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JULY, 1945

NO. 7

THE Bharata Dharma

A Magazine of Liberal Hinduism

—The Official Organ of the Arya Mata Sabha—

HONORARY EDITORS.

Mr. E. VINAYAKA ROW, B.A., B.L. (Editor in charge).

20 SEP 1945 RAO BAHADUR S. K. YEGNANARAYANA IYER, M.A.



चितं वटतरोर्मले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुणा । गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यस्तु छिन्नसंशयाः॥

The wonder under the Banyan tree! A young teacher and old disciples. The teaching is silence and the disciples' doubts are cleared.

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THE



Bharata Dharma

VOL. XXIII]

JULY, 1945

[No. 7

THE WHITE PAPER ON INDIA.

The following is the text of the statement made in parliament on 14-6-1945 by the Secretary of State for India :

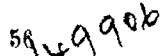
1. During the recent visit of Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to this country His Majesty's Government reviewed with him a number of problems and discussed particularly the present political situation in India.

2. Members will be aware that, since the offer by His Majesty's Government to India in March 1942, there has been no further progress towards the solution of the Indian constitutional problem.

3. As was then stated, the working out of India's new constitutional system is a task which can only be carried through by the Indian peoples themselves.

4. While His Majesty's Government are at all times most anxious to do their utmost to assist the Indians in the working out of a new constitutional settlement, it would be a contradiction in terms to speak of the imposition by this country of self-governing institutions upon an unwilling India. Such a thing is not possible, nor could we accept the responsibility for enforcing such institutions at the very time when we were, by its purpose, withdrawing from all control of British Indian affairs.

5. The main constitutional position remains therefore as it was. The offer of March, 1942 stands in its entirety without change or qualification. His Majesty's Government still hope that political leaders in India may be able to come to an agreement as to the procedure whereby India's permanent future form of Government can be determined.



y's Government are, however, most anxious to

6. His Majesty's Government are, however, most anxious to make any contribution that is practicable to the breaking of the political deadlock in India. While that deadlock lasts, not only political but social and economic progress is being hampered.

8. All that is so urgently required to be done for agricultural and industrial development and for the peasants and workers of India cannot be carried through unless the whole-hearted co-operation of every community and section of the Indian people is forthcoming.

10. It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce any change contrary to the wishes of the major Indian communities. But they are willing to make possible some step forward during the interim period, if the leaders of the principal Indian parties are prepared to agree to their suggestions and to co-operate in the successful conclusion of the war against Japan as well as in the reconstruction in India which must follow the final victory.

12. It is proposed that the Executive Council should be reconstituted and that the Viceroy should in future make his selection for nomination to the Crown for appointment to his Executive from amongst leaders of Indian political life at the Centre and in the Provinces in proportions which would give a balanced representation of the main communities, including equal proportions of Moslems and Caste Hindus.

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14. The members of his Council, who are chosen as a result of this arrangement would, of course, accept the position on the basis that they would whole-heartedly co-operate in supporting and carrying through the war against Japan to its victorious conclusion.

16. Nothing contained in any of these proposals will affect the relations of the Crown with the Indian States through the Viceroy as Crown Representative.

17. The Viceroy has been authorised by His Majesty's Government to place this proposal before the Indian leaders. His Majesty's Government trust that the leaders of the Indian communities will respond. For the success of such a plan must depend upon its acceptance in India and the degree to which responsible Indian politicians are prepared to co-operate with the object of making it a workable interim arrangement. In the absence of such general acceptance existing arrangements must necessarily continue.

18. If such co-operation can be achieved at the Centre, it will no doubt be reflected in the Provinces and so enable Responsible Governments to be set up once again in those Provinces where, owing to the withdrawal of the majority party from participation, it became necessary to put into force the powers of the Governors under Section 93 of the Act of 1935. It is to be hoped that in all the Provinces these Governments would be based on the participation of the main

parties, thus smoothing up communal differences and allowing Ministers to concentrate upon their very heavy administrative tasks.

19. There is one further change which, if these proposals are accepted, His Majesty's Government suggest should follow.

20. That is, that External Affairs (other than those tribal and frontier matters which fall to be dealt with as part of the defence of India) should be placed in the charge of an Indian Member of the Viceroy's Executive so far as British India is concerned, and that fully accredited representatives shall be appointed for the representation of India abroad.

21. By their acceptance of and co-operation in this scheme, the Indian leaders will not only be able to make their immediate contribution to the direction of Indian affairs, but it is also to be hoped that their experience of co-operation in Government will expedite agreement between them as to the method of working out the new constitutional arrangements.

22. His Majesty's Government consider, after the most careful study of the question that the plan now suggested gives the utmost progress practicable within the present Constitution. None of the changes suggested will in any way prejudice or prejudice the essential form of the future permanent constitution or constitutions for India.

"23. His Majesty's Government feel certain that given goodwill and a genuine desire to co-operate on all sides, both British and Indian, these proposals can mark a genuine step forward in the collaboration of the British and Indian peoples towards Indian Self-Government and can assert the rightful position, and strengthen the influence, of India in the counsels of the nations."

Sir S. Cripps Commends Proposals.

The Labour Party leader Sir Stafford Cripps, commenting on the White Paper, said to-day, "This plan was worked out during the life of the National Government at the suggestion of the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, and is one for which I accept my full share of responsibility.

Sir Stafford Cripps, who was speaking at a Labour Party meeting, added: "I hope most earnestly that what is proposed will find acceptance in India and will succeed in bringing a new spirit of co-operation into the relation between the British and Indian peoples."

"Ever since my visit to India in 1942, I have hoped that some way might be found towards a solution of this difficult problem and I

have done my best to help in resolving the impasse which has gradually increased in severity since the autumn of 1943 I am particularly delighted that the Secretary of State has been able to announce the release of the members of the Congress Working Committee from detention and I hope that all other political detainees will quickly gain their freedom at the hands of the Central and Provincial Governments of India."

"These releases will mark the end of one of the three chapters of our relationship with India and will provide an opportunity for vigorous Indian leadership, which alone can solve India's problems of reconstruction.

THE WAVELL PLAN

BY

MR. E. VINAYAKA ROW B.A., B.L., *Advocate, Madras.*

We have reproduced in this issue the full text of the White paper on India as it is a document that requires careful study at the hands of the public now and hereafter for sometime to come. The Viceroy's broadcast read with the White Paper has naturally not commanded much enthusiasm in the country. On the other hand the Hindu Mahasabha which has been all along claiming to be the only representative organisation to speak on behalf of the Hindu community has been totally ignored, and the manner in which invitations have been extended to the Simla conference and the proceedings of the conference from day to day have accentuated the feelings of great disappointment in the Hindu Maha Sabha circles. The Hindu Maha Sabha through its leaders has given public expression to its great dissatisfaction. A week of protest has been announced and perhaps Mr. V. D. Savarkar's pointed description of the Simla conference "as a conclave where Hindu interests are to be butchered" represents a wide spread feeling in the Hindu community and in totally nationalist circles which desire to have a square deal to all interests without submission to bluff, bluster and political blackmail.

Why has this offer been made now and at this stage? This is an intriguing question. Many answers have been given. It may be as a facade to British Imperialism in the international setting at San Francisco. It may be a conservative plan to stampede the labour and liberal parties in England into making an offer on the eve of the general elections in the

name of the National Government so that all the three principal parties in England may stand committed to the offer before the general election results are known. It may help the conservatives at the polls as the Indian issue could be put aside and will not form an election issue. The dissatisfaction against the conservative party on the Indian question could be reduced. It may be that if Conservatives lost in the elections and labour came to power, labour may not make a bigger or better offer which the Tories may consider too bitter a pill to swallow and acquiesce in. It may be the feeling that the three million soldiers of India will be seen returning home and something should be done before their return to make them feel that something has been done for their motherland as the result of the heroic part played by them in the World struggle for the four freedoms being assured. It may perhaps be the result of the arrangement come to behind the scenes by a leading Congressman and a leading Muslim league member as the result of which at least in the interim period power may be truly transferred to a National Government. It may also be the wish and earnest desire of His Excellency Lord Wavell to do something which could result in the breaking of the political deadlock in this country. Whatever may be the reason the offer has been made and happily the conference has been convened.

Constitutionally speaking this offer is by no means an improvement on the Cripps offer. On the other hand in political content, it is definitely less than the Cripps offer. It will be remembered that three major defects were pointed out in the Cripps offer as emerged out of the discussions between Sir Stafford Cripps and the Indian leaders who met him.

The first is the Viceroy's veto power. This still exists in the present offer. It is explained by the Viceroy as well as by the Secretary of State that the Viceroy's veto power is retained in Indian interests and will be used only in the interests of India. Such conventions are hard to make and maintain even in a free country between equal colleagues. They are harder still in the relations between Britain and India, in the positions which they respectively occupy. A similar convention was promised in the Montagu Chelmsford reforms that the Secretary of State will not interfere when the Government of India and the Indian Legislature agreed on any point. Many instances have happened where the Secretary of State issued over-riding orders in violation of the convention and India stood helpless.

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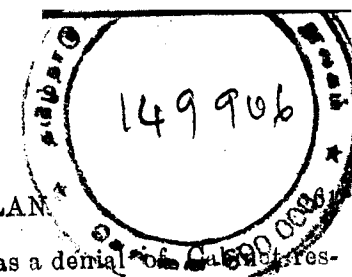
THE WAVELL PLAN

The second defect in the Cripps offer was a denial of cabinet responsibility to the Central executive. The Viceroy has made it very clear that cabinet responsibility, on the lines familiar in British politics is not given and could not be given now. A member of the Executive council owes his appointment to the nomination by the Crown on the recommendation of His Excellency the Viceroy and is responsible only to him and not to the legislature. That the Council has to work under the existing constitution is underlined several times. That means on many vital matters a member of the Executive Council cannot know what orders are being passed in the next room by another Executive councillor on any vital point as regards National progress. The existing rules under which it is permissible to a Secretary to Government to obtain orders from the Viceroy direct may affect even the limited powers of the new council. Orders are passed in the name of the Government of India by a member and when the concerned Secretary issues the orders, the entire Government is responsible for such orders. The key positions in the Secretariat offices are all held by members of the I.C.S. It is difficult to imagine that they will very obligingly change their mental outlook overnight, as the result of the publication of the White paper, which takes the trouble to point out that no constitutional change is contemplated or is attempted to be made.

The third objection is even more important. The Defence portfolio was to be partially in the hands of an Indian member in the Cripps scheme. An attempt was made to draw up the list of subjects that would be dealt with by the Indian Defence member and the list of defence subjects that would be dealt with by the Commander-in-Chief. The list of subjects proposed to be given to the Indian defence member contained a few innocuous and unessential matters while everything vital was in the list for the Commander-in-Chief. The present offer has even gone back on this. The entire defence portfolio will be in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief and no Indian Executive councillor can have any voice in respect of any matter that can be claimed to lie in the portfolio of the Commander-in-Chief.

The Viceroy has made it clear what the tasks of the new Executive Council would be in his broadcast address. He said "first to prosecute the war against Japan with the utmost energy till Japan is utterly defeated.

Secondly to carry on the Government of British India with all



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the manifold tasks of postwar developments in front of it until a new permanent constitution can be agreed upon and comes into force.

Thirdly to consider when the members of the Government of India think it possible, the means by which such agreement can be achieved. This third task is the most important. I want to make it clear that neither I nor His Majesty's Government have lost sight of the need for a long term solution and that the present proposals are intended to make a long term solution easy."

The offer contains one important and unalterable feature which is not open to any negotiations at the Simla conference. That is the question of Muslim and Caste Hindu parity. For the first time in the History of Indian Constitutional development the word 'Caste Hindu' has been introduced in a State document. This is a highly objectionable feature. The Viceroy explained it as only meaning Hindus other than scheduled castes and nothing more was meant thereby. The explanation simply makes the matters worse. It is this attempted division between the Hindus and the Scheduled castes that was protested against by Mahatmaji in the shape of his famous Poona fast. The separate claims for the so-called scheduled castes which have been put forward by British officials as an objection to India's national aspirations are of British make. They are Hindus and part of the Hindu community and any assent to the break up of the Hindu community in this way will lead to grave consequences disastrous to the Hindu community as a whole. Some way should be found for avoiding this danger.

The so-called caste Hindus are, even according to the figures accepted by Professor Coupland, 151 millions in number in British India alone, while the Muslims in British India constitute only 79 millions. It is very difficult to perceive on what basis any justification can be given for putting these two elements on a footing of equality, as regards representation in the executive. If it is on the basis of the two Nations theory that is a position which can never be accepted by any politician who knows the facts. The Jinnah-Gandhi correspondence makes the position very clear and Mahatmaji regarded the two nations theory as inadmissible and this was one of the rocks on which the Jinnah-Gandhi conversations split. Will the Congress claiming to be a National body, and will the Liberals who stand for undiluted nationalism and justice and fair play to all, and will the Hindu Maha Sabha which claims to speak for and to safeguard the rights of Hindus, accept as a fair or proper solution this most inequitable pro-

vision which reduces a vast enlightened numerical majority to a position of equality with the Muslims?

It may be argued in answer that this is only an interim arrangement and everybody will remember that when the final constitution-making begins to take shape, this injustice will be remedied and every one will have full freedom for shaping the things to come at a later stage. This is a specious argument. It was an argument like this which was advanced by Mr. Ali Iman and Mr. Hasam Iman to Mr. Gokhale in 1907 to persuade him to agree to separate communal electorates. It was an argument just like this that persuaded a decade later the Congress and the Muslim League to agree to more extended separate communal electorates. Anything once conceded in such a matter to the Muslims by way of appeasement, is treated by them, as history has shown, only as a jumping off ground for making further demands which cannot be justified on any fair political social or economic grounds. Already it was reported in the Press that Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan, a Muslim League politician of Madras made a demand that in the Hindu State of Mysore, where Muslims constitute only 7 per cent of the population, there should be as many Muslim Ministers as there are Hindu Ministers on the ground that the two nations theory has been accepted by the British Government and conceded by the Congress and that therefore as in the Centre so in the States, there should be equality of representation between the Hindus and Muslims in the Executive. Conceding this even as a purely interim measure is not without danger.

It may be argued that the proposal of the Sapru committee envisaged such a parity as an interim measure. Bearing in mind the constitution of the Sapru committee and its wholly unrepresentative character that the members of the committee had endorsed their favourable opinion on a similar suggestion made by Sir Sultan Ahmed, member of the Viceroy's executive council in a pamphlet issued by him on the subject, can be attributed only to an earnest desire for getting out of the rut rather than any consciousness of the desirability of such a provision from a constitutional point of view.

A more weighty argument in support will be that the parity principle has been embodied in the Desai-Liaquat pact. Mr. Desai and Mr. Liaquat at one stage denied that there was any such pact. The details of the pact are still kept secret and in the absence of an authoritative version it is not prudent to make any comment. It has now been revealed by Mahatmaji that he was consulted and the pact had his approval.

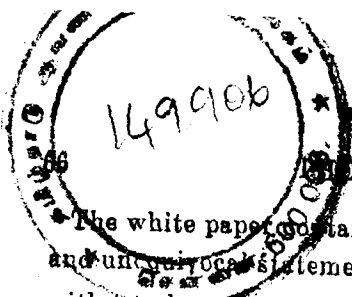
It is obvious that Mr. Desai however high his position may be in the hierarchy of Congress is said to have entered into this arrangement with Mr. Liaquat, while the other members of the Congress working committee were behind the prison bars. Even with Mahatmaji's approval made public, the appropriate congress body competent to deal with the question may still reject this parity principle. In any case, it is highly doubtful whether the 151 millions of the Hindu population in British India will endorse any such acceptance if elections are again held, to the congress and there is a reshuffling of the personality in the Congress high command. Secondly if there is to be fresh elections to the Provincial and Central legislatures the Hindu representatives who are returned will without doubt repudiate this unacceptable parity principle.

Instead of the open and democratic way of discussing the parity principle at a conference table, the Simla conference has been allowed to break into different groups holding secret conversations on the ground that the negotiations are delicate. The leaders will have to remember that for nearly 6 years now they have been in the wilderness and the Central legislature is more than 10 years old and the Provincial legislatures were elected so long ago as 1937. Unless fresh elections are held and some of these momentous matters are made election issues, no political leader can honestly say that he represents duly and correctly public opinion as it is to-day.

The Wavell offer proposes only to take into consultation the leaders of public opinion. Para 13 of the White paper makes it clear that leading Indian politicians, who are the heads of the most important parties will be called into conference. The persons who have been actually invited do not exhaust the heads of the most important parties contemplated in para 13 of the White paper. The Hindu Maha Sabha has been ignored, the National Liberal Federation of India which is the second largest National party in the country has been ignored and the large Muslim organisations which are outside the Muslim league have also been ignored. Instead of bearing in mind that the conference as a whole should only suggest names to the Viceroy from among whom the final selection should be made by the Viceroy, the leaders assembled have fallen into the old rut. Mr. Jinnah insists upon the Muslim League being declared at the conference as the sole and only representative organisation of the Muslims of India and that he and he alone should have the final say in the choice of the Muslim members of the Executive Council. Apart from the organised nation-

alist Muslim organisations and the National Muslims in the fold of the Congress, Mr. Jinnah's position even in the Muslim provinces cannot lend any support to his plea. In the N.W.F.P. which is not an unimportant muslim area, the Congress is in power and the Muslim League is nowhere. In the Punjab, notwithstanding all the attempts of Mr. Jinnah to have a finger in the Punjab pie after the death of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the Muslim League as such has not succeeded; the Unionist party returned to the Legislature on the Unionist ticket is still in power. In Assam, it is a coalition party in which all interests are equally strong that is in power and in office. In Bengal, the Fazlul Huq Ministry refused allegiance to the Muslim League and while it functioned, Hindus and Muslims worked together. The purely Muslim League administration of Sir Nazimuddin could not stand on its legs with all the support it got from the European bloc and the Government House and it fell. At a time when Mr. Jinnah has lost and has lost so heavily as recent years have proved, the Wavell offer has come to him as a God send to reassert and to reestablish claims which have been repeatedly exploded by the verdict of the ballot box.

The Congress again claims to be the spokesman of the entire Indian Nation including the muslims. No doubt on the issue of independence that claim may be justified, but on other matters the claim has to be established as a result of fair and unfettered fresh elections, as many of the problems have emerged only in recent years after the last election, when the electorates had to give their verdict on the specific issues then placed before them. Of course the Nation is tired of remaining in the wilderness any longer. People have learnt bitter lessons from the accumulation of nearly Rs. 1,500 crores as sterling balances in England and controversies that rage round the repayment thereof. They remember bitterly the events of the Bengal Famine and the clear findings of such a responsible official body as the Woodhead committee. People are tired of the dead weight of innumerable control orders of every description in every sphere of economic and political life. Vast schemes of post war planning and development are awaiting immediate attention. India's representation in international gatherings in a manner consistent with her position and dignity is yet another urgent and vital matter. There is no other alternative now open. Notwithstanding all the above defects it is better to get power in Indian hands if not to achieve anything else at least to conduct at a very early date fair and unfettered elections to the Central and Provincial legislatures.



BHARATA DHARMA

JULY

The white paper contains one redeeming feature and that is the clear and unambiguous statement that the Cripps offer stands in its entirety without change or qualification. In all the recent discussions one factor has not been sufficiently emphasised, and that is the provision in clause (d) of the Cripps offer. If for any reason the political leaders do not come to an agreement as regards the machinery for the formation of the constitution making body before the cessation of hostilities the Cripps offer gives a scheme in clause (d) for the formation of the constitution body. According to the Cripps offer "immediately upon the result being known of the Provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of the hostilities, the entire membership of the lower house of the Provincial legislatures shall, as a single electoral college proceed to the election of the constitution making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about 1/10th of the number of the electoral college. Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion as in the case of the representatives of British India as a whole and with the same powers as the British Indian members."

If a reasonable and fair adjustment is not found possible an ultimate remedy is still open to the nation and it will be open to the electorates such as they are to give their verdict. There are certain essentials on which a surrender is not possible. They are:

- (1) maintenance of the integrity of India as a whole as a single geographical, political and economic unit.
- (2) giving to Muslims and non-muslims representation in the legislatures in proportion to their population.
- (3) maintenance of parliamentary democracy with territorial electorates on the lines which have functioned so successfully in the United Kingdom and the colonies.

If it is implied in the Wavell offer that leaders have the final say and large sections of the population will have to be dealt with as flocks of sheep in different pens, the electorates will soon give their verdict, when the opportunity next presents itself. Let us hope that the final outcome of the Simla conference will be such as will command acceptance by the electorates. The war has been fought and won for democracy and India alone among the victorious powers that have contributed to the winning of the war shall not lose the democracy for which it has fought and suffered so long and so heroically.

E. V. R.

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The Passing away of Untouchability

K. V. SETHA AIYANGAR, M.A., B.L.

Bharata Dharma Pamphlet No. 1.

This pamphlet will indeed go a long way towards the removal of untouchability in India, a cause for which the whole enlightened population of India is striving. (The Hindu.)

This pamphlet puts in a nut shell the case for the Untouchables. (The Swarajya)

Do Sastras justify Touch Pollution?

MR. B. SITARAMA RAO

Bharata Dharma Pamphlet No. 2.

The pamphlet is calculated to bring an assurance of conformity to those working for social uplift as showing that Hinduism without untouchability is not less orthodox than present day Hinduism. (The Hindu)

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90 SEP 1945



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AUGUST, 1945

[No. 8

INDIA AND THE LABOUR VICTORY IN ENGLAND

By

MR. E. VINAYAKA ROW, B.A., B.L., *Advocate, Madras.*

Even the most optimistic forecast of a Labour victory could not have anticipated such a triumphant electoral victory for Labour. For the first time in the political history of England, Labour has been returned to power with an unchallengeable working majority in Parliament. Surely the war has wrought a miracle. A new order has arisen in England and a bloodless revolution on a stupendous scale has been accomplished.

The three main British parties went to the polls after defining clearly their respective programmes and policies. In this, Labour had to work with a certain amount of handicap. The time prayed for by them was refused by Mr. Churchill at the behest of the Tory partymen, who imagined that an easy election could be won by the Tories playing as their trump card the personal position of Mr. Winston Churchill, the war-time Premier who for nearly 5 long years was at the steering wheel and saved the British Constitution and British freedom, which were so perilously threatened by the Hitler hurricane that swept over Europe. The level-headed British electors were not unmindful of the great services rendered to the Nation by the war-leader, but at the same time they have showed marked political sense in not allowing their sentiment to get the better of their judgment, and the election results have proved that with all the gratitude they have to Mr. Churchill for his services, the Nation was no longer prepared to put itself under Tory

Rule. Although the actual numbers returned to Parliament are in such a large majority we could not overlook the fact that the votes polled in favour of the Tories and Labour are nearly in the proportion of 3: 4.

We in India rejoice that Labour has come to rule the people in England. They now have a chance which it will be their duty to explore to the fullest extent possible to translate into action all the promises to implement India's national aspirations as a part of the commonwealth. India will regard with special satisfaction the exit of Mr. L. S. Amery from the India office. We believe that the promise to abolish the India office altogether and to treat India on the same basis as a Dominion and make the Dominion Secretary of State responsible to Parliament as regards Indian affairs in the same way as Canadian, South African or Australian affairs, will be courageously implemented and the necessary legislation put through before the end of this month, notwithstanding the frowns and snarls of South Africa.

The abolition of the India office necessarily implies the position that the old way of dealing with India has gone for ever. As a Dominion, India must have a National Government of its own with full liberty to order all its internal and external affairs without any control or dictation of policy from any Secretary of State from London. India must have as any other Dominion is entitled to have the full and unfettered right to send its own nationals as Trade Commissioners or diplomatic representatives. India must be represented by Indian nationals chosen by a National Government of India in all International Conferences on a footing of equality with the representatives of the other Dominions of the commonwealth. This of course involves full economic freedom to India with liberty to order its fiscal affairs and economic arrangements without any outside control or dictation and solely in the interests of India taking a long range view of things.

We believe the policy of the Labour party as regards India will be formulated so as to bring about at the earliest possible moment the fulfilment of India's aspirations on the above lines. To that end, a beginning should be made forthwith and without any delay and to the extent to which the present constitution will permit. The Labour Government should make it clear that steps will be taken immediately in the right direction to form in India a National Government at the Centre and in the Provinces without any more shilly-shallying, petty-fogging and hair-splitting about Coalition Governments, Composite Governments and any unorthodox form of a so-called National Government, not

responsible to the people's representatives but owing their appointment and tenure of office to the pleasure of the representatives of the British power in India. Nothing prevents Mr. Pethwick Lawrence the new Secretary of State even under the existing constitution to direct that general elections should be held in India at the Centre and in the Provinces during the cold weather. In all the Provinces as the result of the elections even with the existing electorate it is believed that the representatives returned, will be national minded who will stand uncompromisingly for a united and undivided India and for immediate political and economic freedom for the country. When on an analysis, the election results disclose such an inevitable feature, popular Governments should be formed on the basis of a stable Government commanding the confidence of the house as a whole.

With popular Governments so established and functioning in the Provinces and in the centre, it must be possible to proceed with that part of the Cripps declaration to which we adverted in our article on the Wavell Plan in our last issue for the formation of a Constituent Assembly as indicated in the said declaration, with full liberty to the Constituent Assembly to frame India's future constitution, which must be and will be a Federal Constitution with power at the centre, sufficiently strong to maintain the integrity and the safety of India as a single political and economic and geographical unit.

To ensure fair elections and to secure the clear verdict of the electorate it is necessary that sufficient time should be given for political parties to place their policies and programmes before the electorate so that the verdict that is given will be one based on full information and careful thought. To achieve this, it is necessary that the Labour Government should immediately permit the Viceroy to release all politicals kept in detention for political reasons without trial and without conviction by the ordinary criminal courts of the land. All controls and bans on a free functioning of political organisations should be lifted and sufficient time should be given before the elections are held for these persons and organisations to discharge adequately the great responsibilities that will be theirs in the near future. The coming elections will be of an epoch making character as on their results will depend the personnel of the Constituent Assembly and therefore the future Constitution of this ancient country.

Mr. Jinnah and his group have already started on the work of winning the Muslim seats in such large numbers as will justify their claim

that they represent the Muslim community of India. The Muslim Timber Merchants Association of Bombay has begun with a big contribution of one lakh of rupees to Mr. Jinnah's election fund. Though money is not everything in elections, it plays a very substantial part in public organisations for victory. Mr. Jinnah has announced that the single issue on which the Muslim League will contest all the Muslim seats will be the issue of Pakistan. Pakistan is still an undefined, vague and ever changing concept susceptible of different interpretations in different situations. Mr. Jinnah has called Mahatma Gandhi an enigma and has posed the question as to how any one can negotiate with him. Can we not with equal force put the question to the Muslim League, how can any one negotiate with Mr. Jinnah if every concept which he uses in the course of negotiations is vague, undefined and susceptible of different interpretations in different situations?

On the question of Pakistan Mr. Nehru has announced his definite opinion that the Congress cannot consent to any division of India on any Communal basis. Mahatma Gandhi has however announced that his offer to Mr. Jinnah stands. The masses do not often carry in their minds the delicate conditions and reservations that are part of Mahatma Gandhi's offer to Mr. Jinnah. There are others in the Congress fold and those who are just outside the Congress fold in order to bring round Congress opinion who may be willing to concede to Mr. Jinnah almost everything that he wants except his claims on the questions of Placit and realignment of Provincial boundaries. There is the Liberal Party which is against Pakistan and their reasons which are so sound and well informed and convincing have been substantially set forth in many articles in our previous issues. There is the Hindu Maha Sabha which is definitely against Pakistan and is prepared to resist the introduction of Pakistan by doing everything in its power. This is only an echo of Mr. Jinnah's threat that if the integrity of India is sought to be maintained and the claim for Pakistan is denied, the Muslim League will resist it with all the means at its disposal. Here is a political issue on which much has been said on both sides and it is possible to have two clear cut sides namely, those who are for Pakistan and those who are against Pakistan. Even as the three major English parties put in cold storage their party loyalties and party programmes when the crisis of the European war overtook them, and even as the National Government remained a single united front so long as that crisis had to be faced and overcome, is it too much to hope that the Congress, the

Liberals and the Hindu Maha Sabhites would for the time being put in cold storage all their other problems and policies and unite as a National Party to give fight to the Pakistan group and usher into existence a Constituent Assembly which can claim to be National and not sectional or communal and which can therefore command the support and allegiance of all political elements in the country in their great task of framing the new Constitution of India, which the Labour Party in power in England will endorse and faithfully implement by enacting the necessary parliamentary legislation to give effect to the political wishes of India expressed thro' their Constituent Assembly aforesaid as outlined in the Cripps declaration which has been many times reaffirmed by his Majesty's Government.

If a National party on the lines suggested above comes into being and the top men and thoughtful minds of all the three parties aforesaid come into it and work as one unit, much work of an educative character has to be done. The public will have to be educated on the real issues involved in the Pakistan controversy and a straight and clear mandate secured. This will also involve the National Party putting forward candidates for all the Muslim constituencies to fight Muslim League candidates so that the myth of Mr. Jinnah representing the Muslims of India can be exploded once for all. This is a very important aspect of the work which has to receive priority attention. Elections are not won by mere pious wishes or pontifical blessings. Much hard and sustained work is necessary. The Labour Party in England organised and worked so hard and their Nation honoured it with their confidence. A truly representative and patriotic National party in India can also achieve no less. When the work of proper organisation proceeds apace the need for a definite enunciation of policies and programmes will be keenly felt and the services of the best men will be needed and should be utilised. The personal popularity or claims of any individual however high should not be the determining factor even as Mr. Winston Churchill's personal popularity was not such a factor in the recent general elections in England. Patriotic men and women should give on the occasion that is before us in the next general elections, a sound and genuine democratic lead which will steer clear of every form and type of mediaevalism in thought or in action. The Victory of the Labour Party in England must be an example to India which should be emulated for the lasting benefit of India as a single political unit destined to play in an increasing measure a notable and honourable part in world

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affairs. In this great work the Congress owes a special responsibility in view of its past history, the recent reorientation of its policies on realistic lines, and the notable and statesmanlike manner in which the Simla Conference was conducted so far as the Congress was concerned. We shall go into the details of what has to be done, in another issue. In the meanwhile, let us devoutly pray that all over the country personal pride and party prestige will be put in a subordinate place, if not wholly eliminated, and fervent patriotism sublimated with political wisdom will be allowed to reign supreme.

RASA LILA

By

DR. V. RAGHAVAN.

An Appreciation by Prof. M. R. Rajagopala Ayyangar.

Rasa Lila is a short Opera in Sanskrit, originally composed for the All India Radio, Madras Station. Dr. Raghavan's choice of the story of the Rasa Krida in the first half of the tenth canto of *Srimad Bhagavatam* for his fine lyric play is happy and felicitous, as it lends itself easily to the inclusion of song and dance.

The theme is the fascination of the *gopis* who run away from their homes to Sri Krishna at Brindavan, charmed by the magic of his flute, their gifts of flowers and garland to the Lord, the elation of each *gopi* at the thought of having made a conquest of the Great Lover to the exclusion of all others, Krishna's device to bring down their pride, his sudden disappearance from their midst, their repentance and sorrow, his gracious re-appearance and the mystic dance that follows.

The author has shown great skill in selecting from the *Bhagavatam* the slokas for song and stringing them together into a lyric play. He has also added some slokas of his own and a fine prose recitative in imitation of the Western operas.

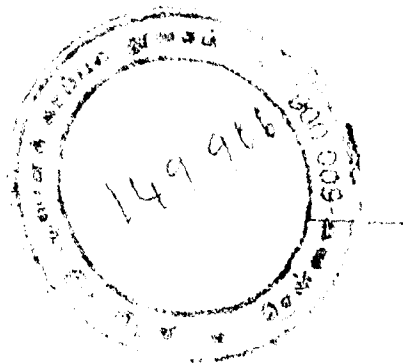
The episode of the *gopis* bringing flowers to adorn Sri Krishna and of his delight in accepting them because they are gifts of true love has no parallel in the *Bhagavatam*. It concludes aptly with the Lord's words: "Be it a flower or only a leaf, whatever you have brought, everyone of them is, to me, dear and beautiful." The reader will be reminded of the famous sloka in the *Gita*: *Patram, Pushpam, Palam, Thoyam, Yo Mey Bakthiya Prayacchathi*. The humorous incident of the *gopi* who, in her pride, wanted to be carried on the shoulders of Sri Krishna being left in the posture of mounting when He suddenly disappeared is also Dr. Raghavan's invention. The prose recitative in the fourth scene beginning with *Yevamasam Virahitikanam* has an excellent rhythm reminiscent of *Kadambari* and *Harshacharita*. The wonder-

The Sanskrit Opera was published in "Amrita Vani" by the St. Joseph's College Sanskrit Association, Bangalore. Reprint copies can be had from the author Dr. V. Raghavan. —Ed. Bharatha Dharma,

ful metre of the lilting, dancing slokas in *Bhagavatam* beginning *Jayathi They—Adhikam Jannana Virajah*, is successfully imitated in two slokas of the author himself which bring out a spiritual significance of the *Rasa Krida* or mystic dance when the Jiva or Soul is in blissful communion with her Divine Spouse.

Indication is also given of the *ragas* in which the slokas are to be sung, and in a number of instances, the names of the *ragas* are deftly shown in the slokas themselves.

Dr. Raghavan has to be heartily congratulated on this successful adaptation of the episode in the *Bhagavatam* for an Opera.



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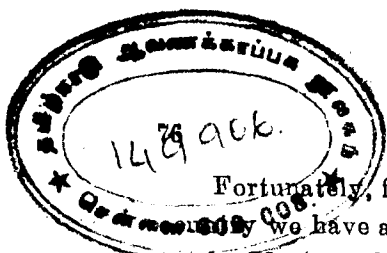
SEPTEMBER, 1945

[No. 9

SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA—THE CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH By

MR. K. BALASUBRAHMANYA IYER, B.A., B.L., *Advocate, Madras.*

Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was a giant among men and dominated the public life of our country for nearly forty five years. He was born on the 4th of August 1845 and passed away amidst the great lamentation of his countrymen throughout India on the 5th of November 1915—the fateful year which saw the death of India's another great leader and statesman Gopala Krishna Gokhale. He (Sir Pherozeshah Mehta) belonged to the illustrious band of statesmen headed by Dadabhai Naoroji who laid the foundations of Indian Nationalism and pioneered the movement for India's freedom. I had the rare privilege of having a sight of this great personality in Bombay in 1904, when, as an urchin, I accompanied my father in his trip to that City to attend the Session of the Indian National Congress held there. Even upon my young immature mind, his personality impressed itself indelibly. I have even now, a vivid recollection of his leonine face and mustache, his attractive smile and the slight squint in his eye. So profound was the impression he made upon me that I was frequently imploring the friends who were looking after me to take me near him at some convenient time. But, this wish of mine was unfulfilled. I remember still also the words of intense admiration of Sir Pherozeshah's leadership and organising talents as Chairman of the Reception Committee, which my father uttered in his usual explosive manner during his conversations with friends on our way to the Congress Pandal and from it,



Fortunately, for us, unlike the case of many other great men in our country, we have a very good biography of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta written by Mr. (now Sir) H. P. Modi published in 1921 and we have also now the advantage of having the beautiful lectures delivered by the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri about him published in book form.

Sir Pherozeshah moulded his public life by the illustrious example of Dadabhai Naoroji, and his political ideas and principles were formed in association with men like Mahadev Govinda Ranade, K. T. Telang and Sir Dinshaw Wacha. He was one of the foremost exponents of the liberal school of politics. Though now 30 years have elapsed since his lamented demise and a great revolution has taken place in our political outlook, ideas and aspirations and in our methods of achieving them, and the complex and intricate problems that confront us now are entirely different from the comparatively simple ones that faced Sir Pherozeshah and his contemporaries in the early years of the struggle for India's freedom, still, the lessons that can be derived from a careful study of Sir Pherozeshah's life and work are of great value even today. First is that a hard study and a careful training are absolutely necessary for a politician aspiring to become a useful public servant and leader. It is sometimes the fashion now-a-days to try to become a public leader with the aid of other adventitious circumstances and without the preliminary qualification of incessant toil and experience. Many politicians yearning for leadership may well lay to heart the glorious example of this great man. Secondly, public work requires a fearless and uncompromising independence of spirit like that which characterised Sir Pherozeshah throughout his life in his glorious work for the cause of Indian freedom. Thirdly, and this is one of the most important lessons—it was Sir Pherozeshah's firm conviction that a person who belongs to any one of the communities in our country will do a greater service to his own community by fostering the spirit of unity among all the communities and by working for the freedom of India as a whole than by developing the spirit of communalism detrimental to the national interests. Sir Pherozeshah in his presidential address to the Congress in 1890 made the famous declaration that a Parsi was a better and truer Parsi, a Hindu was a better and truer Hindu, and a Muslim was a better and truer Muslim, the more he was attached to the land which gave him birth, the more he was bound in brotherly relation and affection to all the children of the soil, the more he recognised the fraternity of all the native communities of the country and the immutable bond which bound

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them to come under the pursuit of common aims and objects under a common Government. But now-alas, this salutary principle is lost sight of in our present day politics.

Next, he was scrupulously honest and incorruptible in his public life. Especially as a member of the Bombay Corporation, he was never led astray from the strict path of public duty by subtle influences, recommendations or corruptions of any sort. He hated all jobbery and was not guilty of it at any time during his public career. These are qualities much to be prized in a public man past or present. His activities were not confined to any one sphere of public life. He was as great a leader in the Municipal affairs of his City as he was in the Indian National Congress or the University of Bombay. A public leader can be really of the greatest service to his country only if his activities are of an all-round character. Lastly, I shall refer to one matter, which may appear to you a little strange at the present day. Sir Pherozeshah had a profound belief in the British connection. It is the fashion now-a-days to point the finger of scorn and ridicule at this simple belief. He expressed, it, however, in this manner in one of his speeches "when, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, India was assigned to the care of England, one can almost imagine that the choice was offered to her as to Israel of old: Behold! I have placed before you a blessing and a curse, a blessing, if ye will obey the commandments of the Lord your God; a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God but go after other gods whom ye have not known". Though there is a good deal of justification for losing this faith in the British connection on account of the many events which have occurred and the broken pledges and promises which have besmirched the fair name of Britain in India, since the days of Sir Pherozeshah, still, it has to be recognised that without the active help and cooperation of British statesmen, during these critical times, it seems to be impossible to solve the present deadlock and that the arbitrament of British justice and impartiality should be brought to play in composing the differences between the majority community and the minorities in our country.

I shall refer to one marked characteristic of Sir Pherozeshah which contributed very largely to his great success—his great art of public speaking. His powers of debate were of an extraordinary kind, but his speeches were rendered most effective by his capacity for banter, sarcasm and humour—powerful weapons in his armoury, with which he sometimes smote his political opponents and the enemies of Indian

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freedom. I cannot resist the temptation of referring to two striking instances taken from his biography. In a speech he made referring to the activities of two persons namely, Sir Syed Ahmed and Rajah Sivaprasad directed in opposition to the Congress, he drew a humorous picture of the difficulties which have arisen by the combination of two such personalities, thus:—

"They were so like the Scotch terrier, who was so covered with hair, that you could not tell which was the head or which was the tail of it. Sir Syed Ahmed pulled vigorously one way, Raja Shiva Prasad as vigorously the other; and they so pulled between them, the poor popinjay they had set up, that it burst and poured out to the amazement of a few and the amusement of us all—not the real patriotic stuff with which it had been announced to be filled, but the whitest and purest sawdust". The other was when Sir Mancherjee Bhowmuggree came in for severe castigation at his hands in a speech which Sir Pherozeshah delivered in reply to a public address in 1895. I give below that portion of the speech worth quoting in extenso:

"A certain class of Anglo-Indians have decorated Mr. Bhowmuggree with a little gold lace, and he is set up as a great political oracle of 'credit and renown' and he has been made oracularly to denounce the educated classes as sowing discontent and sedition by their perpetual selfish and unscrupulous attacks against the English in India. Gentlemen, I, for one, recognize the singular competence of Mr. Bhowmuggree to formulate such an indictment, for I have a very vivid recollection of an incident that took place some years ago. I was returning from Kathiawar, where I had gone on some professional work and a friend joined me at Wadhwan in the compartment in which I was travelling. He got out for dinner at the refreshment room at Ahmedabad station; on returning to our compartment, we found an English gentleman installed in it with a huge and fierce-looking dog by his side. Both my friend and myself had very strong objections to travel in such company for a whole night, and finding on enquiry that the gentleman meant to keep the dog with him, we tried to persuade him to relegate his companion to the dog box in accordance with the railway regulations. On his refusal, I spoke to the station-master, which so irritated the dog's owner that very soon my friend and he came to high words and some not very choice language and I had just time to rush between them to prevent them from proceeding to blows. As I took my friend aside and

tried to pacify him, the English gentleman complained to people gathered about how utterly unreasonable and provoking our conduct was in objecting to the company of his dog. 'I never object to travelling even with natives in the same compartment' he said with the most aggrieved air in the world. You can scarcely conceive, gentlemen, the paroxysm of fury into which my excited friend was thrown at this comparative description of the status of dogs and natives, none the less stinging because made with the most perfect unconsciousness of its insolence. I thought it advisable to take him and myself to another compartment where I tried to moderate his somewhat violent tirades against the intolerable rudeness of Europeans towards natives of all classes from princes downwards, by telling him not to generalize over much or take individual cases too seriously. But he was not to be consoled; he scouted all attempts to explain away the insolence of the treatment of natives by Europeans as anything akin to the estrangement caused by the exclusive character of native social and religious ways. He called to my mind many of the stories on this point related in that excellent article in the October number of the Contemporary Review from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Bonner, whose accurate statement of facts those who are acquainted with things below the surface can fully verify. My friend added many others with which natives are familiar, including that relating to the English Gymkhana in Bombay. I capped it with the doings regarding the Frere Hall in Mahabaleshwar, built largely by native donations, but which has been substantially handed over to a European club which debar by one of its rules, any native visitor being allowed even on the verandah of the club premises. Though feeling very sleepy, I was regaled by my friend for half the night with croaking fears as to the permanence of British rule owing to this galling behaviour towards natives, of the same character as are now denounced in the mouth of educated natives. This friend of mine, the hero of this story, was gentlemen, no other than Mr. Bhowmuggree, who has now recanted the errors of his old ways and is posing as a reformed character before Anglo-Indian audiences to denounce the folly and danger of allowing the educated classes to make perpetual attacks on and criticise Europeans in India, who, if they have faults, have them only as the sun has spots".

LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR PHEROZESHA MEHTA.

By

MR. K. CHANDRASEKHARAN, M.A., B.L., *Advocate, Madras.*

It was Edmund Gosse who said without any reserve that "there is no greater literary mistake than to attempt what is called the *Life and Times of a man*". For, according to him the biography being a 'study defined by two definite events, birth and death, it fills the canvas with one figure, and other characters however great in themselves must always be subsidiary to the central hero.' This observation seems no doubt both profound and true.

Nevertheless exceptions to such axioms necessarily engage our attention. The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri's treatment of the *Life and Times of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta* is a book in instance. He has worked up the background of the Times only in order to bring into greater relief the portrait of Mehta. By making a judicious selection of incidents, by tracing certain general lines of political thought and, above all, by relieving the reader of the plethora of useless matter concerning the historical events bound up with that life, he has been able to paint the imposing figure of his hero in proper setting.

No doubt the form of the original talks is retained here in entirety, and the publishers have hardly taken any more liberties with it than are strictly warranted by the occasion or the circumstances. In fact everybody knows that nothing will suffer by a faithful transposition of Sastri's spoken word into the written. His extempore speeches generally read high-class in print without the need of any touching up or slight alteration even. His command of the English idiom and his capacity for elegance of style are the same to him while speaking or writing. The listener or the reader of his language feels no trace of disparity between these two capacities in him. It is all one even silken chord both to the eye and to the touch. There can be no room therefore for making any kind of preference between his speech and writing. Maybe the listener misses the superb modulation of the voice or the faultless pronunciation or accent while reading him in print; or maybe the reader also occasionally fails to be stimulated by any arresting

**Life and Times of Sir Pherozesha Mehta by Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H. Published by Sri R. S. Anusuya Bai, No. 20, Edward Elliot Road, Mylapore. Price Rs. 4.*

thought or robust philosophy of outlook in that otherwise model piece of English prose.

Sir Pherozeshah is indeed a very engaging character for an experienced artist to handle. He was a towering personality in his own day, and perhaps continues to be regarded so by succeeding generations as well. In the closing years of the last and the first decade of the present centuries, he was an unquestioned power in the land both with the intelligentsia on the one hand and the officers of the Government on the other. It invites our unstinting curiosity and wonder to find him never lowering his flag in all his battles with those clothed in authority. Instances are enumerated here to show how Sir Pherozeshah always regarded himself first and last as an Indian in all the political agitations he was party to. As an early congressman his services to the country cannot be easily calculated. As an administrator at the helm of municipal affairs he is second to none. As a patriot in feeling for a united effort on our part towards complete liberation from the foreign yoke, he is a supreme example in himself.

Still the other side of the picture has not been omitted by Sastri. In pointing out his defects Sastri dwells upon Pherozeshah's inability to bring himself down to the level of the humble and the lowly in social service. Again in another virtue also the hero according to him failed, and that is, his prodigal and epicurean tastes allowed him no scope for acts of noteworthy munificence. Perhaps Sastri cannot reconcile himself to doing justice to posterity as a biographer, unless he has also extenuated all possibilities of a later day critic calling him partial to his hero in any measure. Hence it is that we find sentiments of the following kind emanating from him: "Goodness requires a certain element of tenderness to others, of a fellow-feeling, of a desire to help others in their troubles, of a desire to share your prosperity with others, of a desire to be just and kind. We want that gracefulness, that touch of tenderness; otherwise we don't wish to call a man good. I don't think Pherozeshah at any time showed much of goodness, so defined and so understood."

The reader of this volume will gain much inward knowledge of Mehta's motives in many of his actions in the political atmosphere of his day. Indeed Sastri has spared no pains to bring vividly before our very eyes Mehta's figure and personality. At any rate one fine passage where he compares, not unjustifiably too, Mehta and Gokhale proves Sastri's ability of pen or tongue at its summit. After referring

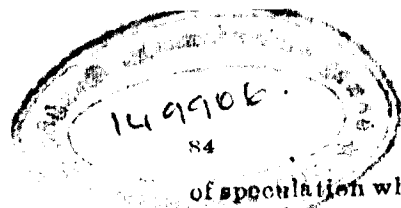
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to some of the public virtues they both shared in equal measure Sastri follows it up with his description: 'But I must say at once that their attraction differed greatly. Sir Pherozeshah seemed to dominate you. When you saw him full in the face, there was a squint in his eyes which fixed you almost. You felt that you were in his power. I have seen him in the Legislative Council speak with authority and with vigour, that drew everybody's attention to him; and I have seen how, when any member of the council spoke, every two minutes or three minutes he used to turn to know what impression he was producing on this Master of the House. I cannot say that Gokhale's authority shone to the same extent on his face. He captivated you also; but there was a pleasingness, if I may say so, in his look, a brotherliness, and lovingness, a tenderness almost of familiarity which drew you to him with a bond of affection. But there the similarity ends. Sir Pherozeshah had a rich and sonorous voice; when he spoke to an audience, without effort he could be heard in the most distant corner. Even his whispers did not fail to catch your attention. And then his diction was dignified and powerful; and when he chose to criticise people, it was such as hit hard. If he was minded to attack a person, there was no mercy in the way he handled him. He could be rough if he pleased; he could be gentle. And there was a wide range of voice which Gokhale utterly lacked. Gokhale spoke also so as to command the attention of his hearers, but his voice was different; it was pitched in a lower key. When you heard him, you felt drawn to a person who spoke with his full heart; and meant every word of what he said and every syllable of every word that he uttered. You saw sincerity and conviction stamped on his features and in his voice. And then there was no banter; there was no ridiculing of the adversary; there was nothing like hitting hard. There was argument piled upon argument; there was reasoning; there was a large number of statistics drawn from registers and returns, and above all there was a note of mild controversy; and there was a note of persuasion which you felt was that of a friend or a man who meant to convert you to his opinion, and not of a person who desired to bear you down with authority or confound you with subtle reason."

But Sastri, the artist, feels not satisfied with the task of a biographer in the stracheyan manner. He is not content with merely "exposing" his hero without appearing himself before you. On the other hand Sastri would introduce here and there his own criticism or judgment,

and when occasion permits it, a brief note of moral also to erring humanity. Above all he makes it an occasion to give us hints on biography writing in general. Even at the outset Sastri exhorts us then: 'Let our sense of human values be robust: let us be to our children in the pages of biography and autobiography no better and no worse than they see us in every day life'. A good maxim indeed!

Again Sastri feels somewhat strongly about the reprehensible tendency of many people to speculate upon the careers of public men, should circumstances have been different for them or should they have survived their own times. For instance in his talk on Sir Dinshaw Wacha added to this volume as an appendix, we have in clear language his total condemnation of people's claims, such as, "if Dadabhai Naoroji and Gokhale could be brought back to life among us, they would take their stand with the author of non-violent, non-co-operation and mass civil disobedience." The rebuke to such detractors follows in Sastri's own language thus: "I confess to a natural aversion from cocksure, uncompromising final judgments in any sphere of human conduct. One can never know enough to judge aright". None need comment on the wholesomeness of such an attitude. Surely Sastri like ordinary persons is drawn by "the sovereign instinct of safety" and does not wish to be racked by doubts when the facts of a life are known to him. But in the view of some of the well-known biographers like Nicholson, 'biography is the pre-occupation and solace not of certainty, but of doubt.' Again, delightful biographers, like Andre Maurois, cannot be looking at biography as only a repository of safe facts. Certainly none can gainsay some of the fundamentals like, "the biography must be written with, effort, with pleasure, with hesitation, with a certain amount of touching up, and also with a strict care for truth—a care not only for truths of fact (so far as the unfortunate biographer can attain them) but for that profounder truth which is poetic truth'. Mark the words profounder truth! Yes, we should try to follow truth as revealed by facts "with all our soul, that is, with all our attention, with all our respect, with all our intelligence, but also with such faculties of artistic divination as we may possess." It needs no greater emphasis therefore to prove that in attempting to produce the sound of that individual and the authentic note, we can aim at truth of a kind totally different from that which is pursued by the chemist or the physicist. As a matter of fact some of the most high-class biographers have shown no hesitation to enter the field



of speculation when it became necessary for them to show how biography as a means of expression is no less praiseworthy than any other aspect of it. We come across such 'ifs' even in Lytton Strachey, the prince among modern biographers, which fixes the seal of approval upon this tendency to help readers in understanding the character of great men. Dealing with a great friend of Florence Nightingale, Strachey would say, "that career would *certainly* have been very different if he had never known Miss Nightingale." So much of cocksureness would be, according to Sastri, detestable. Again we come across a similar sentence starting with an 'if' in another standard biography of recent times: "If Abraham Lincoln, instead of being entrenched for his term of office as President of the United States, had been a Prime Minister subject to conditions of the British Cabinet system, he would *almost certainly* not have survived the long series of reverses which befell the North in the first years of Civil War, or been able to stand up against the attacks of Horace Greely and others, who anticipated the part played by Lord Northcliffe in the Great War."

Surely no good biographer feels he has done justice to the subject unless he has also viewed his hero's personality in relation to his own times. For instance, J. A. Spender, while reviving his memories of Gladstone, cannot pass on without saying, "Yet, great men, like great books, acquire new meaning with the passage of time, and it is impossible to think of Gladstone without relating him to these times.....had he been living at this hour, I feel *convinced* that he would somehow have made his voice heard through all the obstructions, and against all the clash of opposing voices and forces". This natural tendency in the biographer to express his conviction about how his hero would have behaved had he lived on, gains more strength perhaps in the case of those, who had passed away quite prematurely after having raised expectations of their immense potentiality for doing great things in the future.

It would not be fair indeed, while reviewing this praiseworthy labour of love of Sastri, to close it with any dissentient note upon any aspect of the writer's mental preserves. He has shown without any hiding how much an admirer he is of the moderate view "as upon the whole, the truer or juster view." There is always a lofty tone of public spirit in all that he has said or says. High rectitude in human affairs is the keynote of his philosophy. And need we add, how much grateful India should feel towards one who has all along remained consistent in politics as well as his personal loyalties, in an age of a fearful succession of storms, uprooting many age long notions of personal conduct and public life!

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