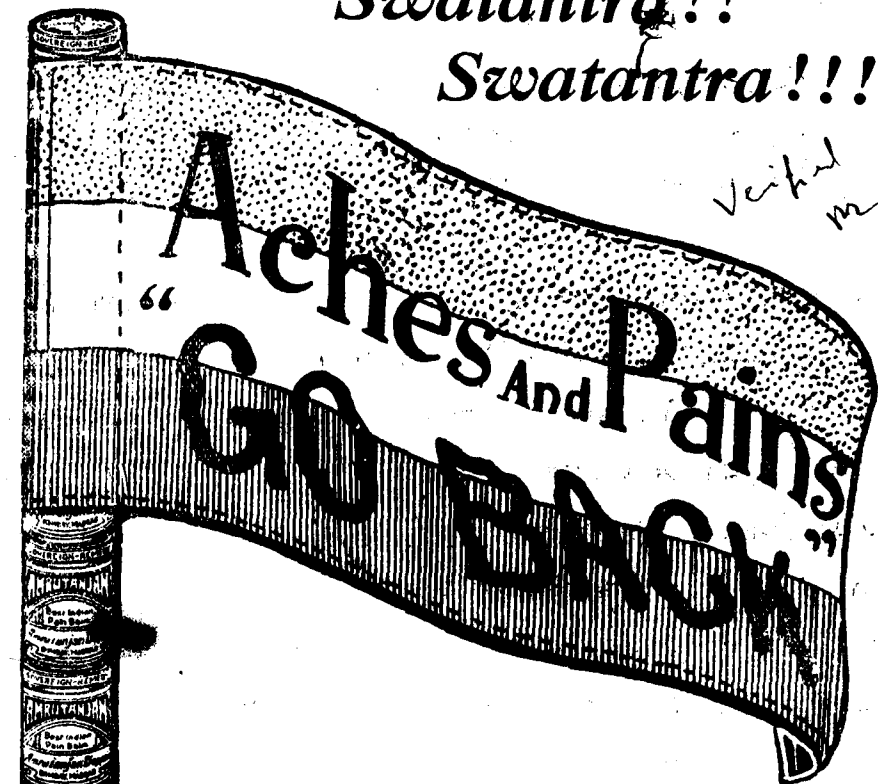


Swatantra!

Swatantra!!

Swatantra!!!

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Swatantra

from

All Aches

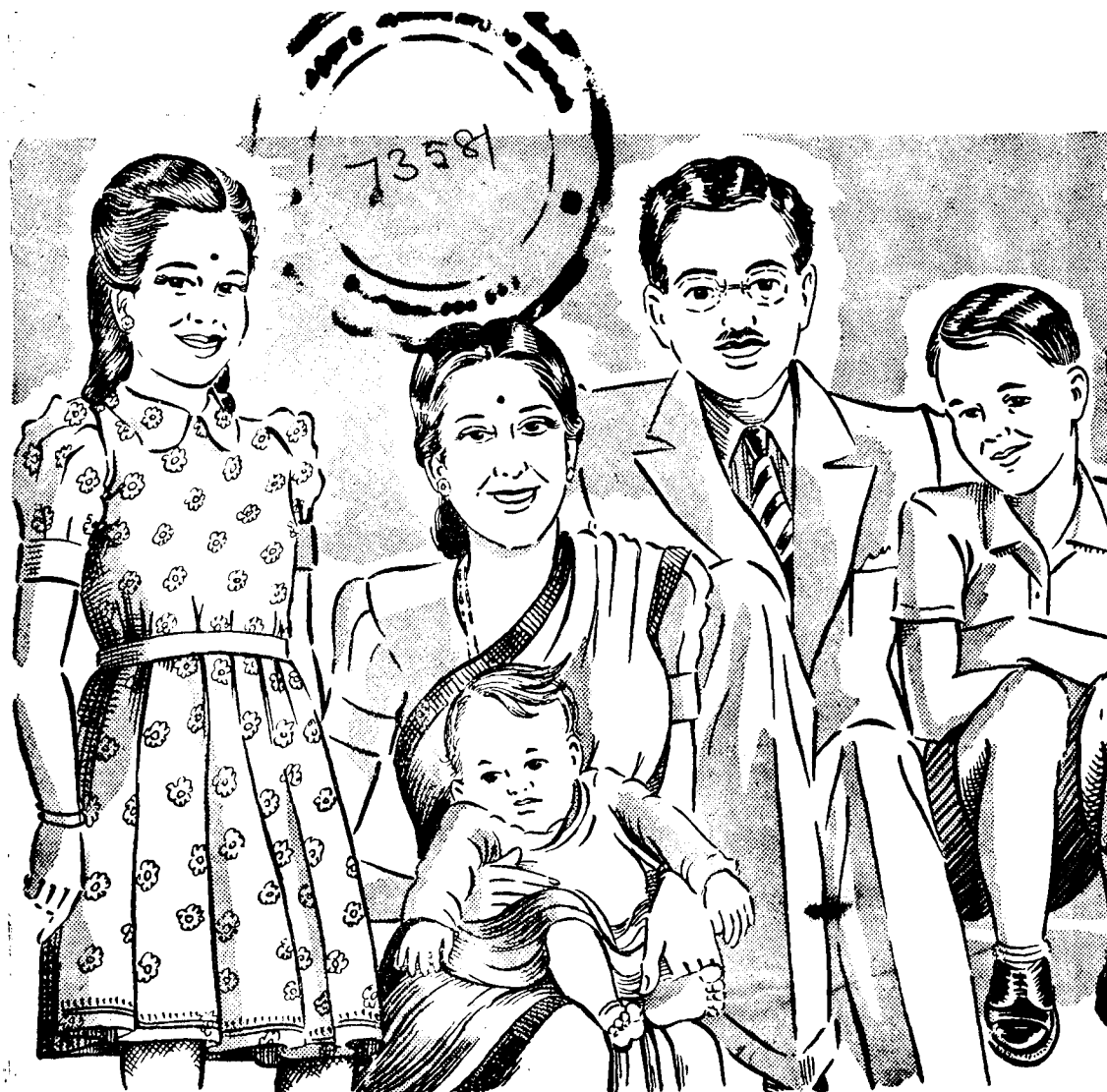
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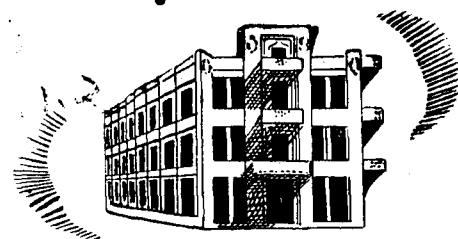




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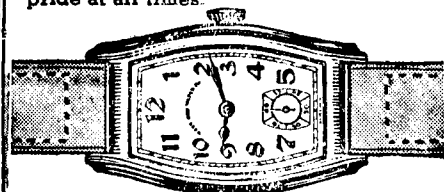
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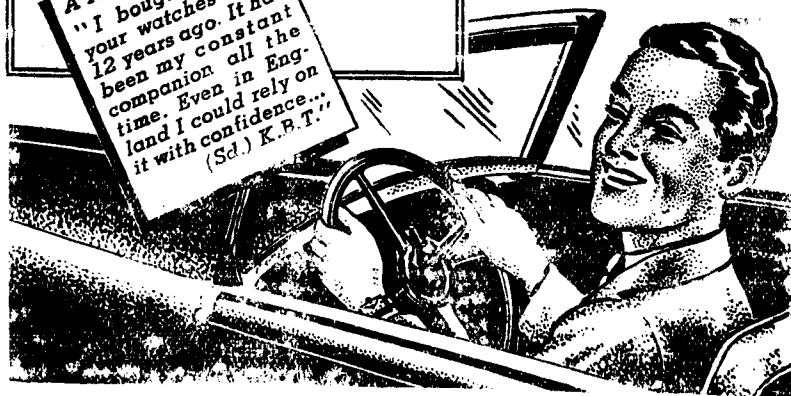
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SWATANTRA

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REACTIONS TO CABINET MISSION



SWATANTRA

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SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1946.

ISSUED
WEEKLY

MISCHIEF ABROAD

THE "rebellion" of the R.I.N. ratings in Bombay was promptly brought to an end by Sardar Vallabhai Patel's timely intervention, but the discontent of which it was the expression has spread from place to place lighting a conflagration of violence which is turning to ashes many precious things acquired in the past with great trouble and labour. We do not refer to material things only. Things of the mind and spirit such as orderliness, discipline, respect for the rights and comfort of fellow-men, a sense of the value of time and of the need for a right use of it to provide society with its needs, have been and are being destroyed with the same destructive ardour shown in the burning of various kinds of easily accessible property. Mischief has come to be mistaken for spirited political demonstration, and ways of doing mischief have been sought by way of establishing prestige. Madras was not neglected by the spirit of mischief that is abroad. It took the city captive on Monday, brought all business to a standstill and had its fill of the glory of forcing workers into idleness and causing the maximum of inconvenience to citizens. All this, whatever else it may be, is not Revolution. The shameful discriminations of British authority against Indians in general to the pampering of everything foreign are of course not to be put up with by flesh and blood, and daring defiances against the system, irrespective of cost to the defiers, constitute a sign of

political vitality whatever may be the name given to it in law. If they lead to some deaths, the lives lost are at times sacrifice before the exalted altar of the national struggle for liberation. We salute all martyrs who lose their lives and otherwise suffer in a good cause. But since all true patriotism is based on faith in the preciousness of people and their lives, to allow lives to be lost purposelessly is not patriotism but the very reverse of it, madness, the more menacing and disastrous when it assumes to itself the name of patriotism.

No hurt to British power is caused when rowdy elements make a nuisance of themselves and succeed in dislocating all work. Some time back Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, member of the Congress Working Committee and reputed commentator on Gandhism gave instructions to Congress volunteers to carry lathis to defend themselves against Communists, saying that non-violence was a weapon designed to be used against the British. If violence and non-violence have to be distributed as between class and class, we would have preferred it if he had reversed his advice and reserved non-violence for domestic use. The whole philosophy of Gandhism, as we conceive it, is insulted by the doctor's declaration, and it is surprising that even the originator of the philosophy should have let it pass without protest. Since the Doctor spoke, there has been no lack of the use of violence against

Communists though it has not always been used defensively. Nor has it been restricted to Communists either. Encouraged in one quarter, violence has spread beyond the intended or sanctioned limits until now it bids fair to become a normal method of settling internal political and other differences.

In view of Dr. Pattabhi's reported statement quoted by us, Congress leaders cannot divest themselves of responsibility for the sorry happenings of recent days. Their enormous prestige must promptly be exercised for the establishment of correct standards, especially among students who need to be saved from deplorably wasting their time and energy on madcap adventures that do nobody any good and do not certainly advance the interests of the country in any way. It may be very exhilarating to imagine that one is discharging a political duty by joining a mob and running amuck with it, but conscience and common sense must come into play to teach all but the irretrievably lost that the rich will get on somehow, while it will be the poor in their thousands that will really have to pay the major part of the price of suspended work. Work is wealth. Any diminution of it will hurt most, not those who have abundance of wealth and credit to draw from, but the needy who have to live on the return of the day's labour. Strikes and the like need to be used with justification for securing redress for specific grievances or in pursuit of a definite clearly-conceived objective. Striking work without provocation or for the sheer abandon of it is anti-social; it will only add to our impoverishment and increase the starvation already much too rampant. Among the singular developments of the present situation, not the least singular is the part being played by Communists in encouraging strikes and other forms of cessation from work. Do they contend that the need for uninterrupted production is less serious now in the face of the gathering econo-

mic crisis than when they condemned strikes as sabotage and rallied labour round industry in order that the war effort may not suffer?

The Railway Budget

We fail to see anything in the Railway budget to enthuse about. Little satisfaction is to be derived from the fact that the Railways have contributed Rs. 158.43 crores to the General budget during the war, augmented the Depreciation Fund by over Rs. 75 crores, paid off arrears of dues to the General Revenue and debt to the Depreciation Fund to the tune of Rs. 65 crores in the aggregate and built up a Railway Reserve Fund of Rs. 29 crores. In fact, but for the the novel methods of accounting adopted last year in writing off the value of certain tangible assets and writing down the value of newly acquired assets on the ground that they were obtained at inflated prices and charging these items to Revenue account, the working of the Railways during the war would have been impressive from a financial point of view. Promises of new amenities to the passengers of lower classes apart, there is no new feature in the budget. It may be said that the constitution of a Betterment Fund and the transferring to it of Rs. 12 crores from the Reserve Fund is a positive indication that some of these promises will be seriously considered. We wonder why this device was not thought of in the days of abounding prosperity during the war, except for the one attempt made to use the excuse of betterment of amenities for these classes of passengers as a justification to increase Railway fares. In any consideration of the future of Indian Railways certain facts stand out prominently, namely, that the war has left the Railways badly battered, that the serious position of coaching stock will effectively curtail any appreciable increase in travelling facilities for quite some time to come and that an inexperienced administration has been blundering

through all the time without attempting to envisage a composite picture of the Railway system. The different Railway administrations still maintain, by and large, the spirit and status that they enjoyed when they were run by British companies. The rates and fares that now obtain have no scientific basis. Nor are they designed with flexibility in view so as to make them adjustable to the cyclical and varying economic conditions that obtain in this country. The Railway Convention Committee that was appointed last year could not proceed with their work without an accurate picture of the state of obsolescence of Railway assets and what has happened to the Sankara Iyer Committee appointed to report on the depreciation of Railway assets nobody seems to know. In these circumstances we would suggest that the Legislature should not ask for a mere multiplication of inexperienced committees of the Legislature but for a composite committee wherein the Legislature will be represented side by side with responsible Indians having experience in the fields of economics, finance, business and engineering to thresh out the problems of the Railways in all their varying aspects and to lay down definite principles for future working of the Railways.

Trust Forfeited

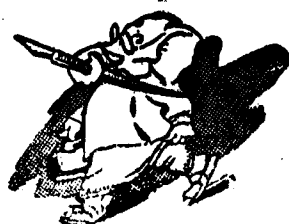
The selection of Congress candidates for the Legislature is now complete. The completion of the task synchronises with C. R.'s announcement of his desire to leave the scene. His exit will deprive the Madras Assembly of the services of undoubtedly the ablest parliamentarian of the province, indeed the whole country. As such it is symbolic of the quality of much of the human material that will be left. Some of the selections scarcely give any indication of political sanity. The first great blunder was committed when the application of Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari for a seat in the Central Assembly was unceremoniously turned down. He did excellent work in New Delhi in the

dark days of 1942. If allowed, his serviceability would have been far higher than that of the chosen favourites of the parliamentary board for all the Madras seats put together. In the selections for the provincial seats, the omission of names like Bulusu Sambamurthi, Unnava Lakshminarayana and K. Ramakotiswara Rao is indefensible. They seem to have been put on the shelf in order that the war-rich in their localities might step into political prominence. The preference shown to Guntur Narasimha Rao as a fit representative for the City of Madras is a first-rate scandal. He is bereft of any political importance. It is openly talked about everywhere that he paid court to leaders like Mr. Prakasam and Dr. Pattabhi by placing them under obligations to himself in various ways, and for all this he has now claimed and obtained reward. Such talk could have been discounted if he had outstanding political merit on which he could have taken an independent stand. But he has none.

Other instances of similar bungling might be cited, but it is unnecessary. The common man knows enough now to feel that for reasons that will not bear scrutiny the dispensers of Congress tickets betrayed themselves into bestowing them in not a few cases on obviously undeserving men. It is evident that they banked on the loyalty of the people for the Congress to secure votes for their nominees. Since the ultimate safeguard against wrong is public good sense, it is time that people thought seriously of a protective device to avert the foisting in their name of unsuitable members on the Legislature. For the sake of clarity, a distinction should be drawn between being anti-Congress and falling out of favour with the office-holders for the time being in the Congress organisation. The right of being accepted without question has in Madras been forfeited as a result of the manner in which the parliamentary boards have discharged their duties.

Sotto Voce

Convex Mirrors



A capacity for make-believe is a wondrous thing. Like the salt of the Dead Sea it prevents you from sinking, little though it may refresh the spirit. And how joyous make-believe can be when you are *in statu pupillari* few who were privileged to witness the alarums and excursions on Mount Road staged for the special benefit of the Parliamentary Delegation can have failed to note.

Madras was not, of course, the only city to distinguish herself thuswise. But we have it on the high authority of *The Student* (organ of the A. I. S. F.) that she was *primus inter pares*. Its report of the Mount Road crisis is a minor classic. "At Mount Road the procession was stopped by the Police. When the Assistant Commissioner of Police asked for the names of the leaders the students demonstrated their fighting unity, shouting 'We are all leaders'. Eventually, again a grand demonstration of the unity of the students, 4 names, 2 of the MSO and 2 of the SC, were given and the procession was allowed to proceed."

"We are all leaders". After that, who can say that the students are not in the vanguard of the freedom movement? How few of our aspiring Leaders (with a capital L) dare say the same thing, though they are all thinking it, you may bet, and perhaps with no more respectable credentials? And that blessed word Unity, how Protean in its ability to mask the most dissimilar things! The "fighting unity"—our Indian world is really a perfect Chamber of Echoes—had to be sustained by the offer of

parity; and MSO and SC, honours even, advanced in triumph hand in hand.

For the benefit of the reader who may be frightened by the riot of initials—happily, nothing more serious happened on that day—let me here explain that the Madras Students Organisation (a limb of the All-India body of that ilk) and the Students Congress were the principal protagonists in this grand protest. There were, besides, "independent students, Congress boys, Communists, Muslims, scholars and sportsmen", truly a piece of that richly variegated mosaic which the lovers of the Unchanging East are so happy to recognise. And how gaily they tripped along, coloured pennons fluttering in the breeze, cheerful noises from a thousand vigorous throats filling the air, ingenuous morning faces flushed with happiness or the burning tips of posh cigarettes, school books tucked forgotten under the arm, outriders of the Cycle Corps deferentially escorting the flappers at the head of the procession—if 'flappers' may be used without disrespect of those demure self-possessed mesdames in shimmering saris.

And the upshot? "At the end of 2 hours the Police gave way before the united might of the students and the procession was allowed to proceed. A victory march was led back to the College and at Fyson Park a victory meeting was held"—so *The Student*; which reminds you perhaps of "The Battle of Blenheim" and the old farmer's vigorous affirmation from hearsay that "it was a mighty victory".

Alas, there was a fly in the ointment. "It was unfortunate"—I am again quoting from the same source, though some might regard this part of the report as coming from a hostile witness—"that even at this hour of united victory K— of the SC could not refrain from raking up his quarrels with the MSC and the Communists". Very bad and sad. But when I try to recollect the far-off battles of my own fledgeling days, what can I bring up to match these fierce enthusiasms, these splendid rivalries? Our Napoleons of Notting Hill were as a rule content to resolve their furtive differences by single combats in mean backstreets over such primitive temptations as glass-marbles (with coloured threads mysteriously let into them).

I find they were even more backward in the days of the Ramayana.

Sri Rama, going out into exile, distributed largesse among "the students of Veda, so devoted to their studies that they did nought else". "Lazy by nature and having a sweet tooth they are beloved of the great", said indulgent Ramachandra and he would not have them stinted in his absence. Look at that picture and at this of our Mount Road processionists, so busy with so many other things that for one little thing—their books—they have no time, and so free with their fathers' money in the sacred cause of "having a gay time", though a mouse would starve on the minute quantities of food they peck at. But in one striking respect we don't seem to have changed at all. The great of our time cherish the 'students'—how inconstant are the meanings of words!—no less. Can it be that in those convex mirrors they see their own tragicomic selves reflected?

VIGNESWARA.

CABINET MISSION TO INDIA

Muslim League's Success in Punjab Elections—Need for redressing grievances of RIN Personnel—Regrettable disturbances in Bombay City.

About the beginning of the second world war H. G. Wells likened the British Empire (and the ruling class in India) to an out-dated ship: it might have served its purpose all right years ago, but it needed scrapping now, if disaster was to be averted. But Winston Churchill was much too attached to the good old ship, steady and conservative like the party which he had led, and so he could not bear the thought of scrapping it ("liquidating" the Empire, as he called it). But history belies many expectations.

The proposed Cabinet Mission to India in this month is an indication that at long last the Labour Government is convinced that it should implement its oft-expressed 'decision' to transfer power to Indian hands. There is also much significance in what Prime Minister Attlee stated in answer to the mischievous suggestion of Mr. Eden that the creation of a constitution-making body should be deemed to be the responsibility of

Indians and not that of the Cabinet Mission. He first demurred to the implication, and then added: "Undoubtedly it is our intention to set up a machinery in agreement with Indians whereby the Indian people themselves will decide their destinies." The object of the Mission, as defined, is to seek as an essential preliminary "the widest measure of agreement as to the method of framing a constitution" (italics ours), and not complete agreement; so it augurs well for the success of the Mission. The British Government could not possibly divest itself of its responsibility for setting up a constitution-making body, were it to meet with opposition from any one quarter. Indeed, even *The Times* (London) stresses this point as the most hopeful aspect of the proposal.

But the essential pre-requisites for the success of the Mission are, firstly, that the terms of the draft treaty between India and Britain (which the Mission is likely to bring with it)

should be consistent with the interests of India, and secondly, that the Viceroy's Executive Council should be so reconstituted immediately after the provincial elections as to make it approximate to a popular Government.

Now that the elections to the Punjab Assembly are over, and the composition of the new Assembly is known, speculation is afoot as to the probable nature of the Ministry to be formed. Though the League has been returned as the largest single party with a strength of 75 in a House of 175, it could not possibly form a stable Ministry without coalescing with the Panthic Akalis (22), the Congress (51) or the Unionists (21). The Unionists have suffered a great reverse, as their former strength of 104 has been reduced to a pitiable 21, whereas the League has triumphed—their only signal success in the elections so far.

The League is not likely to seek the support of the Unionists, in view of the political bitterness still fresh in their minds. If League-Akali-Independent Coalition and League-Congress Coalition are excluded as remote possibilities, the only alternative is a Coalition Ministry of Congressmen, Unionists and Akalis.

The Punjab Premier would appear to have been making overtures to the Congress Party for some time past, and deliberately cultivating its friendship with a view to forming a Congress-Unionist Coalition. Whether such a coalition would become an effective factor would however depend upon the attitude of the Akali Party (22) who would appear to be holding the key position in the Punjab Legislature. The Akalis are expected shortly to decide their attitude towards the Congress and the League.

The recent strike in the Royal Indian Navy as well as its sequel have their springs in deep-rooted distrust of the rulers, particularly in the tense political atmosphere now prevailing in the country. No greater mistake could be made by authority than to seek to deal with such manifestations with a 'firm' hand, as is generally the first impulse. Real statesmanship demands imagination and insight into the character of such

symbolic protests, rather than ready retaliation.

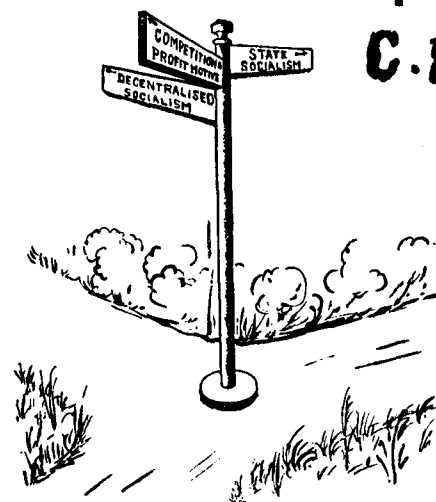
As M. R. Masani (Congress) pointed out during the adjournment motion which was carried in the Central Assembly on the subject, that the grievances of the naval ratings had been simmering for a long time, and there was a feeling of insecurity among them consequent on the successive orders of demobilisation which had resulted in about 17,000 men being discharged. Under the RIN rules they could not secure the redressal of their grievances. What were they to do in the circumstances? A too narrow interpretation of military rules of discipline should be deplored in such instances. The Indian *personnel* in the RIN have far too long put up with invidious discrimination in regard to pay and living conditions as compared with British *personnel*. The situation worsened as a result of mishandling by the immediate authorities concerned.

Mr. Mason, the War Secretary, has promised in the Central Assembly debate to institute inquiries into the whole question. It is however of the utmost importance that the disparity in pay and service conditions between Indian and British *personnel* should disappear, the officering should be completely (and rapidly) Indianised, and the defence services should in fact be used only for the purpose for which they are intended and not for being sent out to foreign lands to suppress freedom movements in other countries, as had lately been our regrettable experience.

How apposite is the saying, "Hell is paved with good intentions!" As a result of what was intended to be demonstrations in sympathy with the RIN strikers an orgy of violence on an unprecedented scale prevailed in Bombay City for a few days. At the time of writing official figures to hand show that 210 died and over 1,000 were injured, let alone the loss of property. The most distressing part of the whole affair was that, even after the naval ratings had celled off the strike and went back to work, the disturbances in the city continued, necessitating military action to restore order, with the inevitable toll of innocent lives.

At the Cross Roads

by
C. Rajagopalachari



It is strange but true that what is fast happening in and about us goes totally unnoticed while we spend our passions in argument. All the time what we argue about is actually being imposed on us whether we like it or not, and whether we ask for it or not. Ever since 1939, the State in India has been imposing regulations on what previously was only the individual's concern. Congressmen may be banning the Communists from coming into their company. Capitalists may be hovering about the Congress hoping for alliance against economic revolution. But meanwhile the stress of the war and the famines that follow it have evolved an intense State-control which daily grows more intense and wider in scope. The inconveniences of this enforced and erratic State-control are gathering force which one day will reach a point when people must begin to think whether a more fully planned regulation of life should not take the place of Delhi Socialism.

Where there is plenty, competition and profit-motive may be

allowed full play over means of production, but when resources are limited, we cannot escape the wiser course of planned production and distribution. The point has been reached when we suffer from shortage in almost everything. We cannot escape planned economy and national control unless indeed we prefer ruin with individual liberty to life under restrictions. Where the power that controls the State has no relation to the will of the masses, life may go on along the rut of past habit. But as soon as substantial power has passed to the people who suffer the distress consequent on shortage of supplies, we cannot escape Socialism. In dealing with rice or kerosene oil, no one has questioned the propriety of State-controls and of State-regulation imposed during the war. On the contrary, most people ask why control is lax or deficient. The time has arrived when we must take it for granted that regulation is essential and the theory of free competition and profit motive must be banished as having no place in a land of all-round shortage. The only question is what form of Socialism or community-control is best suited for this country and for our people, i.e., for the conditions of space, population and culture which we cannot alter at short notice or at all.

The most important question is whether life should be controlled from the centre or whether regulation should be largely decentralised. To regulate things from Delhi or even Bombay or Madras is to follow the German pat-

tern. And that is what is being blindly attempted now. The conditions under which India has to pass from *laissez faire* to regulation are such that central control necessarily leads to corruption, error and widespread distress. A small country and a homogeneous intelligent population can be managed more efficiently and economically by centrally controlled regulation than by numerous local authorities. Such may be the case in Holland or England. But the execution of any socialist plan in India to be tolerably free from error and corruption, must be decentralised. Place differs from place, and the divisions among men and groups in the same place are understood only by those that suffer and enjoy those differences. Regulation is easy for the local community and impossible for a central authority. To take the easiest example, a village panchayat knows how many want par-boiled rice, how many polished rice and how many half-polished rice, and who would with pleasure accept a quota of millet or preserved fish and who would look upon it as misery inflicted by authority on a subject population. Delhi regulation would make a mess of it. Village committee regulation would on the other hand be just and efficient and revive civic conscience as nothing else can.

Socialism, then, must be decentralised and local committees given authority. By 'authority' is meant authority to decide, not opportunity

to report and wait for decision. Actual life cannot follow the secretariat model of routine files, piling paper on paper from below upwards. Local authority must play a real part in the Socialist machine and local authority must mean the actual people who touch things with their own hands and not those who simply deal with symbolic representations of them on paper which, however well-shaped, are not so thoroughly realised as the things themselves.

What about corruption of local authorities? Well, I can say this; that when asked to distribute actual food and clothing or medicine or oil, a local panchayat dare not be unjust. A licence can be corruptly brought from a university graduate who was honest until he was appointed to authority in a Central Secretariat, but when the Harijans in a village want their just quota of cloth or food-stuff out of the stock belonging to the village and which is seen and handled by the people as a whole, the traditional culture of India is still so strong and intact that local representatives of the people handling the rice or the cloth dare not commit sin.

It is not my intention to go over the ground in detail, but just to indicate where we stand and what road we should take. Decentralised regulation has a far better chance than bureaucratic central regulation.

There could be no valid contract between the millionaire and the starving man ready to sell himself into slavery for a morsel of food.

After 150 years of British rule, bent on preparing us for full self-government, we produced two Brigadiers, one of whom was despatched to America as an exhibit, to show the remarkable progress achieved!

—Sir C. R. Reddi.

SIDELIGHTS ::

Character is a diamond that scratches every other stone.
—BARTOL.

I saw her for the first time some seventeen years ago. It was at a meeting addressed by Mahatma Gandhi. She occupied the front row of the huge audience. She had a Khadi garland in her hand with which, at the appropriate moment, she garlanded the Mahatma. Something in her appearance immediately attracted my attention. It must have been the joy, the elation, the exhilaration of soul shining through her eyes as she hung on the words of the great man. Sincerity has great power. Some secret of influence in it compels, first the attention of strangers, and then turns them into devotees. Her looks, her mien, the concentrated, unself-conscious abandon of her bearing made a pretty picture of sincerity that was a thing of beauty in itself—so that a vivid vision of it still clings to me over all these intervening years. That day I believe I completely neglected the Mahatma. Again and again I kept on asking myself, "Who is she?"

Some time later, Chance, in the form of friend O. P., made us acquainted. The acquaintance ripened into friendship in a matter of days. O. P. is a character by himself. Now he is committed to propagandist glorification of Chiang Kai-shek in New Delhi's Chinese Consulate. In those days he had just spiritedly thrown up a post in the Madras Corporation's service by way of protest against British rule in India. He was given to imparting a cosmic importance to his own individuality and whatever came out of it in the form of impulses. Non-violence was always on his lips. But he regarded all who differed from him in the slightest particular with surprised annoyance and poured out continually vials of far from non-violent de-



Atchamamba

nunciation on their heads. He divided his admiration then between Mahatma Gandhi and Atchamamba.

O. P. and myself received in 1932 perhaps the unmercifullest trouncing that it ever fell to the lot of Congress volunteers to receive at police hands in this part of the country. For picketing a foreign cloth shop in China Bazaar we were surrounded by a batch of constables and beaten with the leather-covered knobs of their canes so cruelly that marks of the injury inflicted still endure. The kind doctors of the General Hospital took three weeks to repair our lacerated bodies, while two constables mounted guard over us day and night in the ward where we were treated as in-patients (We had been placed under arrest on a charge of having blocked the traffic!). Atchamamba was then a student of the Medical College. No police sentry could stop her. She brought swarms of her friends to see us, and while they

tendered sympathy for our plight, she would go on expatiating angrily on the wickedness of the British Government. She completely for the time being abandoned her studies and became our nurse. The hours sped like minutes as, with graphic gestures, she unfolded revolutionary plans for social good and the country's liberation.

It was through her that about this time I came to know P. Sundarayya. Her faith in him seemed to me misplaced. I took it to be just an exaggerated form of the way she had (and seemed to have been born with) of mothering with affection, appreciation, encouragement, feeding, housing and other kinds of caretaking, not to speak of whirlwind campaigns of enthusiastic boosting, whoever approached her in a patriotic guise. Sundarayya's unostentatious exterior made it difficult for new-comers to rate him immediately at his proper worth. Perhaps also at that time, I was yet in that callow stage when it gave no pleasure to hear a valued friend waxing eloquent over another's greatness. But of one thing there could be no doubt. Sundarayya's whole being was in those days steeped in Gandhism. He led a life of ascetic simplicity. His frugality was amazing. It was no exhibitionist indulgence with an eye on the public. It was the surface counterpart of a fanatic conscience that left no room for private property, luxury or personal pleasure. The only thing un-Gandhian about him was his voracious pouring over books.

Sundarayya was one of many whom Atchamamba forced out of their shells of diffidence, frustration, loneliness and what not, and with her buoyant good humour and companionable helping hand, set firmly on solid paths of political work and social service along which they have found contentment and fulfilment if not distraction and opportunities for leadership. She made herself in making others.

Her evolution from Gandhism to Communism came from the disillusionments of actual experience in the course of too sincere a striving along lines of work laid down by the Mahatma. Discontent at the power of rich landlords and capitalists at the expense of poor labourers, wage-earners and the like has led to many defections from the Congress fold to the Communist Party. It may be called a revolt, but a revolt not of laggards but of zealots. Those not susceptible to the consolations of meditation and spirituality in the face of wrongs and difficulties have been particularly drawn to it.

* * *

Atchamamba is a doctor by profession and in that capacity renders free service to the poor. The destitute, the ill-treated and the shattered of her sex are by her befriended, cured and made hale, taught useful occupations like nursing and midwifery, and turned into highly serviceable social workers. Her home is the training ground for unceasingly industrious cultural squads. She wears no jewels. Crusading against the craze for jewellery so rampant among rich and poor women alike, she has been labouring to create a new consciousness of feminine dignity based, not on a doll-like state of bedecked adornment for man's pleasure, but on work, economic self-help and active participation in movements conducive to social progress and public welfare. From her emanates a vast educative and protective activity taking in its stride custom-harassed women, illiterates, kisans, coolies, ration-seekers in the throes of food shortage, expectant mothers, disease-stricken sufferers, victims of domestic or social tyranny, having as its natural consequence a slander campaign against her organised by powerful elements in society assailed by it directly or indirectly and threatened with dislodgement from their traditional position of privilege and dominance. But hers is an intrepid soul with grit and philosophy enough to pursue its high purposes in defiance of all vilifiers.—

SAKA

LIFE'S SILHOUETTES

A Short Story

Rahim was a patriarchal-looking grand old man. He had a flowing beard of white silvery hair that gave him a very venerable appearance. In jail parlance he was a black cap. "Black cap" is the name given to a convict undergoing sentence for murder. We, political prisoners, loved to theorise over the human identity of all classes of prison-inmates, and in our moments of proletarian fervour called the sharpers, thieves and worse paying for their offences with hard labour lovingly as "practical Communists". But in our heart of hearts, we reserved for them the role of servitor to minister to our comforts. We ordered them about as if they were in our pay, and when any of them failed in alacrity of service, our anger knew no bounds and we rushed to the deputy jailor's office demanding that he should be punished at once suitably. But with Rahim, none took any liberties. His gentleness, and something in his bearing which seemed to belong to a different world marked him for deferential treatment for all.

There was intense curiosity among the 'politicals' about Rahim and his past. Many legends went round the cells about him. All stories concurred in a few particulars. It was said that he was charged with killing a Hindu when communal riots broke out in his town; and that passion ran so high that when the judge that tried him pronounced the lesser sentence of transportation for life, the enraged mob surrounding the court clamoured for the death sentence and threatened to take the law into their own hands. Rahim was taken by a back-door under heavy guard to save him from mischief at the hands of the violent crowd that thirsted for his blood.

It was mere chance that revealed to me the true story of this extraordinary man. Some of the jail warders are historians in disguise burying the light of unsuspected profound knowledge of strange forgotten happenings of years ago under the unpromising exterior of a ridiculous uniform. What yarns they can spin, and what rich drama unearth from the dead past if only you can break the ice of their habitual reserve and lure them into a festive anecdotal mood! In return for some slight service done by me, one of them waxed talkative one sultry night when sleep would not come,

and in friendly confidential reminiscence, recounted to my eager ears Rahim's amazing story.

II

Santa was a widow in her teens living under the protection of Chandran, her deceased husband's brother. She was not very pretty, but abundant animal health and symmetry of body attracted to her the attention of passers-by wherever she went. Her parents were very poor and died a month after she became a widow in a cholera epidemic, leaving her destitute. She was left houseless with no means of living. It was then that she went over to Chandran's place. None of her nearer relations could afford to give her a home. Chandran was not married yet. An elder sister, Padma, kept house for him. She served to placate the proprieties for making it socially possible for a young attractive Hindu female without a husband to live under the same roof with a marriageable bachelor brother-in-law.

Chandran was a creature of the conventions. Whatever he felt was expected of him, he did spontaneously. Convention was the key to such virtues as he possessed. He irritated the unconventional and was held forth as a pattern by orthodox snobs. Physically he was well made. People took to him at first sight, but on closer acquaintance, felt him to be rather a bore. He tampered furtively with the respectability which he worshipped openly, with pursuit of sensual excitement in imagination. In Santa the mating instinct cried out for fulfilment with the combined urge of robust physical vigour and the reactions of forced abstinence from conjugal experiences on an adolescent organism hungering for thrills. She required something outside herself to lose herself in. Having neither work nor husband to engage her superabundant vitality, she fell into a disequilibrium which made up for Chandran's surface inhibitions and drew out the hedonist in him.

Padma's sole joy consisted in making others miserable. Righteousness became a terrible weapon in her hands. She gave no quarter to sinners. When presently Santa was found to be with child, she worked herself into a fury and saved her soul from contamination by driving the poor woe-begone

girl out of the house. Chandran looked helplessly on. Compassion and respectability in the form of cowardice fought a fierce battle in his remorse-stricken heart. Cowardice won, and he kept discreetly quiet, not intervening, leaving Santa to her fate.

III

Hamid was a carpenter. His family had known better days. His father was a trader who had made a fortune and lost it all through gambling in races when Hamid was ten years old. He did not long survive his misfortune. Left an orphan, Hamid was tossed about here and there and sometimes descended to theft and pilfering to keep body and soul together. A kind man taking pity on him taught him his own trade and brought him up as a son. Thenceforward he found security and a home, but the earlier buffetings in the hard school of adversity imparted to his character a rich comprehension that went out in loving sympathy to all beings in distress. In his own mind he equated wrong-doing with hard luck, and he hated the puritans who bullied others for their imperfections. This was the only hatred he was capable of.

Hamid loved to loaf. He had gone far out into the country without realising that nightfall was imminent. When just about to return he espied Santa. She had come miles away from her neighbourhood. Padma's propagandist zeal for righteousness had preceded her everywhere and perfected the ground for pitiless treatment which first dazed her and then landed her in the exhaustion of blank despair. She mechanically kept walking on and on. When tired she sank down. When the oppression of static condition became unendurable she got up and dragged her wearied limbs along till she broke down again.

When Hamid came across Santa, the last little particle of sensitiveness to pain had been just that moment knocked out of her, and into her eyes had come a demented look which seemed to be impervious to immediate surroundings.

IV

Twenty years later: At the big fair in the city, a happy family group went about from booth to booth. It consisted of Hamid, now grown past middle age, looking serene and benign, with all the marks of happiness and an unclouded conscience on his joyous face ennobled by many acts of kindness and generosity. With him were a youngster who addressed him

as father and a woman whom he called Kurshid. Every little gesture of hers shone with devotion for Hamid. Her hair was streaked with gray, and that was the only sign of age she carried. She was physically perfect, presenting to the onlooker's eye a figure that any master-sculptor would have loved to have for a model. Her face on nearer view was even more arresting. Out of the distilled essence of sorrow, peace, transformed into contentment, seemed to radiate from her eyes and the whole ensemble of her features, suggesting, in some mysterious way, a back-ground of drama and romance. People who looked at her found themselves somehow moved without understanding why. They were impelled to look again. And again and again.

Kurshid was our Santa of the earlier part of this story. That day, years ago, when the saint in Hamid met the sinner in Santa for the first time, Destiny started the pattern of a unique inter-dependence of two souls, each poles asunder from the other, and for that very reason perhaps, finding in companionship of the other an ideal medium for evolving into its best.

Hamid housed, fed and nursed Santa tenderly. Gratitude gave Santa the culture of truth. She made a clean breast of her whole story, unconsciously providing just the stimulus that worked on the heart-strings of Hamid divinising him into overpowering pity. From pity sprang love. He married her and adopted as his own the child that was born, and very soon, the affinities of a happy marriage gathered them into a common religion. Rahim, whose identity you might have guessed, was brought up as a Muslim boy.

After visiting the booths the happy family was wending its way back when a beggar woman asked piteously for alms.

"Poor woman, let us give her something", said Kurshid.

The sound of Kurshid's voice seemed to startle the woman. She peered closely at her.

"You! Santa" she exclaimed.

Rahim turned to his mother. "Why does she call you Santa?", he asked.

She did not appear to have heard him. He saw a look of terror on his mother's face such as he had never seen there before.

A month later Rahim was arrested on a charge of having stabbed and killed Chandran in the course of the Hindu-Muslim riots that had broken out in a town some distance away from where he lived—PREM.

Judged

"Vani Vilas"
P. R. Square
Madras.

You are undoubtedly the most distinguished and well-known jewellers in South India to-day. Your name is sparkling even as your diamonds.

The jeweller's art in India has been celebrated throughout the world from time & out of memory. Some recent & achievements of yours in that lovely art are indeed memorable.

I am glad to be able to testify to your work having always been careful, straightforward, artistic and quite satisfactory. I hope that your business will continue to progress in future so as to advance your name and fame throughout India.

V. V. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,
B.A., B.L.

Expressed

SURAJMAL'S

The
JEWELLERS

313, Esplanade, Madras.

C. R.—A Tribute

By SIR ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI IYER

Though I am loath to enter into the arena of controversial politics, my close association with Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar for over thirty years compels me to write a few lines on his decision to keep out of the present election.

From the state of his health at present, I do not grudge him his longing for peace or to be free from the bustle and turmoil of acrimonious political controversy, at least for a time. Though seemingly cold and purely intellectual in his cast, he is highly sensitive to unjustifiable aspersions which do not take into account the deep springs which form the foundation of his public life and character.

Though, at first, an ardent protagonist of the constructive programme and of the boycott of the Legislatures so long as there was no devolution of power, he was one of those mainly responsible for the Congress shouldering the responsibility of Government in the year 1937. It is acknowledged on all hands, British and Indian alike, that by far his was the most successful of the Congress Ministries in the whole of India. It is hardly realised that within a span of two years during which the Congress Government was working in this province, he tried to put through every one of the major reforms to which the Congress was pledged. At that time the complaint was not that the Government was slow and inactive but that it went too fast. It is only the Government of which Mr. Rajagopalachariar was the head, that was able to place on the statute-book within a short span of two years measures relating to a good number of items in the programme to which the Congress was committed. It is doubtful whether any other Congress Ministry in the rest of India could claim the credit which the Congress Ministry in Madras was entitled to.

Not Opposed To Andhra Province

There have been criticisms in regard to the attitude adopted by the Congress Government in regard to the measures adopted for the maintenance of public order and for the preservation of friendly relations with the neighbouring States during the time the Congress Government was in

power. I am also aware of a feeling prevalent amongst some of my Andhra friends that Mr. Rajagopalachariar was opposed to legitimate Andhra claims and aspirations. But I trust they will forgive me if I say that there is no justification for such a feeling with some knowledge of the inner counsels and the inside working of the Congress regime in Madras. It is untrue to say that Mr. Rajagopalachariar was against the formation of an Andhra province or was opposed to the promotion of schemes for the industrial and agricultural betterment or the irrigational expansion in Andhra Desa. He, more than any other, was responsible for the settlement of the long-standing dispute with Hyderabad which was an essential prerequisite for pushing through the Tunghabhadra project. The testimony of the eminent Special Engineer then deputed by the Nizam's Government was that a problem which had challenged solution for a long time had been tackled by Mr. Rajagopalachariar and his Cabinet with remarkable success. I can very well recall the Rt. Hon. Sir Akbar Hydari telling me after a Conference summoned at the instance of Mr. Rajagopalachariar that there can be no better bargainer for the presidency than C. R.

Clean And Incorruptible

Even the worst critics of Mr. Rajagopalachariar will have to bear testimony to the clean and incorruptible character of his administration. Judged from ordinary standards, his friends who looked for favours to him might have something to complain against in that he did not yield to the normal human weakness of succumbing to the importunities of friends and partymen in the arduous task of administering the affairs of the province.

It is unnecessary to dilate upon his alert intellect, his resourcefulness in debate and the remarkable skill which he displayed in the proceedings of Select Committees. My experienced and talented friend, Mr. R. V. Krishna Aiyar, for a long time Legislative Secretary, would bear testimony to the fact that his work as Legislative Secretary was very much lightened during the Select Committee meetings and in the general meetings of the

Legislature by the skill with which he handled the legislative machinery. It is a great source of pleasure to me that I was of some little help to him in the various legislative measures which he and the Government of which he was the head were responsible for. Often-times, he would take a hint over the 'phone on a knotty constitutional or legal point and he would give life and shape to any point or solution suggested.

After the Congress Ministries had laid down their office in the different provinces in India, and the events that happened in 1942, he took up a line different from that of some of his trusted old colleagues including Mahatmaji on certain emergent issues. It will not be gainsaid that it requires a greater courage sometimes to differ from one's old and tried friends and colleagues than to sail with the current and to fall in with the majority. Even on such an issue as Pakistan, C. R. has been misunderstood. Whether his proposals are sound and acceptable to the nation or not, or whether in the face of the intransigent attitude of Mr. Jinnah, Pakistan can be a wise or feasible solution for the political emancipation of India, there can be no doubt that even in regard to that Mr. Rajagopalachariar's attitude was dictated by the highest patriotic and political considerations to solve the Indian political tangle.

The best vindication of the position he took up is the line taken by no less a person than Mahatma Gandhi in his

attempt to enter into some kind of settlement with Mr. Jinnah.

Under the changed political conditions, he came back to the Congress fold, but it would be mean to attribute to him that his conduct was dictated by a desire for grasping power. His attitude at the Simla Conference that the people's representatives should return to power in the provinces and assume responsibility at the Centre and the keen desire which he has evinced throughout for an Indo-British settlement and the installation of a National Government, belie any such charge.

Rare Virtues

He is one of the few outstanding men whom India has produced or the politics of this country has brought to the fore in recent years. In him is a combination of virtues and qualities rarely found together—a highly intellectual grasp with a practical wisdom and sagacity, a power to arrive at quick conclusions, a facility to express himself in unadorned, short, crisp and simple language, an unrivalled power of debate, an apparently cynical manner behind a deep and subdued emotional nature. At this juncture, when the country is confronted with serious food and other economic problems, when fateful decisions are awaiting solution in Indo-British relations, when the country is, as I hope, on the eve of great constitutional changes, his presence as a member of the Government would have been an incalculable advantage.

[These tit bits are collected from books and magazines. No claim is made to originality. Readers are also invited to contribute.]

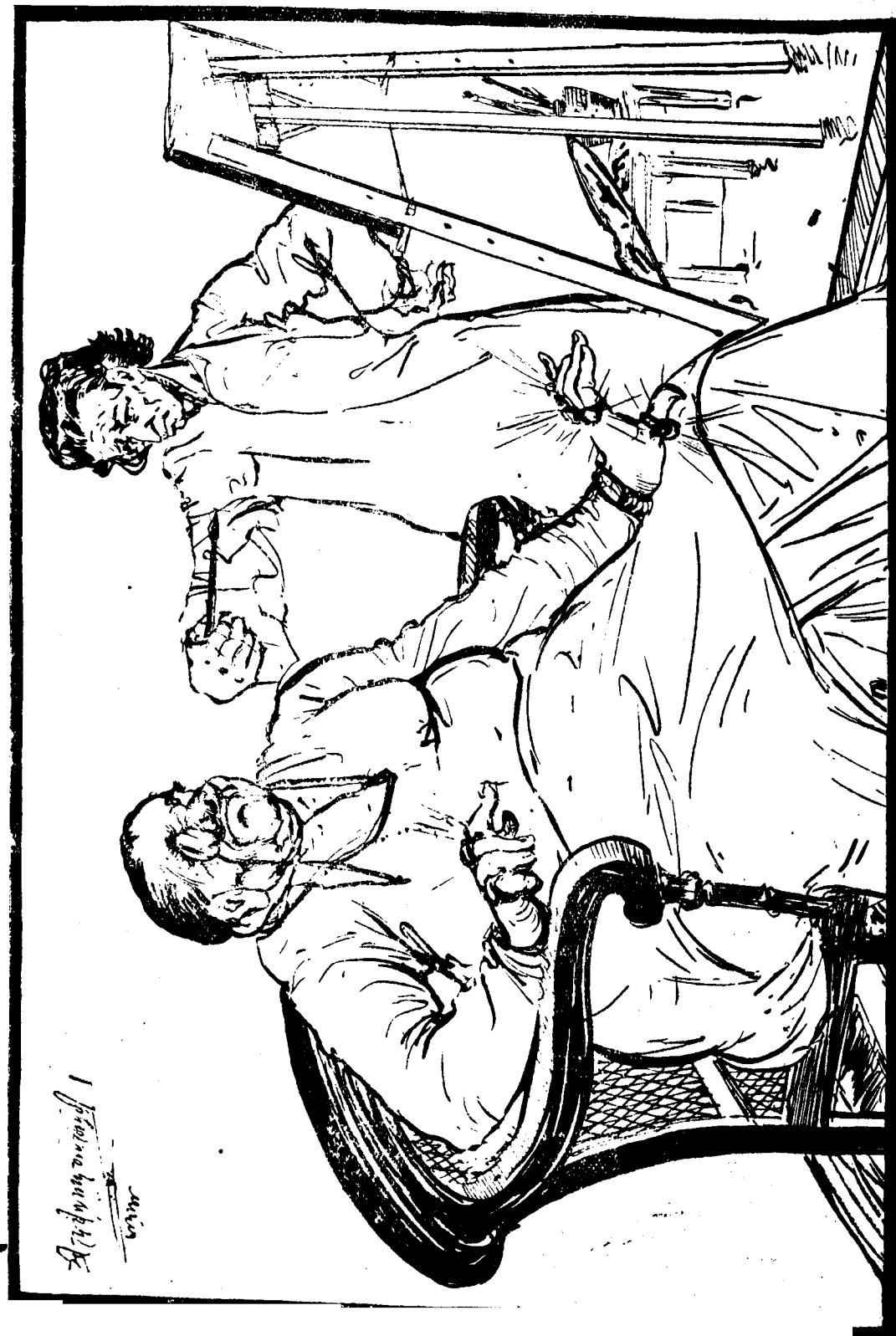
So one day, while working for the *New York World* he made a solemn pact with himself there and then to quit what he named the "Harlot Press" for good, and never again to take a reporter's job on any newspaper anywhere, even though he starved. "And I did so quit", he tells, "and fairly approached starvation before I cut into the editorial and magazine field where at last, little food or much, I could write what I knew to be so, and sell at least enough of it to be able to live."

Theodore Dreiser is regarded by some as America's greatest writer. He narrowly missed the Nobel Prize and his admirers hold that he was purposely made to miss it for sinister reasons.

TIT-BITS:

Theodore Dreiser worked on 8 different American newspapers from Chicago to New York, a section of the world's Press much praised in India now. To be sent out on a story, work hard to get the facts, write the same, turn them in to the city editor, and the same day or the next find the facts altered or the whole story killed, proved to him to be a very familiar experience.

He himself described the experience thus: "In Pittsburgh you couldn't talk about the steel masters' cruelties. In Philadelphia not a word could be said in favour of striking miners, or the social or money masters of the city. In Chicago the big politicians and the big families were sacred. In New York wealth (society), never poverty, must be played up."



PURGATORY : This fine drawing by Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury depicts the mental anguish of an artist confronted with an uninspiring subject—the vulgar, rich expressionless wife. Is he to go on for potboiling, or commit suicide?

A Warning to Artists

by

DEBI PRASAD ROY CHOWDHURY

A warning to artists not to be tied too much to tradition is sounded by Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury, in his address at New Delhi on 2nd March, as President of the All-India Artists' Conference.

POINTS FROM THE ADDRESS :

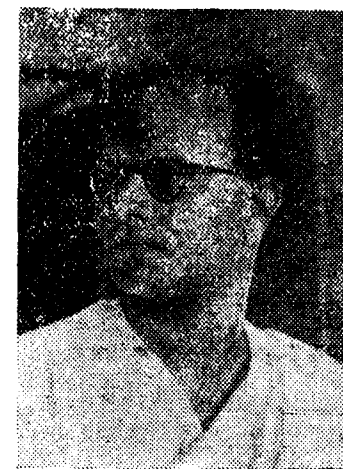
Joy is the ultimate end of a creative function. Art is one such function. It infuses life into joy for a longer period than just a fleeting moment. A thing of beauty made radiates its virtues not only to the creator of it, but also to those who are endowed with the quality of receptivity. This quality is the capacity to see the truth underlying the beautiful.

An indifferent approach to the beautiful will have no better result than a fruitless endeavour, because art is not for all.

Let us compare two portraits, one of a king and the other of a beggar. The painter of royalty is a novice and that of the beggar a master artist. If the two pictures are compared and their qualities assessed on the intrinsic values of pictorial theme, the beggar's portrait will be held in awe and exaltation and not the king's though the latter may claim appreciation on the ground of the sitter's position.

To understand the beauty of a picture in keeping with its subject matter, contact with the concealed skill of the artist is indispensable—the skill is the language—the vehicle that conveys the spirit of the effect to the receptive. It is the life-giving element which can make a dumb, dead, flat canvass live and speak.

The range of the standard of beauty is so widely spread that its magnitude cannot be surveyed with a preconceived ideal or given formula. It may be said that a scene of horror is no less beautiful than the altar of a divine service in its particular sphere. Slums in their grim poverty and agony are no less a pictorial subject than the grand courtyard of a palace where beautiful damsels assemble, decorated with jewels and gems and dance in rhythm to please the master. The former is a picture of pathos and the latter may be a scene of lust.



Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury.

The modern artist is not privileged to isolate himself from disturbing facts as his predecessors could. He is not only involved in economic problems but is also perplexed by successive invasions of foreign influence directed by current issues of fashion. They are ever changing, ever fleeting. If one is accommodated, the other strikes a new note, and before the discord of the new is adjusted in tune, it is found to be out of date. Hence the question of distinguishing the alive from the dead keeps the artist preoccupied, limiting his freedom to pursue the path of his own choice.

It is absurd to imagine that we could revert to the mental equipment of primitive men, having all the benefits and shortcomings of civilization.

A full-grown adult having all the cunning and shrewdness that higher intelligence confers, trying to be innocent like a child, proves that something is wrong somewhere.

Tradition has a value of its own. It is a history of the past. But confining oneself to lost glory and exhuming the dead from the burial ground is a job that can lead the artist only to the glory of stagnation, where he must repeat and rot.

LIMITATIONS OF RATIONING FOR PREVENTING STARVATION

THE food crisis is closely connected with an even greater crisis that is looming threateningly, the unemployment crisis.

Railway and postal workers, signallers and employees in engineering, tailoring, tanning, munition making and similar establishments are being fast disbanded as a result of the cessation of war effort.

The recent closure of the Avadi military camp (near Madras) threw some 18,000 persons into the ranks of the unemployed. More camps are being closed in quick succession, throwing an increasing number on the streets.

An enormous volume of employment was provided in the war years by the Military Accounts Department of which the educated indigent took the fullest advantage. Clerkships without limit went a-begging. That is now coming to an end. War employees are being disgorged from the havens that gave them temporary asylum during the war.

Demobilisation is throwing back on civil life a huge mass of people that had hitherto conferred importance and advertisement on the world's largest volunteer army.

In the war years, despite the high cost of living, human labour became valuable, and in most families more members earned wages than ever before. Such families are now threatened with loss of bread-winners.

IN times of sparse employment, the general tendency is for people to rush from the villages to the towns. In 1942, when the Japanese menace was at its gravest, the authorities in charge of administration on the eastern border of Bengal fell into a panic and created unemployment by burning some 500,000 boats. They feared that the boats might otherwise fall into Japanese hands. Those that had

FOOD PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL

BY KHASHI SUBBA RAU

been depending on the boats for livelihood exhausted the compensation they got in a few days on liquor, and finding nothing to do, marched on already overcrowded Calcutta. With the loss of boats, supply of fish, great mainstay of the Bengali's diet, went down, and forced many to join in the general exodus to the metropolis in search of food.

The vast masses of the unemployed that are now being rapidly added to will, as in Bengal at the time of the famine, soon find their way to the big cities all over the country.

Their advent will be taken full advantage of by capitalist employers to depress the level of wages in all but those sections of their establishments calling for technical skill of special kinds.

NOW for the reception that the unemployed will get in the cities.

Work they will not get in any measure ample enough to affect the situation, since no party likely to come into power has bestowed earnest thought on economic programmes capable of ready implementation for absorbing all the available labour of idle hands. The men in organizational control of the Congress, at least in this part of the country, are far too bitterly engrossed in squabbles over leadership and too doggedly given to self-glorificatory pats on their own backs over their supposed revolutionary exploits of three years ago, to be able to bring a balanced mind to bear, in a constructive social spirit, on problems of immediate urgency affecting the welfare of the people. It is likely that power

and responsibility, when they come, will inure them to better standards of public duty. But the forces of distress and discontent look like overtaking them before they are ready with proper solutions to deal with them.

RATIONING now represents the acme of inefficiency for dealing with the food situation.

The theory is that rationing distributes food equally, and by making available a minimum quantity for guaranteed sale in the shops, prevents starvation and excessive appropriation of what is necessary for all by a few to the hurt of the many.

It is an admirable theory providing every citizen has means enough to buy the food at his disposal, and to him in the guaranteed sale in the shops. The unemployed man without money to buy can only look at the food in the shops—a privilege that will not satisfy hunger.

On the other hand rationing doubly dooms the pauper to starvation since it denies any kind of charity from generous neighbours. When each man is inaccessible to food for himself, gets just enough left over for gift to the needy?

SIDE by side with rationing of food, there should be rationing of money so necessary for the purchase of food, and State insurance schemes are in essence nothing but devices for providing sufficient money for all to buy food.

There are two kinds of State insurance. One is of the type introduced by Lloyd George in the British budget with the

dole as a primary privilege of citizenship. The dole is by some regarded as a disintegrating factor, since it substitutes for self-help a habit of depending on free gifts of money in exchange for nothing, a habit demoralising to the supposed beneficiary, and destructive of his dignity and status as a worker. The late President Roosevelt put the abolition of the dole and its replacement by all-round distribution of work for all at fair wages, in the very forefront of his programme on his ascension to power.

The second variety of State-insurance is the socialist one. It does away with the individual's need of dependence on any sort of gratuitous gift for maintenance by incorporating the right to work for an economic wage as a fundamental part of the State constitution.

WORK for all is the only scientific and really effective way of ensuring a universal food supply and preventing starvation. All other methods merely tinker with the problem, or just provide limelight for experts and administrators.

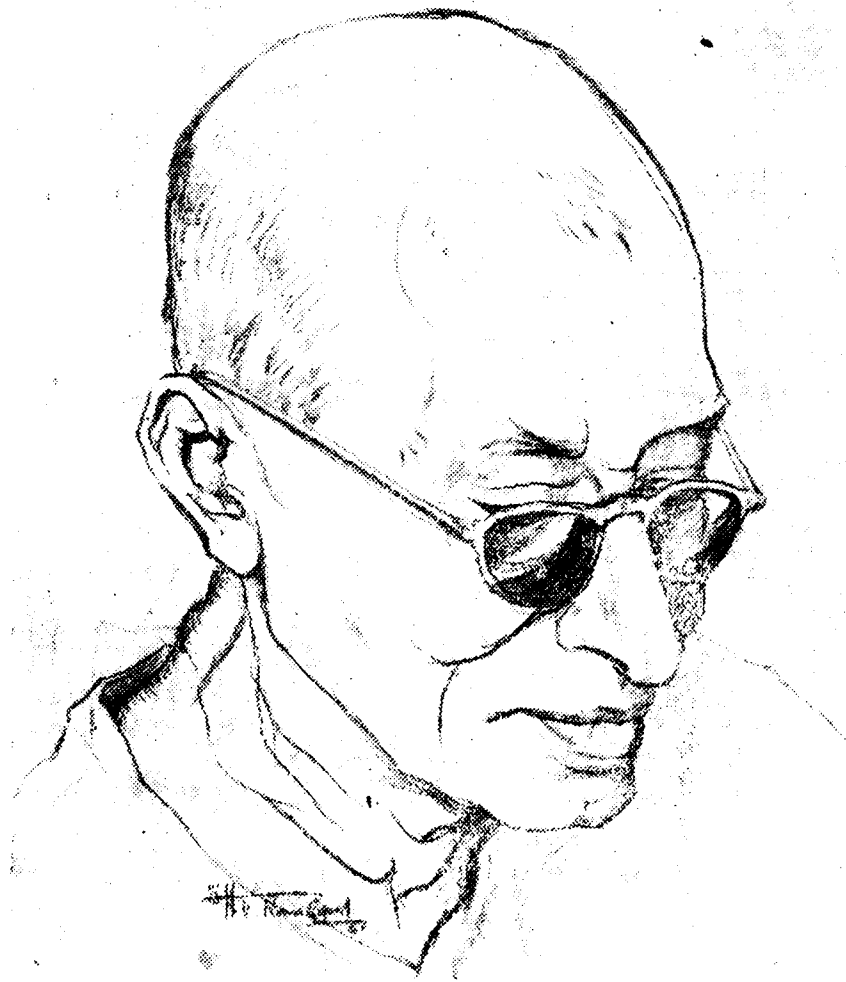
The obstacle to the provision of work for all is the established vogue of capitalist profiteering. Without a shortage, there can be no profit, and the artificial creation of scarcity in the interest of profit is the peculiar technique of capitalist economics. Brazil, which produced 69 per cent of the world's coffee before the war, burnt 15 per cent of it to check production and keep prices up, affording a true and faithful illustration of the weirdness of capitalist profiteering going on everywhere in the world in

many disguised forms. The munificent donations sometimes paid by millionaire industrial magnates to good causes that strike the popular imagination constitute one form of the disguise.

STATE measures to promote production for universal use will extinguish the power of the capitalist whose hold on our economics is based on cornering of goods, commodities and services and the creation of scarcity. Appropriation of excess for oneself goes hand in hand with the creation of scarcity. This is precisely what hoarders and profiteers and blackmarketeers do. Corrupt officials who take bribes create scarcity of money elsewhere for the sake of a surfeit of it for themselves. Society seems now so permeated with the spirit of self-appropriation of the good things of life at others' expense that the poison of it has spread even to movements and institutions avowedly existing to fight monopolistic trends and promote happiness and plenty for all. Otherwise, how is one to explain the extraordinary tenderness shown by the Congress parliamentary boards in the recent selection of candidates for rich men of poor merit in preference to poor men of rich merit?

FOOD for all cannot be provided by feats of manipulation conceived as mere administration. It can be achieved only through pursuit of right ideas. In a world of restricted output, necessities and luxuries converge into each other, excess in the one entailing scarcity in the other.

Administrative measures for social security should be harnessed to a political conscience affording no quarter to wasters and exploiters and treating them as mortal enemies of the body politic to be urged relentlessly from positions of power and influence. The Congress should show the way.



This drawing was made by our artist, Ram Gopal, while Rajaji was at work.

RAJAJI TO GANDHIJI: "What you said about me publicly has, like the churning of the ocean, brought up all the poison and you have to swallow it like Rudra! I know you can. But it has made my old longing for peace too strong to resist. I haven't the strength to stand it any longer. I bore much all these days. I struggled hard to work without minding the calumniators but I give it up now."

"I have often asked myself the question: Is it worthwhile? I feel it is not. I must yield to the longing of my heart not to be misunderstood. Why should I be thought to be seeking 'power' when it is not the case at all? I must prove it, although the proof is one that leaves no good behind but the mere proof."

"Now that the urgent job of selections for the Legislature is all over, let me leave the scene."

Profile—C. Rajagopalachari

"Let me leave the scene"

C. Rajagopalachari concludes, with this appeal, his letter to Gandhiji, a superb document which will rank as a masterpiece in the literature of political controversy of our or any time.

"He should have done it long before", said one of the "calumniators" as, with astonishment, he read the news as it came out of the teleprinter in his office.

WHY ALL THIS STRUGGLE?

At the height of the Tiruchengode election controversy I asked C. R. point-blank, why he should impose on himself the strain of a struggle for what, if he just kept quiet, was bound to come to him a-begging on its knees.

He replied that two considerations weighed with him more than anything else.

- (1) The cost to the public would be great if experienced politicians abstained from seeking responsibility on critical occasions for the sake of personal comfort or dignity or for fear of being misunderstood. He wanted to save the people from having to bear that cost.
- (2) Seeking responsibility is a political duty. One should not be deflected from it, bridegroom-wise, by modesty and similar personal sentiments, or by calculations that bank on others' coming in subsequently with desired initiatives. In the course of seeking responsibility vested interests will have to be fought. Fighting them is itself a part of political duty. C.R. said that, so long as he felt that the people were on his side, he would not be frightened by vested interests into abandoning the struggle.

After his letter to Gandhiji seeking permission to leave the scene, I met C. R. and recalled to him his earlier explanation. "How did the two considerations which he emphasized then, cease to have validity now", I asked.

He said that the very cost to the public which he wanted to prevent could not be prevented even if he continued the struggle. Deliberate poisoning of the political atmosphere had gone too far for any good to come. So he abandoned the scene, giving in to a desire for relief which he had resisted with great strain to body and mind, so long.

MERE PROOF AND NO GOOD BEHIND

Kamaraj Nadar and his friends are left with a proof—the "mere proof" with "no good behind"—that must force them to desist from any more charging C. R. with "seeking power". Will they make of their triumph anything more than seeking power? Unenviable would be their plight should they fail, especially as it will be measured against the towering background of C. R.'s renunciation and the love that the masses are ever swift to pour out on leaders that do sacrifice and give up things.

In the course of the anti-C. R. Press campaign, I am confronted with many quotations from my own criticisms of his premiership disinterred, apparently with considerable labour of research, from the bowels of old newspaper files. Had I not said that for power he was greedy? That he had depressed the hearts of Congressmen by manifestations of favour for others? And so forth.

SACRIFICE

My answer is that the whole setting of C. R.'s position as political leader has to me been changed since 1942. The high pinnacle of

prestige in the Congress that he had reached before that year came by way of Gandhian discipleship. In that year, he cast away, at one throw, all the consolidated advantage of a quarter-century of Gandhian discipleship at its most favoured,—all for dear love of integrity, and for striking out for a faith which he held to be true against all dissenters. C. R. should have known what it would cost. Not merely parting political company from the companions of a life-time, above all from Mahatma, the dearest and mightiest of them all, but misunderstanding, ostracism, wilderness. To give up what he gave up, to face what he must have known he would have to face—this could not have been done by a seeker for power. There was sincerity, sacrifice, real heroism in it.

I regard it as poor journalism to refuse to budge from an opinion once expressed, when overwhelming experiences contradicting it present themselves, claiming to be taken into account. One's own sense of right is worth nothing if it is to be made into a fetish before which all that tends to assail it is to be sacrificed.

ANOMALIES

When I find Congressmen, professing no interest in parliamentary activities, spending sleepless nights in intrigues to secure C.R.'s exclusion from the same parliamentary activities; when in the name of Revolution I find rich men hiring saboteurs while from safe backgrounds they waited for news of the exploits of their hirelings; when I find these same rich men, coming forward to cash in on the August resolution in the guise of Congress patriots; when I find men with no record of public work to their credit but plenty of reputation for adeptness in profiteering and black-marketing, installed as legislators without an iota of competence for the role—I feel that it is not perhaps altogether inapt that for one like C.R. there should be no place in the political scene as it is being shaped by the provincial organisational leaders of the Congress. Among the whole crowd of them C.R. shines out as a figure of transcendent courage and honesty.

Those that now enjoy the trimpuh of his exit from the scene will presently be responsible for breaking the Congress to pieces in the name of serving the Congress.—KHASHA.

You cannot untwist a two-thousand years twist of the human mind and turn it in the opposite direction.—Dr. Ambedkar.

While denouncing the Congress, Mr. Jinnah follows its methods in the organisation and work of the League. If imitation is the best form of flattery, Mr. Jinnah is a great admirer of the Congress.—C. V. Chandrasekharan.

Where the State is working under the capitalist system, how can we make people rich by Acts of Parliament?—C. Rajagopalachari.

Paradise For Youth WHAT WE SAW IN SOVIET RUSSIA

By W. LAKSHMANA RAO
AND MELLIE SCHOLINGER

[This is the second and concluding part of W. Lakshmana Rao and Mellie Scholinger's report of what they saw in Soviet Russia. The first appeared in the issue of SWATANTRA dated 23rd February, 1946.]

Think of the years 1934 to 1936—what a terrible period of slump in Europe, America, Japan and India! Increasing unemployment, falling wages, soaring cost of living, standards of life sinking, factories closed down, business houses in liquidation and banks crashing! It is difficult to contemplate what appalling sufferings the working classes had to face, in spite of the prophecies and promises of politicians, economists and industrialists.

But in that very period, in the USSR, we learnt, the consumption of food per head had increased by approximately 30 per cent. Consumption of bread had increased two-and-a-half times compared with the pre-Revolution days, meat as well as milk consumption had increased to double per capita, and people were having three-and-a-half times as much sugar; since the

introduction of planning, the use of clothing had increased by half as much per head.

Remarkable Reduction in Prices

The shop windows confirmed what the official figures proclaimed. A remarkable thing had happened during our stay in Moscow. Everywhere—in co-op stores, in the *uni-vermags* (department stores), in the smaller shops and in the Red Arcade bazaars—notices showed reduction in prices in all lines of goods, from 25 to 40 per cent! Such a thing, the reduction of price of all lines of goods overnight in all the shops, was unheard of before, and could not be contemplated in any capitalist country, for if such a thing did happen, it was certain to result in the closing down of all the business houses and in disaster to the millions engaged in the manufacturing and distributing trades. We could not at first understand the 'mystery' behind it. Shopping was going on briskly. Entering one of the smaller stores near the Bolshoi, on pretext of buying marmalade we sought an explanation from the director, and asked him to let us know who bore the loss on the reduction of prices, and how such considerable reductions were at all possible.

Soviet Economics

The director spoke excellent German and explained that all the



Collective
Farmer's Children



The Rising Generation

production and distribution machinery belonged to the State—all the shops included. The State had found out that, thanks to the patriotic effort of the workers of stepping up production, the costs of production had gone down. Therefore the State had decreed a general reduction in prices. If there was any loss, it would be borne by the State and written off, and nobody was the worse for it! The capitalist countries had enthroned the false gods of individual enterprise, profit motive and exploitation, and so high prices and lower wages were inevitable, leading to the rich becoming richer and the poor poorer still. In Soviet Russia the slogan was 'produce more and you will produce cheaper' and 'earn more and spend more'.

Thanks to the second five-year plan, which had ensured a sound Socialist economy with a thorough rationalisation of industry, the information and figures collected by us showed that compared with 1929, wages by the end of 1936 were more than three-and-a-half times higher; agricultural incomes had nearly doubled; and the earnings of factory-workers had nearly trebled—in the heavy industries like the automobile industry, they had more than quadrupled.

Production had made very gigantic strides indeed and the pace had been maintained all round. The Stakhnov movement had achieved miracles in speeding-up output. It was all a rank-and-file movement from below. Work was considered a patriotic service and production of more goods a sacred duty. The more efficient, intelligent and skilful a worker was, the greater was the chance of bringing the USSR nearer to Socialism.

Collective Farms

As we wanted to see something of rural Russia, the Intourist (Government Tourist Bureau) arranged an excursion for our party to one of the collective farms in the Moscow district, about 40 miles from the city.

The Kolkhozy (collective farm) consisting of seventy families was started in 1929. At the time of our visit the membership had increased to 140 families, totalling 500 people, consequent on the successful working of Kolkhozy throughout the USSR. The capital invested by the member-families—value of the agricultural implements, machinery, cattle and cash—was 500,000 roubles. (One rouble is equal to one rupee, four annas). The yearly proceeds of the farm were shared by all the members in proportion to the work-days put in by each member, the work-day unit being calculated on the basis of the quality of the work, the degree of skill required, the condition of the soil, machinery used, etc. One farmer earned 400 work-days to his credit, another 600, and others more, corresponding to their capacity and inclination. Of the gross proceeds, taxes to the Government were paid as first charge, a percentage was set aside for seed, provision was made for sickness insurance of the members and for insurance of the livestock, and something was set apart to meet unforeseen contingencies. The balance of the proceeds was distributed among the members, both in cash and in kind. Besides his share in the collective farm, each farmer was allowed by the constitution to own a house, a kitchen-garden and cow, poultry, ducks and pigs.

The whole labour force (all men and women being workers) in the village was divided into four brigades, two being set to work on the field, one employed on vegetable-growing and the fourth engaged in stock-breeding. The Kolkhozy owned and cultivated 500 acres, of which 175 were set apart for potato-growing, 100 for orchards, 175 for food-grains, and 50 for fruit and vegetable culture in hot houses. The collective also owned and worked a paint factory. This Kolkhoz was small, but there were bigger ones, some extending to 125,000 acres, with a membership of 15,000.



Transport and Factory School Students.

Each member was paid his wages according to a schedule of wages for different kinds of work at the end of each day. In 1936 the average wages received by an individual member each day amounted to 15 roubles and 30 kilos of vegetable and fruit. But at the time we visited the place the wages were 20 roubles and 40 kilos respectively. A family of three adults could expect an annual income of 15,000 roubles in cash and 30 tons of vegetables. (The average wages of a skilled worker in Moscow was about 500 to 600 roubles a month.)

The farm owned a cinema, a club for its members and a children's library. As their capital increased, the members adopted new schemes of social service.

A committee of management was elected every year to administer the farm.

As a statutory duty, the collective maintained a kindergarten school for children between the ages of 3 and 8. It also maintained a school for the boys and girls of its members.

We discussed with the young woman-teacher of the farm about

Soviet pedagogical methods in relation to Pestalozzi, Froebel, Dalton, Odenwalde and Santiniketan. She enumerated the Soviet educational ideals tersely:

No. 1: Not learning but knowledge—not cram but culture—not passing exams., but personality.

No. 2: Think individually but live collectively.

No. 3: Work is honour, life a joy.

No. 4: Every Soviet boy and girl to be made a good Marxist—a good Socialist and a patriotic Russian.

The success of the collective farms was due to the Piatiletki, planning by the State. The crops to be grown, the rotation to be followed, the acreage, manures (their supply and application)—the general plan for the whole State is determined, and the programme for every collective must fit in with it. Individual modifications were allowed, provided they were approved by the district Soviet, and actual details were worked out by the collective under the guidance of the district Soviet.

Besides collective farms there were State farms which covered vast areas, and on which agriculture was rationalised and completely mechanised, and the farms were run just like factories where the workers received wages and other benefits. There were also a few individual private farmers whom the Soviet tolerated, but everything was done to discourage them by levying considerably higher taxes. They were thus being driven out of existence.

Religious Freedom

Under the new Constitution, the priests no longer suffered from any political disabilities. They had the right to vote and all other political privileges. The restoration of this liberty to them synchronised with similar concessions to the children of the former propertied classes. With the passage of time and the firm establishment of Soviet society, the priestly classes could no longer be effective counter-revolutionary forces, and it was but part of wise statesmanship that in the new Constitution equality of political status should have been granted to them.

** ** **

For the first time in the history of their race, the Jews were enjoying real religious and political freedom. They did appreciate it and felt happy that they were no longer objects of persecution. There were other religious communities in the USSR: vast areas in the East were inhabited by Muslims, some Buddhists were in the Mongols. The Christian Church in Russia was orthodox Greek but there were Roman Catholics and smaller communities of Baptists and other Protestants. In spite of all the

adverse propaganda in the foreign Press, it could be truthfully said that there was absolute religious freedom in the USSR. There were about 500 churches in Moscow and 20 of them were active during our visit to that city.

Minorities

Instead of discouraging the culture, language and tradition of the numerous minorities in the State, the USSR did everything to foster their sense of nationalism and pride in their own cultural achievement. The Museum of Soviet Nationalities in Moscow bore testimony to the successful efforts of the State in promoting national culture, founding national theatres, establishing universities, colleges and technicums, encouraging newspapers in the various native languages. Before the advent of the Soviets, some of these national minorities had only the spoken language but no script, and of course no books and no literature!

Paradise Regained—for Youth!

No country in the world bestows so much attention on its youth as the USSR. In Leningrad, in Kharkov, in Baku, in Stalingrad—in the thousand and one cities and towns in the USSR—theaters, clubs, stadiums and parks abound for the recreation of the youth of the country, all modelled after the Gorki Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow.

** ** **

We saw the youth of Moscow in scores at the Park. They gave living proof of the birth of a new generation, healthy, strong and intelligent, buoyant and patriotic, and ready for labour and defence in the cause of their country and of its new civilisation.

Trade unionism in Russia has annexed the State; in England it is still fighting the State. So much the worse for England from the democratic point of view.
—Bernard Shaw.

THOUGHTS ON MADRAS

BY A BRITISH OFFICER

[A British Officer's impressions of Madras are given in this article. In most countries, he says, hoarders and black-marketeers are put behind prison bars. In India they are accepted into the premier political organisations. He deplores interparty violence, but predicts that it will prove to be only a passing phase.]

When I set foot in Madras for the first time as a representative of the country that has exploited India for the last 150 years, I naturally expected to be coolly received.

Far from arousing any hostility, I found myself made very welcome. Friendships that would have taken months to develop among the reserved peoples of Northern Europe, blossomed overnight in the tropical climate of South India. I had always thought that friendship expressed itself in the same way the whole world over, but I was mistaken. The sophisticated hail-fellow-well-met relationships of the West contrast strangely with the quiet warmth and ingenuousness of the East, a feeling that expresses itself delightfully by the holding of hands—the action of young timid lovers in the West. But friendship is based on some ideas and beliefs held in common, and I consider myself fortunate in meeting so many who were ready to greet me as a friend. For those beliefs are now reaching to the farthest corners of the world, from Java to Greece, from Argentina to China, from India to India. This urge for freedom and for the emancipation of mankind can no longer be restrained.

The peoples of the world are on the march. I have listened eagerly and attentively to many expressions of Indian opinion from the ardent revolutionary to that remarkable individual who spoke

proudly to me of 'our' King and 'our' Empire. (One and only one has spoken thus.) If as a foreigner I consider the opinions objectively, what are my conclusions? India is forming her ranks in preparation for that forward march. Although her aspirations have been thwarted, and distorted for decades, the main political outlines are now clear. Two broad streams are moving irresistably forward, drawing in lakhs, and even crores, as they move, and bringing hope and inspiration to those who were ignorant or indifferent. Both streams run clear and strong in the centre, only the edges are muddy, sullied by the presence of corrupt and anti-social elements, and by hooliganism. In most countries of the world it is usual to put hoarders and black marketeers behind prison bars. Yet in India they are accepted into the premier political organisations of the country.

I have been puzzled to read in the press of physical violence being used against Nationalist Muslims, and against Communists by their political opponents, with hardly a word of protest from the leaders of the organisations involved. When I went to friends in the League and Congress for an explanation I was met with an embarrassed silence, or at the most by a few stuttered excuses. How can these things occur between honest political rivals? Such actions are unworthy of the high traditions of Indian political life.

But these are only passing phases. The two main streams are healthy and unaffected. What of their future? How long before India learns the lesson that the peoples of the world learnt in their fight against Fascism, the lesson that the peoples of Europe learnt the hard way, that nothing can stand in the way of a united and determined people. How long before India learns this lesson?

Mushtaq Ali, the Peter Pan Of Indian Cricket

The present phase in cricket is one of utilitarianism. Its Jeremy Bentham's are many, but its Samuel Butlers few. It might, therefore, have struck many belonging to the former category that the controversy set on foot by Hassett this season concerning whether Mushtaq Ali was an ugly batsman or no is singularly inept. These well-intentioned Philistines might argue that so long as a batsman made runs it mattered nothing that he struck out ungainly attitudes. But this belief carries its own Nemesis with it, and has been discarded by the finer spirits of the game.

However, this is begging the question. Hassett's verdict came as a great surprise to those who have followed Mushtaq Ali's career with admiration. Ugliness was the last attribute which one would have thought of associating with that leonine grace. It is, however, possible that the Australian merely meant that the Indore batsman is a trifle unsound. If the charge is thus diluted, it may find some favour. Indeed, as Hassett made it clear later, he was referring to the liberties which Mushtaq Ali undoubtedly takes with the balls slightly outside the off stump.

It is proper to insist that, even though Mushtaq Ali is guilty of heterodoxy, his glory is in no way dimmed. Orthodoxy is not the only road that leads to the Lords. Eminence has been achieved by many batsmen who have not scrupled to violate one or the other of the many canons in which C. B. Fry's exceedingly Aristotelian treatise on batsmanship abounds. Jessop is perhaps the shining example, but the fate of Alletson deserves some notice. Playing for Sussex one summer day in the early years of this century, he belaboured Nottinghamshire bowling so soundly that he scored 155 runs in less than

one-third as many minutes. But the grave pundits of Horsham were scandalised. They insisted that the sinner should learn to tame his fury, and cultivate the orthodox graces. The inevitable result was that he lost his form, and was promptly dropped from the county team.

This divagation serves to demonstrate that no stain attaches to Mushtaq Ali solely because he chooses to hold heterodox views. The multitude would much rather admire the resourceful audacity and the lightning quickness with which this master habitually confronts the bowler, than bemoan that he should be lost to the strict proprieties. With truth can the dolorous admission of J. C. Shaw, a master of length bowling, that, when he bowled to Grace, "I puts the ball where I likes, and the Old Man, he puts it where he likes", be applicable to any bowler who sets himself the task of beating this player. For his eccentricities are on the grandiose scale. There is nothing peddling about them; they are more than mannerisms, which irritate one in the sense that the habit of C. P. Mead in touching the peak of his cap before facing the bowler is said to have annoyed many long-suffering spectators. Mushtaq Ali really believes that there is a certain monotony in playing to the off the balls pitched slightly outside the stump; for there are spaces on the leg side which because of their unexpectedness, exercise a fascination for him. Hence those hair-raising strokes to the square-leg, at which the purists have shuddered and the multitude applauded. For Mushtaq Ali has the spirit of the master in him. In a word, he is the Peter Pan of Indian Cricket.

There was a time when, to vary the fairy metaphor, he was less like

a Puck than like Oberon in one of his ineffective moods. There are persons who can remember that, though he was fortunate in coming under the patronage of C. K. Nayudu, he was chosen more for his curious circumambulatory bowling and for his vehement fielding than for any performances with the bat. It is difficult to say when exactly he achieved that frame of mind, as distinct from physical appearance, which is so necessary for international renown. It should not be considered fanciful if one sought to specify it as having occurred during the Third Test at Madras in 1932. A very nervous Mushtaq Ali dropped Elliott at square-leg towards the end of the English innings. But a few runs later when, at the same position he caught the

same batsman, he appeared to have changed vastly. Surely it was then that he graduated in the hard school of Test cricket.

It is true to say that from that time he has never looked back. One of the few redeeming features of the shameful 1936 tour was the excellence of his batting on all types of wicket and against all varieties of bowlers. To this day, India thrills to the memory of Mushtaq Ali's masterful partnership of a double century for the first wicket with Merchant in the Second Test at Lords. It will be the prayer of every Indian cricket-lover that this graceful practitioner of cricket at its loveliest phase will surpass himself in the opportunity that is presently recurring.—N.S.R.

BLUE-BUFF BATTLES BETWEEN I.S.C. AND A.I.S.F.

(BY A STUDENT)

There are, among the students, as many factions as there are in the outside world though probably of much less intensity. The students are not what they should be—a community with common interests, without serious ideological differences and without any baser feelings like communalism tainting their activities. It is not easy to find out who is to blame for this. But college and hostel authorities who still refuse to keep pace with the advancing times and tolerate institutions and habits that tend to emphasise and aggravate communal differences cannot escape their share of the responsibility.

* * *

Of the student organisations, easily the most popular is the Indian Students Congress with its branches all over India. Though it is very popular, it lacks the support of certain sections of the students. The Muslim students have not much to do with it—they have their own

Muslim Students' Federation; so also students with Communist leanings—they have their All-India Students Federation. The I.S.C. represents the good majority who have more or less similar nationalist views. There is, however, one great danger from which it should protect itself, if it is to remain the spokesman of the student-mind—it is the danger of lending itself to external influences to be used to further the interests of external political groups and cliques. I have noted that a resolution recognizing this danger has been recently adopted by the I.S.C. But what matters is not so much the passing of the resolution as the extent to which the spirit of the resolution is respected and acted up to. I see Students Congress members getting themselves entangled in political controversies of a purely provincial nature. If the Students Congress interferes in controversial politics, it will rapidly lose its standing and prestige and go into oblivion like

other student organizations in the past.

* * *

Intolerance has, in the recent past, become a widely respected virtue in politics, especially in the South. I remember a great leader of a great movement once saying that intolerance is the greatest enemy of any nation-wide effort. Nothing at all is gained by violence in thought—much less by violence in the expression of one's differences with others. Probably the best part of I.S.C. energy is spent in campaigning against the A.I.S.F. The two organisations are frequently engaged in violent campaigns of mutual vilification and in bitter controversies reminding one of the *Blue-Buff* battles in the *Pickwick Papers*. There may be differences of opinion, but on that score the I.S.C. cannot brand the A.I.S.F. as unpatriotic. The A.I.S.F. also has to teach the I.S.C. many things—such as, for example, organizational skill and sincere and dogged methods of working. The A.I.S.F. is very energetic, but it does not command any considerable allegiance from the

students. For, when idealism is necessary, the leaders of the A.I.S.F. tend to become ultra-practical and when practical action is necessary they become ultra-idealistic, with the result that they stand to lose at both ends. All the same, it cannot be ignored and does influence the currents of the student movement.

* * *

As students we should primarily attend to the work of equipping ourselves mentally and in other ways for the tasks of life. We should learn to do something definite and constructive, and one such constructive act will be worth more than a hundred resolutions embodying our views on domestic, national and international questions. If we do not do anything constructive but merely mouth fashionable slogans or make fashionable parades of verbal zest for revolution, it will simply mean that we have not yet learnt to think. Ultimately, the only question that the student has to answer satisfactorily if he is to be a valuable factor in national life is, "Does the student think?"

ICH D EIN—Reflections Of The Fair Expert

I know I'm competent to speak
On India and her woes
I saw the TAJ three times last week
I've had a chat with Bose.

I love my Indian friends, I do,
Isn't Nita sweet?
I'm sure she loves me dearly too
And all her pals I meet.

The great Mahatma too, I've seen,
(Indeed he is most quaint!)
I think I know what people mean
When calling him a saint.

Next month will make it one full year
Since to this land I came
In khaki clad, my duties clear
Cut out for war time fame.....

That trip to Kashmere was divine
And Oh! such gorgeous fun
To organize the FETE and FAIR
To aid us fight the Hun.

Midst Kashmere's beauty first I knew
That Peter really cared
And all my dreams of love came true
When wedlock he declared.

So when the sixty-one long days
Of leave "at home" were mine
I felt most lonely in all ways
(Though flying was divine).

Now back in India here I am
And life here DOES feel good
There's so much "WORK" each day to cram
And so much lovely food.....

How will these poor natives live
In safe internal peace
If now the War Department give
My Peter and me release?

The Muslims and the Hindus will
Most surely stab each other
And Christian, Sikh and Parsi kill
Their helpless Pariah brother.

Thus Peter thinks we BOTH must stay
And help this country win
A peace that's safe from neighbour's prey
And safe from Joe Stalin.....

Can we just leave these wretched blokes
To perish in the strife?
Can we desert our subject folks
With danger to their life?

They have no cloth, they have no food,
Of famine they are sure
T'is we must show them how they could
Obtain a lasting cure

For this and every other ill
And teach them most of all
Their dearest dreams how best fulfil
In tune with freedom's call.

To be a great and happy nation
Strong and rich and free.....
By sending one more DELEGATION
Flying across the sea.

* * *

Dear India, here's to you good cheer
With all my heart.....and head
While "SERVING" you we have no fear
For our butter.....and for bread.

—MARY JANE.

THE WEEK ABROAD

A Survey of Foreign Affairs

A typical flare up of international distrusts, not free from a touch of melodrama, has been provided by the sensational allegations against Soviet spies of attempts to steal the secret of the atom bomb. There are many curious features about the 'incident' which support the view that the whole thing is a 'put up job'. The alleged leakage is said to have occurred nine months ago; that it was diplomatically dealt with by the parties concerned, and that the resuscitation of it at the present juncture was inspired by ulterior political motives. The Soviet Press has gone to the extent of connecting the spy-hunt with the discomfiture of British spokesmen during the recent meetings of the U. N. O. There is a good deal of plausibility in this line of argument; for Britain occupied the dock far longer than was the lot of any other country during the sittings of the U.N.O. To divert public attention from it, specially as it has led to other embarrassing situations for the empire all over the world, might seem an easy way of recovering something of the lost prestige.

The Commons debated British foreign policy as a kind of tonic to offset the depressing effects of the U.N.O. debates. There was a touching unanimity of feeling and thought concerning the indispensability of the British Empire for the stability and happiness of the world as a whole. That the imperialist's pet argument should have found expression from the representative of Labour is an irony of the present for which Labour among others will have to pay its own share of the price! Since Mr. Eden and Mr. Macmillan found their opinions expressed with such refreshing forthrightness, the question of winding up the Conservative Party as the

superfluous fifth wheel to the imperial chariot might well engage the attention of the Tories.

Incidentally, Mr. Bevin achieved a new effect by wondering with simulated innocence what issues were likely to drive Russia and Britain to war with each other. The answer to this is that if they two really agreed on any important question, it is difficult to account for the war of nerves which each is promoting against the other. On the question of fact, do their interests not clash in the Middle East no less than in the Far East; and do they not suffer from unbridgeable ideological differences? Are they not now furiously striving for the mastery of the European Continent—over the prostrate bodies of friends and foes alike? Is it not in short power politics, or the carving out of spheres of influence in the blessed name of security? Where else can these competitive notions lead except to war or a state of war, sooner or later?

Disturbances in Egypt reached a climax under the stimulus of students who seem (in Egypt at least) to play the part of an unofficial, adolescent Praetorian Guard; for they have been the barometer to register Egypt's unpredictable political weather. The willingness of Britain to negotiate a new peace treaty having been publicly announced, we confess our inability to see the necessity for queering the pitch in the manner it is being done in riots and disorders. What should be used as an *ultima ratio* is being dissipated on puerile pretexts; the effect of it is likely to be that when the time for action does arrive, it may find the mass exhausted of its sanctions, and breaking down utterly at the testing time.

ON THE CENSORSHIP

Certain recent occurrences have driven me to ponder again over the implications of what has been one of the most ancient instruments of policy. I mean this censorship business. It is an old adage that truth is the first casualty to suffer in a war. This does not however mean that we cherish that virtue with special zeal or tenderness in times of peace! My own view is that the passion for truth is an obsession with a minority who have to fight all round the compass to vindicate it and themselves. Among them I give a high place to the unfed journalist who reacts to censorship as does the seasoned war-horse to the sound of the trumpet!

The simplest method of suppressing the truth is to shout at one's loudest. Nowadays, what with the wireless added to more ancient methods of mass propaganda from the Press, the pulpit and the platform, there is such a lot of noise, figuratively speaking, that thought and even the power of thought are debilitated or deadened.

Everybody knows that truth cannot be permanently hid or destroyed. What we try to do therefore is to hand it over to the censor for safe custody during an emergency. In due course, it may turn up like the bad ha'penny; but then nobody minds it. For there is an important difference between the truth that is news and the truth that is history. The former engages our emotions while the latter strives for a precarious foot-hold in an usually over-crowded memory. 'Queen Anne is dead'—we say to indicate anything particularly insipid. But even that was burning, red-hot news for a day; and because he did not get it in time, the Pretender not only lost a throne but allowed himself to be written down for all time in history. So will it be with the atom bomb as soon as its secret is mastered by another nation.

Though all of us dislike the censorship for *a priori* reasons, we

insist on preserving it for our own private comfort or satisfaction. Public opinion—that curious disembodied Moloch of modern journalism—is supposed to dictate to editors and newspaper owners a shifting scale of preferences and aversions which they are supposed thereafter to reflect faithfully. There is thus developed a new kind of *lese-majeste* which results in blasting individual reputations without the customary formalities of judicial procedure!

Under cover of denouncing censorship, what we demand is a free field for our unbridled curiosity to range at will, or to reduce our betters to our level. Democracies are expert in this art, for it was the purest democracy in the world—that of ancient Greece—that also devised Ostracism as a political weapon. During the war years, it used to be repeated *ad nauseum* that the Germans were prevented from knowing the truth by Goebbels' propaganda; but the suppressions that went on on our own side, if collected to-day, would amount to a biting commentary on our (alleged) love of truth. It is an unfounded idea that democracies encourage a maximum diffusion of opinion; it is true rather of the opinion that perverts rather than reflects truth. Only last week, a correspondent writing in the columns of this weekly exposed the pretensions of America—the arsenal of democracy—to lead the crusade in favour of a Free Press.

But the censorship as an institution is as old as civilisation itself. It has been devised as much in the interests of the few as of those of the many. We know the common saying that truth hurts; it hurts all those who are unfit to receive it—which means the majority of us of course! It is in pursuance of this idea that we have some sort of censorship worked into every system of government. Ministers are administered, among other oaths, that

of secrecy before they enter on the discharge of their duties. In its earliest form, we find censorship in the sphere of religion. The earliest 'sages' could not have known much more than the multiplication table; but even that quantum of learning might well have been considered inflammatory in the estimation of the many steeped in primordial ignorance! Hence it is not to be wondered at if the preachers of religion exercised their calling with the aid of a rigid censorship. Many of these old-world ideas still cling to us in the taboos concerning the acquisition of esoteric lore by all and sundry. The Vedas are not to be chanted everywhere or by everybody; even in these days when they can be bought in books, they are as incomprehensible as in the olden days—for the 'know-how' of them—the way of reciting them or of putting them to their original or declared uses is still a dead secret! The Bible was long kept locked up in a 'dead' language, ostensibly for the good of the faithful. The Catholic Church administers a system of censorship which is both comprehensive and final; and yet no pious Catholic would dream of pitting himself against the accumulated wisdom of the Pope, or claim the right of private judgment for himself as against his spiritual leaders. In the great majority of cases, it is far more to the point to know what to do than what to think. According to Galsworthy, the English have no interest in truth in the abstract, but only care for forms of it which have stood the test of time—like their Church, their State, their cricket and their racing! The more perfect a censorship, the more perfectly does it discharge the twin functions of helping the people to do what they should and preventing them from thinking about things they shouldn't think about!

All organised Governments are a species of censorship on the political plane, and we submit to them in the cheerful belief that they are for our own good. When that belief is sapped, the Government which is based on it topples to the

ground with a momentum in direct proportion to the violence of the disillusionment. For the public opinion which is deified by the philosopher and the demagogue for different reasons is like the djinn in the Arabian Nights—you are safe from destruction so long as you keep it engaged in some task or other. When you impose idleness on it, it turns round and rends you!

The ancient Romans created an office for the censorship of morals. It marked an interesting stage in the separation of the Church from the State. The office carried with it sanctions of many kinds—the venerable character of the incumbent, the force of public opinion and the penal code of the land. Refinement of manners or of social behaviour has also been promoted by censorship exerted unofficially. The loud-swearing, fox-hunting, beer-drinking short-tempered squire of eighteenth century rural England was censored out of existence by social Hitlers like Beau Nash and creative artists like Fielding.

On the other hand, there is a whole body of casuistical literature encouraged by the Catholic Church, and reminiscent of the subtleties of our own Dharma Sastras which discuss with interminable zest the problem of when a lie is more meritorious than a falsehood and a truth worse than a murder!

From all of which, it is clear that mankind should be spared as much of the truth as possible. Unhappily this has been appreciated only by the adventurous careerist so far. The Mahatma ensured the failure of his life-mission in advance when he tacked on to his banner two such unfashionable virtues as Non-violence and Truth! We must throw overboard another hoary old proverb—that which tells us to speak the truth and shame the devil. As modern philosophy has conclusively disproved the existence of the devil, the first and last incentive to speak the truth disappears. A new slogan seems called for. What about this one: 'Don't speak the truth—for you'd be giving away your case!'—P. M.



This section is offered to readers for free discussion on subjects of interest to them. Letters should be brief and typewritten.

Pakistan

A brief survey shows that the supporters of Pakistan are found only among the Muslims while all other communities and even some Muslims oppose it. By "communities" is meant the leaders who are supposed to represent them. Whether this claim is true or not, the present elections cannot decide. Even the introduction of adult franchise can be of no use in this respect. This is because the average Indian has no working knowledge of the political problems of India. He will therefore be influenced by other forces when casting his vote.

What is therefore necessary is to educate him in Indian politics, stating all sides of every question clearly and impartially. Then he should be asked to choose.

The Pakistan State has been shown not to be self-sufficient in the matter of defence. No leader who either knows this himself or has been warned of it by others, should lead millions to danger. If the people are informed of the dangers and also the benefits of Pakistan, they may choose or reject it, placing the general weal and happiness as their aim. A settlement upon the Pakistan question should be postponed and an impartial propaganda about its merits and defects should be the first task undertaken.

T. R. THIRUVENGADAM.

The Enigma in Education

"Whither, education?" is the enigma of the modern world. There was a time when education was the passport to a decent living, when education gave to its possessor 'bread and butter', but the times

have changed. No longer can we apply the pragmatic test of usefulness. Life is more than meat and drink.

Some said that education attempts to develop all the latent powers of the individual harmoniously but in practice it has failed to do so.

Strange to say, the remedy is being prescribed in India itself. Was it not Mahatma Gandhi who said that truth and purity should be the goal of life? Let education have for its aim the development of character born out of truth and purity. As Herbart, the great educationist of Germany had said, the rational and human tendency should dominate over the passionate and brutal. Let education aim at this.

Then only the enigma in education will be solved.

K. S. GANGOLLI

Delayed Telegrams

Sometime ago one of my drivers came to me in trouble. Over a long period he had received no correspondence from his parents and asked me to send a telegram. Through the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Association a wire was sent to my driver's house in Patiala. I was promised a reply within two days. Eighteen days passed before the reply was received. Eighteen days of unnecessary anxiety! Now that the war is over the necessity for priority to the military in the despatch of telegrams no longer exists. Civilians have a right to expect better consideration from the inland telegraph system.

WILLIAMS

Criterion for Leadership

In your centre-page article in the first issue of "SWATANTRA" you had occasion to refer to factors of a personal kind which have contributed not a little to putting Congress affairs in Madras in a sorry mess. You were obviously referring to people who do not like C. R.'s leadership. If C. R. is still liked by the majority of the people of Tamilnad, what can a Kamaraj, a Bhaktavatsalam or a Mu-thuram do against him? On the other hand, if he has not the confidence of the masses of Tamilnad, how can anyone help it?

In the course of your article, you tried to evaluate the success or otherwise of Kamaraj Nadar's future parliamentary career. It is quite irrelevant, and becomes more so, to consider that question, especially in view of the recent resignation of Kamaraj Nadar from the parliamentary board and his statement in that connection avowing his complete lack of interest in the Congress parliamentary programme.

Your main argument in favour of C. R.'s leadership seems to be his intelligence and his administrative capacity—his brains chiefly, which in your opinion the province can ill-afford to manage without. If brilliance, personality and perhaps past services are the criterion for parliamentary leadership, a man like Sir C. R. Reddi is undoubtedly more than a match for anyone in the province. On that criterion, it cannot be easily explained why Churchill was replaced by Attlee who is by far his inferior in personal capacity. I hope England is a democracy and C. R. is an admirer of the British variety of democratic government.

D. ANJANEYULU.

The Will to Live

"There is no destiny but what we ourselves determine. God places all the powers of the universe at our disposal and the handle by which we use them to construct our fate has been and is and always shall be our own individual will." It is strange that a people who have this for their philosophy should lack the will to live. The spirit in us seems dead. It is a living death that most of us lead.

The problem is one worthy of a serious and sincere attempt at solving. The politician would blame our political status and the ignorant our philosophy. Of course a starving people can hardly have the strength to will.

There is clearly visible in the educated and the uneducated as well a resignation quite unnatural and premature. It sits heavy on them and breeds an indolence that blights the growing spirit. That indolence in its turn creates an indifference equally baneful. The result is a certain narrowness of outlook and a selfishness which smacks of ill-breeding. One often sadly misses that intense desire to live so natural to a healthy life.

If things look a little bright to-day it is more due to the extraordinary will and unceasing effort of certain politicians. The enthusiasm they kindle may not live once the goal is reached, and our general habitual indifference, the worst enemy of a growing State, will remain untouched.

What is it that has killed the man in us and left us so weak and spiritless? It is time we take serious notice of the problem. The pleasant but difficult task of governing ourselves, awaits us. We must extract the best out of an independent life. Otherwise the charm of independence must remain for ever unknown to us.

M. PADMANABHAN.

Rationing Plan Should Be Changed

The method adopted at present in the Cheyyar Taluk (N. Arcot) and I dare say elsewhere for procurement of paddy and distribution of rice involves control by monopolistic trade agencies at taluk headquarters. The chief defect in the working of the rationing scheme is that it expects very little of the people, especially agriculturists by way of working in a co-operative spirit with the Government. The procurement of grains from villages and stocking them at the taluk headquarters results in the stocking of the grains (good, bad, indifferent) in lump by the monopolist, supplying of boiled rice where raw rice is in demand, and supplying of raw rice where boiled rice is wanted! The way to secure the co-operation of the people, not only in procurement but in the distribution of rice and the supply of rice bran to avert cattle food famine, and to avoid cartage and other charges and to keep down the price of rice distributed, lies in treating each village as a unit, instead of each family as at present. I suggest the formation of an *ad hoc* committee of respectable landholders for procurement with the help of Government agency and for arranging distribution.

Decentralization should be the keynote of the policy of distribution and rationing. The co-operative movement would not have been the success it has so far been, if the district central banks had not been formed for procurement of capital, and if they had not distributed credit to ryots through village organizations. It would have proved disastrous if the whole credit distribution had been allowed to be undertaken direct by the Madras Central Bank. It is not yet too late to change the plan of work. The Government will be successful in averting a crisis if they take the people into their confidence and teach them to co-operate in a healthy way in their own interests. The village public will then watch carefully the misdeeds, if any, of their committee members. I would also strongly advocate procurement of rice from the landholders instead of paddy, shoving the responsibility to convert paddy into rice, on the village people.

A. VEDACHALAM.

Gandhiji's English

It is a pity that Mr. T. Prakasam has rushed to the Press demanding that Gandhiji should make amends for the alleged characterisation of the Tamil Nad Congress Committee as a "clique". A careful reading of the passage will show that Gandhiji has not called the Tamil Nad Congress Committee a clique, but only stated that the official Tamil Nad Congress has been influenced by the views of a "clique" as against those of the masses. Gandhiji, a master of the English language, has chosen proper phraseology to express his views. Mr. Prakasam, the Andhra leader, should not enter into partisanship in the affairs of Tamil Nadu to the extent of misinterpreting Gandhiji who has no amends to make.

R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,
Headmaster, Sarva Jana High School,
Peelamedu.

'Swatantra'

The name given to the latest infant born in the world of Journalism happens to be the 723rd attribute of the Sri Mata—the mother of the Universe, according to Sri Vidya better known as Sri Lalita Sahasranama.

Its meaning, according to orthodox commentaries is: One who creates without dependence on instruments or other means; one to whom all the Tantras belong; one in whom the

mutual dependence of Parvati and Paramasiva is implicit. And the commentator adds as a final meaning the significant gloss: Swatantra—the name of a book.

I do not know where to get at that book; but till then, I am willing to make do with Swatantra as edited by you.

Only one point in doubt which I should like pundits to resolve. Should the term be spelt

Swatantra or Svatantra?

The matter is of importance because the spelling has a more intimate bearing on pronunciation in Sanskrit than in any other language.

N. D.

The Boy Scout Movement

Some Indians are still far from having a proper understanding of the Boy Scout movement. They think that a sort of military training is given to the Scouts. This is a wrong notion. Training for leadership is given by the Boy Scout organization. Brotherhood, self-respect, diligent understanding and individual respect towards elders and youngsters alike are expected of Boy Scouts. A Boy Scout is imbued with a sense of duty to himself, to his fellowmen and to his country. To maintain discipline and order in free India, Boy Scout training, given at an early age, is of great value. The preciousness of Boy Scout Associations must be understood by all educated people, and they should strive to see that the young get the fullest benefit out of them.

V. RADHAKRISHNA.

C. R.—Prakasam Agreement

Your proposed solution of a patriotic agreement between C. R. and Prakasam is very good. But answer the following question. I am sure your answer will be unbiassed and impartial without the least consideration for personalities as you have already said that the agreement to be reached should be a patriotic one. C. R. was given the Premiership in the first Congress Ministry. Will it not be a patriotic agreement if Prakasam is Premier now and C. R. a Minister? I am sure Andhra will have no objection to this. I agree that a Cabinet to be formed by the Congress without C. R. or Prakasam or both will be shaky.

P. G. KRISHNAMURTHI.

C. R.'s decision to leave the scene makes any answer to the question raised unnecessary.—Ed. S.

BOOKS

Future Prospects of War Industries

By R. Balakrishna, M.A., Ph. D., (Lond.), Reader in Economics, University of Madras. (Rochouse & Sons, Ltd., Madras. As. 12.)

The war-expanded industries, Dr. R. Balakrishna points out in this booklet of 46 pages, have a big contribution to make to the success of the reconstruction plans in the country, "aiming at targets at giddy heights". He agrees that the post-war transitional period may prove to be "stormy weather" for these industries and advocates their re-adjustment to the new conditions, in stages "laid down and operated by the Central Government."

Christianity: Its Economy and Way of Life. By J. C. Kumarappa.

(Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Price Re. 1-8)

This book is a Gandhian reading of the eternal concepts of Christianity. The author draws a vivid picture of the gruesome state of the present world, enticed by Mammon. He urges that the establishment of 'peace on earth and goodwill among men' is the real social connotation of the spiritual belief in the Kingdom of God.

Select passages from the Gospels are quoted, and interpreted in such a way as to emphasise the cosmopolitan and universal application of the truths embedded therein. The book is a radical and valuable contribution to modern Christian thought.

Rural Bengal in Ruins. By Bhowani Sen.

(People's Publishing House, Bombay. Price 8 Annas.)

Forty pages crammed with facts. Forty pages of tragedy. This book tells the sad story of Bengal and Bhowani Sen had been through it, and what is more, he took the trouble to make a proper investigation of the problem and analyse the causes. Here are some of

the findings: "According to official records the famine of '43 affected a third of the people. The bulk of those who perished came from the peasants and agricultural labourers. Exploitation by the imperialistic forces and the zemindari system has so impoverished the peasants that large numbers of them were forced to buy their food in the market. Large numbers had to sell their cattle as well and the inevitable followed. A kisan yoking his son or brother to the plough was certainly no novelty. Starvation was so intense that the sense of poverty, family, religion, and society all disintegrated and mother sold son and husband wife. Even now there are some children passed from hand to hand for sale and purchase like a commodity. And through it all venereal disease and black markets flourished, and the corrupt bureaucracy sheltered the black marketeers".

A sordid tale indeed, nevertheless true. The author, who has suggested ways and means of overcoming the situation, has to be congratulated on his work. The book should be read by all.

Over the Ashes. By Maung Thein Pe.

(People's Publishing House, Bombay. Price 12 Annas.)

In this three-act play Maung Thein Pe depicts the plight of the Burmese people during the Japanese occupation. The author is a Burman and was, on the eve of the Japanese invasion, leader for Upper Burma of the National Revolutionary Party which co-operated with the Japs. Soon he realised his mistake, escaped into India and now he is a member of the Communist Party. He depicts the grim facts of his experience in the form of a play—a very effective method.

A young woman brutally treated by the Japanese soldiers, her parents, the local Japanese industrialist, a young Japanese officer from the university and the opportunist politician are all cleverly depicted in the play. How, after suffering intensely at the hands of the invaders, the Burmese people organised themselves and eventually succeeded in thwarting the plans of the enemy, is brought out in the story.

FOURTH ESTATE

By Manjeri S. Isvaran

Theirs is the pen, not the rifle or sword,
Of the soldiers of the Fourth Estate;
They dip it in nectar, they dip it in acid,
Peremptory, persuasive, placid—
Oh, they dip it in gall
In freedom's call—
The people's most eloquent tongue—
For Imperial eyes to read
And take heed
As the writing on the wall;
Stain'd though with ink and dull'd by lead,
Flaming red,
Of their flesh and blood is the Potent Word,
Proclaim'd from the nation's democratic rung.

Without treason
They can reason
With minister and monarch;
And they can turn
Their pen and burn
—Igniting the spark,
As with the bullet humming hot,
Dictator and despot.

Swift as the beams of the sun,
Swift as carrier-pigeons, swift
Their thoughts dash,
From the world's corners, flash
To melt the ore of ignorance,
And fill each rift
With hectic news!
Authentic views!

Knowing what these can do,
Let no vested rights, the invested few,
Bribe or control
Liberty's Soul!

Poverty may chill,
But can Capital kill.
And Censorship still
The voice of the soldiers of the Fourth Estate?

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Is famous for his aerial trips
In the first of which he showed a flair
For fraternising with the Russian (bug) bear!
Next he came to India
But returned without crossing the Vindya!—
For in the role of a Joker
He played a game of poker—
And just as we thought we had him
The Cabinet bade him
Wind up the Show
With a view to maintain the status quo!

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