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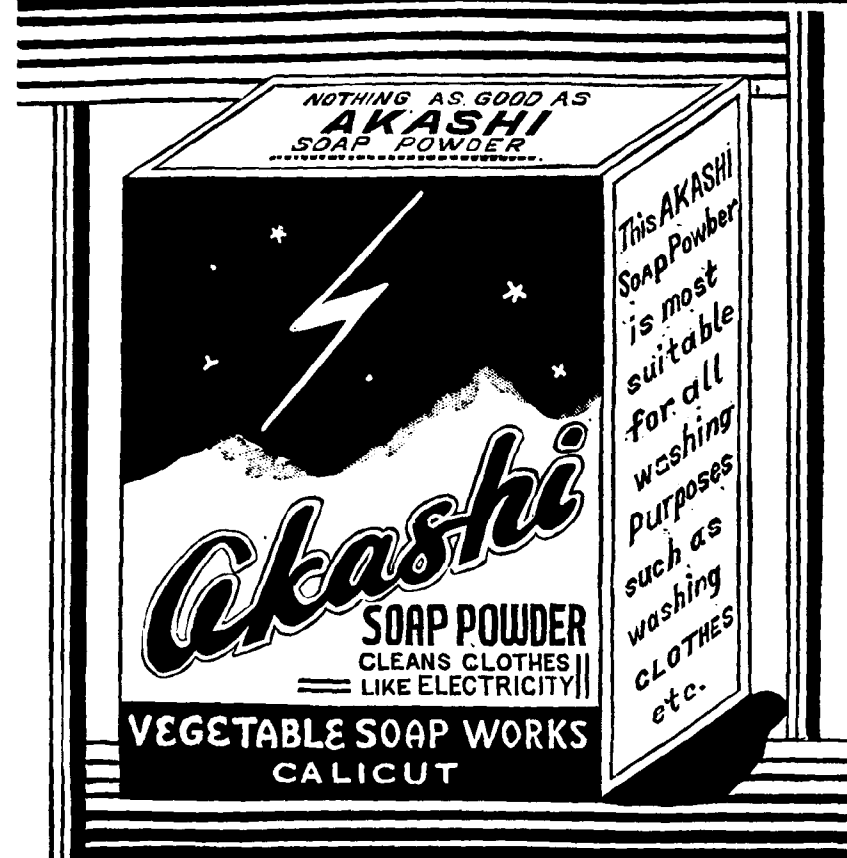
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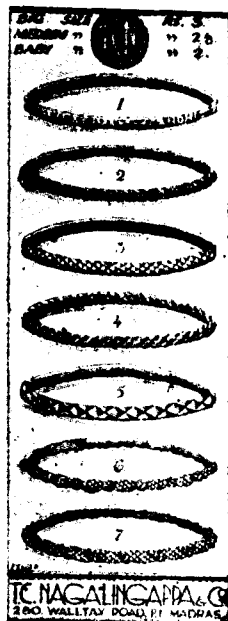
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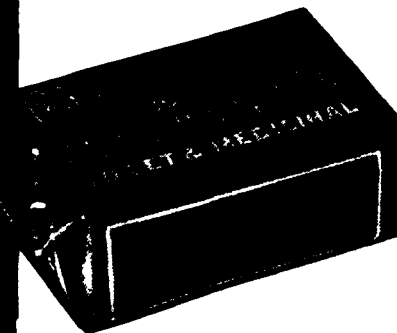
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The SCHOLAR

VOL. XII

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NO. 5



On Vigil for Peace!

(DAIRY LEAVES)

By NICHOLAS ROERICH.



THE main thing is to start the movement and to give direction to the thought. Later on thought will readily flow assuming a world scope. Of course there always will be, imitations, repetitions, elucidations, comments and affirmations..... Everything is for the good. Dangerous is only a morbid stagnation.

The friends of our Pact have again cause to feel encouraged. In the League of Nations there have been proposed useful measures for the protection of Art treasures. The League urges bomb-proof shelters for art and museums are to be isolated from military objectives.

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The building of bomb-proof shelters for portraits and restoration of the medieval sanctuary system for statues are recommended to all countries by the League of Nations International Museums Office in a report recently issued. It proposes that pending an agreement for the protection of Art, competent authorities everywhere shall put their national art on a war footing along these lines:

For movable or easily transportable art works, the building of reliable shelters, within museums offering the same efficacy as those designed, for example, for protection of the civil population against aerial bombardments.

Equipment of museums with a view to the removal of Art works to these shelters in cases of impending danger.

"Drawing up drilling instructions for training museum staffs in these delicate operations. Acquisition of material that can be rapidly utilized for protection against effects of bombardment of Art works difficult to remove.

"For architectural monuments, adoption of the same protection measures by competent departments with a view to insuring, in the event of aerial bombardment, the safety of more fragile parts (stained glass windows, bas-reliefs and other sculptural features) both inside and outside monuments. Acquisition of appropriate equipment for dismantling these parts.

"Steps to be taken with public authorities with a view to clearing in peace time certain artistic monuments of outstanding artistic or historic value of all surrounding buildings, works, aerodromes, lines of communication, etc. used or capable of being used for military purposes.

"Lastly, and in view of facilitating and concluding an international agreement acceptable to the military authorities of all countries, construction outside urban centres and in places that give rise to no misunderstandings from a military or from a strategical viewpoint of shelters and depositories to which movable objects to be protected can be transported wherever possible; or appointment of a town or centre in each country to be declared strictly neutral and to serve as last asylum for humanity's laws."

Thus the League of Nations also ponders on the protection of the beautiful. We shall not discuss the details of these proposals, some of them are more feasible, others less. This does not matter. It is important that the thought about the safeguarding of cultural treasures is spreading all over the world. Many more golgothas and burning pyres will yet fill the world with confusion and awe, and these horrible signs imperatively will remind the world how indeferrable are the questions of the protection of all flowers on the field of Culture.

Some time back we suggested to our Pact Committees to gather and summarize all proposals regarding peace, emanating from manifold organizations. Much indexing and many catalogues have to be made in order to reveal the world thought about peace, about the protection of world treasures, about agreements possible in this direction. There is endless work to accomplish and world events prove the real necessity of these efforts.

Similarly, to the many branches of the Red Cross, there will arise around the Banner of Peace various problems for decision. Without envy and enmity every country will have to bring its mite into the treasury of true achievements.

In schools, from early childhood, the foundation will be laid for the saving of the Beautiful. This year will mark the 34th anniversary of our peace pact movement. During these three decades many people have approached, many opinions were expressed, but one thing remained unalterable—the indeferrability of action. World events have but confirmed this.

Newspapers communicated that the Spanish Government with difficulty saved the Cathedral in Barcelona from its own mob. It was necessary to paste large posters on the walls of the cathedral urging its protection and to call out troops with machine guns. Is this not a striking example how necessary it is to educate the people's consciousness? Before our very eyes deplorable and irreparable destructions are continuously taking place and

only a powerful moral impulse can save humanity from a repetition of fatal annihilations.

The Pact for the protection of cultural treasures is needed not only as an official regulation, but as an educating law, which from the first school days will imbue the young generation with the noble idea of safe-guarding the true values of the entire humanity. The Pact has already been signed by 22 countries. No doubt this large number will gradually be joined by all other countries as well. Our Pact has justly been named the Red Cross of Culture. Truly it stands in closest relation to the great Red Cross, which at the time of its inception was received rather sceptically, but now has become an undisputably humanistic foundation of life.

To show the imperative necessity of all peace movements, let us listen to some statements of leading militarists. "If previously peace wished to subject war to its own laws and regulate it by legal limitations, and tried to compel war to respect its morals and values, now it is the opposite: peace should be subordinated to the demands of war, which has become the ruler of the age and has shifted peace to a mere concept of armistice. This emancipation of war, that constitutes the main feature of our era, demands for its realization the introduction of the last decisive step: the abolition of the present social order, which is based on the assumption of peace, and the substitution of this order by a militaristic one. The establishment of such a militaristic constitution is the specific aim of to-day."

Let us not burden the reader with too many such depressing quotations. There exist entire volumes, as for example, "The Total War" and "The War for Annihilation". They describe a war in which the whole population of the nation is to take place, with the object of the complete annihilation of the enemy, by all available means, without any restrictions whatsoever, without mercy. Thus the "Total War" is directed not against the enemy's army, but against entire nations as such. "War is the highest manifestation of the vital will of the people and, therefore,

politics should serve military supremacy," so the militarists assert.

One can easily understand what is meant by the "complete annihilation of the enemy". This covers also all accumulations of culture. In face of the cruel aims of the "Total War" the merciless methods of conquerors of the past will appear as child's play. If humanity has reached such unheard of monstrosities, one must the sooner direct all efforts towards the protection of cultural values — both in artistic and scientific treasures and in the person of cultural representatives themselves.

It is deplorable that after millions of years of existence of our planet, one has still to reiterate such axioms. Hence, if at our previous Peace Pact Conferences we called for a doubling of efforts, the present condition of the world demands that our efforts should be increased threefold! On vigil for Peace!

Devotion

BY GENE FOSDICK

THE foundation of success must be devotion to the cause. For devotion is an unqualifiable condition, as absolute as is the degree of color—white. Devotion forges the link of attachment between mother and child, between hero and his cause, remaining unassailable even to the forfeiting of life. "Of what do we speak?" asks Eastern Wisdom. "Of the quality of devotion—irrepressible, all-conquering, creative, adorning the path. Devotion is measured only in a difficult hour. Love, readiness, solicitude—these people cite in place of devotion. But these fragments of devotion are as a smile of sympathy; devotion itself is aglow as a warrior ready for battle."

Why then not cultivate the quality of devotion in all our works, in all our strivings that they may be shielded by the very might of their sincere existence from the material influences which attack and undermine any degree of sincerity up to the unassailable devotion.

"Devotion does not resemble a windmill, nor a hired singer of praises. It rather resembles a firm tower upon a summit which the enemies avoid in awe, but in whose chambers a shelter is ever prepared for a friend."

Let us insure the future by evolving its beauty upon a foundation of Devotion!

Maharaja Who Made History

BY C. H. V. PATHY

ON a cold misty morning in the twenties I stood shivering near the Race Course in Ootacamund. The rays of the early sun were struggling through the blanket of the white. Suddenly my eyes alighted on a smart young figure, sitting on a grey horse, happiest in breeches and leggings coming out of the "Dilkush Mahal," the usual residence of the Maharani of Vizianagaram. Close behind was another figure on horse-back. A jockey suddenly pulled me up from behind and said: "Look, yonder rides the boy who will shortly be the ruler of Travancore."

Four years later, in the ancient Durbar Hall of Trivandrum, I was a witness to the magnificent pageantry of the investiture of Chittarai Tirunal. The boy I saw in a flash in riding breeches in Ootacamund was the cynosure of a huge concourse, ruler of an area of 7,625 square miles of charms and palms and picturesque back-waters, holding sway over nearly six million people. With the halo of immemorial ages beating on his royal features, in unfaltering accents, in that hall of hushed silence, where the notabilities of the State and a few celebrities from outside, including "Sir C. P." were gathered, he replied to the Viceroy's *karitha*, read by the Agent to the Governor-General for the Madras States. Later, amidst the roselight and the romance of that day, he drove in splendour through streets thronged with joyous people, waving to them, on to Kowdiyar Palace, situated on a hillock, four miles away from the city.

The next day I was seated in an artistic drawing room of the Palace when the Maharaja pelted me with a multitude of questions. He had nothing of the splendour of Ind about him, he was not in gold-braided dress uniform but in plain dhoti and a silk shirt.

His features are clear-cut and artistic and he has an aquiline nose. His penetrating eyes, with their perfect symmetry suggest a picture of Ravi Varma come to life and when he pauses in between the talks, you have the vague feeling of being in the presence of one who is prepared to fight long odds and is convinced of his ultimate success. They seem to say: "I will do this and I will win."

Soon this boy ruler, inheriting the traits of his talented mother, assisted by one of the shrewdest politicians in India, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, who was appointed as the Constitutional Adviser, was to break every tradition of the State and create history. Instead of building a new palace to reside as is customary on a ruler's accession to the Throne, he renovated Kowdiyar, where his grandfather lived and died, furnished it tastefully and took his residence in its splendid isolation. Riding over the ripples of unreasoning orthodox opposition, His Highness, accompanied by his mother, brother and sister crossed the seas to visit Europe—a thing unheard of in the annals of Travancore royalty. On his return, he gave the bold order to dig up the buried treasures in the Trivandrum temple, so that he could utilise them properly.

Never losing the point of view of a plain man, he is today forging ahead to make Travancore the ideal State in India. Trade is booming, industries are revived and the breath of progress has made even the dry bones of the interior instinct with life. He has laid out a charming aerodrome and opened a first class hotel in the capital of the State. In between his busy hobbies and studies, in disguise he visits the slums of the poor and staggers many a shop-keeper by offering fancy prices for trinkets.

No wonder he is very popular. His picture is hung up in hundreds of houses. It stares at you in the coffee stalls of Travancore. It hits you in the eye in the schools, colleges and libraries.

Youth, energy, courage and determination are written across his features. A fine rider, an ardent musician, a good tennis player, a great lover of fine arts, his character

keeps a perfect balance which charms us in no other Indian ruler. His reign has marked a renaissance of art in the State. Recently, Dr. Cousins opened an Art Gallery thanks mainly to the inspiration and the efforts of the Maharaja.

When Lord Willingdon was honoured with a farewell dinner at Delhi on the eve of his departure by the Princes of India, the privilege of proposing the toast on behalf of the Princely Order fell to his lot—a task he performed admirably.

It is, however, his recent Temple Entry Proclamation that has blazoned his name over all corners of the world. Ardently religious himself and anxious to avoid collision with public opinion, he convinced even the orthodox section of the public about the justness of the attitude he has taken, and today he is hailed all over India as the pioneer of an epoch-making reform.

It has been decided to erect a statue for him in Madras and Mahatma Gandhi whose heart gladdened at the magnanimous gesture of the Maharaja has sung loud his praise for the world to hear.

"The Story of Prophecy"

BY MEA



OW few, if any, can resist the fascination of prediction! Who among us is not interested in the future? Even though the interest may be purely selfish, and when prognostications come from various sources and still foretell similar events, it is impossible for the most sceptical to remain uninterested, and when predictions for the future are supported by predictions, which have been made in the past and which have proved to be more or less accurate, it would be merely obstinacy to deny the possibility of accurate prophecy, whether it is made in the form of inspired visions, by scientific calculations based on the measurements of the Pyramids or by means of astrology or any other of the numerous methods by which certain individuals are able to see into the future.

In *The Story of Prophecy*, by Henry James Forman (Cassell) is an amazing collection of famous prophecies, by Nostradamus, Tycho Brahe, Mother Shipton, Cagliostro and Madame Blavatsky. The author appears to have made a hobby of collecting these prophecies and has accumulated a mass of intensely interesting information. He remarks that "it is difficult to find a prophet whose average was a hundred per cent. correct", but in many cases the average appears sufficiently high to be uncomfortably convincing, and he quotes Cicero as saying, "Never could the Oracle of Delphi have been so overwhelmed with the significant presents from all kings and nations had not all the ages proven the truth of its oracles." That true and direct oracles must have been numerous can alone explain the survival of Delphi as an oracular shrine for hundreds of years.

It has always been a mystery to me why anyone should treat the vapid vapourings of H. G. Wells seriously, and he appears to have proclaimed his ignorance pretty effectually in the following passage which the author quotes

from Wells' "Outline of History" in which he speaks of the Pyramids as "unmeaning sepulchral pilesof an almost incredible vastness erected in an age when engineering science had scarcely begun,"—in the reigns of the three kings, Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus.

Among prophecies for the future there seems to be a consensus that Paris will be completely destroyed by fire, and we are told that Prince Wilhelm will come to the throne of Germany before the end of the present year, while Hitler is to meet his downfall as a consequence of a civil war, the overthrow of Mussolini is also predicted for the present year. There is to be an Eastern war, probably between Russia and Japan, in 1938. The United States will pass through a critical period between 1940 and 1942, and "Armageddon" takes place between September 1936 and August 20th, 1953.

The year 1936, the author states, has loomed large in prophecies for centuries past and he quotes Nicholas Roerich, the famous artist, scholar and philosopher, whose home is in the Himalayas, as stating that "the year 1936 appears as truly momentous for human fate." He has pointed out, the author remarks "that throughout the East, in India, Mongolia, even in Siberia, there is a tense expectancy that the forces of light are about to gain an appreciable advantage over the cohorts of darkness." He quotes passages from Roerich's book *Altai-Himalaya* in support of this statement. It is not to be denied that many events which took place in 1936 will have far-reaching effects on the history of the world, and the historians of the future may be able to point out the year of 1936 as one which was "truly momentous for human fate".

It is also interesting to note that in March, 1934, upon his arrival in New York from India, Professor Roerich told the author, while speaking of prophecies current in the east "to mark especially June 11, 1936, as a predicted date of great significance. More than 2 years later, on June 12, 1936, the newspapers of the world announced that on the preceding day, the 11th, the Soviet Government

of Russia had submitted for discussion to its people a new constitution establishing a bicameral parliament, the lower house to be elected by secret, universal ballot; freedom of speech; freedom of worship, and certain other liberties not theretofore associated with that particular dictatorship. An undeniably momentous event for Russia, it may exert a far-reaching effect upon the entire world."

This particular chapter (Chapter XVI) which is concerned with more recent prophecies concludes with the following reassuring statement: "The year 1936, in short, with which prophets have long been preoccupied, has the forces of light gaining the upper hand and turning the tide against the darkness so long pressing upon the world."

Altogether "The Story of Prophecy" is an intriguing and intensely interesting book and likely to have a large sale. It can be confidently recommended to all who are interested in fortune-telling; clairvoyance; oracular statements and prophecy in every form, and who is not?

'Sonti' Fermentation

By Prof. V. SUBRAHMANYAN, D. Sc., F. Z. C.



THE present article relates to an interesting type of rice fermentation that is practised in certain parts (especially Chittoor and Nellore districts) of South India.

The object of the fermentation is two-fold:— one is to prepare a good flavoured, well tasting and easily digestible form of rice; the other is to obtain an alcoholic beverage which, in addition to its stimulating quality, is also claimed to be a good tonic, particularly in seasons when certain diseases (chiefly cholera, typhoid and small-pox) are prevalent in epidemic form.

The fermentation is initiated by the use of a material known as the *sonti* seed. The latter is sold (at 2 to 3 for an anna in the form of small balls which for all outward purposes, look like lumps of paddy husk together with some fibrous plant material. The procedure for the preparation of the fermented rice (*Sonti Annam*) is as follows:— The stipulated quantity ($3\frac{1}{2}$ seers if white rice is used; 3 seers if red rice is used) of well dried rice is three quarters cooked (as judged by the feel) and spread on a new mat till thoroughly cooled. Powdered *sonti* seed (each seed weighs about 10 grams) is then sprinkled on it in small quantities at a time and well mixed. The treated rice is then transferred to pots which have been previously steamed (this is traditionally done by boiling a few pieces of cactus with a small quantity of water). The pots which are only three fourths filled (thus providing for swelling due to gas production) are tied round the neck with pieces of cloth and buried up to the neck in paddy. After 60—70 hrs., carefully trained nose can detect a pleasant odour reminding one of well ripened plantain or jack fruit. Under favourable conditions, the smell permeates the whole house and even the neighbourhood. If no such odour is noticeable within the stipulated time, it is concluded

that the preparation is not a success. (The failure is generally attributed to evil eye). The badly fermented rice is generally found covered with a black mould and emits a foul odour. Such a product is not consumed by human beings, but charitably offered to the cattle who are generally appreciative of the unexpected gift. If the fermentation is successful, the preparation will be pearl white with a pleasant blend of sweet and sour taste; the alcohol combined with the esters emits a pleasant vinous odour.

Ordinarily, the fermented rice is consumed at this stage. It is easily digested and is sufficiently stimulating to give a pleasant sense of well-being. Its average percentage composition is as follows:—total acid (as lactic acid), 2.07; volatile acids (acetic acid), 0.095; lactic acid, 1.826; alcohol (ethyl), 9.76; acetaldehyde, 0.011; esters (as amyl acetate), 0.118; fusel oil, 0.061; dextrin, 1.368; sugar (glucose), 14.04; starch, 10.35. The rest is made up of water and mould growth. The product is easily digestible and has the additional advantage, that it can also help to digest (through the agency of the active principles in the mould) other starchy foods that may be taken at the same time.

Certain section of consumers—especially those of the working classes—allow the fermentation to proceed for a week or more. The product is no longer solid, but becomes a turbid liquid with a strongly pronounced alcoholic odour. It is then filtered through coarse cloth and the amber coloured liquid which passes out is drunk with great relish. This product is definitely an alcoholic beverage, the alcohol content being even higher than that ordinarily found in the common brands of toddy or country beer.

The preparation of the *sonti* seed, which is the basic material for the fermentation was until recently a close secret, carefully preserved by the *Besta* (fisher folk) community. The researches of Mr. K. Rami Reddi have now brought much valuable information to light and have shown how an illiterate and generally backward community can, through centuries of experience, develop empirical methods which can stand the most rigorous tests of modern science!

The ingredients used for the preparation of the seed are (a) roots of whole plant previously dried, (b) roots and herbs in fresh condition, (c) finely ground paddy husk, (d) rice bran, and (e) rice flour. Hand-fuls of (b) mixed with $10\frac{1}{2}$ seers of powdered husk and $4\frac{1}{2}$ seers of bran and well powdered in a mortar, while hand-fuls of (a) are mixed with $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers of rice flour and powdered separately. The two lots are then mixed together and enough water added so as to roll them into balls.

The balls are now subjected to a process of ripening. A description of this stage as translated from the very words of an old gentleman who revealed the 'secret' is as follows: dry straw (from a recent harvest) is spread on the ground. A new palmyra mat is spread on this. The *Sonti* balls are placed on the mat and then covered first with a new mat and then with fresh straw. The floor should not be damp. The whole room should be warm as in a bakery. After 3 or 4 days, the balls which are now fairly dry are swollen in size like bread in a bakery. In practice, the goodness of the ripened *sonti* seed is tested by its colour (which should be light yellow) and pleasant odour. When these are satisfactory, the seed is taken out, dried in the sun and then stored in a dark place.

Although the above procedure bears a general resemblance to the preparation of the "Chinese yeast" and the fermentation has a few common features with the preparation of rice beer in Japan, Formosa Java and in Assam (*Bukhar*), it is yet very different from others in certain important aspects. Thus, the roots and herbs used in the preparation of the seed are different from those used elsewhere. The checking of the fermentation at the intermediary stage of *Sonti Annam* is practised nowhere else in the world. Lastly, the micro-organisms present in the *Sonti* seed are very different from those responsible for the other types of rice fermentation.

The researches conducted by Mr. Reddi at the Biochemical laboratories of the Indian Institute of Science have shown that the active agent responsible for the *Sonti* fermentation is a new (hitherto undescribed) species of

mould to which the name *Rhizopus sontii* has been given. It is extremely powerful in its action on starch (especially rice starch) and converts it first into an easily digestible dextrin and then into sugar (mostly glucose). In this respect the *Sonti* organism is even more powerful than all the other moulds (including *Aspergillus oryzae* from which Taka-diastase is prepared) so far described. The activity is best seen on rice cooked in the manner usually adopted in India. Uncooked rice is not easily attacked, while overcooked (pasty) rice is not readily penetrated by the white velvety growth of the organism. Polished white rice is best suited for the fermentation. Unpolished or coloured rice (which have generally thick bran coats) are not easily attacked. Par-boiled rice is not well suited to the fermentation. The mould is not very efficient in its action on other cooked grains such as ragi, cambu or cholam. These have either thick outer coats or contain starches of a different type which are not readily attacked by *R. sontii*.

In addition to predigesting starch, the *sonti* organism also produces fairly large quantities of alcohol. During the first two or three days, the quantity of alcohol produced is comparatively small. After the starch is mostly broken up and converted into sugar, then alcohol production begins. The quantity tends steadily to increase until, at the end of about a week, it is between 20 and 30 per cent. on the weight of the original rice.

The manner in which the mould enters into the composition of the *Sonti* seed is still not clearly understood. It is presumably derived from the paddy husk or bran used in the original preparation. Further researches in this direction will yield highly interesting results.

There are other organisms associated with the *sonti* fermentation. One is a hitherto undescribed species of dematium which works in close association with the *Rhizopus* in the digestion of starch. It does not produce much alcohol. Another organism which is of some interest is a round type of yeast which attacks the sugar formed by the moulds and converts it into alcohol. There is no doubt that this yeast is partly responsible for the high alcohol

content observed in the later stages of fermentation. There is also a pseudo yeast (torula of a new type) which produces small quantities of alcohol and causes turbidity in the final beverage. In addition to this there is an acid and gas producing bacterium which indirectly affects the production of alcohol in the medium. There are a number of other bacteria and moulds associated with the *Sonti* seed, but these play no important part in the fermentation. The conditions in the medium are such that only the *Rhizopus* and the few other organisms mentioned above are favoured.

The relative contributions of the different organisms to the degradation of starch and production of alcohol has been studied. It has been found that the digestion of starch is most due to the *Rhizopus*. That organism is also responsible for the production of about two-thirds of the total amount of alcohol (20 per cent. on the weight of the rice) found in the medium. The remaining third is contributed by the combined activities of the yeast, the dematium and the torula. On the other hand, the bacterium uses up the sugar for other purposes and in its presence production of alcohol is distinctly reduced.

During the fermentation, a number of active digestive ferments are secreted by the various organisms. The most active and the one with considerable practical possibilities is the starch digesting ferment (amylase) secreted by the *Rhizopus*. This ferment is particularly efficient in its action on rice starch and since rice is the staple food of most of the tropical countries (especially in the East), it should be of considerable therapeutic value in relieving human suffering arising through indigestion.

It has been found that the maximum amount of alcohol is produced in the first week after which if the fermentation is allowed to continue, there is considerable drop in the alcohol content of the medium. After about three weeks, less than a third of the original quantity of the alcohol is left behind. The product develops an undesirable smell and a sour taste. These show that the other micro-organisms originally present in the seed produce certain secondary changes destroying the alcohol formed

in the medium. Among the other factors influencing the production of alcohol, mention may be made of the proportion of water to rice which should be at least of the order of 2.5 : 1. On lowering the proportion of water there is corresponding drop in the quantity of alcohol produced. The proportion of seed to rice does not ordinarily make much difference unless it drops below 1 : 500. A small quantity of seed does not produce enough quick growth to withstand extraneous infection, so that the production of alcohol is adversely affected. As already mentioned, the extent of cooking is very important. The cooked grains should be soft and yielding and should at the same time remain detached from each other. This will facilitate the mould penetrating quickly throughout the mass. Under-cooked grain is only partially penetrated, the hard inside portion remaining intact for a long period. When the grain is over-cooked and the swollen masses adhere together, then the mould grows only on the outside, leaving the inner portion largely intact. The importance of the variety of rice has already been indicated. Raw, polished white rice (which is mostly starchy) is best suited for the fermentation. Par-boiled rice turns stiff on cooling and offers some resistance to the growth of the mould. Temperature is another important factor determining the production of alcohol. The most favourable temperature is 30°C. (86°F.) at which the yield of alcohol would correspond to about 30 per cent. on the weight of the grain. A lower or higher temperature causes a marked drop in the production of alcohol. In South India the favourable temperature is attained only during the winter months, so, that would appear to be the best season for the production of *sonti* beverage of best quality. Addition of small quantities of starch or sugar (as is sometimes done in brewing practice) does not appreciably affect the course of fermentation, the yield of alcohol being about the same in all the cases. Addition of different mineral salts or nitrogenous substances does not very much improve the rate of fermentation, the seed already containing most of the essential nutrients required by the different organism. Some of the

salts if supplied in more than minimum quantities, do, in fact, lower the yield of alcohol. Exposure of either the original seed or the fermenting rice to direct sunlight lowers the efficiency of fermentation. The active organisms are either killed out or devitalised by the radiations.

There is a remarkable agreement between the method of fermentation as practised by the *Bestas* and the scientific findings cited above. The conditions for the preparation of the seed, the variety of the rice to be chosen, the extent of cooking, the proportion of rice to water, the temperature of fermentation—all these are already realized and skillfully applied by those people.

The influence of various roots and herbs on the course of fermentation is still obscure. There is no doubt that some of them supply certain essential nutrients required by the various organisms. The seed is fairly rich in nitrogen and minerals which are essential to the growth and active functioning of the fermenting organisms. In addition to the above, some of the added materials will improve the flavour and enhance the medicinal properties of the finished product. Some of the herbs used in the preparation of seed are well known digestives and carminatives used in the Indian systems of medicine and there is no doubt that useful quantities of the aqueous as well as alcoholic extracts of these substances will have passed into the composition of the final product.

While there is no doubt that the fermented rice is an easily digested product and hence a safe food to take, it cannot be claimed to be highly nutritious human food. *Sonti Annum* suffers from most of the deficiencies inherent in the use of polished rice. Its nutritive value can be greatly improved, however, by a suitable admixture of substances rich in nitrogen and phosphorus. Small quantities of eggs or milk will make a useful supplement and will greatly add to the health and well-being of the consumers.

It is well known that during the monsoon and post-monsoon months, many of the commoner diseases (especially cholera and typhoid) are traceable to the

consumption of polluted water. It is also recognised that alcoholic fermentation suppresses various putrefactive and pathogenic organisms so that the use of *Sonti* beverage would be a means of eliminating dangers through water pollution. This is well known and practised in many parts of France where the surface waters are often polluted. The use of a mild alcoholic beverage in place of water improves the taste and adds to the safety.

The above arguments do not, however, justify any immoderate use of the *Sonti* beverage. In fact, there is the potent danger—especially among communities unaccustomed to temperate habits—of increasing drink habit which would be extremely difficult to get over. A further danger lies in the possible addition of drugs—especially certain narcotics—which are known to enhance the intoxicating properties of alcoholic beverages. These are known and practised in the case of other Indian beverages. In the case of *Sonti*, they can be easily incorporated in the seed and great care will be needed—especially on the part of the Excise authorities—to see that, what is otherwise a wholesome process, is not misused to satisfy the perverted tastes of man.

Vallathol & Nalapat

BY V. M.



O a votary at the shrine of Malayalam poetry Vanneri holds a thousand thrills. It is the home of Vanneri Poets, Vallathol and Nalapat. The picturesque expanse of its palm-clad gardens and paddy fields rimmed by bamboo bushes, the roar of the nearby sea, prodigal and unmeasured the year round, the glory of the straightforward morns, the amazement of sunsets, the changing shadows, have all inspired the famous Vanneri poems and on that account have a special charm of their own. Situated midway between Guruvayur and Ponnani in South Malabar Vanneri has, to the casual visitor, nothing much in it to distinguish it from the rest of the Malabar Coast. To the student of poetry, however, it is sacred and enchanting. I found it so when on a summer evening I wandered into it. On every cottage front I could see the exquisite kneeling form of the Moplah housewife whom in four score lines Vallathol has transformed into a heroine as sweet as Shakuntala herself. On both sides of every hedge that bordered my path, I could see the two supreme lovers of Nalapat's Teardrops worshipping each other with the blossoms of their love bathed in holy tears. It was impossible to look at the starlit sky without calling to mind the dismal picture it unfolded to Nalapat's forlorn eyes on the night of the terrible tragedy in his life, nor at the lengthening shadows without visualising the army of skeletons that disturbed Vallathol's sleep on the varandah of his nearby house. At every turn of my path I was confronted with some character or emotion that leaped out from the Vanneri poems. There was no getting away from them.

The Vallathol who welcomed me in the portico of his modern looking house that nestled with appropriate modesty among the closely planted palms was every inch of him a complete contradiction of his picture that had

somehow got into my mind. The turn-out of Malayalam scholars on the rare occasions I had met them had chilled me; and Vallathol was an eminent scholar and among other things had translated Valmeeki's 'Ramayana.' I had once listened to a full-blown celebrity among them and he had given me the queer impression that he was a channel for the dull flow of the bookishness of the past, the present and the future. I was relieved to find that this poet whom I had sought had no scholarship about him. The alert figure in early fifties who after bidding me to be seated, reclined on an easy chair had no pontifical aloofness or freezing ways. I went prepared to be bored by one of those learned lectures that are inflicted at the ponderous session of Sahitya Parishads. But I was thoroughly mistaken. A gentleman of culture with winning manners, gay and companionable, it was a pleasure and a privilege to be in his company. The pleasant serenity of his face is its most distinct charm. It sets him quite apart in this modern world of distracted nervous faces. He retains the effervescence of youth. He is capable of entering into the humour of any situation. That is a wonderful asset to him and a help to others, as I found out for myself to my great relief as a host when some months later the three of us—Vallathol, Nalapat and myself—found ourselves lost in the wilds of Behar after many hours of motoring, because the bright driver of our car had never heard of Tagore or Shantiniketan and lacked the modesty to admit it.

Nalapat radiates vivaciousness in all directions. Vallathol makes the horizon lively. Nalapat has no horizons; the sky is his limit, and between him and this limit there is nothing that is not vividly glowingly vivacious. Neither in poems nor in conversations he draws rigid boundary lines. There is an orderly progressiveness in Vallathol's treatment. A tender idea in his hands unfolds itself slowly as the fragrance of jasmine whispered by a packet of forgotten love letters you unexpectedly come across. You get it slowly, in convenient doses. In the sweetest of his love lyrics the rustic village maiden, Radha, is made to uncover her burning heart with a discipline and orderliness one

would associate with a trained nurse dressing a painful wound. Nalapat when confronted with a poignant sentiment sends it flying all over the place. You are just hurled into with scant mercy and left to make your own terms with it.

With Vallathol art is an empire over which he rules, benevolently. In the case of Nalapat art is not distinguishable from himself. Art to him is the expression of his soul. His personality, his philosophy, his pleasures and sorrows, are everywhere in what he writes. His poetry gives the impression that he has found that tragedy—a good part of it at any rate—is soluble in ink, misery can be exterminated by getting it down on paper, the best way to get rid of a broken heart is to put it in a book. Vallathol takes us into the land of glory supreme where the far-flung music of fairy bells greet us. Nalapat too shows us many a new but deeper world, but there mingled with the shimmer of temples and the elusive perfume of the newly opened lotus are flashes of sternness, wailings and laughter all mingled with the throbbing of a unique intellect working at high creative speed. Vallathol would think a thousand times to contradict; Nalapat would contradict off-hand in his debonair way. But what delicious contradictions!

Vallathol wore every symptom of well-deserved triumphs, of the uninterrupted march from success to success, from *Chitrayogam* to *Sahitya Manjari*. It was different with his younger colleague. His path to fame was rugged. He translated a third rate novel and a first rate classic, scribbled the usual love sonnets, dragged with four-footed tongs out of her well-earned retirement a Ramayana heroine (Sulochana) and made her behave with the appropriate degree of decorum dear to the pundits; and then he fell down the stairs. And the man who scrambled to his feet was a new man—the author of 'Tear-drops,' the translator of 'Pavangal', the exponent of a new mode, an overpowering force in the realm of thought, art and culture of Kerala.

Vallathol is the *kokil*, pouring out melody throughout the year, in all seasons, from all tree tops. Nalapat is that

elusive bird who, from some unknown plane, sweeps over the Kerala coast just at the outbreak of the monsoon, sings a distinct song its own, interpreted by many in many ways but setting everybody to think and to solve, and then disappears as suddenly as it appeared for the space of another twelve months.

Vallathol is no ascetic. If he were one it would have been an irreparable loss to our literature. He loves the bubbles of life in healthy wholesome fashion. He is emotional and impressionable. Observing the changing expressions of his face and the decisive gestures of his hands as we passed from subject to subject in our conversation, I could understand how he breathed the breath of life into quite ordinary things. He can converse as he writes and is a selector but not a miser of words. If a woman suggests to him the fragrance of spring you feel he would not hesitate to tell her so with imagery. He would not be miserly with words. He would scorn coppers when he can lavish on her the gold of language. There is nothing pessimistic about him. He believes in success. His approach to this elusive goddess is not that of a devotee but that of an overlord.

Speaking of success, his friend, Nalapat, with the streak of fundamental philosophy underlying his attitude towards life and with the experience of all the storms that have burst on him and around him, is prone to look at it in his usual indifferent way. You have only to talk to him for half an hour to understand that. According to a Western writer success is the immediate and persistent reaction to environments. If he means sympathetic environments Nalapat would have had no success at all because the publication of everyone of his important works has invariably created bitterly hostile environments.

When "Teardrops" appeared, the pundits hoisted the black flag, beat their breasts and went into mourning. Yet it is to-day recognised to be an outstanding poetic achievement and a landmark in our literature, and with

the publication of its English version in London, it is winning approbation from a wide circle of readers outside the Malayalam speaking area. When "Pavangal" took the stage there was a regular uproar. Mild scholars forgot their manners and became abusive, methods of controversy that are only once removed from the dust-bin were requisitioned. Thunderbolts were hurled from the seats of the mighty. Harmless bafoons armed with any odd weapon they could get hold of joined in the holy crusade. Malayalam *saili* was the rallying cry. This man Nalapat was discrediting it, was giving it new forms and characteristics which offended against the good old conception of what a respectable *saili* should be. It must be saved for orthodoxy at any cost. Above all, the young generation should be kept away from the pernicious influence of this new *mode*, this Nalapat *mode*. Yet today the "Pavangal" style, which is the Nalapat style, is perhaps the most sought after and widely followed style in the language. For those who crave for clarity, force and directness of expression, the "Pavangal" style is the ideal to follow. The appearance of flight is still kept up and "Pavangal" is still taboo in a steadily diminishing circle of old timers. But these old timers are as much alive to the heart-beat of Malayalam as the polar bears are to the warmth of the tropical sun. It is amusing to watch the rump of the crusaders tragically tottering to a last defiant stand. His latest poem "Chakravalam"—in my opinion the best of all his poems and in which is recorded a whole voyage of philosophical contemplation—has stunned his public and may have given it up as hopeless. From bewilderment to comprehension is a slow process. But people are beginning to comprehend and the history of "Teardrops" will soon be repeated.

Nalapat thrives on adverse criticism and would probably feel that his art was getting thin if any of his works on its first appearance had anything other than a stormy reception. He serenely wears criticism as a crown, as a symbol of triumph. On the contrary if anybody

invests him with a halo he does not flaunt it; he rather carries it under his arm.

To appraise, to compare and to contrast the art and achievements of these two Vanneri poets is no easy task. Neither are these vignettes a proper medium for any such detailed study. As I have said earlier in these impressions, to Nalapat, self is his favourite theme and hence his art is more intimate. Vallathol alights on self sometimes, but to him that is one of his many themes. Vallathol has developed expressionism into an elaborate philosophy. Nalapat's devotion to it is imperfect. Vallathol's pride is in craftsmanship. There is nothing in the language to overstep his "Magdelene Mary" as embodiment of flawless craftsmanship through and through. He is ready to turn his pen to anything provided it could be done well. But Nalapat is much more fastidious in his choice and applies his art to fewer subjects. Vallathol broadens and spreads himself—sometimes even spreads himself thin—while Nalapat retracts and concentrates and would even sacrifice easy lucidity for the sake of solidity.

Vallathol writes in golden ink, often on gold-tipped paper. Even when reading his Mappu there are visions of gold dust dancing shyly before one's tearful eyes. Nalapat does not use ink always. He wrote *Pulakankuram* in ink, "Teardrops" in blood and *Chakravalam* in a mixture of both.

Vallathol drinks and bathes in colour, indulges his lust for colour in all sorts of ways. He covers his ideas with the golden embroidery of language; he lifts his undulating periods, props and upholds them by the witchery of words, until they have gathered adult strength, and then places them before the reader with due ceremony. Nalapat, on the other hand, confronts you with massed ideas with little or no trappings, and your amazement is never smoothed down by the beat of silky words. You face stern stuff and there is no padding provided to make impact softer. Vallathol uses gloves; his young friend prefers the bare arm.

When Vallathol attacks an opinion he does it vehemently, but at the same time sympathetically, but Nalapat with more energy than sympathy, riddles the enemy with quick words and lays its prostrate form with cruel logic.

To those like the present writer whose approach to Vallathol is through his poetry, his preoccupations of recent years with the Kerala Kala Mandalam that promotes the *Kathakali* dance is a disappointment. He has left Vanneri and with it the atmosphere that was so congenial to the play of his poetic talents. He is isolated from his literary associates. His companionship even with Nalapat, which is one of the most charming phases of modern Malayalam literary history, is all but a thing of the past. As the active president of a large institution with a miscellaneous crew of actors and performers to be trained and looked after and with business affairs to be attended to, his muse is forced out of the sovereign place she used to occupy in his thoughts. Her loss is the gain of Kathakali. The advocates of Kathakali have won and those like the present writer cannot escape a feeling of disappointment.

The Gond Seva Mandal

BY L. N. GUBIL

TEN miles from Amarkantak and the source of the holy Nerbudda is the beautiful Karanjia Valley, hidden from view on every side by the high walls of the Satpura hills. Into tiny villages, lost among the trees, wild beasts from the jungle which cover the hills find their way night after night in search of cattle or of some smaller prize to carry away.

It is in the middle of this valley, on a half circle of hills, that the first ashram of the Gond Seva Mandal was brought into existence. At one point of the semi-circle, the main building stands; and this is known as "Sri Dinabhandhu Ashram" and is that part of the Mandal which is specially dedicated to St. Francis; it consists of a walled court, rooms for brothers, and a tiny mud chapel of St. Francis for the use of Christian members of the Mandal. On each of the other spurs of the hill, a house is built, all in the Gond style, so that the general effect is that of a Gond village. The houses are made of mud and wattle thatched with grass; their normal cost was Rs. 40 a piece, and the biggest of them "Sri Gandhi Jnana Mandir", the Library, did not come to more than Rs. 60.

The Ashram is lost to sight from a little distance among the jungle that enfolds it. It is part of the "Dongar", or Mountain, and as such is familiar to the people to whom the "Dongar", is the main source of occupation, excitement and worship, for it supplies them with almost everything they need. For their houses there is bamboo and the plentiful clay of the jungle: for plates and cups the broad green leaves of mountain trees; for making their coarse rice more palatable, herbs and roots for the seeking. All day long you may see men, women and even children, armed with axe for woodcutting or defence against wild beasts, going to and from the "Dongar", some carrying bundles of leaves on their heads, some staggering under a double load of firewood or a heavy basket of white earth.

The Gonds who live here are a tribe of aboriginals, once kings and rulers until they fell under the conquering Maharashtrians and later under the British Raj, into their present state of misery and servitude. Yet still the blood of ancient chieftains runs in their veins and their ancestry is written in their free carriage, in their soft and musical voices, in their ready laughter, in their generosity and regal indifference to the demands of time and labour.

In spite of the extreme poverty, the houses in which all but the poorest Gonds live are clean and beautiful. The mud walls are whitened and decorated on doors and walls and pillars with jungle creatures, trees and simple designs in "high relief".

The normal food of the people is the poorest rice made into watery soup with herbs and occasionally a little vegetable when there is any to be found. The tax on cows and she-buffaloes, which amounts to nearly a month's income, makes it impossible for all but the wealthiest to taste milk.

Although all but a handful of the villagers are illiterate, they are for the most part anxious to be educated. At first it was difficult for them to believe that a group of Indians and English, Hindu and Christian, had come for any other purpose than for that of converting them to Christianity. The integrity of Hindu members and visitors was questioned, because it was unbelievable that any Hindu would eat with those outside his own caste. So for a time all suffered the fate of untouchables. But now the villagers are satisfied that they are among them simply as their friends and servants without any ulterior motive. Shy and suspicious as they were at first, they are now without trace of either. The Ashram rings with the sound of the children's voices, whether in school hours or out of them; their meals time is usually a favourite time for men to drop in for a chat on their way to or from the jungle late at night. Every tale of woe—a calf carried off by a panther during the night, a villager intimidated by some unscrupulous merchant, a field barren through lack of money to buy a plough-ox and many another is poured into the members' ears daily.

The Gond Seva Mandal has already started a school for little children on the most modern lines. They have some of the best Swadeshi Montessori apparatus, purchased from the Kamdar Karyalaya of Bombay, and they have tried to make the school garden a little paradise for children, with rough swings and poles for climbing clay and sand for building, and garden plots which one day will be little seas of colour. The children are so poor that even on the coldest morning when they are glad to wear a blanket until the sun is high, they come to school with one poor cotton rag to keep out the bitter cold. On arriving they all give themselves a warm bath in a sunny corner of the garden and run into school, where each child has a garment hanging on a picture-labelled peg. When all are clean and dressed in their simple one piece suit of gaily coloured Khadi cloth, they look like bright butterflies as they run and dance, for they love nothing so much as to imitate the wonderful dances of their elders, in the sunny garden. It is hoped that these children and the others who will come to these schools would be the future saviours of their people. They are being educated not for the cities but for the leadership of their own people—leadership in the matter of improved agriculture and cattle rearing, in reviving the cultural life of their past, its dancing and songs and art, and in bringing the best ideas of other peoples and other ages into their own civilisation to enrich and develop it. To this end they are starting a Gond Museum (in which they need the co-operation of the public of the C. P.), for the use of the Gonds themselves; and already one of its members is doing a good deal of research into their thought and customs. To balance this they include as an important part of the school programme the study of religion in its widest sense, literature and history but not so much as set subjects as talks and discussions with the boys and girls. Neither do they neglect what Tolstoy called the "bread-labour" side of education. There are classes in carding, spinning and weaving, carpentry, gardening and all the other crafts, which are, or should be, an integral part of rural community life.

The saddest part of their life here is the terrible disease which surrounds them; with malaria and imported diseases too awful to describe, these poor folk come to them as their only help—and although they have a dispensary, without a doctor they can do so little for many of them. To reach the nearest hospital, they must tramp twenty-two miles through lonely jungle and over two wild mountain ranges, which for months are almost impassable, because of torrential streams. It is a whole day's journey for a strong man by the shortest route, but a much more serious matter for one with great wounds or terrible pain to carry with him. Much of the disease is preventable and with more funds and workers to help to carry on an intensive campaign in the villages against illiteracy and disease they may hope for great things.

The present personal of the Ashram is made up of the co-founders, Father Elwin and Brother Shma Rao, Mani Patial—a graduate of the Agra University, Srikant formerly of Sabarmati Ashramam, and Sister Mary Gillett who has had experience in the most advanced methods of children's education in London. Their great need is for two more Hindu members.

Many people find it difficult to understand both the method and the motive of the Mandal. Yet they are very simple. By fighting the battles of the poorest and the most exploited of India's children it is doing its share towards that unification of a people free and educated, which is the dream of all who are suffering for the same cause in jail or working for it in Councils. Their motive is religious in that they want to bring fuller life to this splendid but down-trodden race, political in that they mean to see them freed of external oppression.

Their method is equally easy to understand. They are not here to drag unwilling horses to the pond—even though it be the water of education that they offer. By their respect for the people and by their identification with their ways of living they hope to become their friends, so that as friends they can share whatever they have of good that has been denied them.

Emotions

BY R. MAHADEVAN, B. A. (Hons.)



THE bane of intellectualism has been in its having brought into its train, the habit of reification of concepts. When we say, 'curiosity carried me away' we seem as if to mean 'curiosity' as an object, while it is only an emotional experience. Here it would be better to use the adjectival form rather than the substantive, wherever possible. So the question, what are varieties of emotional experience, would be more appropriate than, 'what is an emotion?'.

"We may say, that directly or indirectly, the instincts are the prime movers of all human activity..... The instinctive impulses determine the ends of all activities and supply the driving power by which all mental activities are sustained; and all the complex intellectual apparatus of the most highly developed mind is but the instrument by which these impulses seek their satisfaction, while pleasure and pain do but serve to guide them in their choice of the means" says Proff. McDougall. He recognises thirteen instincts, the instinct of escape, of combat and of repulsion; the parental instinct, the instinct of appeal, the pairing instinct, instinct of curiosity, of assertion, the gregarious, food-seeking, and constructive instincts, and to satisfy the superstition, laughter is also taken as the fourteenth instinct. Now, emotions have an instinctive basis.

Every emotion is based on some corresponding instinct. We can explain the impulsive power of emotions, as adaptations of the organism to the modes of instinctive activities. That is why adequate bodily adjustments are essential in every sort of emotional experience. These changes are known as the expressions of the emotion and there is also the conative factor in the total experience.

"Conative experience is the felt impulse to action and it is felt or is prominent in experience in proportion to the strength of the working of the impulse (instinctive). Such

felt impulse is present in all emotional experiences. When we are afraid, we feel an impulse to run, thus proving that appropriate secondary adjustments of bodily organs are necessary. Professor William James of America, tells us that appropriate bodily adjustments, determine the nature of emotional experience. This view is not easily comprehensible. Surely, we run since we are afraid and never do we fear because of the fact that we do run.

Emotional experiences are subjective and may vary in different people at different times or the same subject or incident, may arouse different experiences in the same man, at different times. The same man who trembles at the snake super-imposed string, at a later stage may use it to tie his bundle. The term, 'emotion' is used both to denote the quality of an experience and also the whole mental and organic changes in a man when he is under the experience. Conation is an important factor in all these experiences.

There are some psychologists who identify emotions with sensory experiences that is, kinaesthetic and motor sensations and deny any conative factor. But a study of pathological cases and an unprejudiced observation of normal beings, do not show any connection between muscular actions and mental effort. Mental effort can never be identified with bodily effort.

It is usual to make a distinction between primary and secondary emotions. As we said, every emotion has a corresponding instinctive basis and conversely, every instinctive impulse is accompanied by some emotion. Such emotions are known as primary emotions. The primary emotions, serve as the indicators of the nature of the instinct at work. This, along with the secondary bodily adjustments serve to gauge the mood of an individual at a given moment. To the individual who observes, it is easy to know before hand the nature of the instinctive impulse and make adequate preparations. These instincts are innate and hereditary. The force of the impulse depends upon the nature of the inherited force. That is why emotional experiences also, do vary in individuals according to their

inheritance. The fact that any obstruction to our normal course of actions excite our emotions, is true only of the emotion of anger.

It is a fact that two or more instincts can be at work at the same time. The individual, now would be beset by so many emotions. The conflict can very easily be observed. That instinct, which by inheritance is of more force, determines the course of action to be adopted by the individual. But the different emotions excited by the different instincts, blend into a mixture and the resulting emotion is known as a secondary emotion.

Pity, sympathy, gratitude, reproach are instances of secondary emotions. Take the case of a mother who is called upon as a witness against her son, for a serious crime. Suppose the crime is murder of the younger son. What would be the nature of emotions experienced by the mother and the judge? Anger, distrust and love would characterise the nature of the mother's mental state. The result would be secondary emotion, Reproach. The judge's emotion may be characterised as sympathy, a blending of anger and pity. Only objects for which we have acquired sentiments or enduring affective-conative attitudes, evoke in us, some of these secondary emotions like, reproach, admiration etc.

There is another class of emotions; derived emotions. Those emotions which do not have any particular, definite instinctive basis and which can be evoked by instinctive impulse at work, are derived emotions. Hope, confidence, pleasure and pain are such emotions. These can strictly be called feelings. They are the result of our appreciation of the probabilities of success or failure of the conations in our imagination. With the development of the powers of imagination we are able to fuse pleasure and pain as when we 'taste a lemon'.

Stolen Smiles

A teacher asked a little boy to spell 'responsibility,' which he did. 'Now, Tommy,' said the teacher, 'can you tell me the meaning of that big word?' 'Yes, mum,' answered Tommy. 'If I had only two buttons on my trousers and one came off, all the responsibility would hang on the other.'

The man rushed excitedly into the smoking compartment. 'A lady has fainted in the next carriage! Has anybody any whisky?' Instantly half-a-dozen flasks were thrust out to him. Taking the nearest one, he turned the bottle up and took a big drink; then, handing the flask back, said: 'Thank you! It always did make me feel ill to see a lady faint.'

To the surprise of the magistrates, and especially of the official concerned, the prisoner in the dock called the police superintendent as his witness as to character. 'But I don't even know the man' complained the 'super' indignantly. 'That,' returned the prisoner, smiling at the bench, 'is my proof of respectability. I've lived in this one-horse town for five years, and the police don't even know me.'

A man was charged with assault and battery and brought before the judge.

Judge: 'What's your name, occupation, and what are you charged with?'

Prisoner: 'My name is Sparks, I am an electrician, and I am charged with battery.'

Judge (after recovering his equilibrium): 'Officer, put this man in dry cell.'

The old miser was nearing his end and was dictating his last will and testament.

'And to each of my employees who has been with me five years or more, I bequeath the sum of two thousand pounds.'

'That's very generous,' said the lawyer, in admiration.

'Not at all,' said the sick man, 'there's not one of them who has been with me for more than a year, but it will look well in the papers.'

From Press and Platform.

George Arliss on Vegetarianism. George Arliss, the famous actor, Film Artist & Author, has contributed the following foreword to the Annual Report of a Vegetarian Home for Children in England:

There is, I believe, no valid argument against a vegetarian diet. If the scheme of Nature were such that men and women and children languished and died when meat was withheld from them, or even if we were not able to arrive at the full vigour of what is known as "manhood" without being fed with animal food—if such were the case we might have to say, with a sigh, "It seems cruel, but evidently it is God's will," and continue to take the lives of other living creatures that we might live. But it obviously isn't God's will, because there is not the slightest doubt that we can live just as well and become just as strong, without eating meat at all. And when I say "just as well" I am merely trying to avoid any argument with the meat eaters as to what is good and what is bad for us. Personally, I think we are a great deal better, both mentally and physically, if we avoid meat. We know that we have so many diseases that the doctors have to display a good deal of ingenuity in order to find names for them; it seems reasonable to suppose that we were not sent into the world to die of disease, and even "specialists" admit that most of our physical ailments come from wrong eating. Doesn't it seem probable that many of our diseases are the result of eating meat? It's an unpleasant habit anyhow, if you come to think of it—eating kidneys and liver and picking bones, and using blood for gravy; we shudder at the very thought of cannibals, but is there really much difference? A great many vegetarians maintain their youthful appearance and their strength and endurance to a surprising old age. There are many good arguments in favour of vegetarianism, and very few, I believe, in favour of eating meat.

But let us suppose that meat doesn't hurt anyone, that it is just as good a food as anything else, is that any reason why we should eat it? Why should we placidly permit creatures to be slaughtered to supply us with food, when we can get all we want without the sacrifice of life? People tell us that Nature intends this; that "big fish eat little fish," etc., but we are not fish: because animals prey upon one another—that is no excuse for us: we have the opportunity of selecting our diet, and our higher

reasoning powers which give us dominance over the animal world should lead us to mercy and forbearance.

My wife and I gave up eating meat as a consequence of seeing the misery of animals on large ranches, and their suffering in transportation. We decided that if the production of meat entailed so much suffering to these gentle creatures, we at least would not be parties in the crime.

Although I believe that it is wrong for us to kill to live, I do not regard meat eaters as wicked people. We have been brought up to eat meat, and have been told systematically by doctors (who ought to know better) that meat is necessary for our existence. People eat meat without a thought for the hideous suffering involved before it is served for their consumption.

And so I welcome a Home that shall emancipate the children from the bondage of meat eating, and shall educate them from their earliest years to appreciate the happiness that comes from showing mercy and compassion to the animals.

Anniversary of the Santiniketan Ashram. The thirty-sixth anniversary of the Santiniketan Ashram was celebrated in the last week of December when poet Tagore delivered a morning sermon to the inmates of the Ashram, in the course of which he referred to the inspiring guidance of his revered father. He said:—

"This morning I woke up to find the eastern sky blackened with murky clouds. It seemed as if our joyous festivity was to be threatened by a weather that looked forbidding. My next thought was that true joy was difficult to secure. The path of spontaneous happiness was menaced by troubles that visit us very frequently from outside. The source of 'ananda' was not to be found in this world of everyday realities. It is sunk deep into the soul. Perhaps it is ordained by God that man should look into this source within his own self to attain joy worth the name.

"Man has come into this world with many serious limitations. Unfortunately to-day, he has his full share of the ferocity and grossness along with the other creatures of this world. To overcome these well nigh insurmountable barriers, and to realise the possibilities of the soul with which he has been endowed, seem to be the mission of his life. I think this is the truth writ large upon to-day's sky. Man is here to tear asunder the veil of darkness, and discover the fountain of life and light which lies deep within his own soul."

Continuing the Poet said: "To-day I am reminded of my revered father who throughout his life tried with the passionate intensity of his soul to conquer this darkness and death. To

secure deliverance from the crudities of this world, he sought for 'Amrita.' His vast earthly possessions could never bind him down. Luxury and comfort could never curse him to a life of self-complacence and ease. This quest of greater ends of life made it possible for him to stand the rude shock of penury which over-came him with the suddenness of an earthquake.

"Over and above this, he had the supreme gift of spiritual detachment which nothing could ruffle. His strong soul freed from the deadweight of wealth, realised the joy of renunciation, but he never shirked the responsibilities of a busy family and social life. He lived in the very truth inculcated in the Gita which says "*Karmanyavadhikarastu ma falesu kadachana*". He was like a sailor who navigated his fully laden boat of life through the trials and tribulations of a perilous sea.

"To retain a supreme self-detachment, in spite of the busy battle of life; this was the lesson which I imbibed from my father's example, and this I can say with confidence, has stood me in great stead during the forty years of my building up of this institution. In the course of these years I have been baulked and buffeted by many and various bad fortunes. I have sustained many a loss, suffered many a grief, faced the heartless indifference of an apathetic public.

"In the teeth of this opposition, the spirit of my father has given me the inspiring guidance which I consider to be one of the greatest assets of my life. Through a long period of my life I have tried despite many obstacles to build up this Ashram not with any material object in view, but with a strong desire to realise in and through it the best ideals of my life. This place is not for those who seek selfish ends and beat their own drums, but it is a meeting place of such people who would share in a common aspiration for the inner regeneration of man through a cultural fellowship of love and brotherhood. This is the message of the day which we celebrate to-day."

Enchanted River

Through shelving fields where wild flowers sway
Beneath the shade of leafy boughs,
Where linnets sing and cattle browse,
Clonmethan river takes its way.

The skies may gloom or gleam with light,
It will reflect each passing change
Through wood and dell its waters range
While sun rules day and stars the night.

All those who listen to its croon
Will hear it sing and never cease,
Murmuring for ever "Peace, sweet peace,"
Singing at midnight and high noon.

And oh! what wonders it has seen
For haunted wood and magic dell
Lie ever 'neath the Fairies' spell;
They dance upon its margin green.

The mystery of Their elfin Life
So fills the place that those who pass
The shadowy wood, the emerald grass,
Know all the vale is with it rife.

The old, old Beauty ever new
The wondrous Dance which lasts for ever,
The happiness which ceases never
Are mirrored in the waters blue.

F. H. Aldhouse.

Match-making

By T. RAMALINGAM PILLAI, M. A.

THE problem of unemployment has of late assumed very serious proportions and the educated young folk, no less than the uneducated old, have to face it. Young men wish to get over the situation by seeking the hand of rich heiresses, and for this they take to newspaper advertising. But advertisements are perhaps, not as effective as travelling agents who move from village to village, town to town and city to city. Thus have arisen itinerant match-brokers, who gain a rather easy living by following the profession. Up till recently it was the astrologer's voice that was final in bringing about marriages. But now the astrologer is replaced by the photographer. The match-broker carries with him photos of prospective brides and bride grooms, even more than their horoscopes. Horoscopic agreement is now only of secondary importance; in fact, it is even held at a discount; for the worst that might happen in marriages, that are horoscopically ill-matched, viz., the death of either party, is remedied by the re-marriage of the widow or the widower, as the case may be. Marriages after all whether effected after astrological consultation or not, go by destiny. Even in cases where love-matches are made by mutual consent and after a period of wooing, some marriages end in divorce sooner or later. Marriages are, at best, lotteries in which only a few draw prizes. The match-making itinerant agent has no faith in horoscopes, and he cites instances of marriages which have been performed after due astrological consultation but which have ended tragically rather too soon. Marriage makes or mars a man's or a woman's life, but as it is no more regarded as a sacrament but treated only as a contract, the parties to it are at liberty to dissolve it by divorce. The new woman as well as the man practically recognises it only as a temporary alliance. It is no life-long transaction; at least that appears to be the modern view.

Personal attraction or beauty largely settles the affair. Intellectual accomplishments and moral considerations hardly count for anything in the choice of brides and bridegrooms. But monetary considerations seem to weigh the most. Even a blackimore or 'blackie', with little or nothing personal to attract a romantic young man would be most sought after by the worldly wise and 'versity men, provided she is heiress to a fortune. Selection of brides and bridegrooms through photos is mostly misleading. The artist can easily make an ugly duckling a thing of beauty. The most unattractive person can be made to be most acceptable by the deceptive touches of the photographer. In the artist's light and shade, even a rickety thatched shed appears to be a most beautiful structure. So also, with the help of the tailor and the barber, even the deformed and the weak are made to appear hale and hearty by the photographer. Modern articles of dress serve to conceal positive personal defects and even skin diseases. The European costume is very useful indeed to the man with an amputated arm, in enabling him to thrust his false fingers into his trouser pocket. So also is he protected by his never absent shirt or coat, from the penetrating gaze of the curious on-looker. He never removes his shirt except of course when he bathes. But he always takes his bath in closed rooms and never ventures to bathe in a public tank or in a river or in the sea. Many an innocent girl has been led astray by the photographer and the marriage-broker. Again the educated man falls an easy prey to the machinations of these professionals. The prospective bride is most richly bedecked with costly jewellery in the photo when she is really penniless. Her eye-glass and her side hair-line with false flowers are attractions to the unwary young man who revels in dreams of rolling in wealth by marrying the heiress or in having for his partner in life a veritable Rati. But both the bride and the bridegroom are soon undeceived, when they come in actual contact with each other as wife and man. Cases of false personation are not extremely rare, where photos go to decide marriages.

The broker who stands to gain from both parties of the marriage contract proclaims to the world that he is thoroughly self-less and that he does a great piece of social service when, through his kind offices, he enables men and women to obey the Lord's Command to marry, multiply and replenish the earth. But if you don't keep him in good humour by making valuable presents to him either in cash or clothes, you run a great risk of becoming a loser in the game. Every community in Hindu India, at any rate, has quite a number of match-makers who are professional brokers. But in carrying on their trade, sometimes consciously or unconsciously they become match-breakers, as many a desirable match is broken by them. In the eyes of some hyper-critics these well meaning brokers are veritable social pests. But they seem to be indispensable to modern life-conditions. Even in the petty concerns of life such as buying firewood or other bare necessities of life, brokers play no inconsiderable part. It is no wonder, therefore, that in the great concern of life, viz., marriage, the broker is a necessity. If he is an evil, he is a necessary evil.

May he live long and flourish!

Book Reviews.

The Story of Mira Bai by Bankey Behari, published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur, India—Price 10 As.

Whatever of real sweetness remains in the spiritual renaissance movement that stirred India deeply in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is attributable chiefly to the lyrical outpourings of Mira Bai. Around her name, no school of spiritual thought and philosophy, grew up, like that of Chaitanya of Bengal, or in a minor degree of Ramananda and Kabir in Hindusthan.

She remains unique in her loneliness and loveliness, and we remember along with her, two other isolated Vaishnavite saints, Lilasuka, the author of *the Krishna Karnamritam*, and Jayadevaswami, the author of *the Gitagovindam*. These three isolated Vaishnavite devotees have immortalised for us, the idyllic story of Krishna's boyhood in Brindaban, and his love sports with the innocent Gopis there! Lilasuka and Jayadevaswami have sung of Krishna in the language of the Gods, Sanskrit, while Mira Bai has sung of Him in the dialect of the people. The spontaneity of Mira Bai is not equalled by the other two devotees. The story of Krishna's boyhood in Brindaban is unfolded for us with a thousand lovely touches by Mira Bai, and her lyrics excel in elaboration the other two compositions.

Krishna's boyhood in Brindaban is a much misunderstood affair; propagandists of other religions blaspheme him badly and accuse him of low things. The unbiassed student of Krishnaism knows that more is meant than meets the ear, and that his life was immaculate. Mira Bai's realisation of truth in and through Krishna, by unquestioning love for Him, makes really a greater landmark experience in the History of Hinduism than we are prepared to acknowledge.

Down the ages, our women have exhibited great heroism and true depth of soul. In the period of the Upanishads our women had taken a just share in the enquiry into truth, in the forest universities in ancient India. In the Epic age we produced great women characters. In the fight with the moslems and the Moghuls, the Rajput women evinced unparalleled heroism. This princess of the Blood royal of Rajaputana and wedded to a great Rajaput chieftain, exhibited heroism of soul in bravely enduring

the persecutions that were carried on against her, and unflinchingly pursued the goal she had set her heart upon, and gained her quest, and has left for us, an imperishable heritage, in those soul-stirring strains which lay bare to us the storms and calms of her inner being. By her spiritual achievements, she has made the name of woman dear and sacred to us.

The story of her life is told by the author with a truly affectionate heart, and he who goes into it should feel thankful to him for providing him, at least for some time, a real cleansing of the heart and purification of the emotions. The illustrations in the book belong to highly developed art, and the English rendering in loose verse of some of the lyrics of Mira Bai leaves nothing to be desired.

P. V. A.

An English Course for Foreign Children by L. Morris.

Of the making of books, especially of English Readers, there seems to be no end. Each tries to draw upon the latest theories of Educational Method, and the advocates of each uphold their choice with the enthusiasm of racehorse fanciers. Macmillans have just published another for Rs. 1-6-0., which compares favourably with all others on the market. It prefaces each reading with carefully planned oral drill, and follows it with points of grammar and exercises in composition. The selections are mostly interesting for children, and the standard of this Third Book will be found suitable for Form I or II in Madras and Class IV in North Indian Schools. Books I and II in the series have already been published. The printing of this volume is excellent.

—Duncan Greenlees.

കണ്ണീർ തൂണി (Tear Drops) by Nalapat Narayana Menon. Published by Vanneri Book Depot, Punnayurkulam. Price 12 annas.

Of the few elegiac poems in Malayalam, the one under notice wherein the poet mourns the death of his wife after an all too short period of married life, has come to occupy a high place in the literary firmament. At the time it was first published there were not a few who denounced the poet, for he had given the go-by to the conventional *chakravaka* bird, the inevitable moon and the unavoidable lotus etc. of the conventional school of poets. "Tear Drops" has proved that 'true love' could be depicted without resort to the age old forms and that real poetry is that which springing from the soul ennobles it. Herein the poet examines subjectively the mixed character of man's life, that is the intermingling of happiness and misery, and consoles himself as to its

inevitableness by studying the conflicting forces of nature itself. He leaves the reader to feel for himself if suffering alone is not the path to supreme happiness, if really happiness and misery are not convertible terms and if the mere appreciation of this truth will not lead one to the ultimate realisation of the oneness of the Universe. The poet's *Pranaya* (love) for the *Vyakthi* (individual) is absorbed by his love for the whole creation.

The poem has stood the test of time. The book is now in its third edition with an appreciative introduction and useful commentary by Mr. Kuttikrishna Marar, the well-known student and advocate of the Vallathol school of poetry.

രമനൻ (Ramanan) by Changampuzha Krishna Pillai. Prakasam Printing Press, Ernakulam. Price Re. 1.

Ramana, a poor shepherd and Chandrika, the daughter of a rich chief fall in love with each other, without stopping to remember the distance that separated them. They never thought then of the evanescence of love. Ramana alone remains constant in his love. Chandrika induced by her near ones has to change her mind. She marries another. Not being able to bear the torment Ramanan commits suicide. This in short is the substance of the story depicted in this dramatic poem in three parts composed in Dravidian metre. Though the conception of the story is a bit unnatural, it is told in such mellifluous verse that it enthralls the reader and raises him to the highest emotional pitch. While emotion has its place in poetry, the intellectual element is more important. While the former produces but a temporary exhilaration in the reader's mind, the latter leaves behind something permanent. The want of the intellectual element is a defect that one cannot fail to point out in this poem. The tragic element is so cleverly interwoven that it is perceptible from the beginning to the end of the story. We congratulate the young poet on this, his successful production of an extremely readable poem and wish him a bright future.

M. S. K.

The Bird with the Golden Voice. Stella Mead. Published by Oxford University Press. Price 3½ annas.

This little book of 48 pages printed in neat bold types contains four short stories inculcating sound moral lessons to children. The stories are written in simple idiomatic English. The book is useful for general reading of school children from the first to the third forms and may also be prescribed as nondetailed text for them.

A Hand Book of Play and Games (in Tamil) by K. S. Venkatraman, M. A. Macmillan & Co. Price 10 annas.

The publishers of this book are often pioneers in bringing forth fresh publications with fresh ideas and thus facilitating healthy ideas among children and those who have to deal with them. The publication under notice is an instance in point where the author has collected in a methodical manner the games that are useful to the development of the physical side of children. The games have been grouped under five headings and under each heading they have been classified as being suitable to children of differing physical growth and capacity. Parts of the book dealing with the need and indispensability of scientific physical education, the hints given to teachers to make physical instruction classes interesting and the ten golden rules of the games given are particularly instructive. One other noteworthy feature of the exercises and games suggested has especially to be noted in these days when the increasing cost of education of school children seems to confound many a parent and it is this that most of the games do not require any expense at all and even in cases where something is required the amount is comparatively insignificant.

ശാസ്ത്രീയ ശാക്തമ്യം. By Vydiaratnam P. S. Varier, Arya Vydiasala, Printed at the Norman Printing Bureau, Calicut, Price Re. 1/-

Owing to the contact with the Tamil stage a taste for the musical Drama came to be developed in Kerala and as a consequence a few dramatic compositions giving importance to songs and music were made here and there, and locally enacted. Some composers have placed their hand in "Sakuntala" itself, but none of them had the good fortune to complete their work. What they failed to do Mr. Varier has now accomplished. Though the author has thought it fit to make some departures from the original they are few and far between and of very minor importance from the point of view of the rapid progress of the story or the effect of dramatic representation. It will not of course be considered as decrying the present work if we say that those who have enjoyed the literary excellence and musical elegance of the original may find it irksome to go through several portions of the work in its new garb. Mr. Varier's verses are sweet and simple and his prose good though not entirely faultless. We are not aware if this drama has been put on boards by his own well-known Paramasiva Vilas Dramatic troupe and if so how it fared on the stage and how much time it occupied.

M. S. K.

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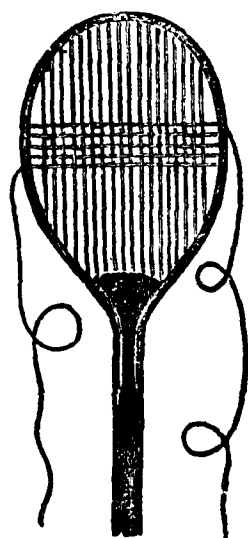
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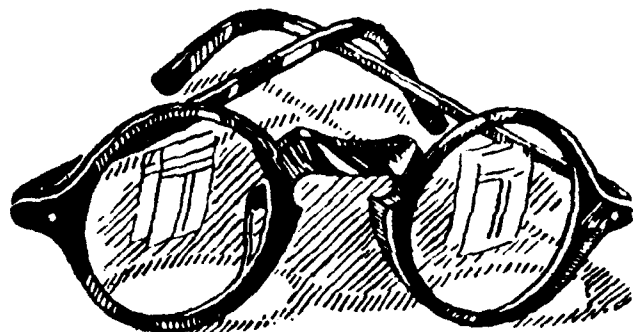
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