first sons of the Earth—the giants, who picked up strength every time they were thrown upon the ground; and their enemies, according to the old story, could only dispose of them in the mid-air of isolation. The bare human nature will teach us more than all

the drawing-room artists and philosophers. Wordsworth wrote :—

“One impulse from the vernal wood
Can teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can.”

The modern thinker is discovering that one act of apprehension of our common humanity, and one act of realisation of our duty to one another as well as to our highest self, will make us far better and more beautiful men and women than all the ‘hot-house’ cultures of the world could do.

But the danger that art is exposed to in India today is different. A large number of authors, critics and artists are busy introducing foreign ideals and standards into Indian literature, art and music. It may be possible for us to assimilate some of these Western principles and ideals, but the bulk of them is bound to remain foreign to the genius of India. What reason is there to suppose that the English or Italian style of painting, the Gothic style of architecture, or the jazz music of America, can be naturalised in India?

This is one danger for Indian art and culture—the alien danger. But there is another. There is a revivalistic tendency in modern Indian art and culture, outwardly as reaction against, but essentially in subtle imitation of, the West. It has shown itself most conspicuously in the Indian school of painting; it is showing itself also in the Indian classic dance as interpreted and practised by Uday Shankar. Besides there is a growing encouragement shown to the ancient folk-arts in the different parts of the country.

This revivalistic tendency is natural, and to a limited extent a healthy tendency of the national mind in an age of all-round awakening and progress. The revival of Hindu classical music is altogether a healthy process and deserves every encouragement, even though it cannot be allowed to replace the romantic development of popular music in recent times. But there seems to be a lurking danger in most

revivalistic movements beyond a certain point. They tend, consciously or unconsciously, to put back the hand of the clock of evolution. I recognise that the course of evolution may sometimes take us backward in order to sweep us forward again, for the line of evolution is not necessarily a straight line. At the same time we may not tamper with it and sport with its tendency without retarding, if not altogether stopping, its progress.

The evolution of Indian culture had passed through and superseded many phases of the national art in its upward progress. Not that the artistic expressions of some of these epochs might not have been preserved and harmonised with the life of the people under changed conditions. For we must remember that the natural evolution is repeatedly interrupted by historical, *i.e.*, accidental causes, and a particular art which was at one time welling up from the heart of the people may be inhibited or altogether suppressed by historical coercion or violence. It may not therefore be against the law of evolution to revive that art at a later stage of the life of the people. But it is dangerous for the people of one age to revive wholesale the manners and arts of a long past epoch of its history. Who would want to revive polyandry in his admiration of the age of the *Mahabharata*?

Such thoughtless revival of an old or seemingly lost art of a people may be an act of ‘atavism,’ however charming atavism it may seem to be, rather than being progress. In these times we are becoming enamoured of the dress, manners and arts of the Buddhistic age on account of the discovery of their pictorial relics in the fresco paintings of the rock-cut temples of Ajanta, Ellora and other places. The Indian school of painting is over head and ears in love with the ancient fashions of dress, especially female clothing, which it faithfully copies in its own paintings. The theatres and cinemas have taken the hint, and we can see Ajanta male and female figures in action and motion on the stage and the screen in these times.

It is all very well to do this so far as historical fidelity to

the modes and manners of a particular age requires it. But in practice there is a good deal more than mere chronological exactitude. Most of the commercial art has begun to follow the Indian school of painting, as some of that art in the West follows the ancient Greek models. But the craze does not stop there. The Greco-Buddhist fashion of female dress is gradually passing from the art-studios to the dressing rooms of cultured Indian society. The 'Kanchuli' and the other seductively beautiful items of meagre female costume threaten to become the Indian counterpart of the low-cut gown and other innovations of the West. This is not independent artistic self-expression; it is slavish imitation of a refined type.

The amateur classical Indian dance has already become professional, and is showing signs of penetration into cultured Indian families. It is time to consider if it is safe to take back to our bosoms an art which our society had practised, perhaps for hundreds of years, and ultimately thought fit to leave to the *Natas* and *Natis*, i.e., the professional actors and actresses, when it was found to be out of harmony with the higher and more spiritual ideals of our national life. The research scholars of the age of Kalidasa know that the age that produced all the refinements of *Meghaduta* was not far removed from the age in which Vatsayana wrote his *Kamasutra*, that amazing encyclopædia of refinement and filth. Let us not flatter ourselves that we have left behind us that curiously mixed-up stage of social evolution. We can see the deep shadow of the 20th century light—the clay feet of the golden image of progress—in the horrible sexual literature that threatens to inundate the world today in the name of Knowledge and Science.

Let cultural revivalists pause and think. The art of dancing was scientifically cultivated in India like music and the drama. It is undoubtedly a beautiful form of self-expression—a natural accompaniment to music. But it has long ceased to be India's national art. It is very important that we should study the causes of the degradation of the

art, and not blindly proceed upon the preconceived idea that the art is a jewel whose value the people have forgotten on account of the decay of national culture. There may be a deeper cause than that; possibly the art ran its full course and died a natural death. In other words, it was played out. We should think many times before we proceed to revive on a national scale an art so full of display of the beauty of the flesh, and therefore so full of danger for the higher spiritual life. Music is a much finer art and even when decayed it cannot corrupt us so easily. We may not be able to raise the *Nati* of the market-place to the position of the lady of society; but we may easily degrade the lady to the position of the *Nati*. Everything has its natural line of evolution, to go against which is dangerous. It is an idle wish to combine the wisdom of old age and the innocence of childhood. We can only produce imbecility and give it the name of 'second childhood,' but it is devoid of wisdom. How can we expect to enjoy the smell of the mango blossom of March while eating the ripe fruit in July? On the contrary we find from experience that it is necessary to check the excessive flowering of the tree if we want to have a good crop of fruits. Who shall say that the fine fruits of the spiritual culture of India are not directly owing to the sacrifice of certain forms of artistic expression of the people's life? If, as Freud says, art, religion and the higher impulses of man are different expressions of the repressed sexual instinct, is it improbable that a Mirabai, a Kabir or a Tulsidas, is the result of the suppression of some of the visible and palpable forms of artistic self-expression of the Indian man and woman? We can perceive the same rhythmic beauty and symmetry of form in the spiritual life and aspirations and thoughts of these persons as we might see in the artistic performance of a world-famous dancer like Anna Pavlova or Maud Alan.

The States and Federation

By SARDAR M. V. KIBE, M.A.
(Minister, Indore)

On account of the inclusion of the Indian States in the Federation, the greatest change in the relation of India with Great Britain that is proposed to be brought about is that instead of there being a Governor-General in Council, he will be freed from the council and he will also act in the name and style of Viceroy for the purely British Provinces and Indian States respectively. Thus if in some matters a seemingly more than existing popular control is proposed, the principle of the Morley-Minto reforms in associating the natives of the country in the governance of the Empire has been given up.

Similarly the preamble of the 'Proposals' brings the Indian States within the orbit of the Constitution. As will be seen in the sequel, the assurance conveyed in the following two paragraphs in the proposals are illusory. Already there exists a tacit distinction between the States in India, *e. g.*, Nepal, and the Indian States, *e. g.*, Kashmir. If troops have to be marched into the former territories, under the existing Act the sanction of Parliament has to be obtained. No such sanction was required when troops were marched into Alwar, the other day. Unlike the former, Orders in Council extend to the territories of the Indian States. All these together with the other undefined ramifications of paramountcy will now be embodied in an Act of Parliament, which it alone can modify.

"The States, though under the suzerainty of the King-Emperor, form no part of His Majesty's dominions." Yet the following condition is unambiguous. "Full liberty will, of course, be reserved to the Crown to refuse to accept the accession of any State to the Federation if it is sought on

terms incompatible with the scheme of federation embodied in the Constitution Act." Moreover, the powers of the Crown are now to be conferred on the Governor-General in relation to the States outside the federal sphere. While the former quotation will lead to the substantial modification of the treaties, the latter will once for all settle the claims of the Indian States to direct relations with the Crown, *viz.*, that they can go no further. Even an appeal to Parliament will thus be barred. This fact is again emphasised when explaining the special responsibilities of the Governor-General in respect of the item, "The Protection of any Indian State."

Coming now to the law-making power of the Federation, it is significant that while the provincial legislatures have the power to make laws to meet local conditions, such a power is not only not given to the Indian States but this fact is emphasised by the provision that "if any provision of law of a State is in conflict with the Federal legislature" present or future, the former shall give way to the latter. Further, "the Governor-General shall be entitled, by inspection or otherwise, to satisfy himself that an adequate standard of administration is maintained." He will also issue orders in this behalf.

The administration of the Railway Board is proposed to be incorporated in the Constitution Act. It controls revenues almost as large as the rest of the revenues of India. Admittedly it is a commercial concern in which much private capital, in addition to the public moneys, is employed. The policy latterly has been to nationalise the railways. In these circumstances it is improper to remove the control over the railways for ever from the future autonomous government of India. However liberal the constitution of the Board may be, even including members belonging to the Indian legislature, the scheme is outrageous.

Next to law-making is the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court in the territories of Indian States, which can be regarded as an intrusion into their sovereignty rights. A judge of a State Court will be eligible for being appointed a judge of the Federal Court, although it is not clear whether

a practising pleader in a State High Court will be eligible for appointment as a judge, like his brother practitioner in British India. The Federal Court will hear appeals from the decisions of the State Courts on questions of the interpretation of the Constitution and rights under it in abstract, although in money matters beyond a certain sum it will require the leave of the lower court. Will appeals below that sum be heard without such leave being granted? The writ of the King-Emperor, which does not at present run through the whole of India, will in future do so. The powers of the Governor-General to make any reference to the Federal Court for consideration, whatever that may mean, and opinion, are unlimited.

The first point to be noticed as regards finance is that all claims of the State, perhaps as found by the Davidson Committee, will be met from the duties on Salt, Federal Excise and Export duties only, but obviously the import Sea Customs duties will not be touched.

Although it will not be obligatory on any State to levy a particular federal tax within its territories, it must make a proportionate contribution to the federal government, apparently from its general revenues, if it is unable to levy the federal tax. The same applies to the corporation tax.

These powers of the federal government, coupled with enhancement of its powers in respect of borrowing, will make the finance in Indian States confined to a more limited extent than now. There is a corresponding advantage of having its loans guaranteed by the Federation. But this is a doubtful advantage since the financial control of the federal government will be complete.

Even at the commencement of the Federation, Corporation and Income Taxes will be federal throughout. As already pointed out, the States may make proportional contributions directly. While under these arrangements the provinces will receive subventions to meet their deficits, no such help will be extended to the States.

The implications of what has been stated in the preceding

paragraphs become still more significant both as regards the provinces and States when the subjects under the special responsibility of the Governor-General (and of the Governors too) are examined. His sphere under that head will extend to the entire Federation. Curiously under them figures the protection of the rights of the Indian States, presumably against the provinces, but they will have no protection from the inroads of the Governor-General in other matters in which they are at present subject only to diplomatic representations.

Of these special responsibility matters, No. (1) prevention of grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India, is already an all-India matter under the control of the Governor-General in Council. It extends to Indian States too. Then No. (2) safeguarding of the financial stability and credit of the Federation, may, with other provisions foreshadowed, give room for interfering in the financial conditions of the Indian States to the Governor-General alone.

The clauses regarding commercial discrimination are likely to be applicable to the States too. Already in their treaties there are terms making it obligatory on them to obtain the permission of the British Government before employing an European or an American. And by political practice it is laid down that before the State grants any concession of a commercial nature to a foreigner, it should first obtain the advice of the Paramount Power. The enforcement of this practice has varied with circumstances and the strength of the State administration. It seems that under the new order of things it will be legalised and will become uniform.

It is a well known law that the currency policy of a State governs the economic life of its people. Since this department will be controlled by the proposed Federal Bank, it follows that he who governs it, will shape the economic life of India. It is evident that there should not be violent fluctuations in it; it should progress in an orderly manner. Consequently it should not be too much under the thumb of

leaders of parties. All the same, the Indian States, no less than British India, should have a substantial hand in framing and leading its destiny. Too much stress can be laid on keeping it sacrosanct.

Some Princes of India appear to have formulated safeguards under eighteen heads as a condition precedent to their entering the Federation. The list discloses that some have been formulated prior to, or without studying the White Paper, some fall under the category of paramountcy, yet there are others which strike at the very root of federation and there are only a few which could be incorporated in the Constitution.

Among the eighteen safeguards referred to in the preceding paragraph, one refers to a Confederation of States. It appears that such confederation is to come into existence for the purpose of electing only members to the legislatures. For such a modest aim the word 'confederation' is pompous. 'Union' will be more appropriate. But in order to escape from certain consequences of a federation which are vaguely foreshadowed in the eighteen points, a confederation is really wanted. But it should be much more of a union than what is proposed. Moreover this is the time, that is to say, when new instruments of accession have to be forged, to have provision made for a real confederation. It will lay down uniform actions for many matters of common interest which alone will give stability to the tottering structure of the Indian States and not the safeguards which are founded upon the support of a foreign power, which is subject to many changes. Some of these eighteen points are deserving of immediate consideration, *i.e.*, as regards normative and concurrent legislation and are capable of being granted at once. But the only thing which will give complete freedom to an unit of federation, especially a State claiming full internal sovereignty, is the right to secede after due notice. The claim to keep the army independent is another right, but it will be hardly compatible with the federation under consideration, since the States have already placed limitations upon it by their

treaties. It will not be possible nor advisable to go over it, in the new instrument of accessions. It is not too much to say that the eighteen points are ill-conceived, badly mingled, promiscuously mixed and will fail to achieve their object.

Some Thoughts on English Prose Style

By C. L. R. SASTRI, B. Sc.

I

The art of expression is an art like another; if anything, it is the greatest and most difficult art of all. There are some well-defined courses of study for the other arts; and, with all these, surprisingly few persons, strange as it may seem, are ever able to make a name for themselves. In regard to style, however, there are no recognized text-books, the guiding hand is nowhere distinctly seen. The writer has nothing for it but to fall back, in the last resort, upon his own resources, whatever these may be; and to make his spoon or spoil his horn, according to circumstances.

II

The word 'style' connotes a way of writing. It touches not the matter but the *manner* of a given piece of writing. It follows that the best style is that which has the best manner. The thought, the internal content, alone is not sufficient, be it ever so noble. This, in my view, requires emphasising. Certain reputed critics have laid it down as their considered opinion, as their unshakable conviction, that the manner is nothing so long as the matter is precious; that the idea is the chief thing; and that 'style', being only a kind of outward dressing, a sort of extraneous ornament, does not, and ought not, to appeal to the serious student. One of my objects in writing this article is to expose the utter hollowness and absurdity of this theory.

III

It is, I venture to think, high time people recognized that obscurity of expression does not necessarily connote pro-

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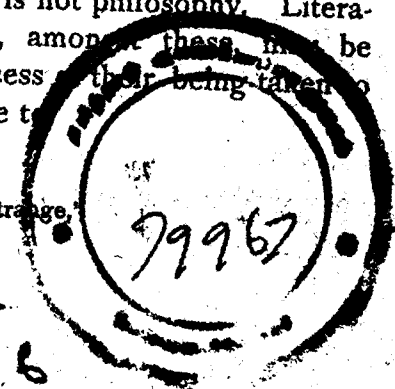
fundity of thought. Every person that writes is allowed certain peculiarities of style (to match the particular idiosyncrasies of his mind) but it only stands to reason that he should not push these peculiarities beyond a more or less well-defined limit. All arts enjoin on their practitioners some amount of discipline, of self-restraint, and I do not see why, amongst them all, writers alone should regard themselves as being exempt from it. The function of literature is to entertain, not puzzle, the reader. Nor is profound thought, I imagine, any the worse for lucid expression. If the expression is not lucid, then one of two things follows: *either* the thought of which it is, *ex hypothesi*, the vehicle, is not so profound, is not so world-convulsing, as it feigns to be, *or* it is, as yet, not clear enough to the writer himself. Let us not be taken in by such pretences. There never yet was any thought which was incapable, in the right hands, of the most lucid expression. As Mr. Herbert Paul, referring to Swift, says, in his admirable book, *Men and Letters* (John Lane, 1915):

"Until Swift became a lunatic, his mind cut like a diamond through the hardest substances in its way. No sophistry ever deceived him. No difficulty ever puzzled him. There was nothing he thought which he could not express. The pellucid simplicity of his style, both in prose and in verse, came of clear thinking and sound reasoning, assisted by the habit of daily explanation to unlettered women. *It is easy to understand him, because he understood so easily himself.* A great deal of time is wasted by the 'general reader' in guessing at the meaning of authors who did not mean anything in particular. *Uncertainty is the fruitful parent of obscurity, and many people write obscurely in the hope that they will be thought profound.* Like the subaltern who would not form his letters distinctly lest his correspondents should find out how he spelt, there is a class of writers who will not be plain lest the poverty of their thoughts should be exposed." (My italics: pp. 282-283).

In philosophy thought may be more important. Nay, it *is* more important. But literature is not philosophy. Literature may be many things; and, among these, may be philosophy also. But, in the process of their being taken into its capacious bosom, they are made to

".....suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange."

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and what emerges ultimately is literature and not any-ism or -ology. Thought, indeed, need not be absent from literature. But there it is more valuable for the *garb* in which it is conveyed than for itself. Literature consists of "what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed." Literature, in short, is of the word wordy: it is thought *plus* style; and sometimes, even, it is *all* style and *no* thought—if, that is, anything written or spoken can be said to be completely devoid of thought. The silliest thing uttered well becomes literature: whereas the profoundest thing spoiled in the telling remains outside literature's porch. (I am, of course, to be understood as speaking in the most general terms. There may, indeed, be circumstances which palliate even the worst writing imaginable. Authors have been known to exist—as Balzac, for instance, who, it would seem, was not guilty of having written a *single* beautiful sentence in all his numerous books—authors, I say, have been known to exist that have written in a very atrocious style, yet they stand high in the ranks of literature. But, I plead, they are only exceptions, and, as such, cannot invalidate my argument). Literature, then, by its very nature, by the very law of its being, deals rather with the *outside* of things than with their inside. As the late Mr. George Moore says, in his *Epistle to the Cymry*, included in his famous *Confessions of a Young Man*:¹

"The thought that sustains a book is but a small part of the book; a thought is but common property, but the words belong to the writer, and he cannot be dispossessed of his verbal beauty any more than a sculptor and a painter can be robbed of their surfaces."

Again, in the same "Epistle," he says:

"An idea is mine today, it is yours tomorrow, the day after tomorrow it belongs to the whole world; but a beautiful sentence is always the property of him who made it."²

IV

Coming now to the practical part of it, of all kinds of style the simple and the familiar is the most to be recom-

¹Heinemann: 1928: P. 290.

²1900.

mended. The simplicity should relate not only to the length of the sentences but also to the size of the individual words. One cannot, to be sure, be always measuring one's sentences with a foot-rule, or weighing one's words in a balance, but the safe rule is to try to make the one as short and the other as light as is consistent with beauty of expression. This, of course, does not mean that there should be no variety in the structure of one's sentences. If there is no variety, and, further, if there is no imperceptible gradation from one sentence to another, the reading will not be smooth, and there will, inevitably, be considerable jarring on one's ears. The writer must guard particularly against such loose, careless, and haphazard endings to his sentences, or paragraphs. There are authors that end their sentences as well as their ideas most abruptly,—with a bang, as it were. There is no knowing when one train of thought ceases and a fresh one begins. This is a serious fault in composition; and even some otherwise admirable writers often fall a prey to it. The sentences, considered by themselves, may be beautiful enough, but the writing taken as a whole, the *tout ensemble*, in short, is seen to be defective. A well-known instance in that of Emerson. Emerson's sentences are usually very simple: though, it is only fair to say, his thoughts are not. They are charged fully with matter. Emerson, indeed, seems to have profited immensely from the famous advice of Keats to Shelley, namely, to "load every rift with ore." He suffered, in other words, from an excess, a repletion, of ideas. We may say of this immersion in them, what Chapman, I think, said of Marlowe's immersion in poetry, that "he stood up to the chin in the Pierian flood." This is all, no doubt, very good in its own way: but, unfortunately, when he came to the *arrangement* of his ideas he sometimes (as has been testified by innumerable critics) broke down. Of course, his method of piecing together his essays is partly, at least, responsible for this. He would, it appears, jot down stray thoughts of his in a note-book and, when engaged on his essay, bodily transfer them (or such of them

as were apposite) to it. Naturally, his essays lack development. As Mr. Augustine Birrell pertinently remarks:

"For, let the comparison be made with whom you will, the unparalleled non-sequaciousness of Emerson is as certain as the Corregiosity of Corregio. You never know what he will be at. His sentences fall over you in glittering cascades, beautiful and bright, and for the moment refreshing, but after a very brief while the mind, having nothing to do on its own account but to remain open and see what Emerson sends it, grows first restive and then torpid. Admiration gives way to astonishment, astonishment to bewilderment, and bewilderment to stupefaction."¹

My whole point is that, in such a style of writing, both the sentences and the ideas have a bad, an incorrigible, habit of leaving rugged edges of themselves behind: they are not "rounded off" as they ought to be: they do not, if I may say so, "cease upon the midnight with no pain," but go on, as it were, making rambling noises in our brains when they ought, by rights, to be comfortably asleep. For perfectly good writing, your thoughts need not be multitudinous: they need not be legion: if you have the right stuff in you, a fraction of them will usually suffice. I do not, indeed, imply that you can make bricks without straw. But I do say that an abundance, an overplus, of that material is not necessary: or, if there is an abundance of it, you must know how to space it out. A wise and even distribution, rather than local and haphazard accumulation, is the gist of the matter. As De Quincey puts it:

"Eloquence resides not in separate or fractional ideas, but in the relations of manifold ideas, and in the mode of their evolution from each other. It is not indeed enough that the ideas should be many, and their relations coherent; the main condition lies in the *key* of the evolution, in the *law* of the succession. The elements are nothing without the atmosphere that moulds, and the dynamic forces that combine."²

V

I was saying that, of all kinds of style, the simple and the familiar is the most to be recommended. It is not easy to

¹ *The Collected Essays and Addresses of the Rt. Hon. Mr. Augustine Birrell*, Vol. II, P. 61: J. M. Dent.

² *De Quincey's Works*: Edited by Masson: A. & C. Black, 1897: Vol. 5, P. 281.

write a simple style. One of the simplest of styles that I have come across is that of the distinguished journalist, historian, and critic, Mr. Herbert Paul; and it is necessary only to try to write like this to see how difficult it is. A simple style is not, as some imagine, an insipid style. There is an ornament that pertains to simplicity, and there is a simplicity that is at the same time scholarly. There is, I am aware, a widespread opinion that the more grandiose the language is, the lovelier, *ipso facto*, is the style. Prince Harry said of Falstaff that he was a "tun of a man." There are writers who would go any length to introduce a "tun of a word" into their compositions. They are all for magnificence in writing. They, evidently, are followers in real life of that well-known character in Messrs. Stevenson's and Osbourne's *The Wrecker*, Jim Pinkerton, the typical hustling Yankee. Turn to his comments on the word 'hebdomadary':

"That's a good catching phrase, 'hebdomadary,' tho' it's hard to say. I made a note of it when I was looking in the dictionary how to spell 'hectagonal.' 'Well, you're a boss word,' I said. 'Before you're very much older I'll have you in type as large as yourself.' And here it's, you, see."

"A boss word", that is it: that is the ideal of many writers.

A gaudy style, if we analyse it carefully, will usually be found to be, after all, not the wonderful thing it looks at first sight. Many faulty and unnecessary things often go to make it. As a general rule, I may say that to use two words where only one grew before, or to employ a word of four syllables where, previously, a word of only two syllables was known to exist, is not conducive to chaste writing. In literature, as elsewhere, economy is of the essence of the thing. I shall even go so far as to say that in writing (I refer to prose, not to poetry), it would be well to have a sort of birth-control of words; and the State, I am convinced, would be assisting the cause of letters were it to impose some kind of penalty on too, too prolific writers.

VI

Figures of speech are the bane of most writers of prose. Aristotle, we know, put a premium on metaphor, raising it almost to the level of a divine gift; and poetry, perhaps, becomes all the more poetical for it. But in that (as Dryden calls it) "other harmony of prose," metaphor (or, for that matter, any figure of speech) is not such a prime necessity. Nay, it is often a positive hindrance. Some of the most exquisite writers of prose have avoided metaphor as they would have done the devil: they have let it severely alone. Swift is a case in point. "The rogue never hazards a metaphor," said Johnson; and right he was not to hazard it. People are apt to forget that what is good for poetry is not always equally good for prose. "There is one glory of the sun and another of the moon"; and prose has its distinct glory, and it is harder to be attained than the one appertaining to poetry.

VII

There are those who are the exponents of the ornate style of writing, Burke, and De Quincey, and Ruskin,—not to mention Jeremy Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne, and that curious poet-preacher, John Donne. With Burke, indeed, it was more or less a case of overflow of mind: the thought and the style had to keep pace with each other: images crowded upon him "not single spies, but in battalions." And what exquisite images, too. Burke, I am inclined to think, could not help writing a pompous style: he was to the manner born. There have been, and are, those that have tried to write like De Quincey and Ruskin, but they have succeeded only as far as the *length* of the sentences go: sentences that, as Mr. Chesterton happily remarked, "lengthen out like night-mare corridors, or rise higher and higher like impossible eastern pagodas."¹ But they have not been able (as how should they?) to copy those

¹ *The Victorian Age in Literature*: By Mr. G. K. Chesterton: The Home University Library: pp. 24-25.

masters' felicity of expression, or their mastery over phrase and idiom. The mischief of this kind of style is that, apart from lack of elegance, mistakes are bound to creep in, despite the best care in the world. Take Newman. Newman's style has been extolled to the skies by almost all the critics of English literature. And, no doubt, it deserves at least part of the praise. But read the late Mr. George Moore's *Hail and Farewell* and note the fault he finds in Newman, and in *Newman's best book*. It is not, it will be perceived, enough if one's writing is fine at places: it must be *uniformly* fine, and, at least, it should be exempt from mistakes—of whatever kind. Sonority (let it be remembered) is not always sense; and volume (or voluminousness), by itself, is seldom a recommendation.

VIII

The more ordinary amongst us will do well not to aspire too high. Rhetoric is a dangerous mistress to woo, and he only should woo her who is fairly confident of success; else, there is every likelihood of a sudden and ignominious retreat. We should, on the contrary, try to write a simple and elegant style: the sort of style that such great masters of prose as Shakespeare and Swift and Cowper and Goldsmith and Hazlitt and Lamb and Thackeray and Stevenson wrote. If such a style of writing was good enough for them, it will, I fancy, serve us, too, well. Hazlitt writes in his well-known essay, "On Familiar Style," included in his *Table Talk*:

"The proper force of words lies not in the words themselves, but in their application. . . I hate anything that occupies more space than it is worth. I hate to see a load of band-boxes go along the street, and I hate to see a parcel of big words without any meaning in them."

That is to say, we ought to exercise an economy in words, as in everything else: there should be a self-restraint in language, what Pater, I think, calls "the beauty of a frugal closeness of style." This is what Stevenson meant when he advised the late Sir Edmund Gosse in the following

¹ Vol. II. "Salve", Heinemann, 1920: pp. 240-254.

terms. The occasion was a perusal of the latter's *Father and Son*, which that gentleman had sent him. Stevenson, in his letter of acknowledgment, writes:

"Beware of purple passages. . . And in a style which (like yours) aims more and more successfully at the academic, one purple word is already too much; three—a whole page—is inadmissible. *Wed yourself to a clean austerity*: that is your force. Wear a linen ephod, splendidly candid. Arrange its folds, but do not fasten it with any brooch. I swear to you, in your talking robes there should be no patch of adornment; and where the subject forces, let it force you no further than it must."¹ (My italics).

Elsewhere also he writes to the same effect:

"There is but one art—to omit! If I knew how to omit, I would ask no other knowledge. A man who knew how to omit would make an *Iliad* of a daily paper."² (My italics).

¹ *Letters of E. L. Stevenson*, Vol. III, pp. 70-71. Tusitala Edition.

² *Letters of E. L. Stevenson*, Vol. II, p. 271: Tusitala Edition.

"Anal Ha" or "I am God"

By AGA SYED IBRAHIM DARA

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These words were spoken in Islam at the beginning of the third century A. H. by the Sufi sage, Hosain Mansoor al Halaj, whose life is of great interest and worth studying. He was a heroic soul that fought alone and singlehanded against the entire orthodox and fixed religious beliefs of his time, when religion was at its zenith and had a very strong hold on the mind of the people. Sufism too was yet in the grip of dogmatic theology. Though many Sufis had devoted their lives for spiritual realization they had hardly gone beyond the boundary of religious philosophy. Hosain Mansoor brought into it a flood of new ideas and higher perceptions of spiritual truths, and by his heroic and untiring fight in which he had to undergo untold suffering and bear great pain, he at last succeeded in his mission of establishing his doctrine on a firm basis. His life work had a great effect on Sufism; it not only left much that is permanent in it but also opened it to much greater possibility of vaster and loftier spiritual realizations.

Incidents of his early life are not many. That he was an inspired child born to be a great sage could be seen from his early childhood. At the age of fourteen years he renounced all luxury and comfort of homely life and becoming a fakir wandered in quest of God. He had an ardent aspiration which made him undergo very severe and rigorous discipline and perform hard penance. He prayed all day and night and observed long fasts. He visited all the sages of his time but none could satisfy him fully. He then went to Mecca and stayed with the son of Hazarat Usman named

Oomar who became his great friend, but after one year Mansoor left Mecca and came to Bagdad.

In the town of Bagdad he met the greatest Sufi sage of his time, Junned Bagdadi, whose fame had spread to distant countries and whom the Khalif greatly revered. Junned took great interest in Mansoor, kept him with himself in solitude and imparted to him his spiritual knowledge. Mansoor very soon passed over all the stages, and being yet unsatisfied with his attainments he left the sage and went back to Mecca, and this time he lived with the Sufi fakirs of the place. Soon he began to get new inspiration and rare experiences from which he formed his own new doctrine and explained everything in his own terms. His first realization was that there is no difference between the individual soul of the devotee and the God whom he worshipped. This idea was yet quite new even in Sufism, not to say of the orthodox believers. Though the Sufis had by now perceived and experienced that an individual could get out of his body and the limits of his mind, and get contact with the Transcendent Divine above and get Union with God through the heart and inner consciousness, none of them had experienced the descent of the Divine into the human consciousness and of man becoming God. It was this that Mansoor began to experience and realise in himself. His greatest words were "Anal Haq" "I am God." Although they expounded only the doctrine of the oneness of God and the Unity of the soul of man with the One, they became the cause of his sufferings, persecutions and death.¹

¹ "Anal Haq" means "I am God" or "I am the Truth." The Sanskrit equivalent of it would be "So Ham"—"I am He" or "Aham Brahmasmi"—"I am God." These are the principal sayings of the Upanishads. Each Upanishad has a similar principle which forms the basis of its teachings. Similar sayings of the other Upanishads are "Tattvam Asi"—"Thou art That"; "Eko Ham Bahusyam"—"I am One and wish to become the Many," this applies to the manifold manifestation; "Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma"—"Verily everything here is God." This corresponds to the Sufi doctrine of "Hama Oost"—"All is He." All these explain the Unity and Oneness of God and the many-sided realizations of His Oneness.

In the Vedas too, "Though there is no clear reference to the spirit of man in its Unity with the One" there are Hymns in which the Rishi declares himself to be, pantheistically, all the gods and all that is in the Universe. The Gods are recognised as the names of the One "Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti," "There is one Existence and the sages call Him by different names."

The entire Muslim belief opposed Mansoor. None could understand the meaning of his words. He was called a Kafir by all who heard him. His friends sincerely implored him not to speak blasphemy and to fear God. Mansoor was driven to despair. He cut himself off from everybody in Mecca and returned to Bagdad, to Junned, his spiritual master in the hope of being understood by him. He told Junned all his experiences and explained to him his doctrine of "Anal Haq." Junned heard him patiently but did not give any reply. Mansoor then put to him some questions and asked for an answer. Junned pondered over them and at last spoke, "Mansoor, I fear in a short time your body will be hanged." Mansoor got disappointed and he too said, "The day I am hanged you will have to change your Sufi dress of a fakir and put on the garments of a worldly man." With these words Mansoor left his master and after some time he himself began delivering discourses and explaining and publicly preaching his message of "Anal Haq" to the people. Though crowds came to listen to him, none could understand his meaning. The orthodox section, whom he most mercilessly attacked, became his greatest enemy. The learned scholars too opposed Mansoor and scorned his ideas. They all gathered and sent an appeal to the Khalif urging strongly that Mansoor should be hanged. Individually too people wrote about him to the Khalif and there was no end of opposition from the ignorant masses. The Khalif went through the entire heap of the complaints and the letters and remarked, "I do not find here any remark of the sage Junned. His opinion too is necessary in such a serious matter and should be obtained." Junned was now pressed to give his opinion. The sage hesitated for some time. Then he left his hermitage and went to a religious college. Here he took off his Sufi dress and put on the robes of a religious theologian, and with their pen wrote to the Khalif, "From the worldly point of view Mansoor should be hanged. Of internal matters God alone is the best judge." The Khalif did not pronounce any judgment and Mansoor was set free.

Mansoor left the place and went to Tastar and stayed there for one year. In this short period he created a miraculous impression on the people. He gave inspired discourses and eloquent speeches of rare wisdom and beauty. His language too was sweet, convincing and forceful. Large crowds came to hear him from distant places and all kinds of rumours, such as that Mansoor called himself God, spoke to the gods and the beasts, and performed miracles and wonders, began to get afloat everywhere. His ideas were spreading fast and firing the imagination of the people. The religious and the educated class became alarmed at it and opposed him strenuously. They sent long complaints to the Khalif asking him to put an end to Mansoor's life. Even Oomar, the son of Hazarat Usman, who was Mansoor's friend, now pressed for his execution. Mansoor left the place but wherever he went there arose a storm of endless opposition and he met with great and serious difficulties. Personally too, he had to undergo great physical suffering. The infuriated mob wanted to kill him. The orthodox were pressing for his trial and death. Regardless of all the difficulties, enmity, opposition and personal sufferings, bold and fearless like a lion as he was called, Mansoor went on fighting for the Truth that had descended upon him and for the spiritual experience he had realised. There was the Divine light and the Divine power working through Mansoor and he acted at its bidding. All his enemies and the infuriated people dashed themselves against him in vain, as the stormy waves against the hard rocks, to be shattered, broken and thrown back; for who can touch the Divine or contradict the Will of God or come near the light of His Presence? Mansoor went on fighting and attacked everything that came in his way or opposed him. In a short period of this miraculous superhuman activity Mansoor had delivered his message to the people. Now came the period of darkness and depression and of a great test for Mansoor. In all such cases of the descent of the Divine Power in the individual, there are always chances of the Power withdrawing itself, leaving him

in utter helplessness at the mercy of the enemy. At times it is to make the instrument more perfect and to purify it for a greater descent, that all the weak points of the individual and the hidden impurities of the nature are exposed and brought to the forefront and their ugliness shown to the man. At such times all the hostile forces and dormant enemies rise in revolt to attack the person and overpower him. For, so long as the Presence of God was there, no power on earth could do any harm. It is only when the Power and Presence are withdrawn that the enemy gets a chance to attack and overpower the individual, who at such times has nothing at all with which to defend himself and has only to rely upon his faith. This reminds one of the saying of the Christ, "My father! why hast Thou forsaken me?" and the anxious waiting of Joan of Arc for the Voices to return till the last moment of her death. Similar too was the case with Mansoor. By his superhuman and ceaseless activity he had spent up his forces and the Power had withdrawn, leaving him an ordinary, powerless human being full of innumerable weaknesses in the midst of a storm of enmity. Mansoor did not know what to do. It seemed that there was no possibility at all of his message ever being understood by the people. Mansoor acted wisely and did not commit any blunders. He at once changed his entire mode of life. He threw off his fakir garments and lived like an ordinary man among rich people, acting like one of them. At times he travelled to different countries.

Thus for five years Mansoor led quite an aimless ordinary life bereft of his former Light and force. After this period he went to Persia and here it was that he once more got the Light. The atmosphere of Persia has always been most suitable for spiritual inspiration, for the heart of the race is open to the Divine and responds to the call of Love. It inspired Mansoor to such an extent that he began to remain all the time in a deep state of trance, and it is said that even a moment of separation caused in him intense pain which he could not bear, though there was no physical suffering or

torture which he had not borne without the least difficulty. People for this reason called him "Mast".

He stayed in Khorasan, Mudrambar and Nimroze and wrote most of his books in which he beautifully explained his doctrine. Then he once more put on his Sufi dress and started holding his discourses and preaching his doctrine again with his former vigour.

From Persia Mansoor went to Mecca followed by a large band of fakirs and preached to the people. A certain Yakub Nehar saw his miracles and raised a great agitation against Mansoor censuring him as a magician. Mansoor went to Basara and from there once more went to Persia; and from Persia came to India. The object of Mansoor's visit to India is not known. His enemies say that he came to study magic.¹ His period of stay in India was very short and it is interesting to note that the first thing he saw in India was the performance of some clever magic tricks and rope-dancing etc., on this occasion performed by a woman.² It is also true that after going from India Mansoor performed many tricks himself. Once when in the course of a serious speech someone told Mansoor, "You say you are God, then get some apples from the garden of Paradise," Mansoor stretched his empty hands and fine big apples began to drop from them. The audience examined the fruits, one of which had a mark as if it had been slightly gnawed by an insect and asked Mansoor how such an apple could be of Divine origin. In answer Mansoor instantaneously spoke out a beautiful couplet. Whatever be the truth and the value of the miracle itself, we should at least give Mansoor the credit of the wit and the humour of the apt reply:

"It is because it has come forth from the Mansion of Eternity to the abode of decay

"Therefore to its heart hath corruption found its way."

¹ A theory supported by some European writers on Mansoor such as F. Hadland Davis in "The Persian Mystics," Wisdom of the East Series.

² "Among the adepts and mystics of Hindustan," the *Occult Review*, December 1906.

Mansoor became very famous in India and is referred to as the expounder of the philosophy of "Anal Haq" by the poets and also the Vedantists. From India he went to Khorasan travelling through Machin and Mudrambar and preaching everywhere to the people. "Thus," says his biographer, "Mansoor travelled over the most part of the known world and delivered his message to all."

Having finished this important part of his work Mansoor now returned to his native place. His people saw that he had become a changed man, "now there was no restraint in him." His manner had become more offensive and he challenged everybody and all authority. He gave discourses on all subjects and performed miracles. He began to get crowds of ignorant followers who at times were fascinated by him and at other times became his enemies. The people could not follow his subtle ideas or understand his message. From his words they took him to be an enemy of religion and it roused their anger and worst fanaticism. The same trouble arose again. There was endless opposition, bitter hatred, ignorance and enmity. People got so enraged that they attacked him personally when he said "Anal Haq" or explained his doctrine. In fifty different places he was beaten by the audience. The government authorities sent complaints to the Khalif and spared no pains to torment and torture Mansoor in all possible ways. In spite of this great opposition Mansoor carried on his work with a fair amount of success. He influenced the masses a great deal. His inspiring and drawing so many people to himself under the circumstances is in itself a great miracle. For we find he was always surrounded by thousands of men. Mansoor loved the people and they unconsciously felt attracted to him, and for the same reason they lived near him even though they did not believe his words and even hated him for it. Mansoor inspired them with his presence and made them his enemies by his talk.

Mansoor wished to start a "great work" but before that he wished to spend some time in concentration, with which

idea he started for Mecca. A crowd of four thousand people followed him to the place. Mansoor went straight to the temple Kaba and on reaching the door stood in front of it and began to perform penance. All day and night he stood like an "inanimate idol" without the slightest movement, absorbed in a trance. The unbearable sun and the heat of the desert had no effect upon him. People put food near him out of which he took only one morsel at night time and fasted all the day. "Though his body was scorched in the sun it had no effect upon his meditation." This continued for many days. Once when Mansoor opened his eyes he saw a great crowd around him, all engaged in prayer. "Mansoor felt ashamed and hid his face behind a sand dune." When the prayer was over and the people dispersed, he lifted up his hands and prayed "O Lord! I know Thee a thousand times more pure than the people that are full of emotions towards Thee and call for Thee and pray to Thee; and also more than those who know Thee in their wisdom. Thou alone knowest what is there in my heart. I cannot utter a word or describe Thee. Thou art pervading the whole of my body. Thou only can describe Thyself best."

During these days a man came to Mansoor and said, "Tell me what is patience and endurance." Mansoor replied, "If your hand and feet are severed from the body and you are put to torture and hanged, yet neither any complaint nor murmur comes to your lips, then alone you have true endurance and patience." Mansoor must have seen his future during this period of penance. For after some years these very things happened to him and Mansoor died without a single murmur or complaint coming from his lips.

Another man asked Mansoor, "Why do you perform penance and undergo so much suffering and pain?" He replied, "Just as the dead body feels neither pleasure nor pain, I too am indifferent to either of these and am unaffected by all the outward reactions of Nature." This shows that Mansoor had reached the high stage of "Equality"—*Samata*,

after which a man rises above all duality and the "pairs of opposites" such as pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, etc. This is also evident from one of his famous and characteristic sayings on the subject, "That which is mine, for by God I never distinguish between pleasure and pain."

After this period Mansoor again took to his work with redoubled vigour. Again he was opposed and tormented as before. This time he was subjected to untold personal sufferings and put to all kinds of bodily tortures and other cruelties which his enemies could think of. He was taken prisoner by the government and "for four days was nailed to the cross and left in the sun without food or water on both sides of the river Tigris." Bravely he went through all these ordeals without once yielding to the enemy. Mansoor's spirit and enthusiasm remained unabated. He answered this oppression by performing greater miracles such as raising the dead to life and "drawing gold flowers from the air." He explained to the people that God was manifesting in him, and prophets of the former ages wished to incarnate themselves in the world, and named his disciples after them. This proves the rare vision of Mansoor and is of immense importance and of much interest to an Indian, for we find that in this Mansoor had the glimpses and perceived the truths regarding the manifestation of the Avatar, the highest Incarnation of God. It is believed by the Indian sages that at the time of the descent of the Avatar on earth, other gods and Beings of the higher spiritual worlds also come down to take part in the Manifestation and incarnate themselves in different individuals around Him. It is necessary for the perfection and completeness of the Manifestation and also for the bringing down of the "play" of forces and its delight, rapture and *Ananda* into this world. Mansoor must have perceived this idea and tried to expound the same to his disciples and others.¹ This is a proof of

¹ It is interesting to note that this idea came into Islam, though somewhat vaguely, at the time when an "hierarchy of saints" was formed in Egypt who were believed to possess miraculous powers and even to control and direct the workings of Nature.

the genuineness of his experience and it also shows that Mansoor not only preached the doctrine of "Anal Haq" but expounded some truths and ideas of the doctrine of Avatarhood also.

The "Anal Haq" doctrine is not the same as the Avatar doctrine. Any one who reaches the One in this experience can say "Anal Haq" or "So Ham,"—"I am He," but it does not mean that he is the Incarnation of the Divine in the sense of Avatarhood. In the Avatar the Presence of God is not difficult to perceive as it is most fully and clearly manifested. Nor is there any need for such discussions and fights for convincing others of the same. It is something very great and of enormous importance. For an Avatar, it is believed, comes once in thousands of years, at which time the entire world undergoes a spiritual revolution. Very great wonders and miracles happen in the world at such a time. Great changes and upheavals take place in society and Nature all around such as wars, earthquakes, revolutions, changing of the old order and the struggle and conflict and clash of the new forces. At this time the vital powers and the *asuras* also descend on earth and try to take hold of its nature and use it for their own enjoyment. Thus all the ignorance, darkness, falsehood, sin and evil is brought to the surface and has its free expression and full play in the existing confusion of the world. At such a time the Avatar comes to save the world and to reveal the Divine Nature in man above this lower nature and to manifest and reveal God in Himself and to lead the world "from darkness into light, from death to immortality." At the same time the highest spiritual Truth, Light, Knowledge and Ananda descend into the world consciousness and also all the Divine Powers, Beings and Forces come down to take part in the great Manifestation for which it is believed the world was being secretly prepared through all these ages. It is regarded a great blessing for any individual to be born at such a period in this world, for it is a period of Grace for the entire world and of the descent of the greatest Truth and

Divine Consciousness and not a matter of only an individual realization or personal experience.

Coming back to Mansoor, we find from the above-mentioned teachings of Mansoor that he not only preached the doctrine of "Anal Haq" and some ideas of the Avatar doctrine but also claimed to be an Incarnation. Thus, about the realization of Mansoor there can be no doubt from the magnitude of his action and the result (introduction of the experience of "Anal Haq" in Islam) that he can be regarded as a *vibhuti*—a special Force of the Divine descended into a human body and consciousness to do some great work in the world of men.

Mansoor expounded his theories and philosophical ideas in forty-seven books on the subject, some of which are of deep and profound philosophical interest containing brilliant ideas and rare visions. The publicity of these books the government tried their utmost to restrain. "But," says a critic, "the light that never for a moment was shut under a bushel, cannot be hid. The very attempt to obliterate it is in itself the cause of a keener and more persistent search." Though outwardly opposed, the ideas of Mansoor began to spread everywhere and catch the imagination of people. They not only considerably influenced the masses but also effected the thinkers, poets and sages. Even those that were opposed to Mansoor helped the propagation and circulation of his ideas by their shouts and clamour and their ignorant and adverse criticism of the same.

Though Mansoor's work of the future was gaining ground, its immediate effect was only an endless hostility and a storm of opposition and enmity from all quarters. At times even the closest disciples of Mansoor lost faith in him and went away. It is said that none fully knew Mansoor except his two disciples who alone knew his real worth. One of them was Shibli. But now he too lost faith and left Mansoor and thought it was his duty to kill his master. With this intention he went to his place. Mansoor who was in a trance opened his eyes and quietly told him, "Shibli, calm yourself now. At present

I am engrossed in a very great and important work and it is not proper to strike me now." The disciple was wonderstruck and went back.

The rest of the story is short. Day by day the opposition increased. The government, the religious classes, and the fanatical mob who had become his greatest enemies, began to take serious steps against him. Mansoor preached to the masses, performed miracles and challenged them. "His tongue had become doubly sharp and now he began to wield a considerable influence and get followers." The Khalif was once more approached very seriously and asked to try and hang Mansoor, who was accused on innumerable charges: he said "Anal Haq", preached irreligious doctrines, performed miracles, and believed that he could himself write better verses than the Quoran. This time the Khalif took action. Yet a last chance was given to Mansoor of escaping a cruel death. He was ordered to mount upon a platform and in the place of the words "Anal Haq"—"I am God", to say "Hooal Haq"—"He is God". Mansoor bravely mounted the platform and said, "The ocean of oneness is rolling on all sides, and in that my individuality has totally merged. I cannot separate myself from it. Mansoor has forgotten that he is Mansoor and has attained Divine Nature. Why should he leave this exalted position and again become a low earthly creature?" This was his reply to the prosecution. His judges went to Junned and asked him to explain to them the meaning of these words. Junned too was anxiously waiting to hear the reply. When he heard that Mansoor did not say "Hooal Haq" and gave this answer he said, "Alas! Alas! The meaning of these words is, 'strike on his body and cut him to pieces.' This is not the time to explain the meaning of his words." Mahomed Dawood, a religious head, attacked Mansoor himself. Mansoor was overpowered and sent to prison by the Khalif's ministers.

Mansoor remained for one year in prison. People began to visit him in large numbers and Mansoor gave discourses and lectures to them. At last, this too was prohibit-

ed and nobody could see him for six months. At this time another great sage Abdulla Khafif who had much influence over the Khalif and on the ruling class and was revered by all, thinking that he might use his influence to save Mansoor, went to see him with his friend and said to him, "Mansoor, you should ask pardon and forgiveness for the words you speak, *i. e.*, 'Anal Haq', and unless you do that you would not be free from this captivity." Hearing this Mansoor answered, "Those who tell me to ask for forgiveness, they themselves will beg me to forgive them." At this reply Khafif attacked him.

In the prison too, Mansoor began to perform miracles. For three days he disappeared altogether and could not be seen anywhere, a fact which baffled the authorities. Then he as miraculously appeared also in his place one day. After it he freed many fellow-prisoners that requested him to do so. The authorities were utterly at a loss what to do. They came to Mansoor and asked, "Where are the prisoners?" He answered, "They are free from captivity." The authorities asked, "Why are you not free yourself?" Mansoor said, "For me it is the wish of God and I remain here to abide by His will." His miracles continued and matters came to such a pass that the prison authorities had to send to the Khalif an alarming report of the same and press for his immediate execution. The Khalif replied, "If Mansoor is kept any longer in prison there will be a great chaos in the country. Therefore, the sooner he is hanged the better. Beat him with sticks whenever he speaks 'Anal Haq' and put him to the gallows."

Mansoor was brought out of the prison and the order read out to him. He felt happy and exultant and continued saying "Anal Haq." Each time he said it he was given a stroke. But he did not seem to feel it at all. The number reached over three hundred! The man who was beating him heard a voice speaking to Mansoor, "Mansoor, do not fear," and he himself felt a great awe and fear.

Mansoor was then led to the gallows, where thousands

of people had gathered to see him. On seeing the crowd, Mansoor greeted them with shouts of "Anal Haq." He spoke now with greater enthusiasm and in a still higher pitch.

A fakir came to him making his way through the crowd and asked, "Mansoor, tell me what is Love." Mansoor replied, "You will see its most concrete manifestation today, tomorrow, and the day-after."¹ Mansoor answered all the questions put to him by people quietly and calmly. When he reached the gallows he kissed the gallows with love, and joyfully stepping on the platform, said, "For the brave, to go to the gallows is just the same as rising to heaven." He turned towards the west, raised his arms and prayed. Some cruel people at this time threw a shower of stones. He did not utter a single word nor felt in the least disturbed. Then his hands were cut off. He said, "It is easy to cut off my bodily hands but none can cut off my spirit hands, which at this time are holding the crown of greatness and glory and are about to put it on my head." Then his legs were cut off. He again spoke, "You may gladly cut my legs which walk on this earth. But my legs by which I walk in the higher worlds, touch them if you have power to do it." Then he smeared his face with the blood which was flowing from his severed hands. Someone asked, "Why do you do this?" He replied, "Due to the loss of blood my face may become pale. You will then think, I have become pale due to fear. I want to keep my face red because the brave must have a face beaming with blood." He then performed ablution 'vuzu' with his own blood and said, "There is no more pure and holier 'vuzu' than that done by one's own blood." The executioners then took out his eyes. At this time there was a commotion in the crowd. People began to weep, others began to throw stones in protest. The executioners were about to pull out his tongue, when he said, "Wait a moment. I will speak some-

¹ "Mansoor meant by this," it is explained by the disciples, "that today I will be hanged, tomorrow my body will be put to fire, and the day after no trace of it will be left."

thing yet." Then turning his face upwards, he prayed, "O God, do not take away the happiness and joy of those that have given me this torture. They have shortened my way to Thee." After this, his ears and nose were cut off. At this moment a hard-hearted woman came forward and said, "Kill, kill this utterly mad sinner," and gave him a strong blow with a stone. The anger was due to the reason that Mansoor by his words contradicted the religious belief that God cannot be seen. In reply Mansoor quoted two words of the Quoran which were his last words, after which his tongue was pulled out. It was twilight and the Khalif now gave order to cut off his head. The order was executed and Mansoor left the body in supreme peace and joy.¹

It is said that when Mansoor died his words "Anal Haq" were heard as if coming from the sky, from the trees, and from the waves of the ocean. The biographer writes: "The all-pervading soul of Mansoor, which was awake, alive and conscious in every thing, even in the trees of the forest and the waves of the ocean, made itself seen and heard and felt even after the death of the body." The Sufi sages grasped the truth of his words soon after his death and some of them got similar realizations. A sect of dervishes came into existence, who went about preaching the doctrine of "Anal Haq" from country to country. In the following century it had not only been accepted but had become an essential doctrine of Sufism, which by this time had become a "very much respected order" and had freed itself from the grip of dogma and its narrow limitations and "watertight compartments." It had become sufficiently wide, free and plastic to make possible the many-sided realizations of deeper spiritual Truths. Not only the idea of "Anal Haq" and of "becoming God" and also "Fana Filla"—"annihilation of the individual in the Will of God" were fully realized in all their different phases, but the idea of pantheism too got into Sufism and found a permanent place in it. There is no space

¹ This account of the execution of Mansoor is given in "Tazkiratul Awleya," a Persian translation of the Arabic books, dealing with the Lives of the Sages.

to deal with the subject, but as an illustration a pragmatic saying of Bayazid may be cited. He says,

"I am the wine drinker and the wine-cup bearer,
"I went from god to god till they all cried to me, in me,
"O Thou I"

Bayazid was a great sage who came a little after Mansoor in the same century. He was greatly revered by all in his life time and is regarded as greater than Mansoor. He was neither prosecuted nor troubled in his life, though in his sayings he too claimed Godhood.

"I am the greatest God, there is none other besides me,
"Worship me."

and also,

"In my vesture there is none but God, whether you seek Him on the earth or in the heaven."

The conditions at the time of Mansoor were different, and it required a hard, brave and an untiring fight like his to first pierce the veil and break the hard crust of ignorant opposition and "to open the door" of higher knowledge and clear the way for the future, and very well did Mansoor perform his mission.

As to what was the actual stage and limit of Mansoor's realization and attainment, we have already discussed in the course of this article. The ease with which he worked his difficult realization and promised it to others is evident from his characteristic saying, "The way to God is two steps, only: one out of this world, and one out of the next world, and lo! you are with the Lord."

Whatever be the controversy regarding Mansoor's realization, a subject which still remains shrouded in its romantic mystery, all will realise the truth of his own words, which he expressed some time before dying:

"From His own cup He made me sup,
"For such is hospitality."

Justice

(A Short Story)

By PROF. N. S. PHADKE, M.A.

(Translated by the Author from the original MARATHI)

[Amongst the Marathi writers of the younger generation, Prof. N. S. Phadke is easily the most versatile and powerful. He has written biographies, scientific treatises, familiar essays, plays, novels and short stories. Whatever he writes bears the unmistakable imprint of the clarity of his thought and the haunting sweetness of his diction. He was born in 1894, and his first novel appeared in 1917. His novels grip the reader not so much by the loudness of incident as by the masterly, subtle, psychological analysis of character, and by the magic of creative craftsmanship. The appeal of his short stories too lies in the quiet simplicity of the theme and in the artistry and wealth of feeling with which the theme is treated.]

The village became such a favourite and frequent haunt of the Shikaris that it soon lost its original name and came to be mentioned in the Railway Time Tables as Shikar Road. On every long holiday the down trains from Bombay would unload at this station bunches of Shikaris who would litter the small, narrow platform with their trunks, baskets, helmets and guns, and who, as they moved about with a regal swing making the sand creak under heavy boots, would make a sight for the village imps that gathered and stood at a little distance, fearful and incredulous. Apart from these occasional big fairs of the helmeted Shikaris, many of them came for a week-end's sport. And rich sportsmen who had nothing else to do in life did not wait for the pretext of even a week-end. They would arrive any day by some down train, get down noisily, walk about emitting clouds of cigarette smoke, and loading the rustic coolies with their kit make for the Dak Bungalow.

These Shikaris, with their riding boots, and with their helmets always a little tilted, made a strong appeal to the

imagination of the small, rustic children of the place. They were their heroes. Playing at Shikar became a new favourite game with the boys, who would stick a thick piece of paper in the rim of their battered, dirty caps to imitate the helmet, grunt at each other in unmeaning, indistinct syllables in the Shikari fashion, and wag a little cane in the hand as they had seen the Shikaris do. The Shikaris often pleased the grown-up people too. They would give very liberal tips to the coolies or to those who helped them in some way.

But on the whole the elderly people of the village hated this advent of the Shikari. If some of the Shikaris were kind-hearted and generous, there were others—and they were the majority—who were simply rude bullies. They would swoop down on any of the villagers, order them to do any menial work, and at the end of the day kick them off without paying a penny. And there was reason for the villagers to have a grudge even against the kind-hearted Shikari. For he was, as much and as inevitably as the bully type, a cause of damage to their crops and farms. When a Shikari spots the game and starts chasing it, he is like a man possessed; and his reason does not return until he gets the animal. The frenzied Shikaris, in their chase, would often rush through the crops and farms, and leave behind them the tragedy of a whole patch of beautiful, promising, head-high corn stalks, or a whole plot of cucumbers or tomatoes, miserably crumpled! The villagers' hearts naturally bled at such atrocities. But they did not know how to get justice; and they simply shrugged their shoulders and cursed the *Kali Yuga*.

Whenever, therefore, the tread of the Shikaris was heard, the elders, working in the fields, would start swearing at them. The women folk, who seemed to harbour a particular hatred for the *Topiwala*, would shower all sorts of execrations on his head—often raising their voice to a deliberate high pitch, that the devil of a red-faced Shikari may know a piece of their mind.

The children, however, who would be near about never

saw any reason in this prejudice of their parents against the Shikari. They would rather have loved to welcome the Shikari with open arms—the wonderful Shikari who spoke some celestial, high-sounding, strident language, flourished the cracking guns with glistening barrels of polished steel, and carried knives and whistles dangling from his leather belt! While therefore the elders swore, the children would greet the sight of a Shikari with joyful shouts of 'Sahib!' 'Sahib!', and would run after him if they could deceive the parental vigil.

At the moment when this story begins, little Shreepati was about to run off like this. But when, looking through the corner of his eye at his mother who was cutting the weeds a few yards away, he found that she was watchful he had to give up the idea of running. He steadied his quivering, eager legs; and in response to the urgent signal of his mates to get off, he had to use his eye, fingers and lips to effect the complicated counter-signal that he could not possibly run with them, that his mother was watchful, and that he would bide his moment and perhaps join them later.

His mates then ran off, and the sight of them sprinting away so thrilled Shreepati that he put the thumb and the first finger under his tongue and gave a shrill, lusty whistle before bending down to the little heap of wild grass which his mother had cut and left for him to tie up.

Mukta, his mother, looked up and, with a frown, said, "What's the joke? Have you, like the other idiots of the village, gone crazy over the Shikaris? Yelling at the sight of the hunting monkeys, were you—?"

"No, Ma" Shreepati said in defence, "I didn't whistle for that. I found a flock of sparrows on that yonder patch of corn, so I slinged a stone and whistled—"

There had been no crack of the sling before the whistle, and Mukta could see that Shreepati was lying. But she dropped the matter at that. Shreepati was her only child, born after years of fervent praying, and she could not repress her affection enough to take him to task any further. She

bent down to her work again, humming some folk-song tune.

Finding his mother occupied in her work, Shreepati turned his eyes again in the direction of the Shikaris. But they had run out of sight.

He sighed.

In that moment of anguish at having missed an enjoyable sprint after the Shikaris, he quite forgot that he had dodged his mother's reproof by telling a lie. He was only sorry that he had missed a big fun.

If any of my readers are here unfavourably impressed by Shreepati's lack of remorse for a moral lapse, I cannot help it. My business is not to create for my story a fictitious hero of unbending rectitude, but to report facts. I must, therefore, record that Shreepati did not repent that he had lied to his mother.

And similarly, however much I should like this story to relate to the beautiful, cherub-like little boy common to fiction, I must record that Shreepati was just an ordinary village boy of seven—dark and unkempt, with a dirty, half torn shirt hanging from his shoulders, a small strip of cloth, soiled with the red earth of the wrestling arena, worn tightly across the loins, and thick, heavy silver wristlets on both hands.

It is another thing, of course, if in the eyes of his mother he was the most beautiful child under the stars, and if she was ever fearful lest somebody's envious 'evil eye' might strike him ominously.

Shreepati sighed when he found that the Shikaris were no more in sight. He looked up at the sun. It was dropping to the setting horizon. But it would be a clear half-hour before it would actually set. It was quite likely that the Shikaris would, during that interval, stampede past him once more.

This was a very comforting thought. Shreepati smiled to himself, moved the wristlet round his left wrist, pulled the ends of the loin cloth at the thighs, and bent down happily to tie up the next bundle of grass.

Half an hour passed. Mukta had moved to a distant corner of the field, cutting the grass and laying it by in small heaps. The sun quivered on the edge of the horizon, and the sugarcane blades cast their long shadows across to where Shreepati stood. He meant to do a few more grass heaps and then shout to his mother to stop and move homewards.

Just then something flitted past him like an arrow. He looked up and immediately knew what it was. It was a pair of deer that had shot in from nowhere and bounced away like two lovely balls.

Shreepati gave a wild cry, kicked away the grass at his feet, and ran after the deer, mad with delight.

He wanted to forestall the deer and prevent their rushing into the sugarcane field and foiling the Sahib's Shikar. He therefore ran like one in a frenzy.

But did a little boy of seven ever outrun the deer? With lightning speed the deer dashed into the sugarcane and disappeared, leaving behind them only the rustle of the blades and the crashing of a few stalks.

Shreepati had raced in vain. Disgruntled and infuriated, he stood at the edge of the field, panting, bewildered!

Just then two gun shots rang in the air. A bullet whizzed past Shreepati, and before he could look out, another came and caught him in the heart as if it had been fired at him.

He shrieked and fell down.

It was a heart-rending shriek. Even the birds, flipping back to their nests, trembled and made a nervous titter!

* * * * *

The Shikaris who had fired at the deer came up running and were shocked to find a small boy, instead of the deer, writhing in the agonies of death. A few villagers who were round about in the fields soon gathered on the spot. Somebody carried the tragic news to Mukta and she came, beating her heart and tearing her hair. My pen has neither the strength nor the coolness to describe the pathetic scene when she threw herself beside her dying boy, kissed his blood-stained chest and rolled frantically in the dust.

One of the Shikaris was a doctor. He rendered first aid to Shreepati and had him carried to the Dak Bungalow for treatment. But the unfortunate child did not long survive.

Shreepati's father, Aba, and maternal uncle, Haibati, had gone to Poona. They returned the next day. Aba had brought from Poona a new 'dhoti', a slate and a rubber ball for his son, and Haibati had purchased coloured glass pebbles for his pet nephew.

The two men were simply stunned to learn of Shreepati's sudden death. Mukta lay in the kitchen like one struck by lightning. Was it ever possible for the two men to console her in her shattering grief?

The Shikaris are not supposed to be a soft-hearted race. But the sad accident had made even their hearts bleed. They went to Aba, expressed their deep regret and sympathy, and also offered money by way of compensation. Haibati was in the kitchen with Mukta. Aba was in an impatient mood. He would not listen to the Shikaris and kept telling them:

"I'll sue you in the law court and bring you to book."

The Shikaris could not help. They returned to the Dak Bungalow.

That night Aba went to Poona, briefed a well-known lawyer and filed a suit.

Next day Haibati was seen hovering about the Dak Bungalow. He saw the Shikaris lounging in the verandah and returned.

Aba returned from Poona at night-fall. In a proud voice he said,

"The suit is properly filed. I have fixed up the best lawyer and we shall get full justice, to be sure . . ."

Mukta paid no attention to his words. She lived in a horrid nightmare of grief and despair.

Haibati too did not make any reply to Aba. He simply frowned and grunted.

At the midnight hour Aba went out into the cow-shed

to see why the cow was restless and lowing. He saw Haibati preparing to go out. In surprise he asked,

"Who is that?—Haibati?"

"Yes."

"Where would you go at this odd hour—?"

"Er—nowhere—I mean—" came the confused reply.

Just then Aba's eyes chanced on the axe which Haibati carried. His surprise heightened, Aba asked,

"And what's that?—An axe?—But why?—Whatever would you do with it?"

Haibati's grating voice was deep and firm as he replied, "I haven't no faith in the sort of justice you would get in the law court. Blood for blood!—that's the justice I can understand and like. I shall hack the heads of the Shikaris and make a small heap of them for my sister to spit upon—"

A shiver ran through Aba as he felt the contagion of those terrible words.

He clutched Haibati by the arm and taking the axe from him said,

"You are crazy with grief. Man shouldn't seek justice like a brute. Come, get into the house and lie down—"

So saying he patted and carried Haibati into the house.

Haibati's brute justice was thus never obtained. He went in and slept. Aba was going to prove his faith in man's civilized methods of seeking justice.

After a few months Aba's suit was decided. The Shikaris were ordered by the court to pay a fine of Rs. 500. This the Shikaris paid immediately and Aba returned home with the money.

As he entered his house Mukta was in the kitchen, stirring the broth on the fire, and Haibati sat in a corner, doing a fancy neck-strap for the ox.

Aba placed the bundle of notes before his wife with a proud flourish and said, "The Shikaris had only offered me a hundred rupees on that day. But I'm no baby to be deceived. The court has made them pay five hundred rupees!—Look!"

But Mukta did not at all seem pleased at these words. On the contrary, she made a piteous gesture as if a dagger's point had touched her in some delicate part, and tears trickled down her eyes. In an agonised voice she said, "How can't you understand?—There has been an aching void somewhere in this my heart since the moment I lost my beloved Shreepati!—Do you hope to fill it up with this money?—I hate it!—Let the accursed papers lie in the flames!—"

And suddenly she whipped the currency notes and flung them into the fire.

There was a flare. And the next moment the currency bills lay in a little heap of ashes.

Aba stood gazing, like a man mute under some spell! He had condemned Haibati's notion of justice as blood for blood. Now his own civilized notion of justice stood condemned at the hands of this woman—this aching mother!

* * * *

Within another year's time Mukta got a child—a son. Neighbours and friends came to see the boy, and Mukta was in a perpetual ecstasy as she held up the little, blinking, pup-like thing to everybody and said, "I'm sure this is my own Shreepati born in my womb again!—Don't you think so?—Look at his nose—his eyes! Ah! Don't say it's not he! My little Shreepati come to suck my breasts once again—!"

And she would say to her brother and husband, "Haibati thought of hacking the Shikaris' heads. And you brought that bundle of notes from the court. But could either have stopped the blood-stream that gushed from my heart at the loss of my child? Today the stream of blood has turned into a stream of milk! God has given me back my own Shreepati. Which is true justice? This?—or the one you brought tied up in a bundle of paper bills?—"

And the two men would make no reply.

Kathakali: The Classical Dance Art of India

By 'ART-LOVER'

Kerala is a fascinating bit of coastal country in the extreme south-west corner of India. Its wooded hills with vegetations of variegated kind; its green paddy fields running in serpentine curves, flanked by thickly planted plantain and arecanut groves and garden-houses; its backwaters with little islands, and lovely lagoons reflecting dreamily the blue sky and the fantastically-bent palms on the banks; the grey huts and the red-tiled roofs peeping through the rich foliage of garden compounds; the big bare-breasted women working bent all-day long in the fields, singing sad songs to forget their hardships; the dark, strong-limbed men at their ploughs and oxen; the white-clad and clean-looking Nairs and their womenfolk of soft, olive complexion, dark eyes and shy looks; the proud, exclusive Nambudri with his caste arrogance and social tyranny; the oppressed untouchable and the unseeable with their long-drawn agony and misery; the magic and mystery that still surround life here; all these exert a strange fascination on a visitor. Kerala is a tropical paradise, with palm-fringed horizons and surf-swept beaches, only to be rivalled by Lanka or Java.

Kerala is rich in arts too. The old temples and palaces contain fragments of fresco paintings as interesting as any in India, and some of the figures and groups on the walls of the Trichur temple and Mattancheri palace are not much inferior in artistic quality to those of Ajanta or Bagh. Stone-carvings and bronze images of the gods are also to be seen in abundance. Folk-arts here have met the same fate as in other parts of India, and, of late, some interest is being evinced in their revival, especially in the two popular folk dances of *Kummi* and *Kaikottukali*, which are being taught to girls in

schools. But by far the most unique and famous art of Kerala is Kathakali, the dance art *par excellence* in India.

It is one of the ironies of Indian life and art that real talent and genuine merit are not so much recognised and appreciated as spurious ones sponsored by vested interests. The New Delhi scheme was a well-known instance. With such master-artists like Nandalal Bose, Venkatappa, Ukil, Asit Haldar and others in the country, whose knowledge and skill in fresco painting cannot easily be equalled or surpassed, it was amusing to see the Government holding competitions among school students and third-rate artists for the execution of that work, with what result the world now knows! It is the same with the art of dancing. Much of the so-called Indian classical dances, 'performed' by both professionals and amateurs, is neither classical nor Indian, but a quaint jumble of Arabian, Egyptian, and Indian dances, with sensuous bodily movements, meaningless steps and gestures set to some popular tune.

Even the so-called Ajanta dances are preposterous impostures, for there is nothing in the whole series of Ajanta paintings, excepting a single dance scene in Cave No. 2, that can give a student of dance art any valuable material save certain *motifs*, and ideas for costumes, ornaments, headdress and, perhaps, some graceful and dignified poses and postures. And yet how that name is wickedly exploited and what funny kinds of dances are exhibited under that name! A notable exception was the interpretation given by Menaka, (Mrs. Leila Sokhey), entitled 'Ajanta Darshan', which was a sincere attempt to bring to life something of the spirit of Ajanta.

But how many in this country who have seen the so-called classical dances of India have heard of, not to say seen, Kathakali, the only genuine hundred-per-cent classical dance art of ancient India, one of the most highly perfected dance arts in the world? Kathakali is not merely based upon the science of *Bharata Natya Sastra*, but on traditions more ancient than that; and this art has remained, save in its own birth-place, unknown, unhonoured and unsung even by the enthusiastic

exponents of Indian cultural renaissance. But thanks to the genius of a poet and his flaming enthusiasm, it refuses to remain any longer in obscurity, and the day is not far off when it will take its place in the world of art as prominently as the Russian *Ballet* or the Javanese *Wayong Wong*, and also considerably influence the future dance art of the world.

Kathakali, in its present form, may be said to date back from the early eighteenth century, and its association with a prince of Travancore may, to a certain extent, be historically correct. But its real beginnings can be traced to a race and civilisation much anterior to the Aryan, and its antiquity must indeed be very remote, considering it has certain primitive elements in its rhythm, music, make-up, dress and ornaments, and considering also it gave birth, at a distant past, to the Javanese and Kandyan dances. One can also trace elements of Polynesian rhythms and movements in it. It has most undoubtedly absorbed and assimilated the whole of *Bharata Natya*, which gives it its present cultured character.

I have no doubt, whatsoever, that its origin was in magic, and even today its *elemental* nature can be felt by any sensitive person. It must have played a tremendous part in the religious rites of the ancients who knew how to invoke invisible powers, both of evil and good, by symbols of sounds and gestures. Both primitive and civilised nations of the world have recognised and used this symbolic language for communication with subtler worlds and invisible beings. The Egyptian masonry, the Hindu Vedic rites, the Chaldean magic, all these were several forms of magic based on a deeper understanding of the laws of nature and their psychic effects. It was well known to the ancients that sounds and gestures create definite forms and colours in subtler matter, as they have a certain meaning and message to the spirits whose aids are sought by these magical formulas and rites. Some of the sounds and gestures and the accompanying drum-beats in Kathakali, especially as in the opening scene of *Keechakavatha* and the like, are distinctly of the spirit-invoking kind. I do not know how far the actors themselves

realise the magical quality of their arts—I suppose they feel but do not understand—but I am certain that the powers they invoke and release are tremendous.

Hence I venture to claim for this art an antiquity far greater than is usually assigned to it. To say that this art is only about 250 years old is absurd. In the first place it cannot be the work of any one single individual or a group of individuals, however clever and talented he or they may be; *it is a heritage of a race*, as old as itself. In the second place, it is not humanly possible to evolve and perfect an art of this kind within the short space of two centuries, even if a whole nation had put its whole energy in perfecting it, and we know for certain that this art was dying a natural death during the last two centuries, except for isolated patronage here and there by a few landlords and petty chieftains. I claim for Kathakali an age anterior to *Bharata Natya* or *Ajanta Chitra* or *Sanchi Silpa*; in fact this art is as great, in its own line, as *Ajanta frescoes* are in painting or *Bahrut friezes* are in sculpture.

Now what then is this Kathakali?, the impatient reader may ask. It is, as its name indicates, story-play (*katha*: story, *kali*: play,) or the narration of a story in the form of a drama. But in this case the drama is a pantomime or dumb-show, accompanied by music, song and dance. It is a unique dramatic art, as daring in its conception as it is complex in its expression. Even a whole epic like the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana* is presented to the public, without a single word spoken by the actors, but through an evolved technique of suitable gestures, suggestive poses, clever facial expressions, and appropriate song and music. It is more elaborate than a musical play and more exacting than ordinary dramatic acting.

It is an open-air show, meant to be performed in a grove or *maidan*, and never inside a theatre. It has, therefore, not the usual painted curtains and horrid backgrounds of the Indian stage to mar its general effect. Its settings are simple and admirably serve the purpose. Just a *shamiana*, with

a high roof supported by four poles; two tall bell-metal oil lamps burning bright all through the night and shedding cool light, not trying to the eyes of both the actors and audience; a beautifully coloured cloth, held in front by two dressed-up boys every time an actor or actors make entry or exit, serving as a drop-curtain; and a stool for actors to sit upon or rest their legs as the case may be. The audience sit in front on matted floor, and the singers and drummers sing and play, standing immediately behind the actors. The orchestra consists of two singers (or narrators of stories), a *maddalam* player, a *chendai* player, a *cymbal* and a gong player. Conch is sounded at the beginning of a show. The first impression of this music is rather loud and harsh, but when the ears get used to them it is pleasing and enjoyable. Certain changes would need to be effected if they are to be played in a closed theatre, as the sound would be deafening, but as far as possible it is wiser to have them in open air.

The play, usually a story or scene from the Indian classics, lasts a whole night, from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.; at times continuing for several nights. In its own place and among its own people this may be all right, but when it has to be presented outside Kerala and to people with modern tastes and ideas, there must be a time-limit to it, say, two to three hours at the most. This much-needed reform is being introduced by the Kerala Kalamandalam, under the leadership of the poet Vallathol, who is devoting all his time, energy and money for the revival of this ancient art, with a hope that it would be accepted and appreciated by the world at large in its reformed state. He himself is an expert exponent of the science of gesture, and his enthusiasm is contagious. He has a keen and energetic collaborator in this work in Mr. Mukunda Raja of Kunnamkulam, the honorary secretary of the Kalamandalam.

The conventional form of presenting a play is as follows:—First there is the announcement to the villages all around, known as *Kelikottu*, drum-beating about sunset time, and this is followed by *Todayam* and *Vandanaslokams* (dance

music and prayers) behind the curtains, a little before the commencement of the play, and after this the first appearance of characters amidst a loud flourish of drums and conch, known as *Purappadu*, and the interval between this and the actual commencement of the story is taken by *Melappada*, musical contests between the *maddalam* and *chendai* players and the singers.

The stories interpreted by Kathakali are in poetic forms set to music, which closely resembles the temple music of South India. Several gifted poets of Kerala, some of them princes of the royal blood, have contributed much to this art in the form of poems and plays written for this purpose, which the actors faithfully try to interpret in Kathakali. The singers here, like the *Dalangs* in Java, are not gifted with a good voice, which is unfortunate, and even the drummers should be trained to play softer music than they do now. It would not be a bad idea if *Edaka* (stringed-drum) be introduced in certain scenes where solo dances are performed, conveying the *sringara* or *soka rasas*. For a proper appreciation of this art by the world at large, certain innovations and changes need to be effected, and experiments to that end should soon be made.

There are thirty varieties of dances, some simple and some complex, in Kathakali, and they are based on a sound knowledge of rhythmic laws of body movements. There is very little 'foot-work' in the Western sense of the term, and some of the steps are obviously primitive and uncouth. The main emphasis seems to be not so much on grace or beauty but on strength, but still there are a good number of graceful movements and steps in the dance. A student of Indian sculpture can easily trace in this art the varied bends and flexions, poses and postures that one sees in stone and bronze images.

This art is not merely suggestive and interpretative but highly descriptive and realistic too, such as, for instance, the Peacock Dance. It is an amazingly truthful portrayal of the bird's moods and movements, its vanity and majesty. The composer of this dance was not only a keen observer of

nature, and particularly of the life of the peacock, but also a psychologist who understood a little bird's flutterings of heart and mind. This clever imitation and interpretation of animal and bird life is an interesting feature of Kathakali. Knowledge and originality characterise every one of these interpretative dances, and not the mere whim and fancy of the artist as in some of the modern dances.

It is here tradition helps and keeps in check individual idiosyncracies from running riot. A sad feature of modern art is this supreme conceit and folly in art interpretation and creation without the requisite talent or guidance. Tradition can both help or hinder; it all depends upon the artist and his genius. It is my conviction that the traditional forms evolved in Kathakali can greatly help any aspiring student of dance, and I have no doubt that more and more will go in search of it as Ragini Devi and Uday Shankar have done.

Abhinaya (i.e., interpretation and portrayal of moods, emotions and ideas through hand gestures (*mudras*) and facial expressions) is a singularly significant aspect of Indian dancing, and it is developed into an interesting science and art. Body movements and rhythmic foot-steps have their own important place in Hindu dancing, but not a primary place as in Western dancing. Bharata, the reputed author of *Natya Sastra*, has elaborated a system of gestures (*mudras*), and it is in use, though in a corrupt form, in the several styles of dancing existing today. But the unknown author or authors of Kathakali, either following a more ancient tradition or creating a new one, have enriched this with a wealth of words, idioms, phrases and expressions nearly as complete as the spoken language, and capable of interpreting even abstract ideas. Some of these *mudras* are as descriptive as any picture could be and some as suggestive as any symbol. They are based on a profound understanding of life and nature, and when you consider that the whole of the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata* can be interpreted successfully by this gesture-language, its achievement becomes almost incredible. And yet that is what has been attempted in Kathakali!

Gods, Goddesses and Devas; Siva, Vishnu and Brahma; Parvati, Lakshmi and Saraswati; Indra, Varuna and Kubera; Rudra, Narasimha and Durga; Gandharvas, Kinnaras and Kimpurushas; Vyasa, Narada and Agastya; sun, moon and stars; clouds, thunder and lightning; rain, storm and wind; earth, sky and ocean; fire, water and air; man, woman and child; friend, foe and lover; king, queen and prince; saint, sinner and sage; teacher, warrior and workman; trees, flowers and buds; animals, birds and bees; peaks, valleys and mountains; moods, passions and thoughts; hatred, anger and jealousy; love, lust and affection; aspiration, devotion and worship; subtlety, cunning and greed; birth, death and growth; speculation, imagination and introspection; concentration, meditation and contemplation; description of scenes, incidents and events; portrayal of persons, character and conduct; dialogues, soliloquy and conversation—all these have their appropriate *mudras*. Their description is, at times, true to life. Deer, fish, peacock, elephant, lotus, buds, creepers, etc. are picturesquely illustrated. Verbs, nouns, prepositions and even exclamations have their apt *mudras*.

Being a descriptive language it is naturally much more elaborate and intricate than spoken language and takes time to learn. The memorising of the 24 'root-mudras' and their endless permutations and combinations would itself take a long time, but to be efficient in their exposition and to master, simultaneously with it, the nine movements of the head, eight glances of the eye, six movements of the eyebrows, four postures of the neck, and other 64 movements of the feet, heels, toes, ankles, knees, thighs, waist, sides, back, arms, elbows, shoulders, wrists, palms, lips, nose, chin, cheeks and eyelids, as practised in Kathakali, is indeed a matter of strict and careful training for several years. That is why a pupil takes six years the least to get some proficiency in the art, and no one is allowed to teach another unless one has learnt it for over twelve years. The discipline and regular practice these pupils have to undergo are very rigorous and exacting, and the course of physical exercise and massage of

the body are exceedingly interesting, albeit a little crude and primitive.

What a mockery then it is that, after an easy and indifferent training for six months or so, young dancers come forward most brazenly to interpret the classical dance art of India before the public and expect patronage, appreciation and applause! Art is a jealous mistress and the aspirant must pay her price. In the whole of Kerala there are now only two masters of this art, who have been practising it for over forty years, and who now teach at the Kalamandalam—Kunju Kurup of Thakazhi and Narayana Nayar of Kavalapara, both great artists and good men. In any other country their genius would have been proclaimed from the house-tops, but here they live and teach in an insignificant village for no fame or money but for the love of the art and its traditions. All honour to them!

Make-up and *mask* play a great part in Kathakali. This art is an elaborate process needing years of practice, and there are men who specialise in it. The Kathakali *make-up* ordinarily consists of a white *chutty* (outline), made of rice paste and cleverly done in relief on the sides of the face from ear to ear, and the face within it painted green, red, or black, according to the character, on which one can observe the display of emotions and expressions of the actors. As a *mask* and a work of art, this is much more interesting than the artificial paper or pulp *masks* used in dances all over the world. Women characters do not have this *make-up* or *mask*. Personally I should prefer all characters, except the *rakshasas* and demons, to appear without these *make-ups*. To a certain extent they mar the æsthetic effects of the dance; and if any *make-up* is needed at all, a little paint of the flesh colour for the face, with attenuated eye-brows and slightly emphasised mouth, will equally serve the purpose.

This change in the *make-up* will necessarily affect the present costumes and ornaments the actors wear, which are, truth to tell, barbaric, heavy and cumbersome. The dancers' well-developed bodies and their graceful movements all get

lost within the folds of the present long-sleeved blouses and pleated skirts. These dancers, with practically no dress, save a piece of loin cloth, create a far more beautiful impression and reveal more fully their supple form and sinuous lines than in their conventional costumes. The jewelleries too, though picturesque, are not elegant and refined. They are mostly copied from the ornaments of the temple images, and even the crowns (*makutas*) are heavy and can easily be replaced by a more elegant form of head-dress, like the Javanese dancers'.

A bold and courageous reform needs to be introduced in this direction; and much of the present misunderstanding about this art, in its own homeland, is due to this barbaric dress worn by the actors and the frightful *rakshasa* characters presented in their plays. In representing *Bhayanaka* and *Bibhatsa* rasas (fear and grotesque elements) on the stage, the Kathakali actors cannot be excelled by any in the world, and their characterisation of *rakshasas* is very realistic and terrible. The make-up, costume, gesture, music, and the tense atmosphere, are all awe-inspiring. This is only one feature of Kathakali, and most unfortunately, it is this aspect that is most emphasised, and hence the misunderstanding that it is inartistic, crude and primitive. This, however, is a mistake. The Kathakali actors are equally experts in presenting *Sringara* and *Soka* rasas (love and grief) or *Vira* and *Karuna* rasas (heroism and compassion), and few actors on the stage can excel them in these. But much of them is really lost in their traditional way of presentment, and it is here the authorities of the Kalamandalam can do much to make this art acceptable to the world. The poet Vallathol and his fellow-workers are eager to accept suggestions and criticisms, and it is for talented dancers and artistes like Sri Ragini Devi, Menaka, Shrimati Hutheesingh, Uday Shankar and others, to learn the art first and then suggest ways and means of modernising this ancient and glorious art.

Reviews

[We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French and German. Books for Review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.]

ENGLISH

Modern Biography.—By Dr. P. Guha-Thakurta, M. A., Ph. D. [The Hindustan Times Press, Delhi. Price As. 8]

Biography as a form of writing holds a very prominent place in Western literature today. One can measure its popularity by the way in which biographies have increased in such large numbers, succeeding one another so quickly. And a mere glance at any one of them will tell us how different modern biography is, in method and treatment, from what it was a few decades ago. The old form which dealt in dull facts and anecdotes, or 'tedious panegyrics' raising the hero to a pedestal so high that it tended to make him appear as if he belonged to another and superior order of men, has given place to vivid portraiture and discriminate praise. Modern biography with its literary finish is indeed decidedly more attractive than a fine novel of skilfully woven plot and lively delineation of character. Our interest in it is quickened all the more because we know it tells us about persons who have lived, felt and suffered like ourselves, and in that knowledge there is a peculiar gratification for us.

The life of a man written with that sympathy and insight into the workings of his mind and character must always make a higher appeal to us than that of any hero of fiction. For as Mr. Andre Maurois says, "The most complex hero of a novel is infinitely less complex than the most simple of human beings." But there is a tendency sometimes to pull down the god from his pedestal and expose to a scandalized world the clay feet of their idol. A truthful, dispassionate biography, however, if it has an aversion to indulge in loud panegyrics, is bound to be, by the very nature of its method to a certain extent, an iconoclastic work. Thus Napoleon is a great man and yet quite human, subject to limitations. Those intimate touches which reveal the man as he is, make him come down from his height at moments and mix with the

crowd. But that serves only to win our sympathy as well as our admiration for all that is great and small in him. Again, if we take Lytton Strachey's "Queen Victoria," what a different Victoria it is that we behold emerging from its pages! It is not the ideal queen, virtuous and good, that we have ever loved to think of, but the woman of ordinary intelligence, spirited and full of life, and insisting on having her own way in certain things. But this Victoria, if anything, appears only the more interesting in our eyes for betraying the common elements in her nature. It is not to be denied that this form of literature does more than give mere pleasure to humanity. For in Herr Emil Ludwig's words, "What task can be grander than to stimulate, and above all to stimulate the young by the example of great men, and show that each was but a man exposed to the limitations, difficulties, perplexities, and sufferings with which we all must contend?"

It is an engaging and fruitful study that Dr. Guha-Thakurta has undertaken in this small volume, entitled "Modern Biography," and he deserves to be congratulated. Though he has not made, as he himself says, any elaborate attempt to trace the literary history of Biography, or discuss the comparative merits of those devoted to this branch of art, he has nevertheless succeeded very ably in touching upon all its aspects. It is clear that Dr. Thakurta understands well the technique and modes of treatment of Biography-writing. For, unless one is quite at home with his subject one cannot speak with authority and confidence as Dr. Thakurta does on the excellences and defects of such eminent biographers as Lytton Strachey, Emil Ludwig and M. Andre Maurois. His critical estimate, too, of other distinguished writers in the field, such as Mr. Guedalla, is no less convincing and may be said to be an eloquent testimony to his high literary perception. And it is a happy thing to note that to all this Dr. Thakurta joins a good, vigorous style which is no mean distinction to urge on behalf of any writer.

K. SAVITRI

The Essential Unity of all Religions.—By Dr. Bhagavan Das. [The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Price Rs. 3]

This is an attractive reproduction in a book form of a paper read by him in the All-Asia Education Conference held

at Benares in December 1930. It is an inspired psychic plea for the unity of all religions.

This small book of less than 300 pages cannot be adequately praised. It is almost poetic in its expression like a Sufi song, which while expressing deep philosophical truths has the capacity of taking the reader unawares by Beauty and giving some rare touch of the soul's inner rapture. In a very clear, simple, lucid style the author discloses to us the real aims, objects and the Ideal of all our various conflicting religious strivings, and finally convinces the reader of their ultimate essential unity. The work is done with admirable care and masterliness and is replete with apt and carefully chosen quotations from almost all the scriptures of the world, and the sayings of many great religious masters and poets. There is hardly a page which does not contain a rare and inspiring quotation, and there are pages after pages where one softly glides on from quotation to quotation of rarest charm and beauty as well as of greatest spiritual wisdom. Thus from the beginning to the end, the book is delightful and captivating and deeply inspiring. The author so well performs his work and is so successful in it that one can safely say that after reading it even the most obstinate sceptic is bound to modify his views and get a broad vision of Truth. I am sure there will be many who will be inspired and guided by this book and will find their way greatly cleared and illumined.

Religion is something very intricate and complex; it has a very strong hold of a believing man, and in India it has entered into the very nature of man and needs to be dealt with very carefully in a scientific manner, the secret of which is known only to the great Sages and Rishis. At times it becomes a great barrier and cripples the aspiration of the inner spirit, if one ignorantly keeps occupied only in its outer rounds and does not bring into it spiritual wideness and freedom. To quote the words of Dr. Bhagavan Das—"Too much religion kills God, God in man, and enslaves him to superstition instead of bringing him from all fear."

In India religion now-a-days is in twofold danger. On the one hand the influence of the Western scientific education and material progress translates itself as an awful doubt and tends to wipe away all religious faith and give an undue and enormous importance to the matters of external phenomenal

world only, while the old orthodox systems with their crushing weight and unplastic rigidity drag it to the other extreme. To discover the real truth, what Dr. Bhagavan Das calls the "golden mean", the spirit of religion, and to allow a true expression of one soul's aspiration and free play of its inner forces is far more important at present than anything else in the world. This little book points the straight way with an unerring finger and is a very good guide to an individual wanderer as well as for the masses, and specially for India it will be of great help and use to dispel the dark clouds of superstition and ignorance that are floating over the atmosphere today.

It is an extremely difficult task to apply the philosophical terms of one religion to another, for there are intricacies of thoughts and conceptions that differ greatly in their inner sense, but the accuracy with which it is done in this book is extremely praiseworthy and striking. The passages selected from various scriptures are appropriate and correct and its quotations do supply very instructive material for a comparative study of religions.

AGA SYED IBRAHIM DARA

Saptapadarthi of Sivaditya.—[Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Notes by Mr. D. Gurumurti, M.A., (Hons), Vice-Principal and Professor of Philosophy, Theosophical College, Madanapalle. With a foreword by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Kt. Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras (245 pages). Price Rs. 2-8.]

The Saptapadarthi (the compendium of the seven categories) is a work on Indian Logic, but, as its name indicates, it is neither purely Nyaya nor purely Vaiseshika, inasmuch as these Darsanas admit sixteen and six categories or Padarthas respectively. It represents a harmonious combination, or better, co-ordination of the two systems, which was possible, seeing that each of them was lacking in just what the other had and thus each could easily supplement the other. The Nyaya with its clear analysis of cognition, and the Vaiseshika with its careful investigation of the categories could be fused together to their mutual advantage. It may be said that Sivaditya heralded this syncretist period in the history of the Nyaya-Vaiseshika and set the fashion for many others to imitate.

Sivaditya follows the traditional method of exposition which consists in enumerating the topics to be investigated into 'Uddesa', the definition of the terms, 'Lakshana', and the enquiry into the admissibility or otherwise of the various entities (Pariksha). The book is almost uniformly distributed over these three sections. Nihisreyasa (or Moksha) can be obtained by Tattvajnana which is fourfold, viz., 'Sravana', 'Manana', 'Nididhyasana' and 'Sakshatkara.' It brings about the end of all misery by destroying the cause of ignorance. Tattva is the unsuperimposed essence of things. Sivaditya admits only two 'pramanas,' which has led some to look upon his book as a Vaiseshika Prakarana. Except for a few minor changes, the treatment proceeds along the same lines as those in 'Tarka Sangraha.' As the translator puts it, "In a small compass Sivaditya has been able to condense all the important doctrines of Nyaya and Vaiseshika systems."

The book has been embellished by Prof. Gurumurti with a scholarly Introduction containing a brief history of the Nyaya-Vaiseshika in general, a critical exposition of the doctrines of the system, and a historical note on the authorship of the book. In spite of all that the learned professor has said in the Introduction as well as in appendix (A), one cannot subscribe to the statement that Sivaditya preceded Udayana. (Vide Mr. S. Kuppaswami Sastri's 'Primer of Indian Logic' Introduction pp. XLV; Prof. Ghate's article on Sivaditya's Saptapadarthi. pp. 34; Vol XXIII, J. B. B. R. A. S., and Mr. Bodas' Introduction to Athalye's Edition of Tarka Sangraha, Pp. XLVI.)

Though he has depended upon other printed editions of the book, still he has given a fairly correct edition of the text excepting in two or three places, as for instance in Sākshātkāri Jñāna Karanam.

The transliteration, considering the present needs of India, appears superfluous. The utility of the book would have been greater still if it had been replaced by a good commentary, say, the Mitabhashini, which, in the words of the Editor, is the clearest and shows considerable philosophical acumen. The translation is really praiseworthy though one might wish it were better here and there.

The notes attached to each section are really of immense value for a college student. Parallels in Aristotelian Logic,

like the Tree of Propyry, Summum genus, infima species, are appropriately introduced and explained. The "inspection" of Bradley is said to correspond to *Paramarsha* and the *Adrishta* of Nyaya is considered parallel to the "pre-established harmony" of Leibnitz. How the concept of *Abhava* which took its birth as a logical necessity was transformed into an ontological category is well explained. In the notes on *Samavaya* it is clearly pointed out how that category is mainly responsible for the realism of Nyaya.

We have however to observe that the notes on section 18 appear to us to go somewhat beyond the original. The statement 'Akashaditrayam'—(p 19) does not imply an identity of Akasa, Kala and Dik as the Professor thinks. If *Sivaditya* meant to identify the three *Dravyas* then his ninefold classification of *Dravya* (Section 4) would be vitiated. In sections 15, 16 and 17 he has spoken of Akasa, Kala and Dik as manifold, threefold and eleven-fold respectively. In section 18 he says that such a further classification of the three *Dravyas* is only due to the limiting conditions each of them actually being integral. (*vide* Ghate's notes on section 15). The attempt to make *Sivaditya* anticipate Bergson, Einstein, and the modern physicists, though flattering to ourselves, does not appear to be quite convincing. The learned Editor has taken great pains in getting up the appendices, bibliography and index which are attractive features of the book which enhance its value. Barring the few points of difference of a minor character which we have noted above, we whole-heartedly concur in the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University who observes that "this edition of *Saptapadarthi*", will be, "a suitable text book for the B.A. classes in Indian Philosophy," and we offer our congratulations also to the Editor on the 'solid piece' of work he has done.

M. LAKSHMINARASIMHAYYA

In The Temple of Truth.—A Poem by G. Ramakantacharya, B. A., [With a foreword by Prof P. Seshadri, M. A., Messrs Padma & Co., Bapatla, Price Re 1].

The poem is based on an incident in the life of Sri Ramanuja. His Guru had taught him the eight-syllabled *mantra*—"the golden key and fair that opes the Immortal Gates of Heaven." Contrary to the pledge of secrecy im-

posed on him, young Ramanuja went up the temple tower, and proclaimed the *mantra* to high and low alike. This is typical of the attitude of the great Reformer towards the lowly and the down-trodden who are ordinarily denied the consolations of religion. Mr. Acharya, in subsequent sections, expounds the essential truths of the Vedic religion in mellifluous verse. The entire poem is a creditable performance. The author commands a simple, chaste style; and he has used his great talents in a worthy cause. When it is remembered that he is a busy official, bound to routine work, this literary venture appears all the more praiseworthy.

K.R.

GUJARATI

Jivan Joyti.—By Vallabh Bhanji Mehta of Morvi, Kathiawad. [Printed at the Saraswati Printing Press, Bhavnagar. Cloth bound. pp. 232. Price Re. 1-4-0, 1933]

This book of verses has been inspired by Kavi Khabardar's *Darshanika*, and is modelled on it. It is divided into three sections, Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, and the verses naturally repeat the sentiments and principles found in the Gita and the Upanishads. Though the subject matter is more philosophical than poetical, still by means of homely language and familiar illustrations, the writer has been able to convey his thoughts in a way which his readers would not find it difficult to follow. The metre (*Zulna Chhand*) chosen for the verses is indeed very suitable for the subject and the lines run smoothly. The book should become popular.

K. M. J.

TELUGU

Nirvachana Bhagavatha Ramayanam.—By Ravipati Lakshminarayana, Taluk office, Gurazala, Guntur Dt. [Price As. 8.]

Telugu literature is remarkable not only for its poetic riches but also for the wonderful literary feats that it has made possible. Whole *Kavyas* have been written yielding, in one strain, several meanings and several stories. Besides, verses have been inlaid with verses, stories with stories, in a

manner so dexterous and masterful as to mystify the ordinary reader. The book under review belongs to the category of such literary efforts as have been described above. The story of the *Ramayana* is narrated in verses which contain in themselves each a different verse, the collection of the latter producing the uninterrupted story of the *Mahabharata*. The whole work is an example of *garbha-kavita* and is a novel addition to the Telugu literature. It reveals the author's mastery over the metres and the language, and entertains the reader with the surprising variety of meanings strung with foresight and with care. Having thus paid the tribute that is due to the work, we are free to confess that the feat-complex in literature is of a derogatory character so far as pure poetry is concerned. Words assume an absurd importance and thought falls into obscurity. Modern taste has outgrown a fondness for such literary efforts, and we hope the author will not rest content with the type of work that he has produced, but will turn to the fresh fields of pure poetry.

G. V. S.

Amaravati Stupam and other Essays.—By M. Somasekhara Sarma [Published by the Author, 1/11 Audiappa Mudali Street, Purasawalkum, Madras. Price As. 12/-]

This is a collection of five valuable essays contributed by the author from time to time to the *Bharati*, and to the *Samadarsini*, and *Andhrapatrika* Annuals. They deal with (1) The Amaravati Stupa (2) Ancient Vocational Education (3) Our Ancient Seats of Learning (4) Neglected Literature and (5) Research into Buddhist Literature. They thus cover a wide range of subjects, and serve to illustrate the author's varied tastes. Mr. Sarma's main object is to direct the attention of an indifferent public to certain aspects of our culture, ancient and modern. To the scholar's accuracy and precision, he adds the patriot's fervour. His style is rich, not gaudy. It is an expression of an inner richness of thought and feeling. His essay on the neglected folk literature is particularly appealing and reminds one of Addison's essay on 'Chevy Chase.' Research scholars and epigraphists are usually imagined to be a prosaic set of people, but Mr. Sarma is a shining example of a scholar who is gifted with imagination, and who literally makes 'dead bones live.' We heartily commend this volume to our Telugu readers.

K. R.

Opinion of
Sir C. V. Raman, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., N.L.

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