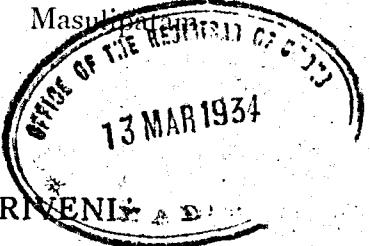


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TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

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

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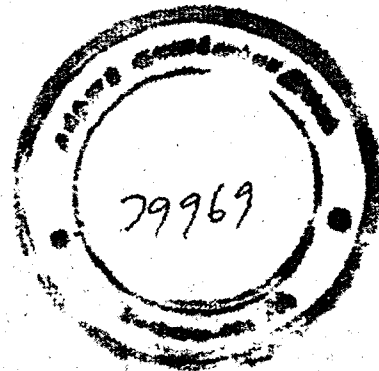
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... he that laboureth right for love of Me
 Shall finally attain! But, if in this
 Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!
 —The Song Celestial

'The Triple Stream'¹

GANDHIJI AT THE KALASALA

More than twelve years ago, when Gandhiji toured Andhra for the first time, he spent two quiet days at the Jathieeya Kalasala (National College), Masulipatam. The wide open spaces, the green lawns, the rows of palm-leaf cottages, captivated him. During those memorable days he learnt to love the selfless founder of the Kalasala, Kopalle Hanumantha Rao. It was a meeting of kindred spirits, of men with vision seeking to translate their visions into objective reality. Hanumantha Rao passed away within a year, and since then the Kalasala has had a chequered history. But to Gandhiji it has always appealed as a noble legacy to modern India. So, he rejoiced greatly when it was mentioned to him at Delhi, early this month, that the Kalasala was preparing, once again to receive him, and to maintain for him the utter silence and peace he requires every Monday and Tuesday during his strenuous tours.

When he came on the 17th evening, it was not Hanumantha Rao alone that he missed; Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the founder's life-long friend and colleague, was away in Vellore jail. Out of the original band of workers, only Mr. Krishna Rao was present to welcome Gandhiji. By a curious turn in the wheel of Time, the Editor, *Triveni*, who had rejoined the Kalasala, as Principal, only a month prior to the visit, was called upon to play the host, to introduce the members of the staff, and explain the details of the working of the institution in a twenty-minute interview with the illustrious guest. What a privilege for a new Principal, and a blessing on his work! Gandhiji expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made for his stay and complimented the young volunteers on their 'vow of silence,' as he called it. As if

¹ December 31, 1933.

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this were not reward enough, he made kind enquiries about *Triveni*, whether it was paying its way, and if it was published from Madras as usual, remarking, 'I was receiving your journal even in prison.' Under such happy auspices was the Kalasala linked up with the *Triveni* in the person of the Editor-Principal.

But what will abide longest in our memory is the unforgettable scene during prayers. Twice every day, men and women—and children too—in hundreds waited for hours on end to have a glimpse of him, as he sat cross-legged under the mango tree near our guest-house and communed with his Maker in soulful song or in melodious chant of the *Gita*. In those moments one's thoughts strayed almost instinctively to him who walked the earth two thousand five hundred years ago,—the prince turned ascetic in pursuit of the Path of Enlightenment.

DISCONTENT ALL ROUND

At long last, the labours of the Joint Committee have come to an end. It now rests with Parliament to enact another Government of India Act for the benefit of Britain's Eastern Dependency. There is no longer any fear that India will be a 'lost Dominion', for the conservative sections of British and Indian opinion have conspired to put off the day of India's freedom. Everybody's interests are adequately safeguarded; the Princes, the landlords, the services, the communalists, are all recognised as important factors in the India of the future. But of real progress, of power to the ordinary citizen to shape the course of administration at the Centre or in the Provinces, of that Swaraj for which generations of Indian patriots have yearned and suffered, there is not the slightest vestige anywhere. The members of the Indian delegation have registered their protest and pleaded for a more enlightened outlook. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's Memorandum puts the case of the Indian Progressives with the utmost lucidity. On the top of it all comes Mr. C. Y. Chintamani's

'THE TRIPLE STREAM'

vehement denunciation of the White Paper. This staunch Liberal feels that 'British arrogance and selfishness have not been conquered,' but how that desirable consummation could be achieved he is unable to tell. Non-Congress publicists are trying to come together on a common platform, to devise ways and means for rendering the new Constitution innocuous, because they have no hope that it can be made beneficial.

During all this upheaval of political feeling the Congress has remained impassive. It is not interested in the question of constitutional reform. No meeting of the All India Congress Committee can be held without either a proper requisition from the members or voluntary action on the part of the General Secretary. But discontent within the ranks of the Congress is becoming increasingly vocal, though it is as yet too soon to say what following the dissentients will be able to command. The situation is thus baffling. Now, if ever, leadership is needed to give a new direction to the national energy and counteract the forces of reaction.

THE NEW IDEOLOGY

For a time it was hoped that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would provide that element of leadership. But years of study and reflection behind the prison bars have deepened his faith in Communism, the class war, the divesting of vested interests. In his view the nationalism of the founders of the Congress is an outworn creed. World conditions are altering, and the coming struggle will be between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' everywhere, and not between compact national units. India, according to him, must prepare to throw in her lot with the world forces arrayed against ancient privilege, and in so doing, she must fight not only the Government but also its reactionary allies in India. Such an attitude is perfectly logical, but not very helpful during the present *impasse* in Indian politics. In the course of our political struggle through several decades, certain notable elements amongst the Indian conservatives—millowners, landlords,

bankers, have actively co-operated with the leaders of Indian nationalism. Is it wise to cast them aside at this stage and drive them into the arms of the enemies of Indian freedom? The present struggle is enough to tax our resources to the utmost; and nobody need endeavour to complicate the situation by holding out vague threats of a class war which a wise ordering of our affairs may ultimately render unnecessary. Political or social progress does not pursue identical lines in all lands. Traditional culture and habits of thought vary from country to country, and India may yet escape the horrors of a revolution which is neither so inevitable nor so imperative as the Pandit imagines. Some have complained that Gandhiji has side-tracked the national movement by emphasising the question of Harijan uplift. With greater truth may it be urged that the Pandit has misjudged the Nation's needs.

UDAY SHANKAR

This gifted artiste's brief stay in South India has given rise to a bewildering mass of comment, laudatory or adverse, and incidentally interest has been aroused in the classical dance-art of India. The Editor was away from Madras and had no opportunity of meeting Uday Shankar or witnessing his dances. This naturally places him at a disadvantage in any discussion about Uday Shankar. In common with all those who believe in the dawn of a new era in Indian art, we hail the coming of Uday Shankar as an event of great significance. To have won for Indian dance the respectful attention of the West, is in itself no mean achievement; to have devoted himself with passionate ardour to the interpretation of the dance constitutes Uday Shankar's especial glory. Whether his dance is absolutely in accord with the canons of Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, whether it owes its inspiration to Ajanta or to the Kathakali of Malabar, whether Kathakali itself is cent-per-cent classical, are questions that do not touch the major issue. Is a modern Indian artiste free to express his soul through graceful, rhythmic movements of the body,

without conforming in every detail to the technique of the ancients? And does his art cease to be Indian or classical if, in departing occasionally from the conventional mode, he is able to impart richness and vitality to the art? Uday Shankar's dance has its analogue in the new poetry coming into prominence in the different Indian languages. Punctilious conformity to tradition is by no means the highest good; and in dance as in poetry, a true artiste will always break new ground and evolve a technique of his own. Uday Shankar, we venture to think, belongs to this class. In this view so much of the criticism levelled at him seems pointless. He himself, we understand, witnessed a private performance of Bharata Natya in Madras and expressed a desire to study the art more thoroughly during his next visit. It is therefore ungenerous to impute to him a desire to palm off spurious and unmeaning movements as the classical Indian dance. A pioneer has to struggle against odds, and Uday Shankar in presenting Indian dance to the world has become the object of criticism from totally divergent points of view. We have no doubt he will accept the criticism in the right spirit and not be deterred from the pursuit of his noble mission.

HONOURING VENKATA KAVI

During the last *Dasara* season, the leaders of Andhra thought,—poets, artists, and scholars—met at Masulipatam to do honour to their most distinguished poet on the completion of his sixtieth year. Venkata Kavi and Tirupati Kavi were fellow-students who sat at the feet of the great Brahmayya Sastri, and while yet in their teens, they made their *debut* into the world of Andhra Letters as twin-poets. Their appearance at the courts of princes like the late Ananda Gajapathi of Vizianagaram was reminiscent of the literary triumphs of Srinadha in the fourteenth century. During a long career they succeeded in freeing Telugu poetry from the fetters of the *Prabandha* tradition; they prepared the way for a literary renaissance. In the words of a distinguished pupil,

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Mr. Lakshmikantham, their poetry marks at once the close of the old order and the commencement of the new. Nearly every writer of note today in Andhra is either a student of these poets or has drawn inspiration from them. Some of the younger poets are treading new paths. Venkata Kavi is out of sympathy with them ; he fails to realise that this is the inevitable development of his own earlier work.

Tirupati Kavi, alas, was snatched away some years ago, but every one felt that his spirit brooded over the unique function which, in effect, was intended to honour him too. His son was present and in most touching language rendered homage to Venkata Kavi. During this literary festival, the decision was taken to bring out a new edition of the collected works of the twin-poets. We look forward to the publication of these treasures of literary achievement.

A New Ideology for a New Age?

By PROF. M. VENKATARANGAIYA, M.A.

(The Andhra University, Waltair)

Among the dynamic personalities in India of the present day, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru occupies a prominent place. Two years of reflection has confirmed him in the faith that what the country requires is a new ideology for the success of the revolutionary movement ; and in a contribution which he recently made to the Press, he gave publicity to this ideology with his usual vigour and force. It is sure to give a new orientation to the policy and programme of the Indian National Congress and react also on the work of the other political organisations in the country. In the course of his essays he observes as follows :—‘ In India as in other Asiatic colonial countries, we find a struggle today between the old nationalist ideology and the new economic ideology. Most of us have grown up under the nationalistic tradition and it is hard to give up the mental habits of a life-time. And yet we realise that this outlook is inadequate ; it does not fit in with the existing conditions in our country or in the world.’ In his view the cause at issue is not so much ‘ Nationalism ’ *versus* ‘ Imperialism ’, as the ‘ Rich ’ *versus* the ‘ Poor ’, the ‘ Classes ’ *versus* the ‘ Masses ’. He wants that the revolution should be carried on in the name of this new issue and that the efforts of all political organisations should be directed to preparing a proper ground for it.

In evaluating the new ideology at its proper worth, two truths of great importance have to be kept in mind, one relating to the nature of revolutions and the other regarding the evolution of man’s life in society. It is in the nature of every revolution to bring about a change in almost every aspect of the life of the community, whatever its starting point or ostensible object might be. It might begin as a religious,

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a political, or an economic movement; but it is sure to spread its influence over every other department of life. Religious revolutions like Christianity and Islam, the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth-century Europe and the Sikh religious movement in India, inaugurated changes of a far-reaching nature, as much in the political and economic fortunes of peoples as in their religious life. They were responsible for the destruction of old empires and the establishment of new ones in their place; they strengthened despotisms in some cases and the cause of political freedom in other cases. Similarly, political revolutions like the French Revolution affected not only the form and spirit of government but also the economic and religious outlook of the European nations. The same is true of the greatest political revolution in modern Indian history. The Battle of Plassey and the consequent establishment of British power was not merely a violent political change. It introduced changes of a fundamental character in the economic, the religious, the social, and the cultural life of the Indian people. The Industrial Revolution in eighteenth-century Europe led to democracy and to a new conception of the functions of the State. It brought about the decay of religion and the growth of materialism. All this is but natural. Human life is a unity. It is a whole made up of interdependent parts, and the release of a vital force which affects one part—religious, political, or economic—is bound to affect the other parts also. Man craves after a proper balancing of his activities, and when the balance existing at any particular time is upset by a movement from one direction, he automatically establishes a new balance by setting in motion strong forces from other directions.

The second truth to be grasped is that human life is ever imperfect and incomplete. Progress is only relative. There are always a thousand and one obstacles to the development of human personality. Suffering and misery of one type or other are always present. The actual life of man falls very much short of the ideal conception which he is able to form of it, and the ideal can be approached not by improv-

A NEW IDEOLOGY FOR A NEW AGE?

ment in one particular field alone but by steady improvements in all fields. There is no need to regret that a movement is started to improve social conditions alone, or political conditions alone, for there is nothing like too much of progress in any one or other set of conditions. Progress in any direction is always initiated by a few individuals, the great heroes of history—a Cæsar, a Buddha, a Christ, a Marx, or a Gandhi, and the particular direction depends on the temperament of such men and on the special needs of their age. If we once recognise that there is inexhaustible scope for revolutionary changes in all spheres of human life and at all times, and if we also realise that changes in one sphere are bound to react on other spheres also, it may not be a matter of very great importance whether the revolutionary ideology is political, economic, or religious in character. Whatever the starting point, the ultimate goal will be the same.

The ideology is the central principle or doctrine in whose name a revolution is attempted. It may be a spiritual principle like the 'Path' of the Buddha, the 'Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man' of Christ; it may be a political doctrine like 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.' What is of greater importance for our purposes is the laying down of some criteria for judging the value of any ideology proposed. There are two essential points to be considered in this connection. One is whether the ideology has the momentum to gather round it a disciplined revolutionary party like, for instance, the Apostles of Christ and the early Christian martyrs. And the second, whether it is able to make an attractive and effective appeal to the masses, at least to the extent of getting from them their passive sympathy if not active co-operation. The preference which has to be given to any ideology will depend on the extent to which it is able to satisfy these requirements. For it is always to be noted that revolutions are the work primarily of disciplined and efficiently organised minorities who have a firm faith in the mission and message of a great leader. They are

the active minority who possess the courage, the daring, and the preparedness to face consequences, however serious they may happen to be,—men who do not shirk to take any measures they consider expedient and necessary for securing the end which, according to their ideology, gives meaning to life. As a revolutionary force it is valuable, not in proportion to the intrinsic truth which it embodies but to the extent to which it is able to gather round its banner a party and make an appeal to the inert masses.

Jawaharlal Nehru is now convinced that the Marxian ideology, with its emphasis on class-warfare and the abolition of private property, is what the country is in need of at present. His is an appeal to the proletariat, the landless and the capitalless labourers, the rackrented tenants, the borrowers at usurious rates of interest, to all those who are economically exploited. His ideal is the creation of a classless society in which all distinctions between the rich and the poor will disappear.

Every one is aware that this is no new ideology. Its prophet was Karl Marx and its greatest achievement is Soviet Russia. It is now about a century old and it was in its name that the Czardom and all for which the Czardom stood was overthrown. It was to defeat and destroy it that Fascism was organised in Italy and Hitlerism in Germany. Some of the leading thinkers of England sympathise with it, and in the Labour Party there are not a few who wish to adopt it completely. The emergence of this ideology in India and its triumph would mean the overthrow not merely of the zamindar and the factory-owner, the mining capitalist and the large-scale producer of steel and paper, but also of the peasant-proprietor, the petty shopkeeper and the tradesman, the tool-owning artisan and handicraftsman. The success of its regime will reduce the clerk and the manager, the machine driver and the machine designer, the mason, the architect, and the engineer to the same economic level.

The question to be considered is whether this ideology will make a better and a more effective appeal and meet with

a greater measure of practical success than the ideology of nationalism with which we have become familiar for the last thirty to forty years. Jawaharlal Nehru and its other exponents regard it as more effective in appealing to revolutionary sentiment, perhaps on the ground that it answers to a much more urgent need in our country than anything else. If there is one circumstance which is responsible for stunting the growth of Indian humanity, it is the appalling poverty of the masses. Their standard of living is horridly low. What they possess in respect of food, housing, clothing, and the other elementary needs—not to speak of comforts and luxuries—is so very much less than what any rational individual will regard as the bare minimum of subsistence. And all this in a country where there are individuals rolling in unearned wealth. The zamindar and the sowcar and the capitalist owner of big business are not unfamiliar figures, even in this land of poverty. Besides these, there are the Indian Princes and their hangers-on, wasting their crores and lakhs here and in the capitals of Europe. In recent years there has come into existence a class of professional people—lawyers, doctors, etc.,—who have been able to accumulate large fortunes. And above all come the class of government servants, whether they belong to the Heaven-born service or services like the Police, the Public Works, Revenue, Judiciary, Agriculture and Co-operation. In these Services, standards have been set by the European members whose salaries begin in hundreds and go up to thousands, and it has become possible for several Indians entering the ranks of government service with its time-scale, promotion based on seniority, and comfortable pension, to make fortunes, indulge in money-lending and absentee landlordism, and investment in city real property. Disparity between the rich and the poor is as wide here as in any Western country—and perhaps wider—and an ideology that holds out the hope that the poor will be raised to the level of the rich and economic equality achieved, is sure to attract a large section to its banner. Hunger and thirst are among the commonest instincts; and

when a doctrine is put forward which appeals to them and which professes to do away with poverty and the indefensible possessions of the rich, it may appear at the outset that it will satisfy the essential requirement of an ideology.

There is also another consideration which makes it specially efficacious at the present juncture. Middle-class unemployment has become an acute problem in this country, and many among those that are unemployed are highly trained intellectuals who have received the benefits of University education untempered, as in many countries of the West, by reverence for inherited tradition. As is known to every one, higher education in this country is exotic in its character. It has not its roots in the soil; it has not grown out of the spiritual and social traditions of the people. It is something superimposed on the youth of the land. These youths were absorbed until a few years ago into the comfortable ranks of government service or the lucrative white-collared professions. Now they find themselves unwanted everywhere, compelled to drag on a weary existence. To these the new ideology is sure to make an intellectual as well as an emotional appeal and many among them will become its faithful devotees. The economic depression which has severely hit all classes of people except the government servants, will also bring additional recruits to this cause from among the more intelligent and adventurous sections of the peasantry and businessmen who feel that, for no fault of theirs, many of them have been compelled to become bankrupts.

It, therefore, appears at first sight that the new ideology may succeed. There is also another thing in its favour. It is more concrete in character than nationalism which is the other competing ideology. To the people of this land nationalism is still an abstract idea. To grasp it requires more effort and imagination. Differences of caste and creed are so very much on the surface and impress themselves so very much on the mind and life of the average man that he is unable to see the unity of common interests beneath these differences. Among the more educated there is a vague sort

of internationalism sponsored by persons like Dr. Tagore. Even Jawaharlal Nehru regards nationalism as narrow in its outlook and a cause not so worthy of being fought for.

There are not wanting others who wish to revolutionise modern Indian life by an appeal to religion and the unfolding of a new scheme of spiritual values. No one who has studied the history of the world will deny its efficacy in bringing about a revolution. In all epochs when an appeal was made in its name, whether it was in India, in Europe, or elsewhere, thousands of men and women were prepared to sacrifice themselves and their all in its cause. The Crusades and the religious wars of sixteenth and seventeenth-Century Europe, the Maharatta and the Sikh movements in India, bear testimony to this. But may one doubt whether at present religion has any inherent vitality in it? Somehow it is at a discount in most parts of the world and so also among many of the Indian leaders. Moreover, religions in India as elsewhere have become institutionalised and have turned out to be the primary cause of strife and schism. Under these circumstances it may not be able—unless something extraordinary happens—to give the stimulus for a powerful movement.

The contest is therefore, in the main, between nationalism and Marxism as preached by Jawaharlal Nehru, and there is no reason to conclude that the latter will really and in the long run be a more attractive and successful ideology than the former, and that it has to be given a preference over the former as a workable doctrine. After all, in matters like these, it is the workability of a principle that affords the best test of its value. Even though, on a superficial examination, the new ideology appears to attract a large section of the masses, it will have to face the opposition of more or less the same forces as nationalism itself. If in this country an appeal made in the name of nationalism is found to be inadequate and to have little chance of success, an appeal in the name of Marxism cannot be expected to fare better. It may even fare worse.

The new ideology will have arraigned against it the large

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majority of the people of the country—not merely the zamindar and the capitalist but also the peasant-proprietor who is the backbone of rural India. Even the tenants in the zamindari areas have a preference for property and are anxious to become the owners of the land they are cultivating. While they may sympathise with a revolutionary movement which aims at the expropriation of the zamindar and the talukdar, they will strenuously oppose the abolition of private property. The Indian Princes will throw all their weight on the side of the existing social and economic order. And until the capitalistic order is overthrown in England itself, the Government of India established by law will strenuously oppose the new ideology with all the might of the Empire behind it. In fact the new ideology will have to face the opposition of the established government backed up by the propertied classes. And it has become clear from the events of recent years that the opposition to nationalism comes from practically the same quarters. How can one therefore hope that Marxism will succeed where nationalism is failing? And for any revolutionary movement to make progress, one has to work on the psychology of the people. Propaganda is necessary for the purpose. If propaganda in favour of nationalism is difficult because of the muzzling of the Press and the ordinance regime, is it not more difficult to carry on propaganda in favour of Marxism? There is no guarantee that the new ideology will be able to overcome the obstacles created by differences of caste and creed, that the workingmen will feel primarily that they are workingmen and not Muslims or Hindus. If in an economic fight there is a prospect of their sinking their religious differences, there is no reason to think that they will do the same in the cause of nationalism. But the difficulty is the same in either case. Communalism is rampant throughout, and if the nationalistic ideology has not yet succeeded in killing it, the new ideology will not have a better prospect.

The new ideology appeals to differences between class

A NEW IDEOLOGY FOR A NEW AGE?

and class; it will create more of faction and bitterness and hatred. It will strengthen and consolidate the forces of opposition. Nationalism as an ideology is more unifying in its character: it will create more of solidarity, and in countries where the issue between Marxism and nationalism has so far been fought, the victory has been on the side of nationalism. It will, therefore, be a wiser policy for leaders not to stress on class-war at present but carry on their struggle in the name of nationalism.

Western Influence on Bengali Literature

By JAYANTA KUMAR DASGUPTA, M.A., Ph. D (LONDON)

(Formerly Lecturer in Bengali, School of Oriental Studies, University of London)

It was in 1871 that a distinguished writer observed in the *Calcutta Review*: 'The Bengalis—the Italians of Asia, as the *Spectator* has called them—are now doing a great work by, so to speak, acclimatising European ideas and fitting them for reception hereafter by the hardier and more original races of Northern India.' More than half a century has elapsed since these words were written and the Bengalis have amply fulfilled the expectations cherished by that writer. Under the influence of the West they have not merely built up an entirely new literature but also carried to other provinces the message of the West. In the last century the largest number of good writers in Bengali belonged to that class which had most been influenced by the West. Michael Madhusudan Datta, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Romeshchandra Datta, Hemchandra Banerjee, Nabinchandra Sen looked up to the West for inspiration. As things then stood it was natural and in fact inevitable that they should be influenced by Western literature and thought, but their works do not lose in quality on this account.

Apart from the debt that individual Bengali writers owe to the West, there have been influences of various natures on the general development of Bengali literature. These influences have appeared in different ways. There has been similarity of characters. There has been indebtedness for themes. There has been suggestion or hint towards characterisation. Some writers have borrowed not only thoughts and method of expression but even the language. Similarity of ideas in the poems of Tagore and D. L. Roy led the poet Satyendranath Datta to launch a severe tirade against

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Dwijendralal. But the answer to the charge of plagiarism was furnished in a way by Satyendranath himself in the words of Shelley: 'It is impossible that any one who inhabits the same age with such writers as those who stand in the foremost ranks of our own, can conscientiously assure himself that his language and tone of thought may not have been modified by the study of the production of those extraordinary intellects.' Literary influence does not end with mere similarity of situations, language, and imagery. It furnishes new types of literary work. It opens up new lines of thought and brings in new currents and tendencies in literature. It replaces older conceptions by entirely new ideas and gives a new orientation to conventional modes of thinking. Aspects of literature hitherto neglected or ignored receive a new light after contact with newer influences.

One of the greatest boons that the West has conferred on India is the printing press, due to which there has been such a rapid expansion of literature. Towards the propagation of literature there is no greater impetus than the Press. It makes it possible even for the man of moderate means to be in touch with all that the best thinkers of the world think. Literature today has not to be handed down from one generation to another in manuscripts laboriously written on bark or palm-leaf, or on paper which cannot stand the ravages of time. It is no longer a matter of memory and improvisation. People do not depend upon memory or hearsay for the authenticity of what others say and think. Literary treasures which had been scattered at different places or buried in moth-eaten manuscripts have been recovered and printed by enterprising individuals or learned bodies. The Eastern Bengal Ballads, poems about Gopichandra and Maynamati, songs of the Vaishnava poets and Sakta writers, would have been irretrievably lost but for the enthusiasm and patient labour of a few devoted students of literature.

A distinctively literary class today occupies in Bengal a prominent position in national life and commands admiration and respect. This literary class comprises within itself various

smaller groups and sections with definite literary creeds and ideals. Though they approach literature from different angles of vision, they certainly have no quarrel as to the ultimate goal of literature and its chief function. If literature instead of belonging to the masses has become the concern of the intelligentsia, if instead of being in touch with the classes which do not fall within the category of the intellectuals it has become largely a matter for the educated people, if instead of reflecting the feelings and sentiments of people of humble extraction it speaks for members of the advanced communities, it has, on the other hand, gained in tone, general outlook, ideas and manner of expression, though losing something of its homeliness and native simplicity.

With more Western influence on our life, women are taking a keener interest in literature and a greater share in literary work. Not that we did not have learned women before the period of Western influence, but with the progress of education more women are coming to the forefront in life and taking greater burdens and responsibilities upon themselves. Women poets, novelists, and story-writers are making their mark in literature, and in their writings their own ideas about men, society, and life in general are finding adequate expression. Side by side with what men write there is also the feminine standpoint. To some extent a clash between the two sexes has been showing itself in Bengali literature, and already there are exponents of the militant mood who would not brook any more the masculine domination. But this spirit of revolt is still in a nascent stage.

With the development of literary creeds and ideals the critical spirit has grown up. Criticism, as a rule, was rare in older Bengali literature. The few works that existed, were based upon Sanskrit texts on poetics. Against the rigidities of Sanskritic codes Madhusudan Datta revolted and he used rather disparaging language about writers like the author of the *Sahitya Darpana*. The rigours placed upon dramatic construction chafed Datta and he wrote dramas basing them on the critical canons of the West. It cannot be said that th

genuine critical spirit is always to be met with among Bengali critics. Still whatever critical spirit is in evidence in our literature is the outcome mainly of Western influence. Modern criticism does not mean the annotation of texts, or the bringing out of hidden meanings which the writers themselves perhaps never intended, nor is it concerned primarily with rules of grammar, rhetoric, or prosody. It is the function of criticism to appreciate all that is good, beautiful and true in literature. It sets values upon eternal verities amidst temporary fluctuations of taste and opinion. Modern criticism devotes itself more to the inner aspect of literature than to its mere outward form.

With the growth of the spirit of criticism men have come to realise that the world does not consist of themselves alone, nor does man live by himself alone. The external world around man arouses feelings in the human heart. Feeling for Nature was almost entirely absent in older Bengali literature. Nature, whenever it was described, was described in a formal and stereotyped way. The outer world made little appeal in literature, so much engrossed it was with the inner aspect of life. The soul was so much steeped in the problems concerning itself that it had no time to think of the outer world. Even if a few imageries were borrowed in poetry from the world of Nature, they were of a rather commonplace type. Bengali poets were fond of speaking about the Kadamba tree, the river Jamuna, the groves on the banks of that river, but beyond these little was mentioned. It was not blindness to the beauties of Nature, but it was failure to understand that Nature had any life. Nature was not understood in the sense in which Shelley or Wordsworth understood it or Tagore understands it. Its 'transcendental' meaning was totally unknown in Bengali literature before the nineteenth century. Today Nature is not merely described. Its beauties are idealised. It appeals to men and women in their joys and sorrows. It responds to their feelings. Its harmonies and dissonances echo the varying moods of humanity.

Likewise the feeling for Man has undergone a change.

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No doubt in all Indian literature the sanctity of human life has always been upheld. Yet it so happened that birth in a particular caste or community gave a person superiority over another. Such distinctions did much to widen the gulf between man and man, so much so that millions of human beings are still regarded as untouchables for no fault of their own. For a time Vaishnavism cemented differences of birth. But again things became as they were before. That men belong to one vast fraternity, that there is no fundamental difference between men of different races, that the stamp of rank does not give a person precedence over others—these ideas are partially the effects of Western culture. Of course, in ancient India, mere wealth did not give a person a high place in society. The emperor in purple bowed before the ascetic in loin-cloth. Plain living and high thinking characterised older Indian life. The greatest minds lived far away from the busy haunts of men or the hum of cities. Modern industrial life has placed money-value upon man, though equality and fraternity are preached by political thinkers. Herein lies the paradox of modern life.

The sentiment of patriotism and nationalism in Bengali literature is one of the effects of Western influence. Except on rare occasions, in older Bengali writers there is not the slightest trace of the feeling of nationalism or love for one's own country. It is in the literature of the British period that these sentiments are being expressed strongly. One reason for the silence of older Bengali writers on questions of patriotism seems to lie in the fact that, in the period previous to the coming of Western influence, the people of Bengal did not regard their rulers as aliens. Therefore they were untouched by anything akin to nationalism or patriotism. Political consciousness has grown up with the march of time. Politics enunciated in theoretical works and politics as practised by men of affairs in real life, may be two different things. But in the domain of literature the ideas and aspirations that take shape in the brain of the poet and dramatist are embodied in marvellous works conveying to all ages

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message. The *Prometheus Unbound* of Shelley may be cumbersome as a stage performance but the feelings that it evokes are irrepressible. The golden days dreamt of by the poet have yet to come, but that the poem has added to human hopes is beyond dispute. In practical political matters dreamers and visionaries have little place. But men of letters are after all human beings. Their ideas, feelings and sentiments cannot be anything other than human. Literature as an expression of life must, therefore, include that which poets and men of letters think about life and death, nature and man, government and the people. In the march towards political progress literature is playing a valuable part and thus its share in constructive work is by no means insignificant.

Western influence has widened the subject-matter of modern Bengali literature. In the past Bengali literature was concerned mostly with some religious cults which advocated the worship of particular deities. The main theme of literary works was the worship of a god or goddess, and interwoven with it was the story of devotees receiving boons and favours. In Kavi Kankan's *Chandi*, Srimanta's fortunes rise and fall as the favours of the goddess increase or decrease. In the *Manasamangal* all misfortunes of the merchant Chand disappear when he begins the worship of the goddess Manasa. In Bharatchandra's *Annadamangal* the goddess has her own favourites and the whole poem has a religious background. The religious element plays a more important part in these poems than the human interest, and the human characters are wholly subordinated to the divine beings. Their lives and actions are regulated by divine wrath and pleasure. In such an atmosphere, naturally, character creation became a subsidiary affair. No varied treatment of character was possible and nothing very original could be depicted. In many poems the characters were similarly drawn. Imitativeness introduced monotony and most writers were content to restrict themselves to what their predecessors had done and to get the materials from some common source. Boldness of

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conception, originality in outlook, novelty in characterisation, skilful handling of complex situations were rare literary qualities among older writers. The standard of taste of the public was not always high and a poor standard often produced mediocre literature. The vastness of the subject-matter of literature has introduced exuberance of fancy, complexity of emotions, and heightened imaginativeness. Technique has become simplified. The highest thoughts are clothed in lucid language. There is no over-ornamentation. Variety has replaced uniformity. The personality of the writer for which there was so little place in older Bengali literature, finds today an adequate expression. The note of subjectivity which is a marked feature of the literature of the West has led to the replacement of the classic strains of older Indian literature by personal lyrics in modern Bengali.

Notable among the various types of literary composition introduced under the influence of the West are the novel, the short story as distinguished from the fairy or folk-tale, the sonnet, the ode, the elegy, the parody, the satire, the essay, etc. But most important of all has been the foundation of a prose literature. The Bengali prose that existed before the period of Western influence, was a conglomeration of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, and Urdu words and it had no proper style worth the name. The making of Bengali prose has mainly been the work of writers nurtured in the school of Western thought. Indeed it is sometimes complained of that much of modern Bengali prose reads like translation of English. 'English-smacking Bengali' is often a term of reproach. Towards the simplicity of style and raising it to purity, sweetness, suggestiveness, force, and precision, and purging it of obscurity, heaviness and all unnecessary rhetorical flourishes, Western influence has done much.

There is a spirit of progress and advancement. Writers in previous ages did not have the courage to rise above certain conventions and certain hackneyed situations. It would have been unseemly, had a writer of the Vaishnava period thought of Radha in the same light as Bankimchandra

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could think of his heroines, because Radha was the symbol of something divine. An eighteenth-century Bengali writer could not have the faintest idea that there could be women as we find in the novels of Rabindranath or Saratchandra. A love-intrigue like the Vidyasundar story in the hands of Bharatchandra could not rise above the vulgar description of a court-scandal. Many of our modern heroines would be shameless hussies according to the literary tenets of the past. Vaishnava writers could not think of love as anything more than the yearning of the human soul for the divine. But love as the affection of one human soul for another, love as the call of one spirit to another kindred spirit, love as the means of uniting human hearts were ideas somewhat foreign to older Bengali writers. The Sakta conception of love as found in the songs of men like Ramprasad was love as maternal solicitude for her children. The treatment of human love is to some extent noticed in the songs of Sridhar Kathak, Ram Basu, and Nidhu Babu. But beyond certain aspects of love such as 'separation' (*viraha*) and 'union' (*milan*) the imagination of these poets did not soar. There is no place in their love-poems for those complex emotions which characterise the love-poems of Tagore.

Critics of the most advanced school in the last century were of opinion that Bengali literature has been partially denationalized in the course of its contact with the West. That such a situation should arise was inevitable. A discrimination was not always possible. Under the pressure of circumstances limits are sometimes forgotten; there is an encroachment on forbidden ground, and the sense of balance is lost. The westernisation of Bengali literature could not be avoided during times when influences were so strongly working and impressions were so vivid. To rise above the tide of Westernism was well nigh an impossibility. Occidentalism in thought led to an occidentalism in literature. With the marvellous spirit of adaptability that is a characteristic gift of the people of Bengal, they have assimilated Western influence in a manner which has led to the steady development of Bengali literature.

The Future of Tamil Literature

By A. V. Ś.

When a nation is struggling to be free and is passing through all the strife and turmoil incidental to such struggle, it is apt to ignore the fundamental fact that national life is a vast and many-sided entity and covers very much more than mere political activity. It must be remembered that no nation can be called great that has no great living literature of its own, for literature is the imperishable record of the thought and genius of a race and hence a sure index of its vitality.

What is the future of Tamil literature? This is the question that must confront every thinking Tamilian. So far as the literary and cultural heritage of the Tamils is concerned, it can stand comparison with the ancient and medieval literature and culture of any people in the world, notwithstanding the absence of Prose, or Dramatic literature. But if we take modern literature into account, the Tamils cannot make a similar claim, for the output of creative literature in Tamil is very small indeed. The very mass and brilliance of the ancient heritage of the Tamils have become dead-weights, impeding progress.

It is only natural that this state of affairs should have stimulated lovers of Tamil to some activity and made them furiously think. It is a good sign so far as it reflects a will to strive and improve. But conferences and organisations cannot do anything considerable unless a sound and discriminating public opinion is created in the world of Tamil letters on matters pertaining to literary and cultural tastes, standards, and judgments. No improvement in modern Tamil literature is possible until we have a new race of Tamil scholars who can add, to an erudition in Tamil literature, a completely assimilated knowledge of any modern European language and literature. Unless this is boldly recognised nothing can be

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done. This can never imply any disparagement of the pandits and scholars of the old type who have preserved and transmitted intact to us, by their laborious toil and prodigious memory, the literary treasures of countless generations of the Tamils and whose masterly learning and erudition are worthy of great admiration.

The modern age which, for Europe, began in the fifteenth century with the Renaissance and invention of the art of printing, has, for us, the Tamils, begun only very recently. Though we live in the twentieth century and are chronologically abreast of the modern nations of the West, and though we have a full view of the magnificent triumphs of the modern spirit in the realms of Science, Art, and a new Religion of Humanity, we are only just beginning to shake off the dust of the medieval age. The transformation from the medieval to the modern has presented great difficulty, so far as our temperament, ideals, outlook on life, and mental make-up are concerned, though the process has been comparatively easy in the matter of the externals of life. It appears that the time is far, when there will be a complete efflorescence of the modern spirit in the life of the Tamils.

The application of the modern spirit to, and its reflection in, literature must be the mission of all men of letters of the present age in our country; this must give direction to all creative talent; the awakening of the modern spirit in the people must be their religion. In what does this awakening exactly consist? Matthew Arnold, whose contribution to the general principles of literary criticism is far more valuable than his application of the same in assessing poets and men of letters, answers the question thus: 'Modern times find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward; yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary, not rational. The awakening of this sense is the

awakening of the modern spirit.' While dealing with modern Tamil literature, one must keep this in view and take into account only that portion of our literature in which the modern spirit has found expression, in however imperfect a form it may be.

Literary criticism, in its modern development, is practically unknown to Tamil literature, though the grammar, the range and rules of the technique of literary compositions; and the laws of prosody have attained a high degree of development. The hold of authoritarianism, which was very powerful in the literary, as in other aspects of the life of the community, was fatal to the growth of independent thinking and an intelligent development of likes and dislikes on the basis of a highly cultivated æsthetic taste. The tendency to subordinate literature to religion, which became dominant in the hymnal period and has continued to be so ever since, was also another important factor that hindered the development of correct conceptions and a table of pure literary values.

Half a century of the labour of Tamil scholars has not resulted in literary criticism of a high order. The work of bringing to print the classics of Tamil literature is a very indispensable one and that has been achieved with a success and thoroughness on which the Tamils can congratulate themselves. Besides this, the only work that the scholars have taken upon themselves is that of research into the names of authors, their dates, and other particulars about their lives and works. In spite of great labour spent by a host of scholars, the positive and certain results achieved in this direction have not been considerable. Nothing definitely historical has been unearthed about the greatest Tamil poets. Genuine historical materials have been very scanty; and what little of history we have, has come down to us adulterated beyond recognition, with a large volume of legends and myths from which it is extremely difficult, if not thoroughly impossible, to extract indisputable facts. Naturally, a good deal of speculation and guess work have been indulged in, in the name of research and this has passed muster for the genuine

coin. A severe application of a strict rational method is essential if the results of research should carry weight. A tendency to dismiss all legends, myths, and miraculous incidents regarding the lives of poets and the origin of their works ought to be promoted with religious zeal in the literary world. Scholars ought to turn their attention towards literary criticism, in its aspect of the study of the fundamental principles of literature and the judgment of all classics according to modern principles of criticism.

The world of Tamil letters is just now emerging out of one of its darkest periods; it has, for long, fortified itself by a comforting and deceptive satisfaction in the fulness of past achievement and glory and shut its doors against the modern spirit and ideas; but the spirit of the age is at work and is shattering this snug self-complacency. The impact of modern civilisation has awakened in the people a new spirit that is slowly, but steadily, spreading and making itself felt, though it is still groping in the dark for fulness of artistic expression. The freedom and the richness of national life, so indispensable for the birth of creative art, are wanting.

The Tamil Muse that once held the kings of this land captive under her spell and inspired her bards to the most sublime heights of expression in Poetry seems to have now fallen on evil days; her glory and power to inspire seem to be gone for ever. She is suffering, on the one hand, from the blind adoration of the old-world pandits who keep her in chains and enthuse over her wrinkled visage, withered charms, and lost splendour, and, on the other, from the cold neglect of people who have had the benefit of modern education, who simply ignore her. The voice of those who belong to neither group, who are neither Philistines nor scoffers, who want to assess, with legitimate pride, our literary heritage at its proper worth and make it a fountain of never-failing inspiration to modern effort, who feel the need of a living growth and a modern orientation in Tamil literature, does not go forth with authority and prestige sufficient to compel respectful attention.

The time has come when the method of study of Tamil literature has to be drawn away from its old moorings. Tamil literature and the Tamil poets have to be studied from the standpoint of the principles of modern literary criticism and evaluated afresh. To make this possible a wide diffusion of modern culture through the medium of Tamil is absolutely essential. It is clear that the Tamil pandits of the present day, most of whom are, in spite of their erudition, strangers to modern culture, cannot make any effective contribution to bring about this consummation.

It has been an accepted view with Tamil scholars and poets that scholarship in Tamil will not be perfect and fruitful without proficiency in Sanskrit literature and culture. This is a perfectly sound view. Extending this idea, I should like to add that, in the present age, Tamil pandits who have scholarship only in Tamil, or even in Tamil and Sanskrit together, will not do and that sound scholarship in Tamil literature is now impossible without proficiency in any modern Western language and literature. For us in India, English has taken this place. The teaching of Tamil in schools and colleges therefore, should be entrusted to scholars who have a good grounding in English literature and modern culture.

The appearance of great poets and geniuses is not governed by any known law, but it is clear that when they do appear the atmosphere must sustain them and be congenial for their development. The deepest energies and impulses of a people, from which flow the springs of all great creative art, must be ever active. The impulse to creation is inherent in geniuses and will manifest itself under any circumstances; yet, it can find its greatest scope only if the life is rich and the atmosphere dynamic. For instance, Subrahmanya Bharati, the only great name in modern Tamil literature, was a genius of rare gifts and creative power. In his work, the modern spirit has found as full and artistic an expression as is possible among a people whose creative activity has fallen low during an age of transition from the medieval to the modern. If the life of the Tamils had been richer, and their culture

more vivifying, he would have left us poetical work of the highest kind and gained an assured place in the very summit of Tamil poetry. As it is, he has left us some of the finest lyrics and small poems, which are, like the smaller lyrics of Shelley whom he resembles most in several respects, absolutely imperishable. These, however, fall short of that measure of quality and quantity required of the poets of the very highest class, a class to which Kamban and Kalidasa belong.

The Tamils are undoubtedly passing through a period of Renaissance. It may take a long time for their life to find fulness of expression and achievement. The speed can, however, be accelerated by organised movements to kindle the dormant literary and cultural conscience of the people. Scientific literature and literature on modern thought, artificially produced, without the Tamilian spirit and outlook on life becoming modern and rational, will be a failure. Will lovers of Tamil recognise this and try to create a sound public opinion in the literary world, and help the modernising of the literary and cultural outlook of the Tamils by weaning it away from its medieval moorings?

The Working Classes and the Future Constitution

By V. V. GIRI, BAR-AT-LAW

(General Secretary, The All-India Railwaymen's Federation)

The subject of the future constitution of our country, as outlined in the White Paper has by now apparently received exhaustive criticism on the part of the intelligent public. Nevertheless, the view-point of organised labour has not attracted adequate public attention.

It is generally agreed that the future constitution will be retrograde in removing certain matters outside the sphere of activity of the legislatures, *viz.*, questions relating to the Army, the Railway Board, and the Reserve Bank. The financial safeguards proposed and the arbitrary powers, under the plea of special responsibility, vested in the Governor-General and the Governors will make the legislatures more powerless. Similarly, the British element in the public services will be under the proper control of a popular Minister. The number of legislators necessary for the working of the future constitution will be very considerably increased, from 872 between 1500 and 1750 in the provincial legislatures also costing to local governments about Rs. 66 lakhs, and to candidates above Rs. 100 lakhs at every general election, let alone the cost of elections to the federal legislature. Nor has any provision been made to establish a Statutory Economic Council though recommended by the Whitaker Commission, in the Constitution Act, to ensure the establishment of a machinery for tackling the economic problem of the country with the utmost efficiency and expedition, without going through the cumbersome process incidental to legislative action in the future councils. There is no provision indicated for progressive increase of political power to the country in a reasonable period of time.

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The proposed classification of subjects to fix the respective jurisdiction of the provincial and federal authorities is equally unsatisfactory. Labour would not prefer a federal form of government to a unitary type, for the simple reason that the desire of the working classes is to discourage divergent action on the part of the legislatures and encourage inter-provincial and inter-national unity, even feebly, on the principle that the interests of the workers are identical everywhere. In this connection, it will be relevant to point out that France and Italy originally tried to modify the Versailles Treaty in such a manner that a Convention adopted by the International Labour Conference may be automatically binding, without requiring individual ratification on the part of the States-Members. It is indeed regrettable that this attempt was successfully opposed by other countries. The difficulty experienced in federal countries like the United States and Canada in bringing about uniformity of labour legislation has been very considerable. Recently, a delegate of the American Federation of Labour, addressing the British Trades Union Congress, significantly pointed out that while it was difficult enough to get a favourable legislative measure passed in Great Britain, it was almost impossible to do so throughout the United States, because the British workers had to face opposition only in one parliament while the American workers had to fight in 48 parliaments.

The same position will be experienced in our country when the Federation is inaugurated. In the evidence given before the Joint Select Committee, the Secretary of State stated that, while power of labour legislation will be generally concurrent in federal and provincial legislatures, the provincial governments which will administer labour legislation under the new constitution will have a great voice in shaping labour measures passed by the federal legislature.

It may also be pointed out that while Railways will be a federal subject, Roads will be outside the purview of the federal legislature. Similarly, the legislation on health, insurance, and relief to the poor will be exclusively provincial subjects.

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Examining the question of the classes that will share the small political power that will result out of the future constitution, or in other words, the franchise which will send legislators, it will be seen that communalism will become rampant and communal electorates will serve to perpetuate religious and caste distinctions. The franchise is mainly based on property qualification, and needless to say there is no provision for adult franchise even on a voluntary basis as in Ceylon. The politically minded section will not be necessarily confined to the enfranchised electorate, and such of them as are not enfranchised have no hope of redress except through the exercise of some influence over the 14 per-cent. enfranchised adult population.

While every important section including the women receives some representation or other, the vast majority of agricultural labourers have no direct place in the future constitution. In defence of this arrangement, the Lothian Committee states: 'As regards his interests as an employer we feel that in addition to the influence which the relatively small number of electors of the agricultural labourer class be able to exercise through their fellow agriculturists, their representatives in the legislatures, the representative labour in the legislatures may be relied upon to interpose themselves broadly in their welfare as wage-earners.' The Lothian Committee forgot to note is 'that it is not sufficient that some party interests itself in the welfare of others but that there should be sufficient representation of interest. Labour, besides being under-represented, will be lost in the opposition of agricultural, industrial, and commercial capital, both European and Indian.

The recent evidence given by the Secretary of State admittedly shows that reservation of seats for Europeans exclusively is for the purpose of giving representation to European capitalists as such. In the Federal Assembly Labour will secure 10 out of the 250 seats allotted for British India. But this will be more than offset by 26 seats (7, 19 reserved for land-holders, commerce and industry,

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European interests. In the provincial legislatures, out of 1585 seats, Labour gets 38 seats while capitalists have reserved seats numbering 119 (26, 56, 37) from European, Commerce and Industrial, and Land-holders' constituencies. In the Federal Council of State, Labour has no direct representation at all.

Even the representation of industrial labour, wherever recognised, is further handicapped by the exclusion of certain sections of the workers, like the clerical and supervisory staff, from the electorate. The average cost of election to a seat for the candidate will range between Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 25,000 according to the Lothian estimates. The present inadequacy and poverty of labour organisations will discourage running costly election campaigns and there is no chance for a labour candidate being successful in a general constituency.

No provision is contemplated to embody in the future constitution a declaration of fundamental rights guaranteeing to the workers freedom of speech, association, and press for legitimate Trade Union purposes, right to work, right to strike and to receive State assistance in case of social risks.

In the circumstances, when the propertied classes are themselves keenly dissatisfied with the future constitution as transferring no real power to this country from the British vested interests, it can hardly be expected that the working classes will rest satisfied with the constitution proposed in the White Paper.

The Bride Waits

(A Short Story)

By K. S. VENKATARAMANI

I

C. Subramania Sastri was a Sub-Inspector in the Salt and Abkari Department of the Government of Madras. In those spacious days the salt department was something like a joint Hindu family and the humiliating distinction of provincial and imperial was not known.

After a penal term of five years in the malarial district of Cuddapah and Kurnool, Subramaniam was just then being smiled on by fortune in the fertile Salavedu range of the Arr Circle. And Salavedu was a coveted range for the fine 'extras' it yielded on a generous scale. Indeed the Sub-Inspector of Salavedu was a little Rockefeller to the starving local republic.

Salavedu is an immense plain on the arid level tract from Acharapakam to Wandiwash, and truly has the parental air of great battlefields. Wherever the soil is a trifle fertile fed by some jungle stream, the palmyra grows in splendid clustres darkening the horizon. Palmyra is the true-born of the sandy plains of South India and the darling of the abkari department. It is a source of revenue to the mighty Government of Madras and the humble abkari Sub-Inspector. It yields to the tapping hand of the government three rupees a tree, and to the patting hand of the Sub-Inspector one anna, with an additional fourth share therein allotted to the legion of six peons who worry the soul of *gramanias*,¹ like a troop of wild ants in the bosom of a loaf of brown bread.

C. Subramania Sastri's entry into the salt department was one of the tricks of Providence. He came of a very distinguished

¹ Shop renters.

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family of Sanskrit pandits who had won renown by original excursions into Vedantic lore, in the shape of commentaries, and also enriched their lives by many *yagams*.¹ Dialectics was in his blood like juice in grape or sugar in sugarcane and Subramaniam would have made freely his mark as a great pandit.

But according to the Time-spirit of the early seventies he was put to English education. He was a student of the Madras Christian College and one of the early batch who studied Shakespeare under the Rev. William Miller. He imbibed the spirit of Shakespearian tragedy so well at college that he used to recite 'To be or not to be' with dry and solemn majesty, his eyes twinkling the soul's misery in the salt department, whenever he failed to balance his own budget or to adjust some intricate arithmetic of an arrack shop, dreading all the while of the black mark that would impede his promotion, from rupees thirty to forty *per mensem*, pending so long.

Subramaniam was a brilliant boy at college but had a serious attack of illness while appearing for the F.A., and he fared miserably in algebra. His convalescence, hastened by the nearness of the examination, quickened his insight into the psychology of Shakespearian character but worked disaster to the exact science of algebra and geometry.

Subramaniam had always felt that the inner call of his career and of his own inheritance of qualities was the call to the Bar. But after failure in F.A., 'B.A., B.L.' seemed impossible, for he had married early and God had already blessed him with two children, the eldest born a daughter. His inheritance was slender and his all-powerful elder brother had refused him any more supplies of money hard-earned from agriculture. Therefore, Subramaniam had to enter life, leaving the sweet pleasures of further Shakespearian study and the dreams of a fine career at the Bar: he had a stentorian voice, and he thought that it was the ripest qualification for a successful advocate.

¹ Sacrifices.

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Subramaniam's fellow tenant was a clerk in the excise department at Chepauk. He introduced him to his chief who, attracted by the comely, graceful and lance-like figure, and clear-shining Brahmin face of Subramaniam, appointed him to a clerk's place. After three years of drudgery at the desk, and city life which his wife hated, he escaped one day to the wilds of the interior as a *sub-pro-tem* Sub-Inspector on the regimental scale of thirty rupees a month. Thanks to the one anna which the benevolence of the palmyra yielded, in spite of the malevolence of man, Subramaniam and Sundari, his wife, led a happy though not rich life till they came to Salavedu range, except of course for occasional storms in the domestic teacup which only made the flavour of life the richer.

II

'Ah, dear, you'll never learn to trim the sails to the passing wind, risk the worm on hand to catch the big fish in the sea. If only you had promptly sent the two tins of ghee to the camp-clerk to the A.C. (the Assistant Commissioner) why, there would have been no transfer at all to arid Cuddapah and this waste of five years—what a loss! We should have saved by now really five thousand rupees, ready for Pattu's marriage—two tins of ghee, what a magic charm in our life!'

Subramaniam bore bravely this indictment of him by his own partner, and slowly answered grinding his teeth with a fine air of discontent.

'Yes, you are right, Sundari. Two tins of ghee have wrought a miracle five years ago . . . and ghee, you know, is a holy gift to another according to our sastras. In this case it would have gone to soak and flavour a dish of *pilao*.¹

'What is the use of polished irony or bitter words? Life's rough ways have got to be trodden as they are every day? You have to stoop a little even if you want

¹ Savoury dish of meat and rice.

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pick up a flower from the earth. You should learn these little arts of life, if only for the sake of our dear Pattu.'

'Stoop till I'm trodden over, and my back is broken, and I'm humbled to dust by fellows of yesterday who roam about as camp-clerks; no, not even for dear Pattu's sake. What's the urgency about Pattu's marriage now? She can wait three years and more; a husband for her, God-anointed, will surely come like the ant that finds its way to the drop of honey. Sundari, we have made many beautiful things in life odious by the mere touch of our vile human hands. . . .'

'You are as usual out on your philosophic nothing—but Pattu is completing twelve this *Ani*¹ . . . but that we are in this desert, the voice of social pressure and odium would have reached us long time ago. We should have married our Pattu even last year while at Cuddapah. She surely takes after me and it is perilous to keep her unmarried for a month longer: risk the happiness of our darling's whole life by your laziness and lack of thrift.'

'That is just what you propose doing now by your hastiness and extravagance,' Subramaniam roared in a husky voice.

Subramaniam felt the revolt surging in his blood which was charged with the grained orthodoxy of fourteen generations. In some measure this instinctive revolt had its partial fulfilment in the choice of his vocation—the daily sour odour of toddy dilating the refined Brahmin nostrils of one who was ordained by the sastras to inhale daily the smoke of ghee burnt with the sacred *arasam*² twigs.

Under the powerful spell of English education and the heap of reprints of R. P. A., Subramaniam's mind had already opened up new windows of thought. He had secretly cherished the thought of not making Pattu's marriage a hasty eleventh-hour mess. Pattu would get her God-appointed husband in the fulness of time. The ripe plum in the tree: does it coo for the bird to come and peck at it? Let Pattu win

¹ Tamil month corresponding to June—July.

² Peepul.

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her lord as in the old spacious days of Vedic India. But he thought that he must adopt a different line of action and argument to convince his wife, and began in a soft conciliatory tone, 'Dear, you know best how we stand; we can't manage the money to marry Pattu decently this year or even the next?'

'What about the village lands in the grip of your elder brother? It does not yield us a bag of rice, a *seer*¹ of tamarind per year. Why keep it only to pamper your respectable *anna*²—sell it or mortgage it—'

'Sell it or mortgage it to whom? *Anna* is all in all in our village and near about—to raise a loan? that is impossible.'

'What about the palmyra season? You were describing to me only the other day that this Salavedu range was a veritable silver mine, two thousand rupees extra per year; you promised even an *abhishekam*³ to our Lord of the Seven Hills if no extra inspection of A.C or D.C. came off during the mining season, and if you were kept on to this place for three more years.'

'But dear, nobody would lend us now on such uncertain credit.'

'But somehow we should celebrate the marriage year. If you give up your laziness for a moment and stir round our district a tithe as carefully as you patrol the palmyra wastes, you will certainly be able to secure for our son Pattu a decent boy in the B.A., whom we may pay a thousand rupees on hand and for the balance undertake education for the B.L.'

'Dear, now you are certainly planning very ably instalment system; you have something of your father's constructive skill.' Her father was a well-known tout *vakil gumastha*⁴ recognised to be the ablest hand at writing a plaint or an affidavit for weak causes.

This compliment of Subramaniam mollified Sundari a little, who took it seriously. She stood more at ease, with

¹Weight equal to 3/5 lb.
²Ablutions to the Deity.

³Elder brother.
⁴Lawyer's clerk.

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left hand angling at the waist. And Subramaniam after a decent pause of responsive, eager, admiring look reconnoitered a little and ventured to begin, 'It's no doubt a good idea, yours, dear. But the palmyra season begins only in March and finishes by the end of July and the collections all come in in dribblets only towards the end of July or early in August, and you know the marriage season ends before it.'

'Well, then,—' Sundari began a fresh plan. 'Let us send round our district ahead of us our Dorasu—'

'Our Dorasu! you mean your brother Dorasu! What is he fit for, I wonder; I'm surprised that a sensible lady like you—'

'He may not be good at cramming books and passing examinations but he is fit for collecting good horoscopes, and all say that he is a very plucky hand that way.'

'But he is such a spendthrift, dear; who can trust him with silver? It will surely go either to coffee clubs or to cing girls. He will bill me first-class travelling allowance, waste his time and our money, and post us a few false horoscopes. We have had enough of him early in our lives at Iras. I'll not have him on any account, not even for your wedding.'

'No wonder you talk like this. If it lay with you, you wouldn't have me even or our own dear Pattu, but spend your days pleasantly with these drunken fellows, your peons, in the palmyra forests, under the shade of toddy-shops. Our Dorasu must act for us or tell me at once some one who will do all this responsible task, or I myself will go home and do the task as best as a woman can.'

'I'll think of it all and tell you next week.' Subramaniam, a reverent student of *Hamlet* who scored the highest marks in Shakespeare, could never be surprised into a decisive action.

'Think of it! that means you are not going to think at all.' We are already at the beginning of March and tomorrow you are going out on a long camp with the first batch of a hundred tapping applications—instead of horoscopes.' Sun-

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dari was in an unusually perturbed state and showed such a decided fighting mood that it was clear she would carry her point.

C. Subramania Sastri reflected for a while pencilling his finger and tapping it on his lips. With charm in his voice and sadness in his face he spoke, 'Sundari, today you are in a very unreasoning mood; you speak as if I had no responsibility for Pattu's marriage. Pattu is as much my daughter as yours. Money is not the only point now, there is yet another peril. The moment I apply for leave for my daughter's marriage—even supposing I'm so lucky as to get it sanctioned by the A.C.,—I shall be surely transferred to a barren range; then you are off for ever from Salavedu and its silver mines. I hear already that the S. I. of Thular is intriguing for this range, ready with tins of ghee and a n' Bangalore saree. We shall on our return get only a station at the foot of the Javadi Hills—full of mosquitoer malaria.'

Sundari was flaming red in the face. 'There's no your objections and arguments. I've known them so. You are not the man to act. You can cast account. I'll be at the desk even when our home is on fire. I'll be for Dorasu. You may keep quiet at home drinking the of coffee and casting toddy accounts.'

'Why, dear, you are becoming of late quite unreasoning about Pattu. Where is the need for hurry? Let her grow a little more into a perfect girl full of health and strength, a mind that has grown to know itself and the glory of marriage.'

Sundari wasted no more words in reply to this confession of faith of a social reformer. She was long standing or *reli*¹ with a cup of coffee in her hand, as if she would with it only after extracting a promise from her husband that he would make honest attempts at Pattu's marriage this year. Now she got out of control, she flightily placed with a t

¹ Pial.

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the *lota*¹ and pushed it angrily towards her husband as if it were a toy motor-car or a perambulator. *Lotas*, not blessed with wheels, go ill together with angry wives,—or husbands? It simply fell on its face in one mute act of worshipful protest both of Subramaniam and of Sundari, and of this domestic discord. The coffee flowed out in a clear black rill by the side of the S. I., and fell in a little cascade from the pial to the ground. And the *lota* span a little, and looked woe-begone like a badly hit spectator in a wrestling match.

Pattu was sitting in the open courtyard with an illustrated book, seeming intent on it but really interested in this conversation. Subramaniam now raised his eyes and gazed on her with proud joy, if only for the perfect rendering of facial outline and pigment of the skin that was all his own.

The flowing rill of coffee and the grinding protest of the decided the issue once for all. Indeed Sundari was never rough or agitated all her life, and something unknown and mysterious to his rank Masculine must be the reason for this of the Eternal Feminine, and the urgency of Pattu's marriage this year. He must gracefully yield hereafter. These were the quick reflections with which Subramaniam watched the winding progress of the thin line of coffee which cascaded to the ground.

III

C. Subramaniam had not the full benefit of the palmyra season of the famous Salavedu range. That he had applied for leave for his daughter's marriage got wind,—the salt tinels of six blood hounds, what are they for if not to ferret out domestic secrets which have so intimate a bearing on their official fortunes? The toddy-shop renters, apprised of their good luck for the year of changing S. I.s in the middle of the palmyra season, withheld their *mamools*² to Subramaniam with the finest and most gracious of assurances of payment with the next batch of tapping applications. Still,

¹ Cup.

² Tips.

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thanks to the fate of energy and the driving power of need; Subramaniam had succeeded in collecting over five hundred rupees of exquisite silver and copper, in all stages of emaciated and over-thumbed currency whose relatively final haven of rest in this restless world is the toddy-shop.

Subramaniam tried another day another chance with Sundari, pleading that five hundred rupees would not cover even the cost of exploring for a son-in-law in the maze of villages in the Tanjore district, and that it was not yet too late to cancel his leave and save Salavedu. But what does a roving S. I., with no headquarters according to rules, know of the pulsing anxiety and the melancholy hours of an Indian mother over the marriage of her daughter before the sodium crashes into her ears like thunder, even if whispered secret? Sundari finally clinched the matter by promising her jewellery for a pledge, to be of course redeemed the palmyra season. That was earnestness indeed, and her husband, thoughtful or otherwise, can afford to ignore such offer of outstanding merit, if only for the sake of the elements of his own nature.

So Subramaniam left Salavedu even with some gaps in his matrimonial researches for his darling Pattu. Some time ago his brother-in-law, for a remittance of rupees fifty, secured four horoscopes, two being dilapidated old maps in the marriage market the third time, with known and unknown liabilities. With this precious load in his portfolio, which was itself a clever chronicle of many imaginary inspections of shops and *topes*, Subramaniam with Sundari and Pattu arrived one cloudy morning in their village of Alar on the banks of the Cauvery.

Sundari had not been to Alangadu for over twelve years. Her vital problem, of course, was her sister-in-law who was as masterful as *anna* himself. She was quite a sterile cooing affair who burnt with jealousy at the sight of Sundari's jewellery, her accomplished daughter and promising boy. It was a joint family in which the elder, supported by an aged mother who believed in befriending the man or

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t, gave *nil* return of mesne profits year after year with perfect audacity to his younger brother.

For the sake of darling Pattu whose marriage no son-in-law would agree to celebrate in the wilds of Salavedu, she was prepared to put up with her sister-in-law quietly for a month. But on the very day of her arrival she had hints from her husband sufficient to get alarmed. 'Supposing she declares for sheer malice in secret whispers to the gossiping widows of Alangadu that our grown-up and well-built Pattu had already come of age—red ruin will track our way if such a vile and false rumour were set afloat by her.'

So she spurred her husband to declare his position as S. I. of Salavedu with an extra income of two thousand rupees a year, and one not to be trifled with. Of course Subramaniam did his best to indicate his adolescence in the august presence of his elder brother. Meanwhile Sundari prayed to the family God at Swamimalai that the critical month of *Ani* may pass smoothly and fruitfully, with a son-in-law to welcome her for Deepavali on a grand scale at Salavedu. How many requests in one prayer for one cocoanut? But the phant-god Ganesha, still a bachelor, to whom all these prayers are addressed, is no match for these agile members of the fair sex.

IV

It was indeed a critical month for C. Subramania Sastri. He plunged heroically into his work on hand—after all he was by vocation a man of action,—only nobody can do two things at a time well—dispose of tapping applications as well as horoscopes. But he was practically an exile from his own district for over fifteen years, and did not know the nuances and modes of approach to its decadent but refined life. This refinement involves a complex code of diplomacy rivalled only by the tangled politics of Central Europe today. He knew all the conventions and intricacies of the marriage market. Therefore, he had to co-opt very reluctantly the eminently diplomatic services of his brother-in-law Dorasu, saturated in

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the cleverness and conventions of Tanjore. Dorast him in one whirlwind tour from station to station, exhausted the latest developments in theatre, and in musicians including of course some pretty dancing girls just budding into flower.

The day-time was used laboriously for the collection and scrutiny of horoscopes, and no two astrologers said the same thing. How could they in such a sublime subject and with so many stars speaking such a jargon!—and no stars care to add their mystic tale of charm to the poor man-worm crawling on his belly. Really it appeared to Subramaniam that Patu's husband had not yet been born in the Tamil land. No boy of twenty would care to think of a girl unless his inheritance was doubled by that alliance—a rupee fetched a rupee, often a bad rupee fetching a good one.

V

C. Subramania Sastri's five hundred rupees dwindled during these travels of search and research to rupees fifty—enough to cover his retreat back to Salavedu on the eve of his leave. Three weeks of *Ani* had passed and Subramaniam had gained enough experience to know that on the rainy season and its gains had to be sacrificed if even Patu should get married. Odious it looked to his rational and cultured outlook on life—he was an *apastamba*,¹—that marriage, the most sacred and beautiful institution of the Tamil land, should have become such a dead-end affair in the Tamil land, to a government servant such an impossibility.

Subramaniam returned home just at break of dawn on the 25th of *Ani*. And Patu was drawing the *kolam*² in front of the house in lines of exquisite grace and symmetry, matched only by her own beauty. She greeted her father with a tender and anxious smile; her eyes put the question as to the destiny which her tongue dared not. She stood lovely, gazing at her father, like a pomegranate bud in its ripening hour. Subramaniam's heart sank within him as if changed to lead by this sight of gold.

¹ Ritual sect.

² Decorations done with rice flour.

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His elder brother came out of the house and greeted him with a merry twinkle in his sly and far-seeing eyes. He often explained his own infertility that in this *kalyuga* it was not worth while bringing forth children into this conflicting and cruel world. He placed a long official envelope in Subramaniam's hands and said: 'Suppu, don't be angry with me. I charge me with indifference. I've got ready all the hundred things needed for the marriage. Here are a fifty *suvarina* poles and three thousand *keetu*¹ for the marriage *andal*. I've husked thirty *kalams*² of paddy in a day. The books, the *molakkaran*³ everything is ready. Have you settled the Budalur boy? I think he would prove the best boy for our *uttu*, though indeed somewhat above our status. Is't the 31st *Ani*, the wedding day you have fixed?'

The elder brother, a veteran in the field of life and the uses of others, used the utmost narrative skill in his speech, and he had already read the story of the marriage from the glowing face and the moist eyes of Suppu. And he had also the official letter read out to him and translated in secret.

The office memo from the Arni Circle read as follows:—

Subramaniam, VI grade, S. I. of Salavedu Range has been transferred to Moolakkadu Range, Polur Circle. To join immediately on expiry of leave.

Yes, Moolakkadu, as its very name so deftly suggests, is at the foot of the Javadi Hills, full of deadly malaria and mosquitoes. The very mention of its name is enough to send a thrill of pain to any S. I., however chronic and listless be his share of life in the Salt and Abkari Department of the Government of Madras.

¹ Thatches.

² Denotes a quantity.

³ Piper.

Kathakali, and Other Forms Bharata Natya

By V. RAGHAVAN, B. A., (Hons.)

I

It is sometime now since the Kathakali of Malabar has begun to attract the attention of 'art-lovers,' and the Kerala I mandalam of Vallathol is being sought by artists who are eager to become exponents of Indian Dance. We are much interested at present in the English literature that has recently grown up on this subject. Four articles have appeared in this part of the country: two in the *Triveni*, one in the *Hindu Illustrated Weekly*, and one in the *Journal of Annamalai University*. Besides these stray articles there is the small publication of the Archaeological Department of Travancore Government which gives a short treatment of Kathakali by Mr. R. V. Poduval, Superintendent of the Department. The pamphlet describes Kathakali and adds two supplementary sections on 'rasa' and 'tala' both of which are a bit scrappy. The speciality of the booklet, however, consists in the three plates it contains, one giving us a group of Kathakali actors dressed in various roles, another giving some 'mudras' or gesture-symbols of the hand as employed in Kathakali, and the third and the most important plate giving us a comparative study of the 'mudras' as described by the Sanskrit text of Bharata and Nandikeswara, by the Tamil text, the commentaries on the *Silappadikaram*,¹ and as used in the Kathakali. A short article on the 'Kathakali of Malabar' by Mr. N.K. Vetteswaran giving us a few details about the art appeared in the 1931 Nov-Dec. issue of the *Triveni*. In the *Hindu Illustrated Weekly* for June 5, 1932, appeared an art

¹ The booklet supposes wrongly that *Silappadikaram* itself gives these mudras. The fact is that they are given in one of the commentaries on it, viz., the *Adiyarkkunallar*.

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intituled 'The Kathakali; or, Ancient Malabar Drama,' by Mr. Ramanatha Aiyar, B.A., with three pictures. The account is brief but clear and bereft of any rhetorical flourish. The main characteristics of the form of drama called Kathakali were given there, attention being drawn to the Kathakali literature, make-up, training in 'abhinaya,' 'dumb-show,' and stage effects. The three pictures giving three typical scenes show us the costume as well as the facial 'abhinaya' of the artists. Then appeared in the first part of the first volume of the *Annamalai University Journal* a rather long article on 'Kerala Theatre' by Mr. K. R. Pisharoti, A., Head of the Sanskrit Department of the University. His article devoted a section to this most noteworthy form of theatre-art in Kerala, namely, the Kathakali. The latest contribution is an article by 'Art-lover' in the 1933 May-June issue of the *Triveni* which has been responsible for provoking me to contribute this paper on the subject.

It appears to me that the greatest danger awaiting the future of art in India is provincial superiority complex. It is that even in the realm of art there is little possibility of the provinces federating into one unit of Indian Art. It has become very common now for one province to abuse another, in trying to show up to the Western world that, in respect of cultural advancement, art, literature, etc., it alone stands pre-eminent in the whole of India. Each province says, as the Vedic seer said of the *Brahman*: 'It alone existed at first; nought else winked': *Nanyat kinchanamishat*. This sense of feeling permeates the writings of those who write about the forms of art flourishing in their own provinces. For instance, Mr. Pisharoti says in his article on 'Kerala Theatre' that it is the unique feature of the Kerala stage, as distinguished from not only the vernacular stages of India but also the English stage, that it gives prominence to 'actual acting and dancing' and that such terms as 'nataka' and 'natya' lend weight and authoritative-ness to their stage (P. 3). He adds that their theatre in Kerala keeps 'truer and nearer to the ideals of the ancient Hindu stage tradition.' He concludes his paper

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with the statement that in the Kathakali 'may be seen most the highest perfection of the arts of acting and dance the perfect realisation as yet known of the technique scientifically elaborated and described by Bharata in *Natya Sastra*.' Such vanity results from a vicious provincial patriotism. It is a pity that writers do not care to do diligent research and compare the forms of art of their province with those available in their neighbourhood and all India. If one is not writing about one's own province's is an 'Art-lover' who has just come suddenly upon one provincial variety of the vast Indian Theatre and, having adopted that new-found form as his pet-child, he begins to write as the only truly classic Indian art. Writers harp upon it till suddenly they discover Kanchi and Tanjore. Till things are discovered, they write upon the same thing without end, giving us all the time few facts but indulging in empty rhetoric.

It now seems to have happened that a few artists have come to know a little of Kathakali. At once they begun to write that this is the most hoary, ancient, and genuine art of India. Mr. N. K. Venkateswaran opines Kathakali is 'hoary' and that its technique is 'original'. Not so old as it is supposed to be, nor is its technique original. 'Art-lover' says that Kathakali is based on traditions ancient than that of *Bharata Natya*! To this audacious statement is added the discovery of the fact that its real beginning can be traced to a race and civilisation much anterior to Aryan and that its antiquity must indeed be very remote. It is affirmed that it is Kathakali that walked over to

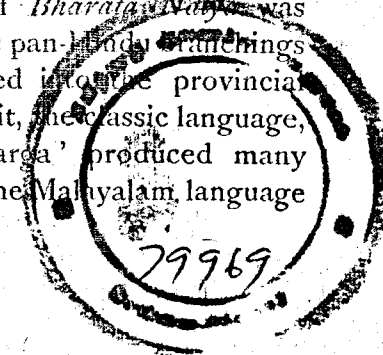
All this is unsupported dogmatic assertion, and the article proceeds in a spirit of propagandic pamphleteering. Kerala scholars accept the date of Kathakali as the latter part of the seventeenth century.¹ There is being carried on a controversy in the pages of the *Kairali* on the date of the origin of the Kathakali by Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer and Mr. Krishnan Nair of the Malayalam Section in the Madras University.

¹ P. 16, Mr. Pisharoti on 'Kerala Theatre'.

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Oriental Research Department. The latter wants to push back the date and hold that the Kathakali is four hundred years old. Even Mr. Krishnan Nair's four hundred years does not make the art 'hoary' or much anterior to Bharata. The story of how it arose is also known to everybody, that Kathakali or Attakkatha or its first specimen in the form of the Ramanattam devised by a chief of Kottarakkara Swarupam arose out of Krishna Attam which was pure Sanskrit drama. A Sanskrit drama was being staged everywhere in India. It had it in the Tamil country as 'Ariyam'. An inscription at a temple at Tiruvavaduturai, Mayavaram taluq, Tanjore district, says that the managing assembly of the village of Tanur decided to have enacted the seven parts (Acts) Ariyakkoothu, Sanskrit drama, during the festival. Besides, such Sanskrit compositions as the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva were rendered in 'abhinaya' in the Tamil country. We have in the Tanjore library a commentary on *Gita Govinda* which gives the 'abhinaya' word by word. Similarly the Chakyars staged Sanskrit dramas by the way in Kerala (Prabandham, Krishnattam, Koodiyattam), all this acting was based upon Bharata's system as found in his treatise on *Natya Sastra*. Says R. V. Poduval: 'But the greatest influence on the Kathakali was from the Chakyar Kottu and Koodiyattam, two older dramatic representations' (Page 16). But lapses and provincial deviations there were and must have been, and I have with me a manuscript in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library entitled *Natankusa* in which an author, very well-versed in the Sanskrit *Natya Sastra*, criticises 'the haughty and erring' Chakyars of Malabar and their enacting of the Sanskrit dramas as *Ascharyachoodamani*, *Nagananda*, etc. This apart, it is sufficiently clear that the technique of *Bharata Natya* was widespread, and like the banyan tree, its pan-luxuriant branchings sent provincial shoots which developed into the provincial varieties of Bharata's art. The Sanskrit, the classic language, produced the Prakrits, and one 'marga' produced many 'desis'. It is as foolish to assert that the Malayalam language

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as it is now is an original language with nothing to do with Sanskrit as to claim for the Kathakali an origin independent of the classic Sanskrit theatre of Bharata. Surely primitive folk-dances there were all over the country, and forms of these might have been remoulded with the aid of the Sanskrit Bharata Natya, thus evolving new forms. But to call Kathakali as more ancient than Bharata and as based on pre-Aryan traditions smacks of what in the Tamil districts one is acquainted with as the 'veerattamil' and 'self-respect' spirit which is everything as non-Aryan or pre-Aryan, non-Sanskrit, least pre-Sanskrit.

'Art-lover' asserts that the Kathakali is 'the genuine hundred-per-cent classical dance-art of ancient India. One can as well identify the strip of land called Kerala the whole of India. Mr. Pisharoti seems to think that only the Kerala theatre which uses the words 'nataka' 'natya' and that there alone Bharata's system lives. He holds that Kathakali is the highest perfection of Bharata, as known. Possibly it is the only form as yet known to the writer. Just as Sanskrit is the classical language of India, the language of its culture; just as Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, and Raskha are the classical poets of ancient India, so also the system of Bharata Muni as laid down in his *Natya Sastra* in 36 chapters and on the basis of which Sanskrit dramas were enacted and dances were performed in ancient India, is the classical art of ancient India. With the dethronement of Sanskrit, the development of provincial vernaculars, provincial forms of drama and dance retained the science of Sanskrit *Sastra*, but the literature of the stage, the dramas and songs that were danced, became vernacular. Anyway the genuine classic Indian dance is that whose technique is what Bharata and a host of other Sanskrit writers have laid down in numerous Sanskrit treatises. What is the characteristic that differentiates this Bharata Natya, the genuine classical Indian dance? Bharata Natya is the imitation of human moods—*Avasthanukritih natyam*, through a medium which is a marvel of achievement at once in 'bhava,' 'raga,' and

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emotion, melody, and rhythm. Natya is of two kinds, 'rupaka' and 'uparupaka,' 'vakyarthabhinaya' or 'rasabhinaya,' and 'padarthabhinaya' or 'bhavabhinaya'. That is, it is either drama or dance. The former presents a 'rasa': it resembles an epic poem; the latter presents only a 'bhava': it resembles a minor poem. There is thematic unity of one 'rasa' all through a drama; the dance is a mere bit. The former has all the four kinds of 'abhinaya' or means of representation, namely, 'vachika' (speech), 'sattvika' (action of sattvika bhavas, tear, horripilation etc.), 'angika' (physical action), and 'aharya' (make-up). In the minor dramatic varieties and dance one or more of these four cannot be seen.¹

As for instance, the Kathakali is an 'uparupaka' which is 'bhavabhinaya' in which vachika or speech is absent, being a dumb show. All these form Bharata's Natya that which characterises them as such is the one element called 'abhinaya,' the language of gesture. In drama action is natural ('lokadharmi'), whereas in varieties of complete and incomplete drama there is a super-abundance of stylised action, ('natyadharmi') which necessitates the presence of maximum 'abhinaya'.² Thus the absence of speech in Kathakali secures in it a larger amount of 'abhinaya'. In Kathakali we have various persons to take the part of various actors ('anekaharya') which quality classes it as a drama, in the Prabandham Kootu and Nautch done by one individual ('ekaharya') there is a maximum of 'natyadharmi' and consequently maximum of 'abhinaya'. Besides this 'abhinaya' conveying the emotion by gesture, there is the pure dance called 'nritta' and this is 'tandava' with all its 'angaharas,' 'bhavanas,' and 'karanas' elaborated in the fourth chapter of Bharata and carved in the tower of the Chidambaram temple. 'Nritta' is pure rhythmic dance and does not interpret any emotion through gesture. It depicts pure joy and is sheer

¹ Vide *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras, Vol. VII. Part 3, my article on 'Asarupa'.

² In Vol. VII. Part 4 and in Vol. VIII. Part 1 of the *J. O. R.*, Madras, will appear two papers of mine on this subject of Natyadharmi and Lokadharmi.

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rhythm, beauty of motion, the manifestation of 'laya'.¹ It is not so useful in drama as such, but in minor dramatic varieties and dances its place is definite. In 'abhinaya,' we have above all the 'hastabhinaya' which deserves the greatest attention of one who wants to train himself. By 'hastabhinaya' called popularly as 'mudra,'² 'artha,' (things, objects, and ideas) are suggested or shown. By the eye and other parts of the face as the brows, lip, nose, the cheeks, etc., 'bhava' or emotion is shown. The eye is the soul as it were. Says Bharata (*Natya Sastra*, XIV. 34.): "It is in the eye that feelings and emotions are: the feeling first indicated by the eye is then known by its physical action." The eye shows the three minor moods called 'vyabhichari bhavas' and the three major sentiments called 'sthayi bhavas' which develop a relishable state in the tasteful spectator's heart as the actor. Besides these, there are the movements, 'rechaka' (o-bust etc.). Says Bharata: "Angikabhinaya is threefold, of the body, action of the face, and such natural action of the dramas as going, sitting, etc., ('cheshta'). In each done by one, only the first two count. The first has three parts, there being the actions of six parts of the body: head, hand, hip or waist, bust, flanks, and feet. The second has the six 'angas', and six are the 'upangas' which come in the realm of facial 'abhinaya'—eye, brow, nose, lip, cheek, chin." It is in that part of the first department of physical action ('sarirabhinaya') called 'hastabhinaya' that the 'mudras' come up. When an emotional theme is set to a tune sung as in Kathakali or as in any old Nataka of the country or as in Nautch, the scheme works thus: the dancer keeps the rhythm or 'tala' by the feet, and along with it have the 'nritta'; the song is sustained by the throat artist or by a set of musicians at the back; 'artha,' objects

¹Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, IV. 260.

²The word 'mudra' does not occur anywhere in *Natya Sastra*. It is of graphic and sculptural origin and its use by modern writers on Indian dance is due to the fact that very much earlier than classic Indian dance, Indian sculpture and iconography became subjects of modern research. The word used in Sanskrit *Natya* texts is simply 'hasta.'

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ideas are shown by gesture-symbols of the hand, and bhava or emotion by the eye, the chief of the six upangas.

Kanthena alambayet geetam
Padabhyam talam acharet|
Chakshurbhyam darsayet bhavam
Hastena artham pradarsayet.||

II

A rather long analysis of Bharata has been given above to enable critics to realise what constitutes the evidence to identify a form of art they come upon as faithful to Bharata. And when an 'Art-lover' tries to travel into nooks and corners and visit each province with a view to impartially gather the forms of dance and drama available all over India, he will find a number of forms which are as faithful, if not more, to the technique of Bharata as the Malabar Kathakali, which are provincial varieties, vernacular species of the classical Sanskrit *Natya* of Bharata. The Kathakali is the only genuine hundred-per-cent classical dance-art of present India, nor is it the only form in which the tradition of Bharata lives or has reached perfection. The Nautch or Bharata *Natya* or the Sadir done by the courtesan-dancers in the Tamil country, which is the most widespread religious as well as secular form of dance as far as the Tamil, Andhra and Telugu provinces are concerned, is as much, if not more, genuine cent-per-cent classical Bharata dance. In it we see the whole world of 'hastabhinaya' or 'mudras,' the 'bhava' of the rest of the 'angas' and 'upangas,' etc., 'nritya' as well as 'Nritta'. Its history goes back far into ancient times, and who can fail to see the courtesan-danseuse in every page of Sanskrit literature from the Rig Vedic hymns to the Mahabharata from Valmiki and Vyasa? This dance was spread all over India as the evidence of all Sanskrit literature shows. In the Tamil dramatic literature it is referred to by the name *inayakkoottu* which means Abhinaya Dance. (Refer Adiyar-unallar on the *Silappadikaram*). In old times it was known as Mohiniyattam in Kerala and this is almost a dead variety

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there now. (Page 13, Mr. Pisharoti's 'Kerala Theatre'; Page 105, *Madras Christian College Magazine* 1921, 'The Malabar Drama' by Mr. R. V. Poduval). This is the dance which Parvati originated as 'lasya'; this is the classic dance which Malavika presented for the rapture of Agnimitra's heart in the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa; this is the dance which the courtezans offered to Lord Siva every evening in the temple of Maha Kala at Ujjain in the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa.

The Bharata Natya of courtezans is, however, pure dance. There are varieties of drama that flourished and continue to be enacted even now in the Tamil land which are faithful forms of Bharata's art. The Kathakali of Malabar is, to give the fact of history, the mute brother of the Terukkoottu of the Tamil land. It can disclaim its relationship, but it can do only to the extent old Malayalam language can disclaim Tamil origin. The Terukkoottu as it is now done in the streets of the Tamil villages may have fallen from Bharata's system, but till recently it was full of 'abhinaya.' There is no doubt that the Tamil Terukkoottu is the Veethinattam of Andhra, the Yakshagana of Karnataka, and the Kathakali of Malabar. All these are identical except for sundry unimportant local differences. There is a vast Tamil Terukkoottu literature and when one takes one drama and sees how it is constructed in the form of 'padas' (songs), 'padyas', both sung, and occasional brief prose, one can see the difference between the two forms as far as literature goes. Often at the beginning an item called 'todayam' which is an invocation to God and announcement of the names of the authors of the play. It is this same 'todayam' that figures in Kathakali. Let us notice how the Kathakali proceeds. There is first an announcement, long before the show, by beat of 'maddala,' 'chendai,' etc., called 'kelikkottu' and this corresponds somewhat to what in Bharata's *Natya Sastra* we find 'nirgitavadya' or 'asuravadya' or external instrumental music forming part of the 'purvaranga'—the preliminary. The Terukkoottu was announced in the morning by the 'vettiyan' by beat of the 'tamukku'. Then comes 'tod-

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which can be seen in the Tamil drama also. The 'todayam' appears also in a number of songs called 'todaya mangala' in the traditional 'bhajana' of the Tamil country. It is part of the 'purva ranga' and as seen in the Tamil drama it is the 'nandi' (benediction) and 'prarochana' (inducement) of the Sanskrit 'prastavana' (prelude) rolled into one. In Kathakali this item comes at about 8-30 P.M. Some boys come and dance in 'sukumara' (graceful) style after which there is 'nandi' in the form of 'vandana slokas.' Then there is the 'purappadu,' procession, if one can call it so. In this the divine or semi-divine character who figures in the drama as the hero is brought out in divine paraphernalia. Kathakali scholars suggest various explanations of this. This appears occasionally in the middle of the performance also, as in *Kimmiravadha* and *Kalyanasouandhika* though it is not called so. The song sung in these extra and middle 'purappadus' is the same as sung in the first prelude—'purappadu'. The purpose of the 'purappadu' of the hero with all his paraphernalia is evidently creating and preserving in the minds of the spectators the presence and the epic atmosphere. Personally I think that this development of what in a later stage of Sanskrit drama, the 'purva ranga' underwent a change, is called the 'Sthapana Sutradhara'. This Sutradhara, the Sanskrit scholars on Drama say, appears in divine make-up if the heroine or human make-up if the hero be a man and begins his part. The 'purappadu,' as it is at present, may differ much but it might have originally developed out of the Sthapana Sutradhara. After 'purappadu,' we have a musical item called 'melappada' when we have only 'vadya'—this is also an item of 'nirgitavadya' of Bharata. About this time is sung what is called 'Manjutara' which gets this name from the practice of singing at this juncture the song 'Manjutara', etc., the seventeenth composition in the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva. This shows the influence of Sanskrit 'abhinaya' forms on the Kerala variety. As pointed out above, the *Gita Govinda* was very popular and was rendered in 'abhinaya' all over India. Some later writers have substituted their

own new songs for the old piece 'Manjutara' from Jayadeva. The portion up to this can be said to correspond to what the *Silappadikaram* calls as 'antarakkottu,'—'music within.' That at about nine the play begins. Two musicians, one chief and another following him, called respectively as Ponnai and Sangudi, sing the theme and the mute actors render the whole drama in 'abhinaya'. In between the 'abhinaya' of each foot of the song there is a course of mere dance which is 'nritta' and is called as 'kalasam'.¹ It is the same process as can be seen in the Nautch. Every foot of the song sung and gestured variegated by a course of 'nritta' in the shape of rhythmic dance called 'tirmanas' in a variety of 'gatis' of the sang 'tala.' The Terukkoottu also, as a true representative Indian dance, had both 'nritta' and 'nritya.' All the actors entered dancing and till recently 'abhinaya' was not. Maybe there are yet Terukkoottu actors who perform 'nritta' and 'nritya'.

Since Kathakali is devoid of speech ('vachikabhinaya' is a 'nritya' and not a 'natya,' a 'bhavabhinaya' or a 'sthavabhinaya,' not a 'rasabhinaya.' Further a 'natya,' a classic Sanskrit drama, requires unity of one 'rasa' real climax at the end, but in Kathakali any part of any play played beginning somewhere and ending somewhere. The theme is always renowned ('prakhyata') being but has slight innovations by the poet ('utpada'). As pointed out before, the 'sahitya' of the Kathakali which resembles that of the Tamil Terukkoottu, is in the form of song, verse, prose, or sometimes devoid of the last. The verses and less frequent prose are what the poet says 'Kavivakyam' expression relating to what the characters speak for themselves is always song. The song is in the same form for anybody knowing Karnatic music and Karnatic music position knows, in 'pallavi,' 'anupallavi,' and 'charana.' These will clearly indicate the date of Kathakali, for the designations of 'pallavi,' 'anupallavi,' and 'charana' date only.

¹ 'Kalasa' occurs in Sarngadeva's *Sangeeta Ratnakara* (VII, 1302-3). It means 'end of a course of dance.'

the time of the Kannada composer Purandara Das, though long before him we had corresponding parts being called 'dhrupada,' etc., in Sanskrit. In Yakshagana of the Kannada country, the Veethinataka of the Telugu country, and in the Terukkoottu of the Tamil land we see that the music is called Yakshagana.¹ In Tamil Terukkoottu plays we find the songs called by the names 'Taru,' 'Oradikkirithana,' 'Kanni,' etc. I do not know if these names are current in Kathakali also. Thus all these forms of South Indian drama are of operatic nature.

III.

Besides these there are some other aspects of the Kathakali to be noted. It had undergone some changes at the hands which fashioned it with the help of Bharata. As pointed out by Mr. Pisharoti in his article, the Kathakali does not discountenance actual death, lying, etc., on the stage though Bharata prohibited them. The MS work *Natankusa* referred to above criticises also this practice of the Kerala actors going against Bharata. Mr. Pisharoti however praises the Kerala stage for this improvement (?) upon Bharata. When one breaks into a rhyme of praise upon one's province's art one cannot break the rhyme by a distinct note. Even flaws must be praised. Says Nilakantha, the great Sanskrit satirist, that a panegyrist upon a black man whom he had to praise and since he praised him as the black cloud that rains. 'Sringara' or love is overdone in Kathakali and 'nyatva' or vulgarity is not absent. Such signs of popular low handling are evident. Even as regards literature, Pisharoti says that at least one specimen of Kathakali drama, namely, the earliest Ramanattam 'does not possess a high order of literary merit.' (Page 16). The Tamil Teruk-

¹ The type of song called 'Yakshagana' is referred to in the music work, *Ita Sudha* of Govinda Dikshita (1614. A. D.), minister of the Tanjore Telugu ruler. He says that he took 'Yakshagana' also into account and studied it for his work. In the Kannada Yakshagana as done now, songs of the type 'Kirtana,' also are added occasionally.

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koottu dramas also, except stray works like Arunachalakavi-
raya's *Ramanataka*, were of poor literary quality and were
full of low comedy. There is no comparison between
Kathakali or Terukkoottu and the masterpieces of Kalidasa,
Bhavabhuti, and Sudraka and the refined technique as seen
in Bharata's text.

Sometime ago I drew the attention of Bharata-art-lovers
to a certain form of old drama which still continues to be
staged each year in certain villages of the Tanjore district. I
gave the information in the second instalment of my article on
'Theatre-Architecture in Ancient India' in *Triveni*, Vol.
V, No. 4, 1933. In the month of *Vaisakha* both at Sula-
mangalam and Oottukkadu, two villages in the Tanjore
district, every year the Brahmins of the village enact about
eight traditional dramas as part of the annual festival of the
local temples. In these 'natakams' lives every bit of Bharata,—
the 'charis,' the 'karanas,' the 'nyayas,' the complete langu-
age of gesture ('*hastabhinaya*') and 'abhinaya' of other
'angas' and 'pratyangas'. Mask and other parts of tradi-
tional make-up ('*aharya*') can be seen here. Here al-
most speech is least, and song gives an operatic character to
the drama. Crowds gather at these shows from all neigh-
bouring villages. A Brahmin 'bhagavata' taking part in it is a
master of 'abhinaya' and can give the gesture-symbol of any
character. His feet can keep the rhythm of any 'gati' of any 'tala'.
If he is a boy he portrays women's roles exquisitely.
As much, if not more, cent-per-cent genuine classical Bharata
art of ancient India.

These dramas, however, are in Telugu, which con-
tinues to be the language of Karnatic music in the Tamil land.
This fact links it up with a variety of the Andhradesa. I point
out above that it is a variety of the lower strata of society,
Terukkoottu. This Terukkoottu is in Andhra the *Venkata*
nataka, both words, Tamil and Sanskrit, meaning street-drama.
The Yakshagana of Karnataka is likewise called Bayalata,
meaning open-air play. The songs of these varieties are
called Yakshagana. If one turns over the catalogue of the

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in the Tanjore Saraswati Mahal Library or the Madras Govt.
Oriental Mss Library, one will find that the Tamil drama is
called by one of the three names 'natakam,' 'yakshaganam,'
or 'vilasam'. The second name is very common. Similar is
the case with Telugu dramatic compositions some of which are
called 'yakshaganam'. This name of the song in the drama
has been applied to the drama itself in Karnataka. We had
recently in the city of Madras a series of performances by two
Yakshagana Dramatic Companies of South Kanara, and art-
lovers could have got an idea of it.¹ To these has the Katha-
kali to be linked as also to what I was describing as the
Brahmins' 'natakams' of the villages of Oottukkadu and Sula-
mangalam in the Tanjore district. Corresponding to the
Brahmin 'bhagavata' who are masters of the Bharata-art
in these Tamil villages, we have the 'Kuchipudi bhagavata' of
the Andhradesa. Besides these many other varieties
of cent-per-cent genuine Bharata Natya existed and some do
exist even now in the Tamil land. For instance, there was the
class of Brahmin artists called 'arayars' attached to some of the
important Vaishnavite shrines in South India. These Vaishnava
artists were masters of 'abhinaya' who interpreted, through
Bharata's 'abhinaya', the Vaishnavite lyrics which are all set
to music. If an art-lover takes trouble to visit the temple at
Sulamangalam in the month of *Margasirsha* he can still find
the art living. So Kathakali is not the only form of genuine
ancient Indian Bharata Natya. If one cares to know more, he
can discover forms which every province is rich in. Menaka,
writing in the *Young Theosophist* for July 1933, informs us
of a form called 'kathaka' existing in the north. When an
art-lover who harps upon one variety is told of these various
forms, he gets into a most pitiable feeling of anger against the
art. The Kannada Yakshagana is nothing but the Tamil Terukkoottu. Originally
the drama had 'nritta' and 'nritya' to a very large extent. Each actor entered
the stage to a song which introduced him. The theme is written in songs and verses
which are both sung by a supporting musician. When these are sung, the actor
acted and did 'abhinaya,' word by word. It differs from Kathakali in having
no speech by the actors. Themes are 'tandava'. Though impoverished in
speech it is yet rich in 'nritta.' For a full account of Yakshagana, vide my article
on the same in *Sound & Shadow*, Madras, Vol. II, Nov., 1933.

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informer. A rabid provincialist flies at one who says that similar forms of dance exist in other parts of India. On the other hand, a true lover of Indian art and its rejuvenation as the national entertainment, ought to feel glad over the discovery of the fact that Bharata's system lives profusely. One must thank God when he knows that so many sources are now discovered. Let modern renaissance-dancers take to one form or another, try to learn its technique, and be sincere and loyal exponents of Bharata's classic Indian dance and not deal in spurious stuff.

'Art-lover' says on page 584: 'Much of the so-called Indian classical dances are preposterous impostures.' I entirely agree. Let dancers of modern India resort to some traditional master of 'abhinaya', learn the whole foundation and science of the thing, steep themselves in the tradition of Indian art, culture, legend, and literature, and then try to devise new forms. In this connection 'Art-lover' has a mark on Indian painting. He says that Ajanta dances preposterous impostures, for there is nothing in the series of Ajanta paintings except a single dance-scene in No. 2. This statement and the ideas that follow it show how fragmentary the writer's knowledge of the three arts of Indian dance, sculpture, and painting is. Let me digress a little. The art of sculpture is also called 'chitra' the classic Sanskrit Silpa treatises. As a matter of fact only sculpture that is called 'chitra'; for a half-visible relief on a wall is only 'ardhachitra' or half-sculpture, and painting is only a species of the same in colour and line, is only a semblance of sculpture, 'chitra-abhasa'. These two arts of sculpture and painting, if one peruses the biggest and the most valuable Sanskrit text on painting and allied arts, the *Vishnudharmottara*, are based on the *Natya* of Bharata. The 'sthanas', the 'karanas', the 'hastas', the eye etc., of *Bharata* are all utilised by the sculptor and the painter:

Yatha nritte tatha chitre trailokyanukritis smrita |
Drishtayascha tatha bhavah angopangani sarvasah ||

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Karascha ye mahanritte purvokta nripasattama |
Ta eva chitre vijneya nrittam chitram param matam ||

As in *Natya*, so in painting (and in sculpture), it is the imitation of the universe, that is, representation of men and other beings in their states of emotion; as in *Natya*, so in painting and sculpture, those eyes, those 'bhavas', those 'abhinayas' of 'anga' and 'upanga' and those hands which were described in a previous section on *Natya* are to be present; for *Natya* is supreme picture, *param chitram*. The statue or picture shows us a moment of dance, and dance is a succession of pictures. The sculptor and the painter choose one powerful moment in a vast movement of feeling and express it in such a manner that one vital moment can suggest to us the previous and the succeeding ones. It is thus that stones, walls, planks, and papers are said to have 'jiva' and seem to speak. The *Vishnudharmottara* says that a good picture is so sweet that it seems to smile; it has life:

Hasativa cha madhuryam (yat) sajiva iva drisyate.

One realises the perfection of such art when one stands in the presence of some of the beautiful bronze icons in the temples in South India; as for instance, before such a statue as the Rajagopala at Mannargudi, Tanjore district. Being the way in which sculpture and painting are merely related to but are actually based upon Bharata's *Natya*, how can one be not profited by a study of Indian sculpture and painting? It does not matter if special dance pictures are rare. Every picture and every sculpture has a *Natya* 'abhinaya', a 'bhava' of the eye, a pose, and these can be studied with great profit for 'abhinaya' itself, and not only for the very external part of dance, namely, dress and ornament. And, dance themes themselves are not rare in our sculpture and painting. If 'Art-lover' can find only a single dance in the Ajanta Cave he can find that again and again, frescoes in the Brihadiswara temple at Tanjore, albeit the full extent of the whole series, show us pictures of Bharata's *Natya*. Again we have such temples as at Chidambaram,

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Belur, and Halebedu, and sculptures at Mount Abu where infinite are the representations in stone directly giving us specific poses, hands, etc. Of course one who studies these must not think that 'statuesque' is dance, and 'still' is movement. He must not show us mere tableau but utilise the one moment found in a figure of stone or of colour and line in perfecting the grace of one 'abhinaya' on his face, hand, and feet. He must knit it in a continuous fabric of an emotional theme.

IV

The Kathakali is said to be 'tandava'. Now artists and art-lovers speak of Siva's dance, Parvati's dance, 'tandava', 'lasya', etc., with little or no knowledge of what exactly these names mean. The 'karanas' described in Chapter IV of Bharata constitute 'tandava', the 'nritta' which Siva passed on to Bharata and his sons through one of his 'ganas' named Tandu. Generally, all robust and masculine dance, all movements having vigour are said to be the 'tandava' mode. The 'vritti' called 'arabhati' and the 'guna' called 'ojas' characterise 'tandava'. It is an 'uddhata' or forceful type. As contrasted to this, Parvati is said to have inaugurated the 'lasya', the 'marja' type which is graceful in its movements and is by the 'kaisiki vritti' and the 'madhurya guna'. It does not mean that males cannot do the graceful 'lasya' or that women cannot do the vigorous 'tandava' also. It cannot be any dance which is purely of the nature of these two. One can predominate. Both 'tandava' and 'lasya' are present in the Nautch but Kathakali takes 'uddhata' or weird and vigorous themes of the kind of Rakshasas, as in the *Kimmiravadha*, *Bakavadha*, etc., is mainly 'tandava', even as the Kannada Yakshagana. But even here there are places where 'sringara' is even done and we then have 'lasya'. The 'kamaladala' is a classic instance of the 'lasya' in Kathakali. In the manner, though 'tandava' and 'lasya' are both present in the Nautch, the Nautch is mainly 'lasya' because

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exponents who are women, and because of the themes which are mostly 'sringara'. Menaka seems to suppose that at present 'lasya' can be found only in the 'kathaka', which she has come upon in the North! The 'kathaka' of the North is our South Indian 'katha kalakshepa', with much dance ('nritta') and with a little of 'abhinaya'.

Mr. Venkateswaran gives a few emotions and a few ideas, and remarks that the Kathakali has gestures for all these! Trying to be more thorough and more informed, 'Art-lover' gives a paragraph of objects and ideas and says that all these have 'mudras'! What wonder is there in this? The whole dictionary of the Sanskrit language has its corresponding gesture-dictionary in Bharata. A hundred Sanskrit treatises there are, as far as I have been able to go through, which give us pages after pages of 'mudras', and these live as much in the Tanjore district and elsewhere in the Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu countries, in the 'bhagavatars', the 'nattuvanars', and the 'devadasis' all over the Tamil country and elsewhere, as much as in the actors of Kathakali in Kerala. When I was thus speaking of 'abhinaya' as living elsewhere also, a Kerala Kathakali scholar got into a bad mood and put me a crushing question whether 'abhinaya' in either Nautch, elsewhere, or even in Bharata's system is as perfect as in Kathakali which has symbols even for cases ('vibhaktis')! Limitation of space prevents me from going into the matter in greater detail. Some criticism of 'abhinaya', even as given by the Sanskrit texts, has to be offered, for, there has been after the time of Bharata, an overdoing of it. 'Verbalism' has resulted in certain aspects of it becoming arbitrary convention, not having their meaning in Nature upon which Bharata, in a significant text (Chapter IX, Slokas 151-152) bases the whole system of his 'abhinaya'. This is, however, work one has to do when he re-creates the art of Bharata for the present age. There are other essential things in respect of these 'mudras'

Mr. R. V. Poduval in his booklet on 'Kathakali' (p. 46) gives us 'original' information that 'tandava' is upward and downward movement and 'lasya', side-way movement!

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which one has to know before he employs them, but these cannot be here dealt with. The Kathakali-advocate need not suppose that Kerala artists originated symbols for case-endings. Old Sanskrit texts have them. (See Nandikeswara's *Abhinayadarpana*—the list of objects denoted there by the 'pataka' hand.) It is in use and I have seen it employed in 'abhinaya' in Tamil land.

Further the Kathakali 'abhinaya' not only differs from Bharata's text and of those Sanskrit texts which follow him, but shows distinct deterioration. When one sees the chart of 'mudras' published in Mr. Poduval's booklet one sees clearly that Bharata, Nandin, and the Tamil text agree, whereas the Kathakali stands apart, with many differences. The list of ideas denoted by various hands follow the Sanskrit texts, but the corresponding hands differ. An examination of the Kathakali 'mudras' shows us the influence of incompetent or popular or rather lower artists' handling. Many hands are incorrect and do not denote the objects intended to be suggested by them on Bharata's principle of symbolic suggestion. (Page 167)

Firstly, the 'pataka' is wrongly called 'tripataka' and *vice versa*. One can see, on going through the list of objects given as denoted by 'pataka', how that hand, as given there, is incorrect. Taking the 'ardhachandra' hand, everyone knows it as one of the hands in the Nataraja icon. Any layman must know its correct shape, for the Sanskrit idiom means 'necking out' and the 'ardhachandra' hand is employed in that action. Sculpture, Icon, Bharata, Nandin, the Tamil text, and above all Nature give the correct 'ardhachandra' but the Kathakali counterpart has no resemblance to the shape of the sickle moon. The difference and deterioration can be seen with respect to the 'mushti' hand also. The Kathakali passes the thumb in between the four closed fingers. The 'fist' which every man shows in his anger, and in his action of fisting another, does not have the thumb like that. The 'mushti' is given as the symbol of old age, because it is the hand which holds the supporting staff which is a symbol of old age. One

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BHARATA'S
ARDHACHANDRA



KATHAKALI
ARDHA CHANDRA



KATHAKALI
MUSHTI



BHARATA'S
MUSHTI



BHARATA'S
SIKHARA



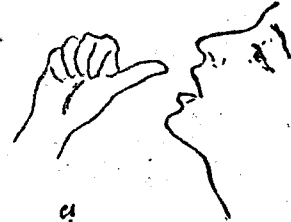
KATHAKALI
SIKHARA



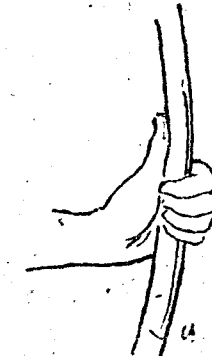
BHARATA'S
SUCHI MUKHA



BHARATA'S SIKHARA =
PITR TARPANA OR
OFFERING OF WATER
TO MANES



BHARATA'S SIKHARA = DRINKING



BHARATA'S SIKHARA
HOLDING THE BOW

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does not have the thumb as in Kathakali 'mushti' when he holds the staff. Similarly, in the double fist which is used to suggest loveliness, the two closed palms are pressed in a way at the two temples, which is what our old women-folk do on seeing a young lovely lass. Here also the thumb does not come in. Thus the Kathakali 'mushti' is not correct according to Bharata and hence according to Nature.

The 'sikhara' hand can likewise be examined. The symbol given by *Bharata*, *Nandin*, and *Silappadikaram* is correct. The hand indicates hero, leader or chief; holding of a bow; drinking, if the upraised thumb is taken towards the mouth; the manes ('pitris'), if we turn the hand horizontal, etc. All these are based upon Nature. We do that correct hand while speaking, whenever we have to refer to importance, leadership, and when we do 'pitri tarpana', etc. But these can never be shown by the 'sikhara' hand as Kathakali gives it with the thumb closed and the next 'pointing finger' raised. The 'sikhara' hand of Kathakali is the 'suchimukha' of the Sanskrit texts. The difference therefore between the 'sikhara' and the 'suchimukha' is shown by Kathakali, by a very insignificant change in the position of the thumb. The 'suchimukha' is a very common hand which any layman knows as the hand which we show while 'pointing out,' for showing 'one,' etc. Instances can be multiplied and the deviation and the deterioration can be seen in 'sukatunda', 'arala', 'mukula', 'katuka', etc. Every 'hasta' should be firstly correct as based upon Nature and secondly, must have 'soushtava'—beauty and grace. What has been said above is about the very basis of 'abhinaya' and it does not get nullified by local peculiarities and provincial adaptations which are bound to be. Nor is it contended here that there are not parts of Nautch-abhinaya in the Tamil land which show deterioration. To the modern re-creator of Hindu classic dance, Kathakali, Nautch, the Bhagavatars, Kathaka, nay, every small surviving thing is of importance.

I have mentioned above other forms of Bharata art still living in other provinces and have examined the Kathakali

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itself rather critically and have attempted to place it. But if Kathakali alone is claimed to be the only genuine Bharata Natya or its peak, the spirit is one of pure advertisement. It is simply preposterous to say that Kathakali belongs to 'an age anterior to Bharata Natya or Ajanta Chitra or Sanchi Silpa,' ('Art-lover') or that 'it has improved upon and refined even Bharata.' (Mr. Poduval). If anyone insists on identifying the Kathakali as 'the only genuine hundred-per-cent classical dance-art of Ancient India' he can be likened only to one of those men who identified the elephant with the rope-like tail of that huge animal. When one thus goes somewhat deep, the facile writer on Indian art today accuses him of suffering from the pandit's mentality; it is only a confession that the facile writer is a 'pamara'.

Seeing Uday Shankar

By K. B. IYER

In the glorious spring time of Indian renaissance the art of Uday Shankar comes like perfume on the breeze. Indian classical dance has for the first time found in him a rare, vivid and authoritative exponent of its subtle graces and sweet suggestiveness. Wealth of imagery, rich harmony of colour, powerful portrayal of emotions—from the softly sensuous to the terrific swell and sweep of passion—, 'mudras' that visualise marble dreams and unlock fabled wonderlands, it is no wonder the world is caught in the delicate trceries of Shankar's art.

At The Excelsior he had opened a short season, and Rangoon had almost gone mad over him and his troupe of talented artistes. And I decided to take advantage of his sojourn here for seeking an interview with him. That I had a special reason in doing so, would presently be evident. I had 'phoned up twice. The receiver at the other end in The Royal Hotel informed me that Mr. Shankar had been practically out all day busy fulfilling a round of engagements. The third time, I got him. To my request for a few minutes' talk he detailed through the wires in hurried sentences a catalogue of pressing unfulfilled engagements. But I was insistent and he agreed 'just a few minutes if you run down right now.' That was enough. In five minutes I was in front of The Royal Hotel. The taxi summoned for his use had drawn up at the entrance. Ready to go out, he was in the drawing room in the midst of a small company, evidently waiting for me. Seeing me, he disengaged himself from the group and greeted me with a clasp of those fine hands. Tall, slim, and graceful, he seemed a wave of floating melody as he approached. A soft beaming smile lit up his countenance and lay mirrored in those lively, melting eyes. As he took my hands and gave me a warm shake I was really re-assured that there was nothing

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of the swell-headedness of success in him. The least stagey and theatrical in his manners, his innate goodness and unfailing courtesy are so eloquent that the visitor feels completely at home in his presence. 'What can I do for you, friend?' he accosted me.

'Just a few minutes' talk, an interview if I may put it so,' I replied. 'No please, I am awfully busy. See, the car is waiting. Right now I go to see U Po Sein (the celebrated Burmese dancer) to witness a private performance arranged for me. After that I have to do a bit of shopping; then to the theatre. Tomorrow early morning I am leaving this for Calcutta. You have come too late, sorry please.'

Frankly, I was unprepared for this eleventh hour blocking. For a minute I was nonplussed and it seemed the 'interview' had come to an end at that.

'But I am from Malabar; I would be pleased...' I almost faltered. 'What, from Malabar!' he repeated in a tone of inquisitive pleasure. It was as I had surmised. The shot had gone home. That disarmed him of all opposition and hesitation.

'Oh, then certainly I must find time.' The feeling of an unexpected pleasure was discernible in his features. Thereupon he excused himself from his company and with a cordial grasp on my arm led me to a luxurious sofa near by. I noticed that the word 'Malabar' had acted like a charm on him. There was no necessity for me to begin the conversation, to throw a feeler or to put leading questions as clever pressmen do to draw out their victims. Not only was the ice broken, but as I soon realised, the sluice gates had been opened.

'I am glad you have come. What a pity you didn't call earlier. You know I am greatly interested in Malabar.'

'I know that,' I intervened. I had noticed the unmistakable influence of the classical dance of Malabar in his performance and have ever since wondered at the marvellous receptive genius of this artiste who had so admirably adapted it to the requirements of the modern stage.

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And I said, 'I saw a bit of Malabar on the stage in your performance,' and expressed congratulations for the wonderful grasp he had of the art of Kathakali.

The conversation then turned on this theme and he let himself go in rapturous tones, displaying the exuberant enthusiasm and ardour of the artist who has after much seeking found the ideal of his heart and imagination. 'Believe me, I am a keen student of Art. I have travelled widely, witnessed the best dances, European, American, Hawaiian, Javanese, Balinese—almost every type, and I say with all the emphasis I can command that I have seen nothing to equal Kathakali. It is Art perfected, the most marvellous manifestation of the artistic impulse of man. There is nothing like it to interpret human sentiments, thoughts and emotions. The language of the limbs, hands, muscles, and eyes is more powerful than spoken words. Graceful and telling, the effect is most realistic. It is a vast mine, the plentiful resources of which remain yet to be tapped. No serious student of Art can afford to disregard it.' He then stressed the necessity of artistes familiarising themselves with its technique and was sanguine that the experience would bring about a great revolution in the art of dancing. Kathakali in the orthodox way it is performed, will, he said, never prove a success outside Malabar. It has got to be adapted to the needs of the stage. The elimination of certain features and the sublimation of others are inevitable in such a process. Then it is bound to exercise a refreshing, tonic-effect adding a new meaning and beauty to the art of dancing. I agreed with this shrewd observation and told him how it fell flat on a Madras audience sometime ago, when for the first time it was performed outside Malabar. And Shankar, it is better to remember here, has adapted to the stage with perfect harmony this classic art in a manner that leaves no loophole or sharp edges. His knowledge of Kathakali has contributed not a little to make his art so realistic, meaningful, and impressive.

I asked how he was led to this extreme corner of India, how he stumbled on such an 'archaic' thing as Kathakali, an

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art that is steadily losing its popularity in its native home, edged out by the dangerously seductive influences of the cinema and the drama. 'Urged by an earnest desire to study and understand I came to the South. The more I saw of the South, the more I came to realise that it was the nursery of pure classic Hindu culture. In my wanderings in 1930 I crossed over to Malabar. I was for five days in Guruvayoor. It was there that I witnessed Kathakali and Krishnanattam. It has been my regret all these years that I have seen so little of these.' I drew his attention to 'Thullal,' a form of dance-recital and other folk-dances. He had no opportunity of seeing them. It was his intention, he told me, that after the fulfilment of his present engagements in the West, to come back to South India, on a long holiday, to study the classical dances there. Then, he hopes to spend a fairly long period in Kerala to study the art of Kathakali.

'Someday or other,' he added in a wistful mood, 'I hope to found an institution, preferably in the South, for the promotion of Hindu culture. That is my life's ambition. Funds I can have in plenty. Lovers of Indian culture in the West have promised their moral and financial support. Such an institution is absolutely essential to renovate and popularise the classic Arts of Hindu India. The object of the institution I hope to found, is not so much to teach as to give the right lead and to provide the incentive and encouragement so necessary for the full and free expression of nascent talents and arts.' He incidentally enquired about Vallathol, the great poet of Malabar. I acquainted him with the heroic attempts the poet was making through the Kerala Kala Mandalam (the Art Academy of Kerala) for the renovation of this decaying art. He was glad to hear of these efforts and charged me to acquaint Vallathol and other friends in Kerala of his deep interest in their labours and of his wish to support any genuine movement in this direction.

On being questioned about his reception in the West he said that his art came to the West as a new experience. 'It was for the first time that people in the West saw anything

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like authentic Indian classic dance. They have read in my interpretation a new meaning and purpose, and had seen a vision of life hitherto hidden from their gaze. To them the rhythm and beauty, the charm and melody of the Hindu dance and music, and the deep significance that underlies these have been a revelation.'

I drew his attention to Western exponents of Indian dances. He was critical of most of them and for a good reason. Hindu dances, he said, are subtle, profound, symbolic, and certainly a serious affair. It was difficult for the Westerners to enter into the spirit of these and render them with understanding and sympathy. Most of them learned a few poses*and were out to gain cheap fame and had a commercial outlook.

Half an hour had slipped away and certainly it was too great an incursion on his hard pressed time. A great optimist with regard to the future of Hindu Art, he assured me on parting that its future will be still more glorious than its great past. He illustrated tellingly by instancing his own case. 'See what little I know of it. And yet the world has gone into raptures over it. What we want is proper lead, incentive, and courageous adventure.'

Music and Musicians

By E. KRISHNA IYER, B.A., B.L.

(Advocate, Madras)

Standards in art, and in the appreciation of art, can seldom be expected to be uniform. There is a growing feeling among savants that South Indian Music has fallen from the high standards of the classic art of the past. The unsatisfactory nature of the average training in the art, the modern exigencies of earning one's livelihood in the musical profession, the uninformed tastes and requirements of audiences, particularly in urban areas, lack of appreciably frank and helpful criticism of art and artists, absence of high ideals and want of effective and useful co-ordination of effort,—these are believed to be some of the many causes for the deterioration in standards.

On the other hand, a new enthusiasm for music is widespread in the land. A far greater number of people are now found to enjoy and take to it than in the past. Newer kinds of graces and styles, polish and presentation are also observable in a few exponents of the art. From being merely a sole monopoly of the professionals, music has come to be practised by a large number of amateurs as well, among men and women. At any rate, in the average audiences of today, in a music hall, one may be sure of finding an appreciable number of music lovers of both sexes having some knowledge of the songs sung in a performance.

Whatever may be the divergence in the general viewpoints of past and present music, the effect of the change of patronage from discerning princes and patricians to the motley crowd of the streets is indelibly marked in the present-day growth and development of the art. The demand of the populace of varying tastes and degrees of understanding has brought in a corresponding supply. A wholly ignorant audi-

ence would ordinarily enjoy the pleasing aspect of sweet sounds and might be content to take the lead of the initiated on the scientific and technical features of the art. But considerable sections of the present-day music-hall audiences, with their nibbling acquaintance with a good number of catchy songs, are not seldom found to crave more and more for what they themselves are very familiar with, than for other things equally important. Among them, the man who sings a large number of pieces—preferably short ones—has perhaps a better and surer chance of wide popularity than others who may be able to expound their *ragas*, *pallavi*, and other scholarly features of the art in a profound or elaborate manner. On the whole, there is more hurry than the necessary leisure in the present-day music in general. Those who go in for impressive, elaborate, and leisurely rendering of *ragas* in particular, or compositions in slow time measures, are comparatively few. This, combined with the excessive development of *tala* accompaniments, has had no small influence in shifting the centre of interest from some of the essentials of good Karnatic music.

Of course, *krutis* and other pieces should in the nature of things form the mainstay of a South Indian musical concert. But even there the question of variety in *ragas* and *talas*, and in the authors of the pieces sung, and the quality of the same with reference to *raga bhava*, are as important as their numerical quantity. Karnatic music has been rich in its composers and compositions, and it is but natural that among them the great Tyagaraja and his lyrical treasures should tower above the rest. But one cannot afford to ignore or neglect the pieces of other good composers, and particularly those of Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Syama Sastri, Kshetraya, Arunachala Kavi, or Gopalakrishna Bharati.

The unique feature and glory of Karnatic music are to be found in its conception and beautifully classified system of *ragas*—pure sound melodies of rich variety, exquisitely pleasing to the ear and capable of rousing different moods

and emotions without the aid of words of any language, though one may not believe in all the exaggerated and legendary notions of their magical effects. Classified and codified as they are with mathematical precision, there is ample scope for the play of one's personal genius, skill and imagination. A musician who has a mastery over *ragas* and *raga bhava* gives a more distinct and exquisite flavour to what he sings than one who is comparatively deficient in them. And yet, as a result of the excessive development of *tala* accompaniments, music has been driven to attune itself to the steel-frame *jathis* of the rhythmic variety, to the detriment of *ragas* and *raga bhava*. The climax is reached when *raga alapana* itself is not infrequently found to be reduced almost to a sort of *swarajathis* though veiled in form.

The learning and exposition of compositions, *swara* and *tala*, are perhaps comparatively more mechanical and easier than those of *ragas*, which are somewhat elusive and require no small skill, imagination, patience, and other personal qualities. More than the latter, the former variety seems to suit easily the convenience and circumstances of the average professionals, with their struggle for life and desire to shoot up quickly into cheap fame, and with their need to satisfy the tastes of large sections of modern audiences for music of the galloping variety, particularly in pieces and *swara sancharas*. In the paucity of the natural grace of *raga bhava*, some of them seek to make their wares attractive by a sort of mechanical finish and polish. In short, they have got only the dry bones of *tala swara* and *sahitya* and well-nigh lost the flesh and blood of *raga* and *raga bhava*.

This naturally leads one to the question of tastes in musicians and music lovers, which is after all the chief determining factor in standards and appreciation of art. One cannot expect much of uniformity, steadiness or refinement in the many-headed multitude; nor can one blame them for it. Hence all the more is the responsibility for forming good tastes on the part of the musicians and the discerning among music lovers. The crowd will always follow what lead it is

given, provided it is definite and strong. Tastes, in turn, depend not a little upon culture and character. The former gives the artist capacity to discern good from bad and the latter enables him to withstand or avoid any temptation to lower himself and his art to pander to the vitiated or moribund tastes of the gallery.

There is again the baffling paradox in voice qualities. It is a notorious fact that in South Indian music not much attention is being paid to selection and cultivation of voices as such. An apparently rich and gifted voice, pleasing as it is on its first onset, is really found to be so ill-trained as not to display the necessary elements of good and well cultivated music. It is a mountain stream rushing through a narrow strip of coastland to waste its waters into the sea, without being harnessed to much useful purpose. Often you come across musicians of profound knowledge struggling with bad or indifferent voices, yet compelling your respect and admiration for their wonderful *sadhana*, or practice and exposition of brilliant features of a highly-developed system of music. The uninitiated crowd—including many of the so-called educated gentry who cannot be pleased except by sweet sounds as such—would swear only by the music of the stage stars and slipshod amateurs with ravishing voices and bad or no technique and practice and would prevent—by legislation if possible—the so-called scientific musicians of bad and indifferent voices from taking to vocal music. The pandits and prudes, on the contrary, can only be propitiated by musical gymnastics and acrobatics and would spurn mere sweetness as effeminate and fit only for the un-understanding plebeians. In the absence of a master-musician of the type of a Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer who was reputed to have combined in him most of the necessary, desirable, and highly appreciable qualities of voice and technique, practice and presentation, culture and good taste, such kinds of factions in tastes and appreciation are bound to exist. There is not much to choose between them. Nor can it be denied that much of the want of attractiveness in the average professional music

of the present day is due to the obtrusively over-wrought technique, killing melody and grace, though laudable exceptions may be found here and there.

It is but natural that in the general dearth of good and well-trained voices among the platform musicians, and scared away by the excesses of dry acrobatics of the technical experts, the democracy of the music-loving public, as the real paying patrons of art, should run mad after sweet sounds as such, wherever they are found, irrespective of the quality of cultivated art. It may not be easy to convince the democracy that sweetness of natural music,—as that found in the voices of women, young boys and singing birds—very necessary and desirable as it is, cannot by itself and without the aid of developed technique and practice make a whole and true picture of a highly-refined and cultivated system of art like South Indian music. Gold ore or bar gold as such is good and valuable. Beat it and mould it into some shape as that of a casket, it becomes attractive. Give it a desirable size and proportion and smooth polish as well, it looks very pretty. Carve some designs on it, it appears beautiful. Set some rubies, diamonds, and other precious stones into it, it shines brilliant. Place it on a well-carved pedestal, it looks glorious. Both raw gold and the finished casket are valuable and will have a sure sale. But it is the latter that ought to be in greater demand and better priced. The trouble comes in only when the casket is made of tinsel, or over-carved with bizzare designs or ill polished, and when the raw gold is clumsily kept, unbeaten into any shape. So is the case with music, in its natural and cultivated forms. It is obvious that good music is to be sought for in a happy combination of natural music of sweet sounds and the refinement of technique, practice, and presentation.

When all is said, no highly-developed art can be understood and enjoyed or properly valued without some initiation into its technique and conventions, though everyone need not be an expert either in theory or practice. The Indian art is not as if it is slowly growing from a crude primitive stage,

catching from here and there a tune or melody at random from every source, making something new out of it. There is undoubtedly room for new creations in it. But before one creates something new, one has to be acquainted with a large part of what already exists—or at least with its basic principles and principal features. Though the contribution of well-meaning amateurs to art is not inconsiderable, there is perhaps not much room for that type of dilettante with slipshod or no technique in a system of art like Karnatic music. Want of understanding of even the bare elements of technique and principles of the art is no excuse either, for the lack of proper appreciation of the same.

Like literature, music too has got its styles. Technique, rigorous as it is, can never make it uniform or stereotyped. In a way it takes on a highly personal colour, according to the individuality of the singer. The same piece with set *sangathis* or musical phrases sounds differently in different artists; and much more so is the case with *ragas*, *swara*, *pallavi*, etc. A rose is best understood and enjoyed when it is seen, smelt,—and worn as a button-hole or on a tuft of hair. No amount of analysis of its petals and pollens can help to give a perfect picture of the flower. So is style in music. It is to be heard, understood, followed, and enjoyed. At best one can only give out some of the outstanding characteristics of an artist that make his art all his own and are fairly describable in words. Again, though each artist may have some individuality of his own, it is not all who have developed it into markedly appreciable styles. Perhaps a distinct and catchy style is mostly a freak of Nature and born with the artist, irrespective of any profundity or depth of knowledge or intensiveness in practice. A combination of many mediocre but necessary and desirable qualities, presented with just balance and proportion, often enslaves a listening audience much more than an extensive or even profound exposition of specialised aspects of the art. Once in a way, we may also come across a genius whose art, though essentially based on technique and conventions, yet transcends both.

There is again the problem of regional differences in music, i.e., the same system of music appearing in different modes in different regions separated by distance. Further, the effect of the growing contact of other systems of music on ours has to be taken into account. While violently different views as to the desirability or otherwise of imbibing some of the necessary features of other systems of music into ours are being held among artists and art-lovers, their influence on our music, particularly that of the North, is steadily and imperceptibly growing and making its mark on the art of some of our popular artists. After all, music in South India has been an ever-growing art through changing times and tastes, and how far the art of a later period can be confined and cramped within the theories and practices of a former one or of by-gone ages, is a highly debatable point. At the same time we have to draw the line where innovations and extraneous modernities strike against the very roots of the system itself and do not fit in happily and unobtrusively into it.

These are only some of the factors in general that have to be borne in mind in approaching the problem of styles and standards in music and appreciation of the same. If it is only a want of understanding of fundamental or essential requirements of art or the elements of its technique, the problem would not be very difficult, and it may not be impossible to bring some sort of uniformity in the means and methods of appreciation. But public opinion, constituted as it is among the present democracy, is not altogether free from unnecessary sentimentality and artificial factions and prejudices regarding art and artists. Not infrequently are these heightened when well-meaning and high placed public men are found to be airing views on things connected with art about which they are thoroughly and blissfully ignorant. It is not uncommon also that really appreciable points in the music of an artist are left unnoticed while mechanical and superficially spectacular rarities are applauded.

The situation is further complicated by letting loose on the public the good, bad and indifferent radio broadcasts and

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gramophone records of all and sundry and making confusion worse confounded in tastes and standards. Though, of late, honest and laudable attempts have been made by the manufacturers of mechanical music to bring out the art of leading and popular professionals, the craving of the masses for some kind of easily understandable music, not to speak of the moribund tastes of the vulgar part of the crowd, and the business exigencies of the trade in mechanical music, is making it extremely difficult if not impossible to wade through the apparent chaos for a proper understanding and appreciation of the art. Perhaps these are only passing phenomena in a newly created flood of popular enthusiasm for music. The flood that has overspread itself, may, in course of time pool down into deep waters. In a way, institutions like the Music Academy, Madras, the Rajah Annamalai College of Music, and the University of Madras, are doing something to utilise this enthusiasm and to bring some sort of order and light in what is apparently a chaotic field. Perhaps some good results have been achieved. But what has been done actually is nothing when compared to what has yet to be done.

In the nature of things and in such a state of affairs, criticisms in art are not likely to carry conviction in any universal manner. One may not look for much of appreciable help in that direction from the average professional experts who, constituted as they are with all sorts of interests and obsessions, cannot be expected to care for or properly and generously understand and estimate one another's art and much less speak out fairly and frankly about it. But music-lovers with a fair acquaintance with the technique and principles of the art cannot help thinking aloud on these matters. If some among them with breadth of outlook and balance of judgment happen to be free from obsessions and prejudices of any kind, and attempt to understand and give out their impressions of the art of some of our professional artists, they need offer no apology for the same and nobody need feel any hyper-sensitiveness about it.

Anyway, factions and favouritism, strong likes and dis-

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likes, sentimentality and prejudices without much of a justification for the same are not likely to improve matters. Perhaps there would be little room for these, if one were to proceed on the assumption that no artist is perfection in himself, and that each notable artist has something of his own to contribute to the art and its appreciation even in these days. A clear vision of the essentials of good art, combined with an open frame of mind, frankness and sympathy, may go a great way in helping music-lovers to appreciate our art and artists.

Our Forum

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MUSIC AND MUSICAL RESEARCH

TO THE EDITOR,

Triveni, Madras.

Sir,

Anent the article under the caption 'Music and Musical Research' by Mr. K. V. Ramachandran appearing in your issue of July-August 1933, I am painfully forced to make the following observations and trust you will kindly find space for publishing the same in your valuable Journal.

The present generation ought at least to be grateful to the late talented Mr. Singarachari for the public good initiated by him, namely that of publishing the grammar of South Indian Music for the first time according to his lights. The fact of the matter is, that as regards South Indian Music, nay of all Indian Music, the grammar is so simple. The framework of any *raga* (melody type) can be simply expressed by the order of ascending and descending notes, within the octave (*sthayi*) named according to the twelve frets of the *Veena*, (for which however 16 names have been given in South India). Just as the grammar of a language comes late in its history, when the language acquires and evolves a decent method of expression of ideas, and the words get different shades of meaning, and just as the grammar can never give us the meaning of words, so also the grammar of Music can never be a substitute for its language. One may as well hope to become a great orator, or a great poet, by the mere study of grammar.

Musical art is different in certain aspects from the other sister arts of painting, sculpture, or literature. Though the ear is the guide and the sole judge of the art, conveying to us the emotional effect of music, the

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impressions are very transitory and evanescent and their retention so difficult. It is only of late, that gramophone records have come into vogue, to give us for a critical examination samples of *raga* improvisation and elaboration, as sung, say within the memory of the last two decades. All we have got to go by for any criticism is the music, in different styles, and in a large number of pieces, as sung today by the musicians and artists. While the sensory impressions given by pictures or sculpture of the various ages of human history can thus be discussed as they can be constantly referred to, in the case of melodic music however, an examination of past music is impossible, except as it is preserved in the voices of the men and women, and in the fingers of instrumentalists living today. If one has had the good fortune to learn from the great living masters, he would find that each *sangathi* (or sentence of a song) as he repeats it for the learner is not quite the same on each occasion. Nay, further, the artist, as he is singing or playing can rarely be his own critic (except when a discordant note 'rushes' in), only he feels that he was not in form when he had finished. On these considerations, therefore, it is easy for the reader to see how futile will be the study of the so-called history of melodic music, and of the more ancient text-books without any samples of music of the ancients, and we are beginning to see already as a result of such study, the squabble over the old words used in describing music, as they cannot be understood. The probable reason for the present decadence of music is that the 20th century torch-bearers lack the faith and the lofty idealism which inspired the past composers.

While on this subject, I may as well give my experience of the practice of the art (on the violin). The vocalist in learning the art from his teacher goes by the sense of hearing, and sets about the adjustment of the vocal chords to produce the sweet sounds as they follow one another, but in the case of the instrumentalists, either on the violin or the *Veena* (where the modulations of the human voice can be more or less accurately reproduced) the music will not come out by simply getting at the various positions on the frets of *Veena*. A manipulation of the tension of the strings has to be made, and thus a second sensory impression of the sense of touch supervenes. In the early stage, the would-be-artist simply attempts at producing the music as sweetly and

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correctly as possible, but when that stage of learning is reached when music is played without any look at the instrument or the fingers, and when the nervous and muscular responses to the correct intonation are good, a self-consciousness arises that the pitches of notes are not the same as those of the 12 frets of the *Veena* in the octave, and the characteristic notes of each *raga* do, more often than not, lie between some two frets of the *Veena* (or well-known positions on the violin). This is called *srutignana* and when this knowledge pours in into the consciousness of the player (and of the vocalist) the art sense suddenly develops in him and he is gladdened with the joy of his own music. Mention of the so-called twenty-two *srutis* within the octave may be in a 2nd-century *sloka*, but *srutignana* is an experience gained by the practising instrumentalist never to be forgotten, and supreme in melodic music. The word *srutignana* connotes a finer perception than *swaragnana*, which is restricted to the knowledge of music described according to the 12 frets of the *Veena* within the octave. The names for these twenty-two *srutis* should have been given perhaps at a very much later age, when the *Veena* frets had to be fixed in hard wax, and the way even to recognise these names has now been lost to us. (In fact the *modus operandis* of this fixation of frets—or of *melam* as it is called—is almost forgotten, and these tuners are, it is sad to say, fixing the frets now by the harmonium, which is entirely wrong). I can, on the statement of my late father, vouch for the fact that even the late Maha Vaidhyanatha Iyer once questioned to himself whether the 'Sadharana Gandhara' of South Indian 'Thodi' was the same as the 'Shadsruti Rishabha' of 'Natai' (though the frets are the same in the *Veena* in common parlance). It is necessarily, therefore, the instrumentalist who, by the very process of the mastery of technique, has a better sense of how the musical sounds are produced, in trying to imitate the human voice, as the sense of touch and of distances on the strings gives him witness to these *srutis*. Thus, the question of frequencies or ratios comes to the forefront, and thanks to Helmholtz, *srutis* can now be defined with a certain amount of accuracy. (Perhaps the writer of your article does not know that it is after the advent of Helmholtz that the tuning of the piano has been rendered perfect by the aid of the counting of 'beats'). My article in the *Journal of the Madras Music Academy*, Vol. 2, No. 1 of 1931 makes references to these *srutis* in relation to the existing music of the present day, as evidenced in the vari-

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ous compositions in some of the more common *ragas* (or melody types). All this is but an aid to the memory of the *raga* type.

There are various types of beauty of the human face, a Japanese, Chinese, English, Welsh, Irish, and so on. But though the Japanese and Chinese are Mongols having common features, there are distinctive characteristics in each. Similarly, in the case of music these distinctive characters of *ragas* can be best described by reference to 22 *srutis* or more, which are present. It should be added, however, that melodic music can be written up (though roughly) only in relation to the notes as described by the 12 frets of the *Veena* in the octave and that melodic art is a whole, which can never be completely deciphered by any system, even of *srutis* or separated notes.

Research work to be fruitful should, therefore, be either on scientific grounds, or by a study of the various musical compositions as now *sung* under the different schools as handed down from teacher to pupil, while references to dead and long-forgotten books can only be of academic interest.

C. SUBRAHMANYA AYYAR,
Member of the Board of Studies in
Indian Music, Madras University.

Calcutta, 12th Oct. '33.

II

UDAY SHANKAR

TO THE EDITOR,

Triveni, Madras.

Sir,

Uday Shankar's recent visit to Madras seems to have caused a mild sensation in the minds of the public and a

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gentle flutter in the hearts of art-lovers, and there is quite a good deal of controversy in the papers about him and his art. Undue praises have been lavished upon him by a generous public and unmerited criticisms have been levelled against his dancing by well-meaning critics. All this is good and encouraging.

Friends, both those who warmly admired Uday Shankar and his art and also those who have adversely criticised his shows, have asked me as to what I think of his dances, and I can only repeat what I had said on another occasion that 'in his case it was a triumph of showmanship over art, of artistic excellence over perfection of technique.' By this I do not mean that he is an indifferent dancer but that he is more successful in his productions than in his performances.

Uday Shankar is by no means a classical dancer in the sense that he has been a keen and careful student of the classical dance-arts of India and a conscientious exponent of accepted *abhinaya* and *nritta* according to Bharata Natya. I do not think he ever claims to be a faithful follower of traditional forms and conventional usages in the art, but an artist who makes use of old *motifs* and suggestive gestures and poses for the expression of his inner urge as a dancer.

He is essentially a creative artist and not a mere traditional dancer. He is certainly no exponent of any one particular type of Indian dancing, much less of classical Nautch dance of South India, for most obviously he has not the proper training and requisite talent for such. He is a concert artist who presents against simple, suggestive, beautiful settings, bits of themes of both classical and folk dances, and to that extent only he is an interpreter of Indian dancing in some of its aspects.

The very nature of his presentation makes it impossible for him to perform any one dance item to its completion, and classical dances of the type of Bharata Natya or Kathaka or Kathakali require not only years of training and practice but hours of display. This fact has been ignored by almost all those who have severely criticised him for taking liberties with the traditional forms and canonical laws of *Bharata Natya* and mutilating them so flagrantly. There is much to

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be said in favour of this view, but one cannot at the same time forget the artist's objective and ignore his motive and purpose.

I agree with much of the criticisms of 'Ganadasa', which appeared in the last issue of *Triveni*, and share with that learned critic the hope that Uday Shankar would really do well to get a good grounding in the traditional style of Indian dancing, under an experienced teacher, before he is able to intelligently and successfully interpret this ancient art of Bharata and before he is able to create something great and unique of his own. As he is today, Shankar is a sensitive artist, a fine producer and a successful showman—a truly rare phenomenon in India—and to this side of his genius due credit must be given. India, today, needs more men of his constructive genius, and his pioneering work should be more sympathetically viewed and appreciated. It is also good to tell him where his faults lie, and if he means business he will indeed be much benefited by criticisms as well as by praises. I personally wish him good luck and success and more strength to his elbow.

Madras, 11 Oct. '33.

G. VENKATACHALAM.

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

The World Crisis and the Problem of Peace.—By S. D. Chitale. [International Book Service, Poona.]

The world situation—political and economic—is at present so complicated that very few are in a position to get a clear and correct grasp of it. There are innumerable currents and cross-currents affecting it, and the forecasts made of the probable transformations that it might undergo in the near future are equally innumerable. A real understanding of the subject requires an acquaintance not only with the facts of contemporary history but also with the course of events that have made contemporary history what it actually is. The above book by Mr. S. D. Chitale goes a long way in giving a lucid exposition of the great historical movements of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries that are responsible for the present crisis and it also suggests remedies by which it could be faced successfully. The book may be strongly recommended for study by the general public who are anxious to get at truth with the minimum of effort.

The author has rightly regarded the advent of machinery as the beginning of the ills of the modern age. He shows how it introduced capitalism and the twin evils of imperialism and rivalry in armaments. He gives a graphic description of the gradual process by which under the influence of these factors England, Germany, France, and the United States extended their sway over almost every part of the globe and have thus inevitably created mutual ill-will, jealousy, and hatred finally culminating in the great war of 1914-18. The close interdependence of economics

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and politics is clearly brought out in this as well as in the subsequent parts of the survey.

He then proceeds to explain how the delegates to the Peace Conference conspired to defeat the aims of the War as enunciated by President Wilson and how the Treaty of Versailles came to be based on a spirit of revenge instead of a spirit of justice and fair play. In his view the impossible conditions imposed on Germany by the framers of the Treaty constitute the cause of all the difficulties through which the international world has been passing during the last fifteen years. This leads him to an examination of the problem of reparations and War debts and his conclusion is that world recovery is impossible until these are completely cancelled.

One has nothing but admiration for the ability with which the author has marshalled facts and figures in support of his thesis; one cannot however say the same thing about the suggestions he makes for bringing about universal peace. He proposes to substitute a 'World Peace Committee' for the present 'League of Nations' and believes that his machinery would prove to be a more effective instrument of peace. He is here labouring under a misapprehension as he seems to think that the nations of the world are ready to adopt a policy of universal peace, that they are tired of war, and that war will have no place in the future progress of mankind. This is contrary to facts and the realities of the situation. Force is still necessary in this imperfect world of ours and it is sheer folly not to recognise the need for it. Moreover it is the lack of 'Will to Peace' that is responsible for the weakness of the League of Nations and not its defective machinery. The setting up of a new organisation is not going to bring the millennium.

Banks and the Money Market.—By B. Ramachandra Rau, M.A., Ph.D. [Lalchand and Sons, Calcutta.]

This book by the well-known writer on Indian Banking problems consists of two parts. The first part is a reprint of four lectures on Banks and the Money Market delivered by him in the winter session of 1930-31 to the Institute of Bankers, Calcutta. The second part contains a number of appendices into which are incorporated the articles contri-

buted to magazines by the author from time to time since 1931. They deal with the question of Silver, the Gold Standard, and the different kinds of banking institutions now carrying on work in India. Though the lectures and articles deal with a number of miscellaneous topics, it is possible to discover a few basic ideas underlying them all.

The Banking organisation in modern India is not a co-ordinated system. There are numerous institutions dealing with money. Some of them are of the traditional type and have a long past behind them. The individual indigenous banker, the village sowcar, and the Nidhis do a large share of banking business. There are the joint stock banks and the foreign exchange banks modelled on similar institutions of the West. Then there are the quasi-governmental organisations like the co-operative banks and the Imperial Bank. Over and above all these there is the Government of India itself which does a good deal of banking and exchange business at home as well as abroad. But all these do not fit themselves into a well-defined and closely integrated system. Each does its work and carries on its operations in its own way and there is a veritable anarchy prevailing in the banking world. It is to this that the learned author invites the attention of his readers. He draws a contrast between the chaos that is the inevitable consequence of such a condition of affairs and the orderliness that characterises the banking system in countries like England. He also gives a picture of an ideal banking system and the wide gulf that separates the actual in India from the ideal depicted.

The establishment of a central reserve bank with ultimate control over all the banking operations in the country thus becomes an immediate necessity. A study of the book will enable one to understand the nature of such a bank and how far the proposed reserve bank approaches the standard of the requirements of the country. Those who are interested in the place of the Imperial Bank of India or of the foreign exchange banks or of the Indian joint stock banks in an India dominated by the contemplated reserve bank will find much food for thought and reflection in the latter part of the book.

As the lectures were delivered in 1930-31, the descriptive portion of the Indian monetary and currency system

is a little out of date. What is said of the Indian Gold Bullion standard on P. 31-34 will have to be read along with Appendix 11 (A) on the linking of the rupee to inconvertible sterling at 1sh. 6d. ratio. To those who have a working knowledge of the basic principles of currency and banking the book will prove to be a valuable aid in the understanding of the more complicated issues with which the world in general and India in particular are at present faced.

M. VENKATARANGAIYA, M.A.

* *Rise of the Christian Power in India.*—By Major B. D. Basu, I.M.S. Second Edition, with 4 maps and 58 plates (one in colours). [Ramananda Chatterjee, Calcutta, pp. viii+1011. Price Rs. 15.]

"The establishment of English power in India is an ugly one. It begins in feebleness and cowardice, it closes with a course of fraud and falsehood, of forgery and treason, as stupendous as ever lay at the foundation of a great Empire. My Lord Macaulay, in that brilliant passage which opens his biographical sketch of Clive, expresses his astonishment at the little interest which we take in the story. I do not know any stronger instance of the short-sightedness of clever men when they only recognise the moral sense as something to flavour a narrative, as you might flavour a pudding with all spice or with mace. Our own consciences will long, ere this, have given the answer. . . . It is the instinctive hypocrisy of shame which has kept us Englishmen aloof from the tale of the rise of our Indian Empire. I suppose that the son of a transported convict in Sydney, whose father has won a fortune for him, who is rising in station and consideration himself, who is received at Government House, subscribes to charities, sits in front pews at church, likes nothing less than to be reminded of the notorious robberies and burglaries by which his father won for himself a free passage to the Antipodes, and if they happen to be recorded in the Newgate Calendar, would only be the more careful to exclude that exciting work from his library. Is it not so with us? Is it not in human nature that we should dislike to be reminded of the crimes which Clive and Warren Hastings, and all that shameless generation which surrounded them, committed for our benefit? I thank God that, until the Whig essayist and cabinet minister, no man had yet had the hardihood to see the picturesqueness of this shameful story, to measure its capabilities as the subject of a brilliant article in a review."

So wrote John Malcolm Ludlow, the British historian, in Volume One of his *British India, Its Races and Its History*. Major Basu in his present monumental work has made a mistake in not including this passage in the first chapter. Instead, he has relegated it to the epilogue. Perhaps, there is ample justification for this procedure. Any one who cares to glance

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through the pages of *Christian Power*—such is the popular name of our present work, will be struck with the absolute frankness, authority, clarity, and utter want of malice which is characteristic of Major Basu's researches into British Indian history.

Our author's preface on the historical method is a brilliant exposition as to the criteria and methodology necessary for any good historian. It would have done credit to any professor of history at Oxford and Cambridge when he proposes to deliver his inaugural address on his accession to the Chair of History :

"The historian must not be only a mere chronicler of facts and events and make his mind simply the mirror of reality, but he should possess the qualifications of a philosopher and scientist. He should observe and record facts, and also try to explain them. Like a scientist he should attempt the classification, generalization and explanation of facts and endeavour to detect in past events the expression of general principles and laws. Like the scientist, the historian also should frame hypotheses and theories to explain events."

It would be difficult for any student of history to exaggerate the merits of *The Rise of Christian Power in India* as a piece of thorough historical research. Its bulk is its forte, because space lends to an interpretation of the development of John Company till the intervention of the British Crown a kind of catastrophic vehemence. To his indefatigable energy Major Basu has brought a rare type of judicious acumen, and this double set of facultative impulses have made the present work as indispensable to the serious student of British history in India, as to the politician and nationalist in our land. Every statement is fully documented. Every document is authentic. Every footnote is replete with ruthless thoroughness. There is no getting away from Major Basu's arguments. There is no doubting his facts. Besides being a cataract of indictments against the misrule of John Company, Major Basu's work presents in its true light the inner history of the mammoth organization represented by this company of merchant-adventurers. I have had occasion to examine numerous histories, but never have I come across a book possessing the splendid magnificence of *The Rise of Christian Power in India*.

The present work has a peculiar significance to our country at this great crisis in our national history. 'Good

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government can never be a safe substitute for self-government.' By throwing the history of the fortunes of the British rule in India into its proper relief, Major Basu has shown us the real strength of the Churchillian argument for the suppression of our national aspirations. It is our wealth which England wants, not the credit that she is fitting us for self-government. There is no gainsaying this fact.

Major Basu's work, in its present edition, is divided into ninety-seven chapters. Frankly, it is impossible for a reviewer to do justice to all his findings. But as one who had occasion to study the first edition while at the University, I can say without the least hesitation that Major Basu has amply earned the gratitude of all interested in the true interpretation of British Indian history. For, *The Rise of Christian Power in India* is more an interpretation than a dry-as-dust chronicle of facts usually met with in text-books. It is bound to rank with such famous works as Froude's and Green's interpretation of English history.

In the present edition, which was revised by Major Basu just before his death, numerous errors of the first five-volume edition have been rectified. Thus it has become a great gift to his memory. Every chapter grips the reader with the sincere veracity and ruthless logic of facts which Major Basu brought to bear upon his subject. Chapter XIX dealing with the Marquess Wellesley's treatment of the Nabob of Arcot, Chapter XXII describing his dealings with the Peshwas, Chapter XLI dealing with the Vellore Mutiny, Chapter LXI which immortalises Bharatpur, Chapter LXXXVIII which describes the annexation of Bharatpur, seem to me to be some of the finest achievements of Major Basu in the field of historical reconstruction and re-interpretation.

Alike with Freidrich List who became famous with his *National System of Political Economy*, Major Basu has shown the world that without a national approach to the study and interpretation of history, all the romance, however gruelling it might be, of the past of any country cannot be fully appreciated. What Jadunath Sarkar has done for the Mughal period, what Romesh Dutt has done for the history and life of India under the Crown, Major Basu has accomplished for the interpretation of the history of the East India Company.

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There is only one thing which can be said about *The Rise of the Christian Power in India*, it is a paean to the energy, shrewdness, and sincerity of Major Basu.

Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, the Editor of *The Modern Review*, is to be congratulated for bringing out this remarkable production at such a small price of Rs. 15. No pains have been spared to enhance its usefulness both to the casual and the studious reader of Major Basu.

LANKA SUNDARAM, M.A., Ph.D. (Lond.)

The Great God Waste.—By John Hodgson, with illustrations by Greta Tolson and Albert Daenens; [Author, Eggington, Bedfordshire, England.]

'A study of certain phases of the present world-wide tendency—as exemplified by Capitalist, Communist and Fascist practices—to impoverish and robotise the Individual,' writes the author at the very beginning of the book as to the nature of its contents. He was a Scientific Engineer who was employed in various parts of the world in the firms of Warship Builders, Gold Minings, Diamond Digging Companies, Railway Roads; one who has seen life in the raw in many parts of the world, in Europe, in America, in Africa, in Canada, in Asia, and this book records his reactions to the many experiences he had undergone, and illustrates, with facts and figures, what he has heard, seen and observed in his much-travelled life. It makes a thrilling reading and his knowledge is deep and profound. He started his life, as he says, with the proud and fascinating knowledge of how to mould material environment for the benefit of mankind and ends his career by setting out to write a book depicting a world full of turmoil, confusion, repression, constraint and woeful misuse of both mechanical and human powers as the result of it. He is disillusioned about the advantages of modern mechanised life and civilisation and about the false methods of making and spending the wealth of the world.

John Hodgson is no economist with any set theory to cure the present ills of human society, and he does not propound any definite scheme of reform or reconstruction. He depicts the present chaos in vivid pen-pictures, and he takes care that he does not draw much from his own imagination. He sum-

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marises, after a careful study and clear thinking on the present muddle in the world, the Old World Order and the New World Order (as represented by the U. S. S. R.) in three simple formulæ: The Capitalist civilization stands for (1) Profit-motive system, (2) Exploitation of the weak, poor and the coloured, and (3) Collective effort without individual freedom. The objective of the New World Order is; (1) Production for Use, (2) No Exploitation, and (3) Intelligent participation of the individual in the creation and sharing of the wealth produced. 'The Great God Waste' is in every sense a notable contribution to *The Way Out of the Chaos* problem that is puzzling and worrying the present-day politicians, statesmen, economists, reformers and well-wishers of humanity. The illustrations are attractive and highly suggestive. Price is not quoted.

The World Chaos and the Way Out Series: Vol. 1, Economics and Finance, and Vol. 2, Science.—By Ernest Kirk. [The National Press, Bangalore, Price Re. 1 each.]

These two slender volumes on the most burning question of the day, *The World Chaos and the Way Out*, challenge attention; whether they carry conviction or not is quite a different matter. The author is an idealist and an independent thinker. He views the problems of the world from the standpoint of what he calls Life, and Life to him is Truth, Reality, God, whatever you may choose to call it. This idea is not in any way new to the world but its application to the problems of politics, economics, finance, art, religion and sociology, as attempted by Mr. Kirk, is quite interesting. It provokes thought and points the way out of the present muddle. Mr. Kirk does not accept any half-way measures, he does not believe in 'hospital treatment' for the existing ills of humanity but wants complete and radical cure. He argues with conviction that the root of the trouble is with the individual, and that 'the individual problem is the world problem.' He says: 'So far as the present world chaos is concerned I submit that the main cause for its existence is to be found in man himself. Being himself 'at sea' about the purpose and meaning of his own existence, his thoughts and feelings, his longings and desires, he naturally succeeds in throwing everything around him into confusion.' He reiterates this fact again: 'Let it once be realised and acknowledged that the basic cause of the muddle in the world around us is due

to the muddle within man himself, his failure to face and solve his own problems.' But the solution he offers, though true and intellectually acceptable and understandable, is a little difficult of practical and immediate application to humanity at large. The greater part of the present difficulty, to my mind, is not so much the failure to perceive what to do, as to how to do it. And even when one has come to know what to do and how to do it, the pace at which it has to be done remains a formidable problem. Economic and other social problems are invariably acute, largely because something has to be achieved in a given time and by a large multitude. That is why, I think, that although the individual is fundamental, to reduce social problems into individual problems is to restate them wrongly. There is yet another way of looking at the present *impasse*, in my opinion. Here again the time factor is the overriding consideration. Nations or large groups of communities have through historical circumstances developed certain habits of thought and life and the problems of each nation have to be solved within that context. By the time they develop another context or terminology, they may have ceased to exist. Thus it happens in India we have developed the individual approach to Reality, and those that insist that our problems cannot be solved unless we resort to another mental attitude often forget that the effort may either result in, or not survive, our destruction. Likewise it often seems to me, those who advocate an individual approach to Reality for the people in the West ask them to take too much on themselves. Most social problems, if not all, are immediate problems, which must be solved somehow at once and cannot await prolonged consideration or perfect attainment. The vision of individual and universal happiness is and has always been before humanity, but it is the way of approach that has been different, difficult and arduous. These two brave little books are indeed pioneers and like all pioneers they are sent out on an adventurous career to do spade work. The books are excellently printed and got up and can be had from The National Press, Bangalore.

Hindu Heaven.—By Max Wylie. [Victor Gollancz, London, Price 7sh. 6d.]

Hindu Heaven is rather an intriguing title for a modern work of fiction. It is not a description of the abode of the Hindu gods, nor of the region where pious souls go after

death. *Hindu Heaven* is not a location like the Christian Hell but is a state of consciousness like the Buddhist *Nirvana*. Max Wylie's *Hindu Heaven* is an entertaining novel dealing mainly with the life of the Christian Missionaries in India and incidentally with the method and policy of their educational institutions in this country. The chief characters in the story are American Presbyterian Christians, both Professors and Evangelists, with a sprinkling of a few Indian students to give colour to the story. The scene is laid in Lahore city, and some of the characters are easily identifiable, especially Shonti Chattopadaya.

The author is a gifted writer and his literary style is quite fascinating. He has insight into life and is a keen observer of men and things. He says some harsh things about Christianity as preached and practised in India, and his gibes at the Missionaries and their mentality are at times a little too severe. He is equally severe with the character and conduct of Indian people and hits hard at their national weaknesses and exposes the hollowness of many of their cherished ideas and beliefs. There is truth in his criticisms and he is not malicious in any manner. He is, however, mistaken in many of his conclusions with regard to the political temper and tendencies of the people. He forgets that there is always another side to some of these questions, and the Indian view-point must certainly differ from the British or the American. His reading of the Congress situation at that time is one-sided and mainly got, I suppose, from a reading of the Anglo-Indian papers, and his opinion of politicians like Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhagat Singh and others is rather superficial. Young Nehru does not hate the English—he has great admiration for English character and some of his best friends are Englishmen—but he hates the Government that is imposed on India by the Britishers. Max Wylie is impulsive, impetuous and hasty, and, though brilliant as a writer, he is not a sound psychologist. He is too sure of himself even where the world is new and strange to him. The book, however, is humorously written and many of the bitter things are said so honeyedly.

Bruno, Jack, Jim and Thomas are, undoubtedly, drawn from life, and the romantic attachment between the American Professor Bruno and the Hindu girl-student Shonti is beautifully depicted. I wonder how the Missionaries in India will

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welcome this book, but it is certain to create a mild sensation in the literary world of this country and elsewhere!

G. VENKATACHALAM

SANSKRIT

MAHESWARA SUTRAS

These form the first fourteen sutras of the *Ashtadhyayi* of Panini. In his great motionless dance, Siva taught the nature of Brahman to Sanaka and his other disciples by *Mounopadesa* (silent initiation—not vocal) by wringing his *Damaruka*. When the *Pramatha Ganas* who were nearby watching the dance were not able to understand, they approached Sri Nandikeswara for an explanation thereof and he gave out his *kasikas* and thus threw light thereon. These sutras are ordinarily understood to form part of the Science of Grammar. Vyaghrapada took them to be such. But his son Upamanyu, with the help of Sri Nandikeswara's *kasikas* found in them the science of knowledge of the Atman, and wrote a short commentary thereon. These were practically unearthed and treated in detail with parallel passages from the Bhagavat Gita, the Ujjara Gita, the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras, the minor works of Sri Sankaracharya and other treatises on Advaitic literature with Telugu annotations thereon, for the benefit of a large number of persons unaware of Sanskrit by Aksharajna, a Sishya of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai, who has laid the entire Andhra world under very great obligations to him. The work under review has had the benefit of the careful editing of the Maharshi himself. The book is priced very cheap, annas eight only, so as to be within the easy reach of all. Copies can be had from Swami Niranjanananda, Sarvadhikari, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

X

Opinion of

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

I have entrusted with the Indian Photo Engraving Company the making of line- and half-tone blocks to illustrate the scientific articles appearing in the Proceedings of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science. As our illustrations are intended to assist in the understanding of new scientific results, it is of the utmost importance that the reproductions should be clear and accurate. I may say at once that the work of the Indian Photo Engraving Company has fully come up to our requirements.

C. V. Raman

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