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SWATANTRA

EDITOR: KHASA SUBBA RAU

*5-2-48
Venkatesh*



IN ALL CLIMES AT ALL TIMES

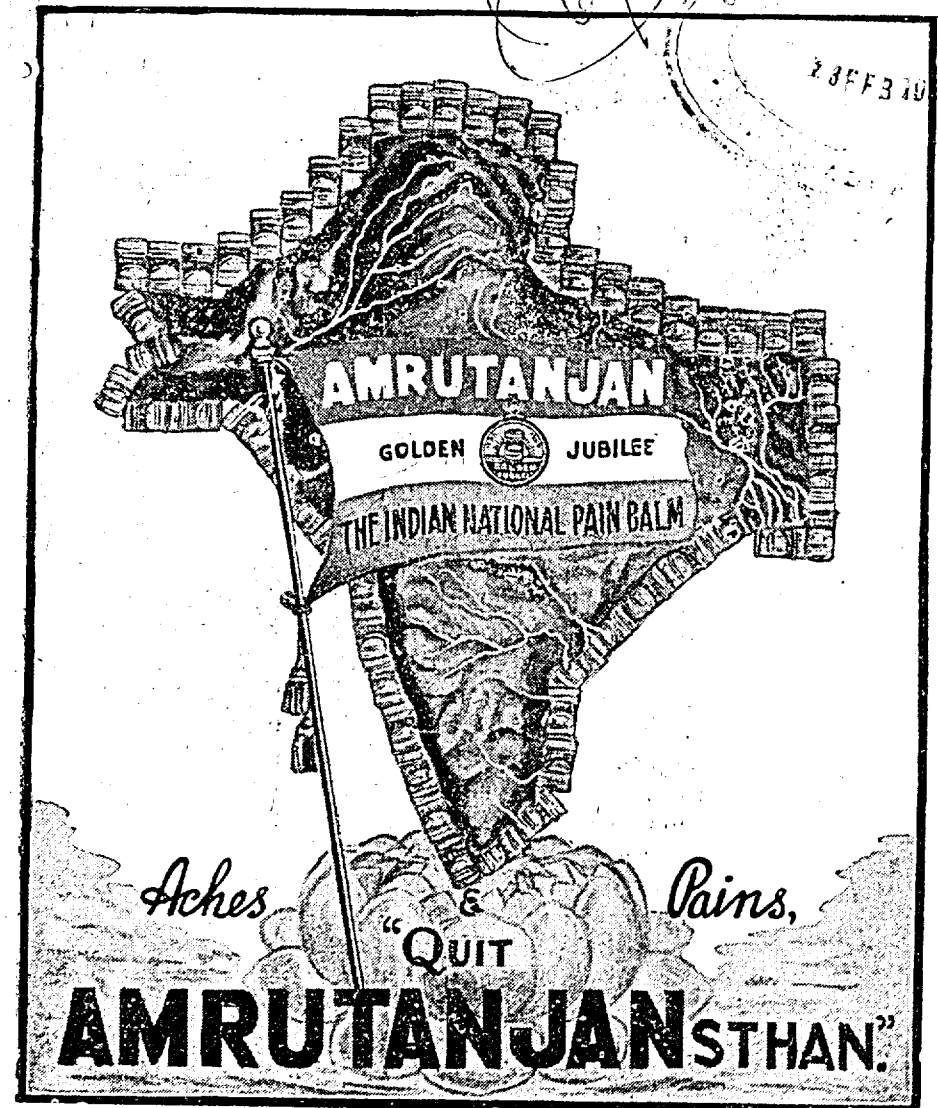
**FOR COUGHS
And COLDS**

Rely on

SIROLIN

"ROCHE"

USED ALL OVER THE WORLD



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and eventually of
The One World



FARMER AND WEAVER

by V. SARANATHAN, M.A.

IMMORTAL Gandhi, shall still without fear,
Plough six hundred thousand villages alone;
Farmer and weaver, poet of one tone,
Diver for one embedded pearl, God's tear,
At world's heart, for man let blood with his own spear.
He ploughs for wisdom and two meals for one,
For mud-hut-dwellers whose children moan;
Whispers "Plough thou the rock until it bear."

And the end! Still he weaves his single web,
Waxes and wanes like yon persistent moon
Who yet communicates one candidness.
The poor behind him walk, ask for no boon
Save that his pilgrim smile a moment bless
Their gaze, while tides of old thought rise and ebb.

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SWATANTRA

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ISSUED
WEEKLY

CONGRESS AND THE R. S. 'S.

VERY energetic measures are being taken by the Government of India to maintain peace. What appeared to be at first the criminal act of an individual madman was discovered later to be part of a deep conspiracy for the murder of the top Congress leaders running the administration. Only Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel stand today between the people and utter chaos. There is none else capable of standing on a national platform and commanding a hearing from the people as a whole. In the misery of their bereavement over the death of the Mahatma, the sentiment of the masses towards the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister has become charged with enhanced respect and affection and anxious solicitude for their safety. Public opinion has therefore never been so uncritical as now of administrative measures conceived for the public safety. This affords an atmosphere of the maximum latitude for the Government to meet the crisis caused by the Mahatma's death with effective executive action without incurring the displeasure of public opinion normally greeting every special exercise of emergency power in excess of the routine jurisdiction of magistrates and courts. The preservation of this atmosphere is an asset of first-rate political importance. If it is lost, it means

public goodwill for Government's defensive measures against secret plotters is lost too, and thereafter such measures will become coloured with autocracy and dictatorship and will have to be enforced in defiance of public opinion, instead of with its cordial approval.

Power must be tempered with wisdom and restraint if its use for the public good is to pass muster without discontent and resistance. We are constrained to say that a good part of the safety measures taken within the past fortnight has been wholly lacking in balance. Instead of adding to the stock of popular goodwill for the Government they have been squandering it most unwisely. The impression produced by the official announcement that there were no differences destructive of the unity of Government between its two outstanding leaders, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, was marred by the rider that it was dishonourable to presume the existence of such differences. A stricture like this practically convicts all but a very few in the country of dishonourableness, since the view that the Pandit and the Sardar were not pulling well together was the result, not of any unauthorised inference, but of patent discordance in content between their own public utterances. This discordance had gone so far that it became actually the staple of discussion in bazars

and buses. The two distinguished leaders should have pledged themselves to overcome their differences in the national interest, instead of covering them with disavowals at the cost of others that serve no purpose except causing doubt and confusion.

Confusion is also evident in the manner in which the police have been allowed to use their power to the hurt of the liberties of many entitled to be left in peace. In the case of an organisation like the R.S.S., the Government are bound to ban it if, in the light of the information at their disposal, they feel that it is necessary to do so for the sake of public safety. But it has to be remembered that the general public has no access to private information within the knowledge of high-placed administrators. Even Sardar Patel, with all the sources of information at his command as Deputy Prime Minister, said at Lucknow on January 6, only three weeks before the assassination, that "the R.S.S. men are not thieves and dacoits. They are patriots who love their country." More. The Sardar actually warned "those in the Congress who are in power" against imagining that "by virtue of their authority they will be able to crush the R.S.S." "You cannot crush an organisation by using the *danda*," he said. "The *danda* is meant for thieves and dacoits."

In view of the fact that even one like Sardar Patel, with all his experience and incomparable access to information of all kinds, was himself misled and misled others about the character of the R.S.S., the least that administrative fairness now demands is that none should be punished for having been influenced by the plaudits of the Sardar in favour of the R.S.S., or for having failed to exercise sounder judgment as to its character than he did. If ever there is a case for

separating innocent folly from punishable complicity in criminal action, it is in the case of the R.S.S. So long as the Sardar himself who so openly blessed the R.S.S. continues in his exalted position, it is unreasonable that the heavy hand of executive wrath should be brought down on the head of lesser persons inveigled into membership of the R.S.S. on the ground of such membership alone, without positive proof of actual direct responsibility for offences deserving to be dealt with sternly. Unfortunately this sort of unreasonableness is just what the administration has now sunk into. A regular orgy of arrests would seem to have become the pastime of the police. The recklessness of their action is indicated in the large number of releases that have followed in the wake of the arrests. These releases are welcome condonations of initial unwarranted injury caused to obviously innocent citizens. But they tend to shatter public confidence in the competence of the authorities for sane and just action. They provide a measure of the facility with which it is possible for the supposed guardians of peace to utilise the present crisis as an opportunity for the harassment of people disliked by them.

As an item of major policy, the present drive against communal organisations is worthy of unstinted support from all patriotic people who must naturally be desirous of rearing our new found freedom on stable foundations. There can be no half-hearted crusade against communalism. Along with the R.S.S. should be banned all other similar organisations promoting from other camps the same undesirable spirit of communalism. Avowedly communal organisations are not the sole repositories of the communal spirit. The poison of communalism has spread to ostentatiously non-communal organisations, and the Congress itself has not been immune from the influence, and in

some regions even the control of rank communalists who simply use its membership as a ladder for their own ends. The purge of proved communalists from responsible posts in Congress institutions is therefore as worthy of urgent attention as the elimination of openly conducted communal organisations from the political arena. It is gratifying that the Congress Working Committee should have realised at last, under the impetus of the heart-searching provoked by the assassination, some measure of this urgency—for in the most important of their resolutions of last week they speak of the duty which devolves upon the Congress of "setting its own house in order." They call upon Congressmen "to purify the organisation even at the risk of shrinkage of the extent of Congress membership." They warn

Congressmen in power that possession of power should make them sober and humble—"they should realise their responsibility and turn themselves into fit servants of the people." If these words of the Working Committee resolution are to lead to the desired objective of re-establishing the standards which Gandhiji had set for the Congress, there should be national direction from the top for the strict observance of non-communal policies in faithful accord with the true Congress creed by all Congress organisations and Governments. Uncongenial persons averse to the loyal execution of such policies should have no place in the Congress, and the more important the positions they hold, the greater the need for the rescue of the Congress from their contaminating influence.

Sotto Voce

Lost Caste



THERE is in New York a street "famed in song and story" under the name of the Bowery. It has fallen on evil days. A campaign was recently set on foot to change the name because it had "become associated with low class people." But *The Times* reports that this has now been abandoned. By a vote of 65 to 64 its merchants have decided to improve the character of the street and leave its name intact. A reprieve is a reprieve even if it has been gained by a majority of one and the Bowery may yet hope to become a respectable address again, as well as a famous one.

It is not quite clear from the report who began the agitation for changing a name that had gathered ancient dust. It could hardly be the merchants. For that kind of courage is rare; even rarer is honesty in these matters. An ancestor of mine, scion of a long line of scholars who was himself unlettered, discarded an honorific which was a family heritage. "Imagine my calling myself Sastri, I who can barely scratch my own name! It would be an insult to my forbears," he used to say. Tuft-hunters have little use for that devastating kind of truth.

Fear, the primitive impulse to save your own hide at any cost, is far more powerful than snobbery as an agent in bringing about spectacular renunciations. Thus, the men who occupy official positions in the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S.S. are, with negligible exceptions, in a blue funk today. They are falling over one another in their haste to disown their past—in the pathetic faith that it would save them from arrest and summary detention. It was as if the prosperous burghers of the Bowery suddenly discovered—when the cops were interrogating the “low-class people” next door—that the Bowery was not the right name of their street at all. They could produce any number of old parchments to show you that the original Dutch name was *bouwerie* which meant “a farm”!

“It was not *this* Mahasabha that I joined,” says one with a gesture of unutterable horror, as if he were recoiling from a hooded serpent. “I thought the R.S.S.S. was keen on physical culture,” says another, like one waking from a long trance. And they vie with each other and with the Congress in convicting the organisations they so energetically repudiate of the abominable crime of Mahatmicide. It is to be hoped—for the sake of our reputation for sanity in the outside world—that the police and the judiciary have not similarly made up their minds.

The Congress is an outstanding example of the magic of names in our politics. Between the Congress of 1948 and the Congress of 1887 there is nothing in common except the name. Its claim to be regarded as the pattern of a non-communal secular democracy is about as sustainable as that triple misnomer, the Holy Roman Empire. The favourite game of orthodox Congressmen in Madras is Brahman-baiting; compared with them the old Justices

were enthusiastic Brahmanophiles. And the ballyhoo we have been treated to during the last seven days should suffice to convince the most confirmed idealist that if the Mahatma does not achieve the posthumous distinction that he most dreaded—deification as an avatar—the fault will not be that of his new and vociferous admirers.

As for democracy, the power of human delusion is such that there were no doubt contemporaries of Montagu and Capulet who regarded them, both as good democrats. The Congress, in its “war to end war”, is following in the footsteps of the Great Democracies. If in the process it finds it necessary to jettison democracy (with a small d) it will have little difficulty in reconciling itself to the thought that the price of greatness must be paid. The Mahatma might have said that hate and violence are not put down by *lettres de cachet*: it is the Grand Inquisitor who has the last word.

The figureheads of the Mahasabha and the R.S.S.S. may confess to all the sins in the calendar if it can procure them personal immunity. But that will no more eliminate “communalism” than Gandhiji’s life-long preaching of *ahimsa* was able to convert the Congress to that creed. And look at the strange companions that the Congress, in its new role of circus master, cracking the whip, has attracted to itself. The Communists, who out Heroded Herod in supporting Pakistan and the “two-nation” myth, now revolted by the communalism of the Mahasabha. And the Socialists, the young men on a flying trapeze, who in 1942 particularly prided themselves on their vanishing tricks, denounce the R.S.S.S. for its nefarious attachment to secrecy. In the post-Gandhian war for power the first casualty is decency.

VIGHNESWARA.

SIDELIGHTS :

Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned.—CONGREVE.

THE intense discredit into which the R.S.S. has fallen has let loose forces of persecution that betoken anything but proper understanding of the spirit of the great teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Here in Madras, at any rate, official action for public safety has degenerated into a search for scapegoats. Communal ill-will under a guise of righteousness would seem to have been lent in full measure to police authority. There is no rhyme or reason in the generality of the arrests that have been made and are still being made. Some absolutely innocent persons with unblemished records, engaged in work of a highly valuable kind, without the ghost of a chance of their ever being connected in the remotest way with the crime that has convulsed the country, have been dragged into the net of the prevailing persecution. While a drive from the top is going on against communal organisations, the spirit of communalism, enthroned in the seats of power, has been working havoc in the very name of the Congress, on standards of justice and fairplay. This contradiction calls for immediate attention and correction.

The logical consequence of communalism is hatred. If hatred is let loose on the country, we will have bloodshed and no government. For the elimination of hatred, it is necessary that it should cease to pay. The sanction of the Congress which is the ruling power should be forthwith withdrawn from manufacturers of hatred for political ends and no effort should be spared in the integration of our society on lines ensuring equality of treatment under the State to all. The units to be considered are individuals and not groups. In a system of equality of treatment for individuals, the danger is that too many of an advanced group may secure too much advantage and utilise it

communally to the detriment of members of backward groups. The remedy lies in the treatment of every kind of communal partiality in administration as a punishable offence, with special measures for the elimination of backwardness, wherever found, as a primary State responsibility. Merit is not less valuable than money. Just as the wealth of the rich is taxed without reference to community to supply the wherewithal for amenities to the poor, the talent of the meritorious should be utilised, without regard to community, in ways ensuring the general betterment of life for all.

Education, livelihood, scope for the proper exercise of gifts and aptitudes for the attainment of happiness—these are the rights of individuals for the promotion of which Governments exist. To restrict them to some is not the way of providing them to others. The restrictive attitude impoverishes the general stock of benefit available for distribution and hurts the supposed favourites of the system no less than the intended victims. While people fight over a sparse inheritance, opportunities for enhancing its worth through constructive co-operative effort are lost. Development is stemmed through strife.

For releasing for beneficial national welfare forces now running to waste in feeding dissension and hatred, Congress leaders at the Centre should incorporate these cardinal points into the Congress conception of freedom and insist on their being given effect to as a matter of inviolable policy:

There should be a common standard for all in all matters comprised under administration and no system of preferences on a sectional basis should be allowed.

No State recognition should be given to communal denominations.

No communal colour should be given to the elimination of backwardness. In a world dominated by



economic forces, backwardness is synonymous with poverty. The poor of all communities are equally entitled to the benefit of all State schemes for the removal of backwardness, and no invidious distinction on other grounds should be encouraged or allowed.

Every form of offence to human dignity on a communal basis should be made a punishable offence.

The mantle of the Mahatma for inspiring the custodians of our new freedom to right endeavour has fallen on Pandit Nehru. He is a big enough man to rise to the occasion. He is the adored of the masses. His rectitude over fundamental issues is unimpeachable. He is marked out

for educating the mass mind into a consciousness of real national fellowship, lifting it out of the morass of fissiparous factionalism into which the tutelage of rabid communalists is threatening to sink it for ever. The anti-imperialist spirit so necessary for the attainment of freedom must now be followed by the spirit of non-communalism if the freedom won is to be retained and made stable and turned into a power for good commanding the loyalty of all. As the Mahatma was the standard-bearer of the battle against foreign domination, his successor in the leadership of the nation, Pandit Nehru, has to be the standard-bearer of the battle against communalism.—SAKA.

FOR HER



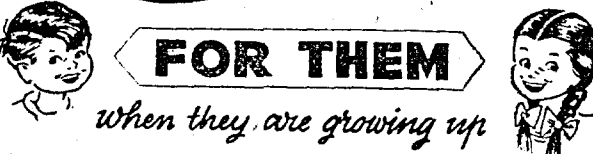
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FOR THEM



when they are growing up

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PATTERN AND UNITY

by S. PARTHASARATHY

THE greatest problem facing our politicians-cum-administrators today is to find a pattern into which our future national life could be woven. They have with some justification but not necessarily rightly rejected the pattern of life under the British administration. These men, the majority of whom belong to the Congress party, have started the hunt without sufficient equipment and without a clear definition of the objectives to be reached. This is only to be expected: for, the Congress politician has been exclusively engaged for over two decades in the struggle for freedom. He has utilised the best part of his life in activities in connection with the struggle and in maintaining his position within the party framework. The march of events and the progress of thought in the several spheres of human activity have left him behind. Strange as it may seem, the Congress politician, while a revolutionary in political methods, is a reactionary in political ideas.

Many of the troubles which we have to face in our province may be traced to this hunt for a pattern. Our local politician-cum-administrator finds the future all too confusing. It requires an intelligent anticipation to evolve a pattern based on the future; but to base the pattern on the past requires only a vivid imagination. We know so little about the past before the pre-British days: but this does not worry him. He can still evolve a chimerical pattern and call it the pattern of national life under the Pandyan, Chola or Vijayanagar dynasties.

Let us examine as an instance the implications that arise from the choice of the pattern under the Pandyan kings as the pattern into which our future should be woven. The court language under the Pandyan kings was Tamil. So, Tamil must be our official language. If the choice of the language is unacceptable to those speaking Telugu,

Canarese, or Malayalam, our answer is: let them form their own provinces. The distracted Malayalee and the Canarese are therefore trying to carve out their own provinces at the expense of some neighbouring States. One might ask what happens to Hindi which has been accepted as the national language. The answer should be: it is always good to talk about Hindi but not to talk in Hindi. The Tamil language has developed on its literary and religious sides only, and has a deficient vocabulary for politics, economics, science or commerce. Undaunted, the politician-cum-administrator seeks to solve the difficulty by proposals to recreate the language in its deficient aspects. Next, the political character of the administration in the Pandyan days was monarchic. The politician-cum-administrator has not the courage to say that the future pattern should be monarchical. But he does not welcome either Socialism or Communism because they appear vague and frightening to him. Probably, he would choose democracy in theory and a despotic premier in practice. The further implications arising from the choice of this pattern are now only vaguely thought of. But the logical outcome of the choice of this pattern would mean the adoption of the Dravidian civilisation whatever it may mean, and a riddance of Aryan and other foreign influences. The cry for Dravidastan as a separate province is the outcome of the search for a pattern. The slogan, "Down with the Brahmin and the Bania" is an attempt to get rid of the Aryan and foreign influences. The growing preference for the worship of Lord Subramanya in his aspect as Muruga is an attempt to evolve a new type of Dravidian religion.

The Congress set out for a free and united India. But fissiparous tendencies prevailed in the end, and India emerged free but mutilated. But even this mutilated India is not being allowed to retain

its unity. Further fissiparous tendencies have been set afoot with the result that we are seeking to achieve unity by dividing the country further into linguistic provinces. What has happened to the unity with which we faced the British? Are we seeking to rediscover it in our language or religion or culture or habits or hates? And, are we sure that we will achieve this unity by dividing ourselves further and fur-

ther, until at last not even groups remain but only individuals? Gandhiji sought it in India as one, nearly found it, before it was allowed to slip away by his trusted lieutenants. The Congressman is now seeking here, there and everywhere, the unity which he does not find in himself. It is time that every right thinking man pledged himself to the task of restoring sanity in this land.

LIFE IN 2,004

Here are some American prophecies about what life will be in 2,004:

From Andrew G. Clauson Jr., president of the Board of Education:

"The schools will come into their own, with teachers, the best brains of every community, dedicated to its greatest trust, the elevation of its children to their highest possible development."

From Paul G. Hoffman, president of Studebaker Corporation:

"Life will be either greatly enriched by the fruitful use of atomic energy or much impoverished by the disastrous employment of the atomic bomb. I predict the first condition will hold; that there will be a United States of the World and life will have a fullness and richness quite beyond our highest hopes."

From Commissioner Ernest I. Pugmire, national commander of the Salvation Army in the United States:

"I foresee peace and abundance in 2004 because the greed and lust of the twentieth century will have been brought into the open where they can be seen and destroyed. The destruction of these evils began in 1947 with our determined effort to aid the suffering people of Europe."

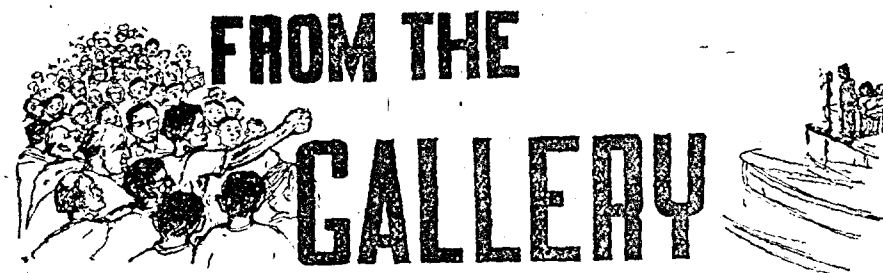
From Dr. James F. Bender, director of the National Institute for Human Relations:

"There will be more divorces than marriages. Twenty-five men out of every 100 will be confirmed bachelors. Polygamy will be socially approved. The tendency for women to become increasingly dominant will be stronger than ever in the history of western civilizations."

From James V. Spadea:

"Women will carry their own little flying machines in jewelled handbags and fly through the air with iridescent wings. Clothes will contain their own air-conditioning units. The great immodesty will be public exposure of eyes. Men and women will dress very much alike. Clothing will be mechanically contrived and electrically controlled."

When we reflect how difficult it is to move or deflect the great machine of society, how impossible to advance the notions of a whole people suddenly to ideal right, we see the wisdom of Solon's remark that no more good must be attempted than the nation can bear.—THOMAS JEFFERSON.



"A chield's amang you taking notes
And, faith, he'll prent it."

I WONDER if there was any sense or sentiment underlying the distribution of the Mahatma's 'ashes' among the various parts of the Union. At the moment, let us by-pass the fundamental question whether such a lot of propagandist dust should have been generated out of these ashes, specially in these days when we are all very enlightened, very advanced and very much emancipated indeed. Nor shall I twit our leaders who have been protesting so much of running a secular government with their odd zeal for transforming a Hindu burial service into a State funeral, and ordering a period of national mourning according to the injunctions of Hindu Smritis. The only people who might or could have protested against these obscurantist tendencies—I mean the Communists and Socialists—are now found either discreetly silent or hallo-ing with the loudest of the crowds. That no time was lost in hurrying through with the funeral was a very courageous decision, as I hope, of Pandit Nehru. Embalming the dead, and arranging for a period in which the dead is to lie in state were quite properly negatived. Here however, Hindu sentiment is modern and rational enough to win the approval of the most modern thinkers.

According to an ancient distich, the sacred rivers of our country include the Indus or Sindhu from which we take our name as a people—thanks to the Arab's inability to pronounce our name properly. It is much to be regretted that the pre-historic cradle of our race

in this land—the waters of the Indus—are not to get a portion of the ashes. It may be true that the Indus is not any more a river of the Indian Union. The Mahatma never accepted the division of India in the sense of disowning any part of it. Indeed, his martyrdom was largely to enforce the impossibility of any enduring 'vivisection' of the country. That being so, it was a short-sighted view of the *status quo* that has led to the exclusion of the Sindhu from carrying a portion of the Mahatma's earthly remains.

The geographical and cultural unity of India was emphasised by our ancients in another manner. There are twelve points from Somnath to Setu where Jyotirlingas were established in token of the victorious spread of the Adwaita doctrine by Sri Sankaracharya. Few of these hoary landmarks figure among the spots chosen by the Union and provincial ministers for depositing the ashes of the Mahatma. Srirangam has less claim than some point nearer Sivasamudram. The Indus might have been chosen nearer its source, as the Brahmaputra has been. Bezwada is not so obvious as Nasik. Sutlej comes in for the apparent reason that it would represent East Punjab.

In short I feel that points in Pakistan should have been chosen if the intention was to gratify immemorial tradition and still throbbing sentiment. If the whole subject had been relegated to a personal or family level, none of these

criticisms would have been appropriate, nor could they have been voiced in public.

With the disappearance of the Mahatma from the earthly scene, there is bound to be a realignment of parties and policies. Present professions of unanimity between the members of the cabinet need not be taken as ruling out a shuffle. The Congress Socialists are already on the war-path; their target is the Sardar. Every group is just now swearing by the Mahatma—even the Communists who hail him as the promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity—an innocuous and non-controversial platform since it commits them to no radical change in their ideology. With all-round exhortations to complete the work of the Mahatma are interspersed complaints, protests and demands for explanation addressed to the Pakistan Government. Kashmir continues to be the mill-stone round our neck,—the 'Serbonian bog' in which, whole armies are tied up, though not sunk, for their misfortune is to fight like the bear tied to a stake with all the mobility and freedom of manoeuvre on the side of the invader. What is the Government's policy on this major issue? And why, since the U.N.O. is making a pudding of all Kashmir problems, should it not be invited to repeat the recipe in the case of Hyderabad? Why should our spokesmen have been so exasperatingly silent about Hyderabad when Sir M. Zafrullah Khan ranged freely from China to Peru?

Alternatively, why not take advantage of the martyrdom of the Mahatma and pull out of Kashmir lock, stock and barrel, handing it over to the U.N.O.; and making arrangements for welcoming the marauders when they overflow the boundaries as they infallibly will? Indeed, there is no end to the string of disquieting questions that confront us. Only a coherent answer is still far to seek.

The outlawry of the R.S.S. has been followed up by the penalising

of the Khaksars and the League Guards. The Davenry Radio has obligingly suggested that some Sikh organisations also are to be outlawed. It was a terrible shock to most people to learn that the R.S.S. was implicated in the plot to kill the Mahatma. In revulsion, many have left it; and it would be no exaggeration to say that the movement would die a galloping death at least in Madras.

The only shady feature of that organisation was its sporting a flag of its own even after August 15, 1947. It is important that not only these organisations should be declared unlawful, but that all flags other than the officially approved flag of the Union should be prohibited. This is a natural corollary of the action already taken, and it is to be hoped that it will be enforced strictly.

I do not know whether the R. S. S. was 'fascist' or 'fanatic' though either charge sounds fantastic to me. But the only fascist indication that I found in news after the Mahatma's murder was an item which declared that with the Mahatma's exit, the stage was now free for the emergence of Netaji Bose, and that he was confidently expected to make his public appearance on the 12th or 13th of this month. I am writing a little in advance of this date, but still write with sceptical contempt. I do not think that Bose is alive, and that even if he were alive and came back, he could rally the masses in the manner suggested.

Talking of fascist revivals, that just staged by Sir Oswald Mosley in London is more portentous than any elsewhere. The Conservatives failed to avert the war, and so lost the first peace election. Labour which won the first peace election has failed to bring plenty which Peace promised. Instead, Sir Stafford Cripps has been exhorting the British public to tighten their belts until there are no more notches to reach. It is in this lugubrious situation that Sir Oswald, like Hitler be-

fore him, has come forward to fish in troubled waters. St. George always killed the Dragon far from home; Sir Oswald must perform the feat among Englishmen themselves. For, he wants to fight Russia—the sooner the better!

The dramatic action taken against the ruler of Alwar and his fire-eating Prime Minister, the redoubtable Dr. Khare is unfortunate only in one respect. It short-circuits the judicial process, and makes a presumption a popular certainty. The R. S. S. has yet to be legally indicted as responsible for the murder of the Mahatma. But the absence of some reticence at high levels may well prove a double-edged weapon. It is no doubt needful for psychological reasons to find a scapegoat, lest inflamed public opinion should get out of hand, as indeed it did in many places. But the trouble with scapegoats is that they enable the criminal to escape.

The Sheriff's meeting to mourn the death of the Mahatma was a surprisingly dull function. The Sheriff dawdled, the Premier fumbled, while the Mayor made a false start. Sir Archibald spoke with brevity and dignity, while Sir Mohammed Usman went all over the place. The most moving speech, if also slightly rhetorical was that of the newly retired Judge of the High court, Mr. N. Chandrasekhara Aiyar. His voice was stentorian, his thoughts had the right blend of feeling and unction, and his style dignified. A meeting which encourages a babel of tongues has a bizarre effect; it was curious though that no Malayalam and Kannada speakers could be found!

Apropos Shaw's remark on Gandhi, a correspondent writes: 'I do not agree with Shaw. It is *not* dangerous to be good; but it is dangerous to be Gandhi.' I hope the neat distinction herein attempted will win the approval of Shaw himself.

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A CHORUS OF PRAISE FROM THE HINDI, ANDHRA, TAMIL & CANARESE STARS.

LALITHA POWAR:—To those who are in search of a best hair tonic I will recommend them to use RITA and I am sure that they will find that our motherland can produce products with excellent merit.

SARDHA JUNNARKAR:—RITA has proved a magic cure for the fall of my hair and it has got wonderful ingredients to give a silken shining to the hair. I can surely say that RITA is a wonderful hair tonic.

K. ISHWARLAL:—RITA has become a habit for my entire family. My friends will surely find RITA as the best hair tonic in the market.

SUSHIL KUMAR:—I have found RITA Hair Tonic very satisfactory in growing my hair. I strongly recommend its use for falling hair and refreshing brain.

JAYANT:—I am very glad to certify that RITA is the finest. It may be tonic for the growth of hair for ladies, but for gentlemen I can say that it is a good hair preservative.

KANNAMBA:—It gives me pleasure to say that RITA has given me an immense satisfaction. It is really efficacious.

PUSHPAVALLI:—Since I began using RITA my hair did not fall. RITA has been very effective in preserving the beauty of my hair. My opinion is that RITA is a very good hair tonic.

SURYAKUMARI:—RITA has a fine smell and keeps its user cool. I have

come to a decision that hereafter I should always use RITA only.

KRISHNAVENI:—RITA is the hair tonic par excellence that prevents falling hair and grows new hair. It is my opinion that RITA is second to none compared to the hair tonics imported from foreign countries.

VASUNDHARA DEVI:—RITA has proved to be a very good hair tonic for the luxurious growth of hair and its protection.

R. PADMA:—I owe the black flowing hair that adds to the beauty of my face to RITA. In a very short time RITA had a wonderful effect on my hair. It has not only made my hair soft and shining but has given it a luxuriant growth. I can with confidence recommend RITA to all those who require hair culture.

RAJANMA:—RITA has in it such ingredients as are most conducive to hair growth and prevention of hair troubles. I have pleasure in recommending it to all women whose ambition it is to have glorious and profuse hair.

LAXMI BAI:—After using for some time past, I feel RITA is matchless hair tonic.

V. N. JANAKI:—I have been using RITA Hair Tonic for fairly a long time. I find it very effective in growing and preserving hair.

A. R. SHAKUNTALA:—I have been using RITA for a long time and I find the result immensely good.

RITA HAIR TONIC

HINDUISM AND MAHATMA GANDHI

by Dr. C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN,
M.A. (Oxon), D.Litt. (Hon)

PROMINENT Congress leaders including the Dominion Prime Minister have spoken of Gandhiji as "the greatest Hindu of our age". If such tributes are genuine and not rhetorical—there is no reason to think otherwise—they should, it seems to me, exert all their influence to make the Congress take up as part of its constructive programme the reform, nay, the transformation of Hinduism in accordance with the life and teachings of the Mahatma. Traditional and orthodox Hinduism as it is practised by millions of our countrymen is the greatest obstacle to India's future. Its worst and most poisonous impurities are untouchability and the caste system. Gandhiji had repeatedly condemned them and warned us that Hinduism would perish if they were not destroyed. In spite of his life-long struggle against untouchability, his achievement in this direction has been meagre and the heart of Hindu society has not been moved to eradicate this evil. As for caste, I need only quote this significant passage from Nehru's *Discovery of India*: "In the context of society today, the caste system and much that goes with it are wholly incompatible, reactionary and restrictive and barriers to progress. There can be no equality in status and opportunity within its framework, nor can there be political democracy and much less economic democracy. Between these two conceptions, conflict is inherent and only one of them can survive." This is an issue which the Congress and the country can no longer evade. When the Congress was waging war against foreign imperialism, it could not take up this matter as it would have involved an internal war against vested interests and no sane general would adopt a strategy which meant "a war on two fronts". With the at-

tainment of independence, the situation has radically changed. A social revolution involving the transformation and purification of Hinduism and the abolition of caste has become an urgent necessity. Hindu fascism as manifested by the activities and objectives of the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. Sangh has to be fought and overthrown. Otherwise, there is no hope for our country.

"All Congressmen and organisations should initiate and carry on an intensive drive" not only against Communism, as the Working Committee has proposed, but also against caste, untouchability and all the anti-social manifestations of orthodox Hinduism. The war against caste and untouchability should be in the forefront of the constructive programme of the Congress and should be carried on with the same vigour and intensity as the non-violent war against foreign rule. Congress should take up actively the question of inter-caste marriages. Young men and young women should be encouraged to marry outside their caste and the Central and Provincial Governments should not hesitate to give them preferential treatment in the matter of recruitment to Government service, other things being equal, of course. Caste names, caste marks and all caste distinctions in the matter of dress and outward appearance should be done away with. If Congress is unable or unwilling for some reason to take up this work directly, it should set up a powerful ancillary organisation for organising this social revolution on an all-India basis and finance it from the National Memorial Fund which is proposed to be started. A casteless Hindu society will also prove to be a most effective means of producing communal harmony. If Congress evades this all-important issue, it

will do so not only to its own detriment but it will imperil the future of our country. Caste, untouchability and orthodox Hinduism are a menace to the ideals and objectives of the Congress and the Constituent Assembly—democracy, social and

economic justice, equality of opportunity and economic planning on a Socialist basis. As Dr. Radhakrishnan has well said, "Every religion is faced by the challenge of the modern world. It must either transform itself or fade away."

SOME ASHRAM MEMORIES

by "K"

WE judge men by their friends. But if we try to understand and label Gandhiji by an analysis of his friends, we will either be trapped in a labyrinth, or forced to conclude that he was the nearest approach to Divinity that we know of.

People of many ages, many religions, castes, provinces and countries—the abjectly poor and the embarrassingly rich—storehouses of learning and the incredibly unlettered—hide-bound bureaucrats and the humblest of slaves—sadhus and sannyasins and selfish barbarians—founts of wisdom, heroes of action and glamorous raj-yogis—men with not much of opinion in common with him—these and many more have had love for him and won his love.

When I had the good fortune to live in the Ashram at Sabarmati, there were about 130 residents there. If I were to classify them, I believe that they would come under 20 or 25 major types. (I believe that similar communities living in other such institutions—at Adyar or Dayalbagh, for instance—are less diverse, that is, a random hundred would group out into 4 or 5 types). In spite of such variation, there was a marked unity of purpose and harmony of life among the inmates of the Ashram. It was like the snow-born rivers of the young Himalayas and the rainfed torrents of the ancient mountains of the South finding a resting place in the sea. And like the sea which surrenders to the Sun the same measure of water as it receives, and knows its level, so was the Head of the Ashram.

Young . . . Bai, M.A., taking orders from an old unlettered dame, . . . a Muslim, taking his turn in the kitchen, and the sky not coming down, . . . Ph.D., studying slum problem in East End, agreeing to stay in the Ashram and pursue his studies in India, a chartered accountant placing his life and all his knowledge at the disposal of the Village Industries Association, boys in tender teens not caring to avail themselves of the general permission to retire to bed after night-watch duty, but staying on to sip the nectar of the 4 a.m. prayer, young college-educated ladies, many of them daughters and nieces of lakhpatis, who are laughing and tripping lightly and appearing to be enjoying some joke, but who are actually cleaning latrines and trenching night-soil, the 'grouser' who is unhappy at getting scavenging duty only once in 5 or 6 days and begs for a daily turn, and the Head who fears to set a bad precedent lest there be too many such applicants, the aged learning new things from the young, and the spruce from the unkempt, young and old sitting to a meal of bland, unspiced food and polishing it off, with reverence and relish, parties of men and women scattered in the sun after each meal and cleaning the cooking vessels with all the enjoyment of a moonlight picnic,—will the world witness these scenes again?

The night meal (5-30) is over. Some boys are playing on the sands of the Sabarmati. A youngster picks up an eight anna piece and shouts out—"An eight-anna piece has dropped from someone's pocket. Let the owner claim it." The first response is—"I have no money. So it couldn't be mine." The second is—

"My banian is pocketless. So it couldn't be mine." The third non-claimant explains—"Let people with shirts and banians bother themselves."

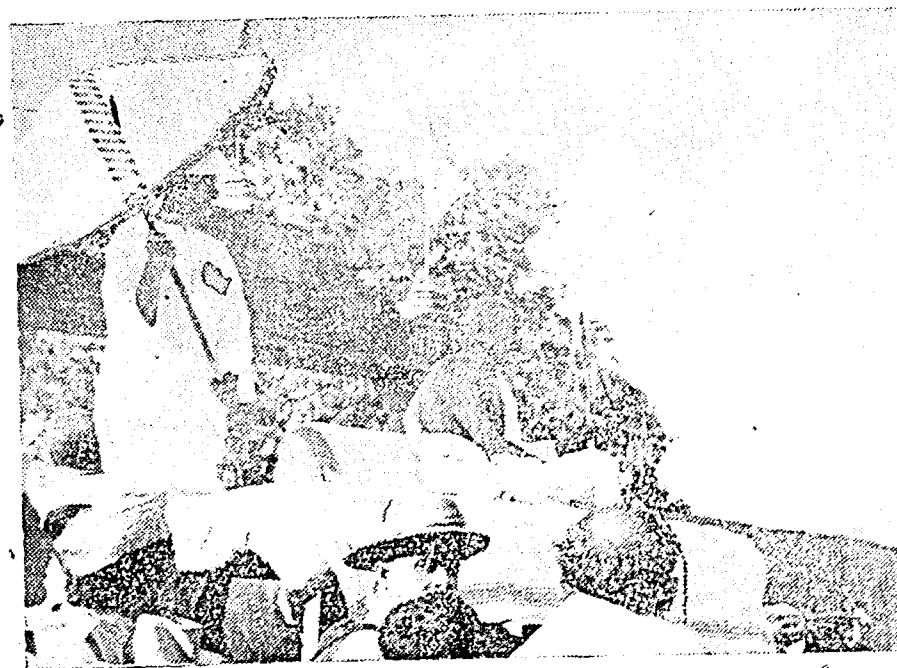
Who is that lady on the river-ghat, dressed in spotless khaddar and washing her sari? Oh, that's Miraben! It might easily have been a lady born and bred up on the banks of the Kaveri—she looks so natural at the job!

What is this stick for, with the holes with a string laced through? . . . It is a snake-noose for catching them, without hurting, and taking them to the yonder thorny bushes.

Who is this gentleman, bent over a new-fangled charkha for hours every day? . . . He is a spinning technician. He has introduced many improvements in the wheel as well as spinning and allied processes.

"What's this tiny, white-washed building for? I have seen it many times in the day without spending a thought on it, but now, in the

second half of the night, and in the dim, flickering light of the hurricane lantern, it looks mystic." "It is a temple. They say that Dadhichi Rshi lived in this region and performed penance." This unexpected piece of information flung me off Time and Space for a moment. The little white building seemed to glide far away. The mind built a chain—Mahatmaji—Dadhichi—giving away one's bone—the Vajrayudha—was the Sabarmati Ashram located here knowingly, or was it just a 'chance'? It was indelicate to start 'research work'. Days passed, and many layers of dust settled on the speculations of that memorable night. But—bang bang bang—the layers of dust flew off . . . A self-less Soul has bequeathed to us a weapon—symbolised by the widely distributed ashes of his bones—more powerful and more wonderful than Indra's Vajrayudha. Have we the strength and intelligence to use it skilfully and destroy the asuric forces that threaten to swallow the country?



SAINTS THAT SUFFERED FOR HUMANITY

by A. RAMA RAO

WHEN I think of Mahatma Gandhi, I question myself why a man of such saintly character had had so much suffering. We may probably get an answer by reminding ourselves about the troubles and sufferings of other great messengers of humanity. Going to the dim distant past, we find that during the middle of the fifth century B.C., were born four great men, an Indian, two Chinese and one Greek; Gautama the Buddha, Laotsze, Confucius and Pythagoras. All of them had their own sufferings. Did not Gautama suffer by long fastings and bitter austerity to solve the problem of life before he made the great resolve? Did he not say under the Bodhi Tree "Never will I arise from this place though this my frame shall perish of starvation till I have won enlightenment." Did not Confucius have his own suffering for attempting to reform society? Was not Laotsze ridiculed and scorned by the ignorant? Did not Pythagoras have his own share of grief? He spoke to multitudes from the hill-side of Tauromenion, founded a school of philosophy at Krotona and was revered for a time. But what happened later? He was abused by ignorant fools, fanatics stirred up riots, his school at Krotona was burned and the great philosopher died a lonely death in the island of Samos in the year B.C. 498.

Reviewing the history of saints in later years, do we not find that Jesus Christ, the embodiment of love was mercilessly crucified? What was his fault? Nothing at all. He said to the ignorant people "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred but by love".

Did not the Prophet of Arabia and his followers have their own indescribable troubles and tribulations? Were not his followers persecuted and tortured till at last Prophet Mohamad was left only with one

follower in Mecca, Abu Bakir, and had to leave the city in A.D. 622?

Did not Giordano Bruno, the great Italian philosopher, suffer eight years of imprisonment? He had to wander the whole of Europe for a home and finally when he returned to his Fatherland, he was burnt at the stake on the 17th of February 1600 A.D. What did he teach? He taught the ancient Wisdom. He spoke the Truth. What were the cries of the crowds that assembled when his body was being chained to the stake? These were the cries: "A cursed heretic. Burning too good for him".

Did not Guru Nanak suffer? He came out of the forest and proclaimed "There is no Hindu, no Mussalman. All are God's children". His doctrines based on Love and Truth, were not accepted and at a place called Govindwai, he was shunned by all except a leper. He died in the year 1538 A.D. after enduring the greatest of privations.

Coming to more recent times, did not Swami Shradhanandji suffer and die as a martyr?

Mahatma Gandhi has joined the great galaxy of the guardians of humanity after undergoing his own share of suffering. These messengers of peace now and then come to help infant humanity. The wondrous story of Mahatma's life, his sufferings in jail and outside, the tortures to which he subjected his frail body by his many fastings in order to cure the evils of erring humanity are all looked up to with deathless devotion by millions of people. He did not belong to any religion although some people in their ignorance still think he was a Hindu. His religion was Truth and non-violence. His teachings are ageless and timeless. There is neither East nor West for him but one eternal North, the unchanging Dhruva. May the kingdom of peace which he wanted to establish soon come into being.

GANDHIAN ERA IN INDIAN POLITICS

by G. JAGATHPATHI

IT is possible and not necessarily incorrect to examine the Gandhian era in Indian politics from a rather unusual standpoint—namely, that of determinism. While the usefulness of determinism as a tool of political understanding is probably more apparent when we study whole periods of history, it is not often that it is made to serve as a basic standpoint in understanding and estimating the life of a great man. The hero in history is so often an extremely powerful personality that it is difficult to see him as the result of a certain set of circumstances. So great a part of the actual history of that period seems to be directly traceable to the inspiration and activity of that great man, Mahatma Gandhi, that it is repugnant to the common conception of man as a being with a free will and the ability to force events to take the direction he wants them to take, that we should view him as a 'creature of circumstance'. This is really due to a misunderstanding of determinism: determinism does not predict the future, as it is commonly thought; it is most emphatically not a brand of astrology applied to history and politics. It is more accurately a method of studying history; it seeks to point out possibilities that are pregnant in a situation. Which of these possibilities actually turns out to be true depends on the action of the people at that moment; and it is here that the Lead in history makes his appearance. Thus, the actual outcome at a particular moment in history depends on the strength of the different forces acting at that time, the nature of the methods adopted by the leader at that time in order to mobilise the people for action and the strategy adopted by him. The strategy may be excellent; the force he represents may be very strong in view of the weakness of the opponent; but yet the movement he leads may fall

because the people he leads have not been effectively mobilised.

Imperialism in India became definitely economic only towards the beginning of this century. There was a period in the history of British colonial policy when the question whether Britain should continue to be responsible for peace in her colonies or whether, on the contrary, she should not withdraw from them was seriously discussed. But with the progress of the Industrial Revolution and with the gradual realisation of the necessity of a colonial market for her products, their value increased; they did not merely add, as in the mid-Victorian period, to the prestige of Britain in the eyes of European powers; towards the end of the Victorian era, the colonies, instead of being a burden to the 'mother-country' actually began making her richer. That explains why the idyllic dream of an Imperial Parliament, led by Britain, followed up by peoples of different faiths, of different races and of different colours, all united by their affection for the Crown, died a natural death during the course of the last decades of the nineteenth century; the pure nationalism of Benjamin Disraeli became aggressive economic nationalism. From then onwards, Britain's grip on the colonies became tighter and the much-publicised idea of trusteeship, with real power in the hands of Britain, replaced the earlier idea of a partnership, in which Britain would have been only first among equals. But this position could not last long; for other European powers also built up empires and developed industrially; in the eyes of the Imperial powers, the world began to grow smaller. While thus the face of Europe was rapidly changing, the Asian countries, mostly pawns in the game of European politics, increased only in population. Poverty became more and more apparent and the role of

Imperialism in this gradual deterioration was better and better understood. It was also clear that independence was the first step in the programme of economic reconstruction. Imperialism in India, as elsewhere, brought to a standstill the internal forces of economic development; the agrarian movement, which would have in due course eliminated functionless landlordism, could not be carried on because it went against 'law and order'. Moreover, the bigger zamindars were ardent supporters of the British power in the country and, in the face of growing discontent in the land, that support became more and more indispensable.

In India, after the downfall of the Mughal Empire and till the British administration unified India, the people had no sense of common nationality; this was a serious defect on our side. In fact, the whole of Indian history can be viewed as a series of attempts at unification, to realise in actual practice that conceptual unity that was already there; it is no doubt difficult to say whether this was ever consciously done but militarily at least, the vast land spaces that are India right up to the Himalayas on the north were a temptation for any conqueror too difficult to resist. This never became an accomplished fact before the British period. But even if it was clear that it was necessary to throw out Britain from India, the people had to be educated to this immense task; it is here that the traditions and the culture of the people have to be understood in order to lead them into action. A certain attitude of non-intervention seems to be basic to the Indian temperament; except in the case of the Muslim minority who are apt to become touchy over matters connected with their religion or custom, this attitude seems to be quite general—till recently at any rate. The Indian can be defiant but rarely does he become violent. He could accept suffering but to inflict it required quite an unusual degree of provocation. This may seem unreal in the face of so much violence in the recent past but it

is difficult to deny that it was generally true of India before the Second World War. It was this poverty-stricken, fatalistic and patient people that had to be turned into a revolutionary army. The only unifying factor in this amorphous mass of humanity was their temperament, their outlook. Developing industrialism had not yet affected to any significant extent the essentially feudal structure of Indian society and so the idea of unity was a vague religious belief and the actuality did not in any way strengthen that feeling. Nationalism had to be created long before social facts justified any such idea; the unifying mission had to pierce through the isolationist and restrictive outlook germane to a feudal society with its scattered self-sufficient village economies, through the often conflicting beliefs and practices of the Hindu, the Sikh and the Muslim and through the differing capacities of the war-like Pathan and the timid *Bania*.

It was at such a stage in Indian history that the Mahatma made his appearance. It is a measure of his immense stature as a leader that he could awaken in this ignorant but simple-minded people a sense of urgency regarding the independence of their country. He presented the problem to them in terms that they could understand, devoid of all technicalities and of all dogmas. The fundamentally religious temperament of the Indian was gradually made to see the enormity of the wrong that they were tolerating and it was pointed out that submission to sin was also wrong in itself. They were told that theirs was not a fight against any single person but against a system which stunted their growth as a nation and denied them the dignity of an independent State—and in a dominantly feudal society, the idea of an insulted status was extremely potent in rousing the people. And above all, the Mahatma was a saint; the Indian had always had a high regard for the saint, be he *fakir* or *sanyasi*. He was fascinated by this politician-saint who symbolised in himself untechnical

but honest and religious India; he sincerely propagated the romanticised picture of a simple pastoral economy. Perhaps the most ingenious was the weapon of struggle he chose; therein was reflected the aversion to active armed fight of the Indian. Jail-going irritated the rulers but the impassive Indian looked upon the panicky Briton with a condescending smile; the poor mortal was engaged in keeping intact, like a bully, his empire over an unarmed nation; there was nothing noble in it; to the Indian, especially the huge Pathan, who could give trouble if he wanted, it was at least worth a laugh. Compared to the massive nobility of the Indian, the Briton was clever but primitive; in spiritual stature, the latter was infantile. It was this conception of the struggle as a non-violent movement against a morally wrong system that made it so active, so widespread and so dynamic. It was not a political revolution but, so it seemed, correcting a long-tolerated wrong. It was the only active struggle that this passive people were capable of; and the Mahatma saw it. The Salt Satyagraha is the most typical of this long drawn-out non-violent movement; the law was wrong because it taxed the poor—it was so simple as that! The essence of the whole leadership was that it simplified politics to the extent of its being clear even to the most ignorant Indian.

But it was not only before independence that the Mahatma revealed his greatness. Independence shattered the final attempt in Indian history at the unification of

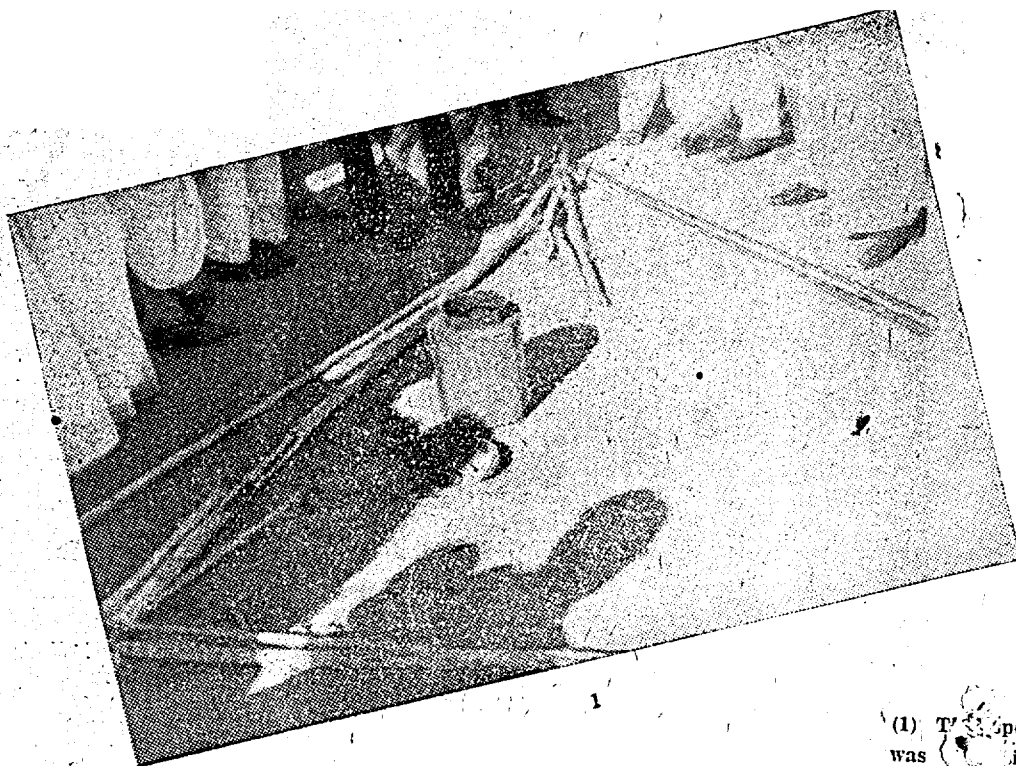
the whole country into a single nation. On the one hand, it was because of the deliberate encouragement given by the British Government to the division in the ranks of the national movement; to Imperialism, it was merely traditional; but on the other hand, it was because of the rising religious nationalism of the Muslims, culminating finally in the achievement of Pakistan; this was more because the fanaticism of the Muslims was deliberately roused by the two-nation theory than because there was any evidence of actual organised oppression. But these inflamed passions continued after independence and large-scale massacre has marred the peaceful picture of peasant India. It shows how great the respect is with which he is looked upon by the common people that the very idea of his passing away because of their faults was enough to make them forget the past and begin a new future. The end of this great life at this moment ought to make us realise the immense responsibilities that we have to shoulder. We have to forget the inhuman and un-Indian passions of the recent past and settle down in right earnest to tackle the problem of national reconstruction. That will be the best way of honouring the memory of the great soul that has been most brutally taken away from us.

Thus—it may seem surprising to the self-publicised idealist—even to the determinist, the Mahatma was really a *mahatma*. Probably his appreciation is more genuine; he also ventures to think that the prospects of our being a great nation are bright—if we grasp the opportunity.

THE "TALKINGEST" NATION

Last year the people of the United States of America carried on forty-two billion conversations over the telephone, setting up a record as the "talkingest" nation in the world.

At the beginning of the year, there were 31,611,000 telephones in the United States and that was 57.9 per cent of all there were in the world. The U.S.A. had one phone for every four persons, compared with a world average of one for every forty-three. Sweden has one for every five persons, Canada one for every six and the Soviet Union one for every 140.

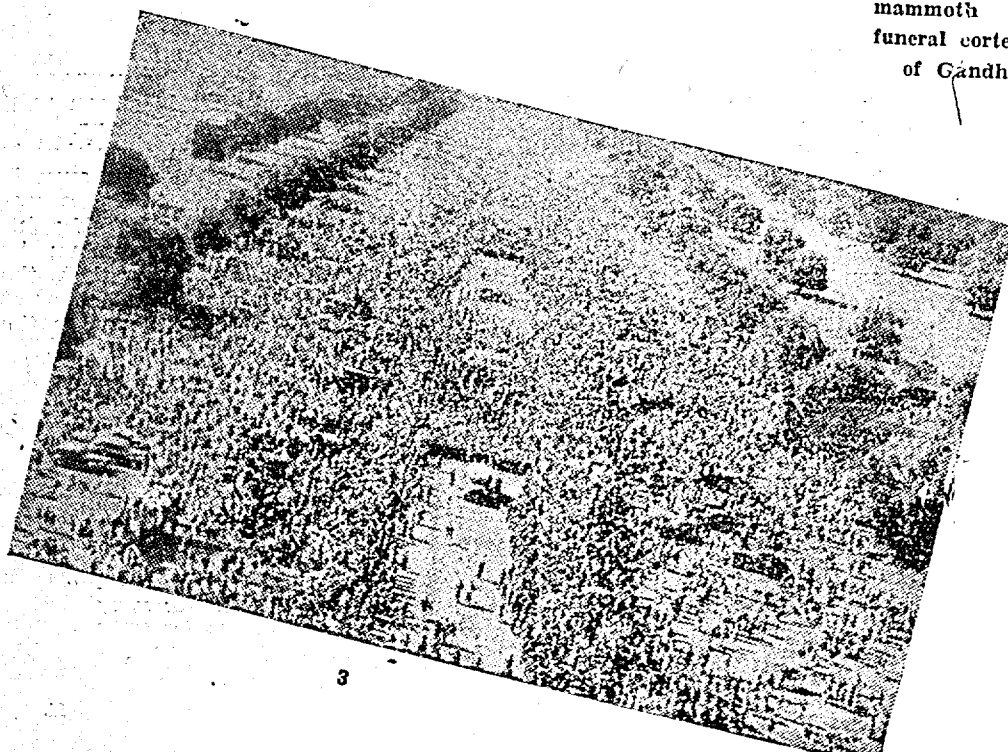


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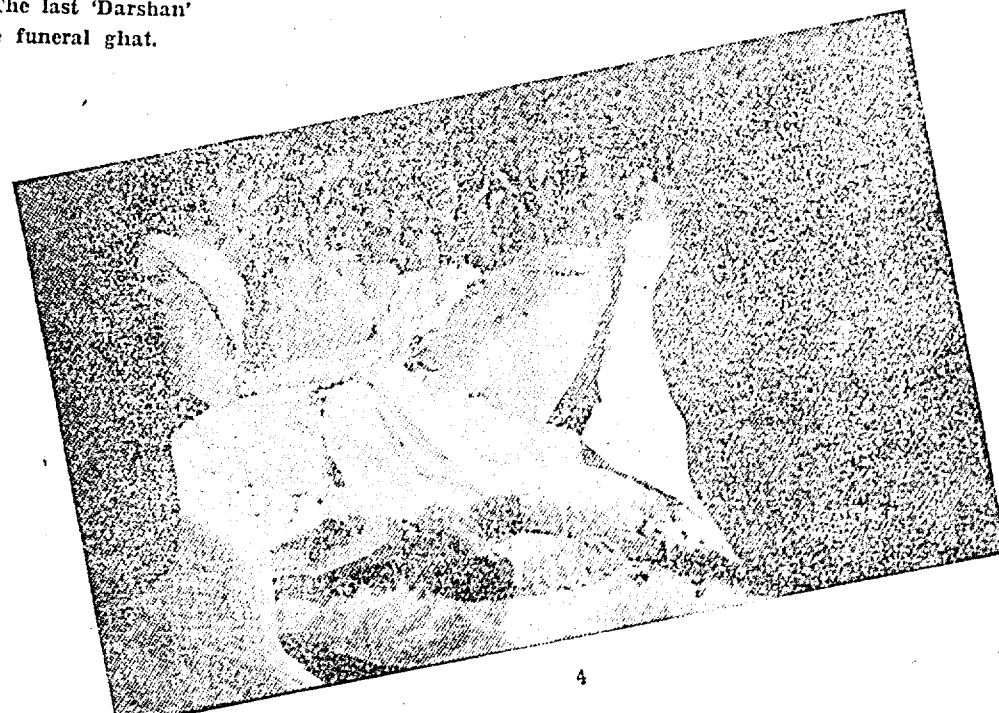


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(1) The spot where Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, (2) The Mahatma's body lying 'in state' at Birla House. The inmates are seen keeping an all-night vigil on January 30, (3) The mammoth procession following the funeral cortege, (4) The last 'Darshan' of Gandhiji at the funeral ghat.



3



4

THE PHENOMENON THAT WAS GANDHIJI

by V. KRISHNA RAO

ON the eve of his last fast, Mahatma Gandhi felt that the calm and quiet in and around Delhi was artificial and that there was 'storm in the breast' of people. The meaning of the fast was to still that storm. The fast was broken but he fell a victim to that storm. Gandhiji was an institution by himself—many institutions. In less than three decades he has pulled up the world to a higher degree of culture and civilization than has been possible for all your universities and federations and leagues. No wonder Bernard Shaw broke into a protest: "What do you mean by calling him a man—He was a phenomenon."

How he became a Mahatma is worth recalling. In the early years of the century, when Gandhi landed in a South African port, he was assailed by a fanatic. The people around fell upon the assailant. He was to be belaboured when Gandhi protested and saved him and would not complain against him, as in his eyes, the assailant was a misguided man. The incident was reported in the Indian papers. Mrs. Besant commenting upon it in the Central Hindu College Magazine commended Gandhi and called him a Mahatma and she it was that popularised the name subsequently on his return to India. She it was, likewise, who gave the appellation of Lokamanya to Tilak, despite the deep differences in their politics—instances of her great magnanimity.

In the spate of appreciations that have been pouring in, I have not been able to light upon a reminiscence that shows up the soul of the man—only superlatives are being exhausted. Gandhiji returned to India before the demise of Gokhale. He called Gokhale his guru. Gokhale directed him to tour India and study Indian politics before beginning any fresh political activity. When finally he was invited to join the "Servants of India Society" he

declined to do so. I do not remember his exact words. They are to this effect: "At this stage of my life, I could not join an institution to be influenced by it. I must be able to influence the institution" and he started the Asram at Sabarmati. The discipline and the training he gave to himself and the inmates are a part of history and he shot up into all-India leadership.

Mrs. Besant, Arundale and Wadia had been interned at Coimbatore, I think in 1917. The Madras leaders protested in vain. B. N. Sarma was the major liberal political star in our welkin. The Mahajana Sabha of which, I think, he was the President, called for a meeting to concert measures for the release of the detenus. Gandhiji was invited from Bombay to lead a movement of passive resistance. At the end of the conference, Mr. Sarma asked Gandhiji, "What is the minimum strength you require for a successful campaign of resistance?" Gandhiji raised a smile—oh, how shall I describe it?—it was one of compassion, despair—and with great forbearance said, "You are not the people to run the movement. You have no faith." The faith of a resister, he meant, must be that, single-handed, he must feel that he will be able to give battle to the entire world. It is only the faithless, the timid, the indeterminate that seek the aid of numbers. There you have the man that rose to the leadership of the world—a miracle of faith in himself, righteousness and truth. When shall we have such another world-redeemer?

The daily prayer messages and the weekly *Harijan* have been our tonics for years on end. Here it is that I feel a sense of loneliness and desertion. Will your Thomas Hardys, Paters, Landers and hosts of imaginative writers and storytellers take off a bit of the tedium of our souls?

When Smuts put Gandhiji in prison in South Africa, Gandhiji was turning out shoes by pairs. Every Sunday Smuts collected books from his own library and piously delivered them to Gandhi for his diversion in the loneliness he had given him. On the day of his liberation, Gandhiji sought Smuts and presented him with a pair of shoes which he had made. Says Smuts: "I was the earliest to mark the nobility of the man I put behind iron bars. I was then entrusted with the building up of an infant republic in South Africa. I had to

sweep all opposition with iron hands. A deep sense of injustice was gnawing in my mind. I could not dare to put my legs into the present, foot-wear though it was. It represented so much of Nobility and Love. I kept them long as a memento and subsequently wore them on ceremonial occasions only." This is my free paraphrase of the sentiment expressed by Smuts which is quoted in the Commemoration volume edited by Dr. Radhakrishnan. Can we not forgive Smuts for all his wrongs towards India?

SAYINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

There is no school equal to a decent home and no teachers equal to honest virtuous parents.

The popular saying, as is the king so are the people, is only a half-truth. That is to say, it is not more true than its converse, as are the people so is the Prince.

In the individual body, the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is Socialism.

Just as pure blood is proof against poisonous germs, so will labour, when it is pure, be proof against exploitation.

The rule of majority when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority.

Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep.

A nation may do without its millionaires and without its capitalists but a nation can never do without its labour.

It is as wrong to destroy caste because of the outcaste, as it would be to destroy a body because of an ugly growth in it or of a crop because of the weeds.

If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use and keep it, I thieve it from somebody else.

God of himself seeks for his seat the heart of him who serves his fellowmen. Such was Abu Ben Adham. He served his fellowmen and therefore his name topped the list of those who served God.

Strong hearts, enlightened minds and willing hands can brave all odds and remove all obstacles.

No country can become a nation by producing a race of translators.

Of all the superstitions that affect India, none is so great as that a knowledge of English is necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty and developing accuracy of thought.

If all simply insist on rights and no duties, there will be utter confusion and chaos.

I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on the laws of economics than many of the modern textbooks.

That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value.

Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE



IN accepting the British proposal that the Rulers of the Indian States should decide, irrespective of the wishes of the people concerned, to be independent of the two Dominions or to accede to either of them according to the Ruler's taste, the Indian National Congress abandoned the democratic principle, which it had long proclaimed, of the people's sovereignty. The developments since the transfer of power have shown that this dereliction of the duty owed to the people of the States was not only wrong in itself, but productive of much practical trouble and confusion. Hyderabad and Kashmir would not have become the trouble-spots that they are now, if the Congress had insisted, during the negotiations with Britain, that the people's will ascertained through plebiscite or otherwise, and not the will of the individual Ruler, should decide the future of the States.

PAKISTAN'S FRIENDS AT LAKE SUCCESS

The current proceedings of the Security Council of UNO on the Kashmir question furnish a grim commentary on the untenable position in which the Congress acquiesced. Thus Dr. Jose Arce, representative of, Argentina on the Security Council, was able to twit the Indian delegation with "the general question of monarchical autocracies which the United Nations could not allow to continue." The homily is a trifle amusing, coming as it does from the representative of a dictatorial—though not monarchical—regime. But it is typical of the general unfriendliness with which India's approach to UNO has met. There

have been many disturbing indications at Lake Success of the readiness of certain foreign powers to befriend Pakistan and to fish in the troubled political waters of India. The Soviet bloc, represented on the Security Council by Russia and Ukraine, has not so far defined its attitude to the Indo-Pakistan dispute. And Russia's stand will doubtless be awaited with interest since it might transform what has till now been an Anglo-American show into the tortuous game of Big Power politics. As for the Anglo-American handling of the Kashmir problem, it has been remarkably adroit in confusing and mystifying what one would have thought was a simple question. The Government of India in the memorandum they submitted to the Security Council, had cited evidence to show "that the invaders are allowed transit across Pakistan territory; that they are allowed to use Pakistan territory as a base of operations; that they include Pakistan nationals; that they draw much of their military equipment, transport and supplies (including petrol) from Pakistan; and that Pakistan officers are training, guiding and otherwise actively helping them." On the basis of this evidence, India requested the Security Council to ask the Government of Pakistan to stop aiding the raiders, since such aid was an act of aggression against India, of which the State of Jammu and Kashmir forms a part. Instead of proceeding to assess the truth of the evidence of Pakistan's complicity, the members of the Security Council have spent nearly a month discussing everything except the specific complaint lodged by India. This, in spite of the fact that the India Government's memorandum had stressed the special urgency of

the Security Council taking immediate action. The way in which the Belgian delegate, M. Langenhove as President of the Council, steered the debate, and the manner in which he and other members have proffered their 'good offices' to facilitate a bilateral agreement, would appear to have been deliberately calculated to make India the accused instead of being the accuser. That Sir M. Zafrullah Khan should make irresponsible and fantastic charges of genocide against India and digress into irrelevant references to the Hindu caste system, was only to be expected. Nor would his remark that 'the conditions on which Gandhiji agreed to terminate his last Delhi fast were an 'eloquent commentary' on the treatment of Muslims, have occasioned any surprise. It was a disgusting but quite familiar exhibition of ill grace. What is surprising is the alacrity with which Britain and U.S.A., and the other powers in the Security Council associated with the Anglo-American bloc, have themselves adopted the mental attitude of Sir Zafrullah. As the correspondent of *The Hindu* at Lake Success put it: "Under predominantly Anglo-American leadership, the Council is getting more and more deeply entangled in such questions as how to get the Indian troops out of Kashmir and the Pakistan troops into Kashmir or how to impose a new self-styled neutral Government on Kashmiris.... Not only is there frequent and striking identity of views between President van Langenhove and Sir M. Zafrullah Khan, but there is a feeling abroad that the majority of the Council members, including Britain and the United States, lean in the same direction."

The motive behind such solicitude for Pakistan can only be the belief of Britain and America that they can rely more on Pakistan than on India for support to the political and economic objectives of the Anglo-American bloc. It might be well to recall in this connection the statement made by Mr. Jinnah on December 19, 1947. "Personally I have no doubt that Pakistan will be

ready to stay in the Commonwealth as a willing member for their mutual benefit and that Great Britain should exercise great moral responsibilities as a senior member of the Commonwealth. At the moment I feel Great Britain is treating Pakistan with indifference. I fully realize that Britain has no power to intervene in the affairs of any Dominion, but at the same time Britain and other Dominions are in a position to use moral persuasion to help settle differences between members of the Commonwealth. It appears to me that His Majesty's Government have so far shirked their responsibility in this respect." From the considerable 'moral persuasion' that Britain and Canada are now exerting at Lake Success to secure concessions for Pakistan from India, it looks as if the quarters appealed to by Mr. Jinnah have taken his admonition to heart and are making amends for their earlier indifference.

If the offer of continued association with the Empire's defence and economic structure has secured British support for Pakistan, the Red bogey—in this case as in most other cases—explains, in part at any rate, the attitude of the U.S. The supposed leanings of India towards Russia and the comparative immunity of Pakistan from Communist ideology, are believed to have not a little to do with the fact that America has been at one with Britain in subtly but surely converting India's complaint against Pakistan into a political offensive by Pakistan against India. Mr. Philip Noel-Baker for Britain and Mr. Warren Austin for U.S.A. have attempted systematically to create doubts regarding the impartiality and representative character of Sheikh Abdullah's administration, to soft-pedal the incursions by the raiders from Pakistan territory and to play up the Muslim Conference as the representative body of patriotic Kashmiris.

It is instructive to note the opposite attitudes adopted by the Anglo-American bloc to the identical situations that exist in Kashmir and in Greece. Both in Greece and

In Kashmir the 'legally constituted' Government is being challenged by local 'rebels' who are alleged to have received aid from neighbouring States. In the case of Greece, Britain and U.S.A. firmly and indignantly ordered the neighbouring States accused of aiding the rebels, to take their hands off. In the case of Kashmir, under similar circumstances Britain and U.S.A. are most reluctant to issue a similar directive to Pakistan. On the contrary they are all but openly excusing the incursions by the raiders and Pakistan's aid to the raiders. Mr. Philip Noel-Baker says: "The main thing is the plebiscite itself. I repeat, as others have said, that if combatants are to cease carnage, they must know what is to happen if they do. The plebiscite is a vital part of the whole settlement." And Mr. Warren Austin, innocently asks: "How are you going to induce the tribesmen to retire?" Answering his own question, the U.S. delegate says, "Only when they (the tribesmen) are satisfied that there will be a fair plebiscite assured through an Interim Government can you have a peaceful withdrawal." To treat the raiders not as aggressive marauders but as men inspired by a

just political ideal—which is exactly what Pakistan claims they are—is disingenuous in the extreme. It is no wonder that Mr. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has been constrained to remind Mr. Warren Austin of the status of the raiders: "What is the status of these tribesmen which gives them the right to demand that a plebiscite should be satisfactory to them? I am unable to see the strength behind such a position. These tribesmen are separated from Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan territory. They invaded Kashmir for certain purposes. They have come to fight and to retire to their own country with loot. Are people of this kind to be given a right to demand that the Kashmir authorities should do something that is acceptable to them?"

The question posed by the leader of the Indian delegation is a simple one. Neither the British nor the Americans being political innocents, their failure to face the question squarely gives rise to the suspicion that they are consciously aiding Pakistan in the latter's attempt to discredit Sheikh Abdulla and the Government of India.

A LETTER FROM EUROPE

by MELLY ZOLLINGER & W. LAKSHMANA RAO

Kreuzlingen (German - Swiss Frontier): This has been a week of strikes throughout the whole of Western Germany. The food-situation, already in a state of chronic crisis, was fast heading towards a crash. Thanks to the loose federation imposed by the occupation authorities, the consequent inter-provincial rivalries, and the hoarding of food-stuffs by the farmers, the deliveries of grain and potatoes fell short of expectations. The result was that even the winter potato-ration could hardly be maintained at a hundred-weight per head, and the bread ration from the beginning of the year, had to be cut down to four lbs. a week. Meat was no longer issued, and fats, already drastically reduced to 75 grams, had totally disappeared from

the ration card. Life on 1,000 calories a day, became almost a lost cause. The New Year witnessed several strikes and food-riots in Hamburg, but both the German leaders and the occupation authorities ascribed these to communist agitation, with the result that nothing was done to alleviate the distress.

"NO FOOD—NO WORK"

The inevitable happened. In Duisburg, the biggest inland harbour of the world, in the Ruhr towns of Mulheim and Dinslaken, 140,000 workers downed tools as a protest against the cut in rations. The chemical workers in Wiesbaden, and Biebrich numbering 8,000 came out to demonstrate against food shortage. In Dusseldorf and Solingen, 80,000 workers struck for 48 hours,

demanding food. In Essen 50,000 workers staged a 24 hour general strike. So did the workers in Kassel, Oberhausen and Dortmund. In Cologne 100,000 struck work. In the big industrial centre of Gelsenkirchen, a workers-conference attended by 54 delegates from the coal-mining townships, resolved to call a general strike on 2nd February, if conditions did not improve by then. In Frankfurt, the employees of the American military administration came out in protest. As in Nuremberg, where 100,000 workers downed tools for 24 hours, everywhere the parole was: "We have hunger: We demand a united Germany! Down with the Bi-zone!"

HUNGER AND POLITICS

Of course, enough food-stuffs could be produced in a united Germany, and food could be brought in from the Eastern Zone. But that apparently cut across the Anglo-American plans for the creation of the West-German State and the formation of a bulwark against Communist expansion. Even so, Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden—in Western Germany—can produce enough wheat, potatoes, apples and vegetables to feed the Rhine provinces, Ruhr and Westphalia—provided land-reform is undertaken by the Allies and the big estates of the Nazis are broken up and parcelled among the land-hungry peasants. Neither the occupying powers, nor the Socialist, Democratic and Liberal politicians would countenance such a revolutionary expropriation of the land-owners. The farmers are now having a glorious time. Wheat and potato procurement became a farce. Last year 731,000 head of cattle, 2,250,000 hog and 1,330,000 sheep disappeared into the "black-market". Bread, meat, fats and fruit were unobtainable. Hoarding, black-marketing and hamstering became profitable past-times. The military Governments, local officials, party bosses and farmers—all seemed to have a hand in the food-racket. (We almost thought we were writing about India!) The corollary to dis-mantling, de-industrialisation, and non-de-nazification is the creation of a

West-German State and the "marshallisation" of Germany. They are the pincer-jaws of the anti-Soviet offensive.

GERMAN-PAKISTAN!

On 7th January, the Premiers of Bi-zonia were summoned by Generals Clay and Robertson to receive the Allied proposals for the reorganisation of the Western Zone. The new "Economic Council" will have two houses. The lower house will consist of 104 members; it will elect the chairman of the "Executive Council", consisting of 6 ministers and is to have limited powers of taxation. The upper house is to have 16 representatives, two from each of the provinces, and with certain limited powers of revision and veto. The provinces are practically independent and form only a very loose federation. Frankfurt is to be the seat of the central Government. There is to be a High Court and a State Union Bank under the direct control of the occupation powers. That was the blue-print. The Frankfurt and Berlin correspondents of all the foreign papers were of the unanimous opinion that on that day the de facto State of Western Germany was ushered into existence. Even "The Times" makes no bones about it and calls the administrative organs by their proper appellations: Parliament, Cabinet and Government. Only it fights shy of the word "State" and calls it a "Regime!"

OPERATION "FRANKFURT"

Every German political leader, let alone the trade unionists, had time and again protested against the partition of Germany. The proposals presented a Hobson's choice to the Premiers. They had no alternative but to accept them, not even to suggest minor changes. They were aware, as one correspondent put it, that "in the face of the proposals, the protestations of Generals Clay and Robertson that they regarded the unity of Germany as inviolable, vanished into thin air". It was strongly rumoured that Schumacher, the Social-Democratic boss, Adenauer, the President of the Western-CDU and Kaiser, the deposed chief of the Eastern-CDU,

gave their blessings to the scheme, and that they even had a hand in the drafting of it. The German Premiers knew full well that public opinion was dead against the setting up of a separate West-German State, however well camouflaged it might be. They also knew that the proposals meant the grave of German unity. The "NEUES DEUTSCHLAND" (SED) lashed the Premiers the next day as "crooks of Frankfurt" and "representatives of German imperialism and militarism". While many Germans would doubtless agree in private with the description, history perhaps would call them "mere party politicians".

THEY ASKED FOR BREAD

Constitutions do not still hunger. Words do not fill the void in the stomach. The scarcity was man-made. Winter is still to run through. Spring is a critical time between the harvests. The crisis was foretold by many. Appeals were made a long time back by many of the Social Democratic leaders of the British Zone. Dr. Arnold, the North-Rhein-Westphalian Premier, drew the attention of the Allies to the growing food unrest. Bockler, President of the German Federation of Trade Unions of the British Zone, had already warned that unless the food situation improved, the occupation-powers would be forced to use their troops against food-rioters, looters of food-shops and farmsteads and against strikers. Many Germans and most of the foreign observers believed that the food-crash was not wholly unwelcome to the occupation authorities. A little hunger would "larn" them Germans to feel properly sinful, and to be truly grateful for American generosity.

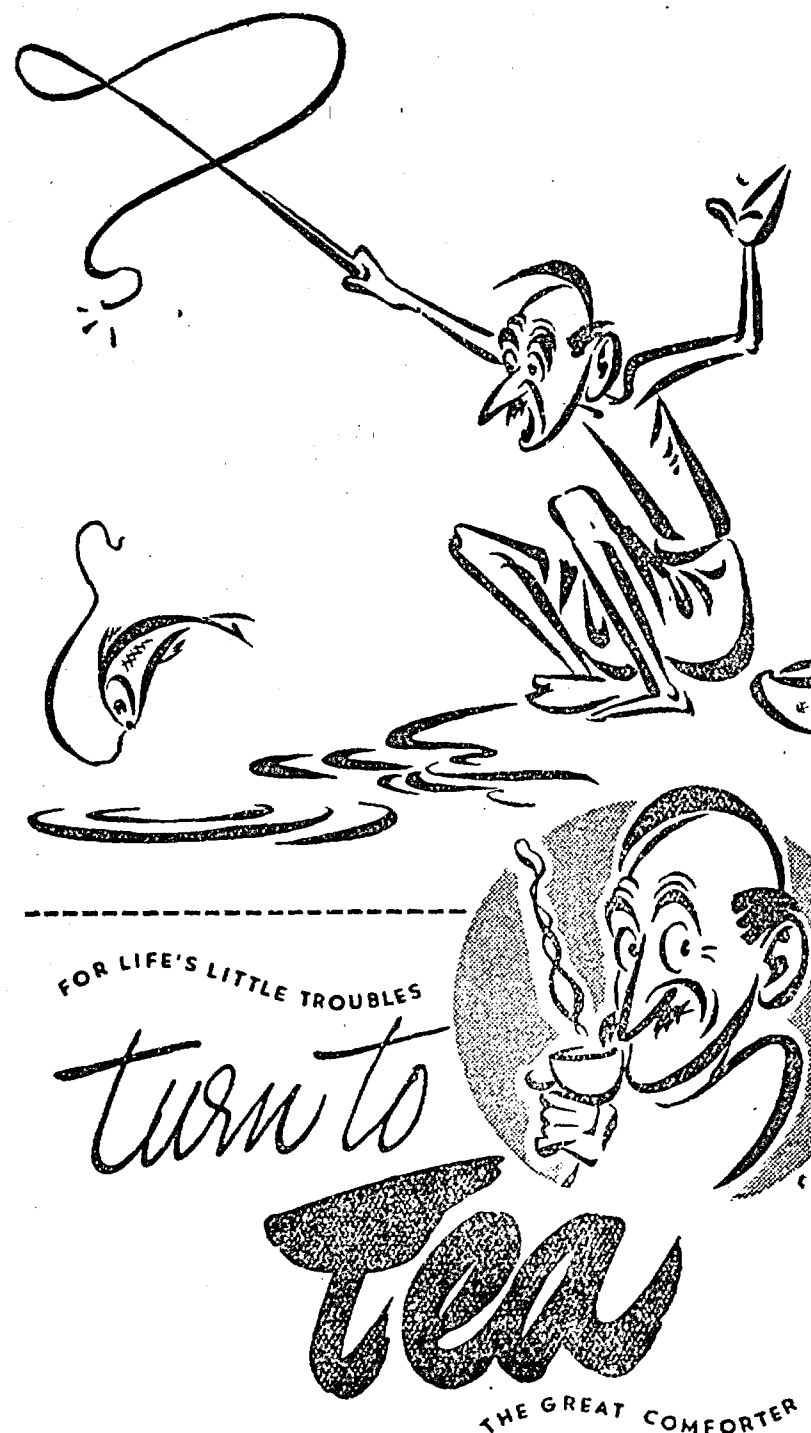
—AND WERE GIVEN A SMOKE!

Bevin has sent an urgent message to Marshall to rush food-supplies to

Germany to stop the strikes and to take the wind out of the Communist agitation. New York messages say that supplies are already on their way, and add a rider that "American circles believe that additional grain supplies to Germany might force up wheat prices" (!). And what do "American help shipments" consist of? Here is the despatch of a Washington correspondent:

"To fight the strike threat in Western Germany, U.S.A. has now thrown in a million-strong army of cigarettes on the Western Front. On the day the announcement was made in Bi-zonia that rations would be cut to 1,200 calories, 400 million American cigarettes and 35 million cigars were distributed (sic.) to the workers in Frankfurt. This is only the first instalment; for, according to a long article in the "Wall-Street Journal", the small and medium-sized tobacco factories in America have launched "A Smokes for Europe" campaign... The "Journal" hopes that "this would not only help American policy in Europe, but also the American tobacco trade. The farmers look forward by this means to get rid of 450 to 500 million lbs. of tobacco, and the factories, specially the smaller ones, hope to keep their works going. Tobacco prices had toppled last week and unless the Government comes forward with timely help, tobacco cultivation would come down to at least a fifth of the present acreage"..... The cigarette campaign has created as strong an impression on the American public as any of the carefully worked out statistics of the Marshall Plan. A refusal or even a reduction, of the European credits, it is said in Government circles, would not only strengthen the Communist position in Europe, but would seriously affect American exports".

It may be possible to use for production of food the vast stores of solar energy that now are wasted on desert and sea. One of the glorious promises of atomic science is that it will help to solve one of the most vexing problems of humanity—how to keep food production in pace with the growth of the world's population.—LILIENTHAL



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Profile

EAMON DE VALERA



“WHENEVER I wanted to know what the Irish people wanted, I had only to examine my own heart and it told me straight off what the Irish people wanted.” This claim will sound extravagant but it has been made by Eamon De Valera with some justification, for the Irish people have been electing him to power ever since 1932. The remarkable longevity of his Premiership of Eire is proof of a rare combination of revolutionary and diplomatic qualities in the man. De Valera began his political career as the stormy petrel of Irish nationalism but after he acquired parliamentary strength he has been playing politics so effectively that he is now ranked one of the most astute politicians of Western Europe.

wholly dominated his life ever since. It is a long cry from the teaching of higher mathematics to the shouldering of arms in a political uprising. As is the case with all revolutionaries, De Valera was shaped into what he is by the very movement which he, in his turn, was destined to shape. In 1913 he joined the Irish Volunteers (known later as the Irish Republican Army). Within three years came the famous Rising of April 1916, the anti-British insurrection organised by the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The revolt was crushed but it generated the political ferment that finally won, for the 26 counties of Catholic Ireland, freedom from the centuries-old British domination. At the time of the Rising, De Valera commanded the Republican forces at a strategic post in Dublin, in defending which he showed remarkable courage. Lloyd George once recalled: “In the 1916 Rebellion he played a unique part. He was found at the top of the Post Office in Dublin when the building was recaptured by our fellows. It was proposed to shoot some of the rebels out of hand, but De Valera intervened and said, ‘No! I gave those men orders to do what they did. It is my responsibility and I accept it.’ That attitude rather appealed to our fellows. It was certainly a brave thing for any man to do.” But the

De Valera was born not in Ireland but in far away New York, in the year 1882. And he is not of purely Irish extraction. His father was Spanish and his mother was Irish; both were immigrants. As a child of three years, De Valera was taken from New York to Ireland to be reared by an uncle. The boy grew up on his uncle's farm, went to school and in due course won a scholarship that took him to a college at Dublin. After graduating in Mathematical Science, he worked as teacher and examiner in various institutions. There was nothing to indicate the future revolutionary in this unremarkable career—except perhaps the keen interest that he took in the study of Gaelic. But interest in the Gaelic League which was working for the revival of the native Irish language, was but an oblique expression of nationalist sentiment.

It was in the years preceding the outbreak of World War I that De Valera, already middle-aged, was drawn to politics. Politics has

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Republican insurgents were hopelessly outnumbered and were forced to surrender. In the repression that followed, many Republican leaders were executed. That De Valera survived was partly due to the fact that his court-martial came somewhat late and, in the interval, there had been many protests against the brutal suppression of the Irish nationalists. Among those who raised their voices in defence of the insurgents was George Bernard Shaw who said: "I am violently and arrogantly Protestant by family tradition; but let no English Government therefore count on my allegiance..... I remain an Irishman and am bound to contradict any implication that I can regard as a traitor any Irishman taken in a fight for Irish independence against the British Government, which was a fair fight in everything except the enormous odds my countrymen had to face." De Valera was sentenced to penal servitude for life on May 11, 1916. But the movement for the release of the prisoners resulted in a jail delivery the next year. De Valera emerged from prison as a national figure for the first time; he had been nominated, while he was in jail, for a bye-election. He won by a big majority and shortly afterwards achieved the distinction of being elected President of Sinn Fein. He defined the objective of the movement in these words: "Sinn Fein has a definite policy, to make English rule impossible in Ireland." But the English did not appreciate his policy, and De Valera was jailed once again. While still in jail he was re-elected to Parliament. After effecting a sensational escape from prison, De Valera made his first bow on the stage of international politics by undertaking a tour of the United States to propagate the cause of Irish independence.

Faced with sustained guerilla warfare, the British Government decided to climb down. Lloyd George invited the Irish Republicans to send a delegation to London for negotiating a treaty. On December 6, 1921, the Irish delegation signed the treaty under the terms of which an Irish Free State was created,

comprising the whole island except the six Northern counties. The members of the Free State Dail (Parliament) were, however, required to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. The ranks of the Irish Republicans were grievously split over the question of ratifying the treaty. De Valera objected to the oath, and advocated rejection of the treaty. But the treaty was ratified by a majority of the Republicans, and De Valera was reduced to the position of spokesman for an unpopular minority. William T. Cosgrave formed the first free Irish Government in 1922. The resistance offered by De Valera's Republican 'Irregulars' did not command public sympathy, and was more of a nuisance than a menace to the Government. Realising the futility of armed resistance, De Valera began to organise an opposition political party. He called it Fianna Fail (Warriors of Destiny). The programme of his party was the achievement of total political sovereignty for a united Ireland, and of certain radical economic reforms.

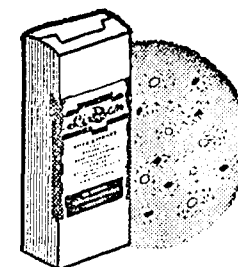
De Valera entered the Free State Dail in 1927 at the head of his party and, in order to do so, he had to take the abhorred oath. He tried to explain away the retreat from his original position by such hair-splitting as this: "I am not prepared to take the oath. I am not going to take it. I am prepared to put my name down here in this book in order to get permission to get into the Dail, and it has no other significance." When a deputy in the Dail asked if De Valera did not know what it was he was signing, the reply came: "Yes. I signed it in the same way as I signed an autograph for a newspaper. If you ask me whether I had any idea of what was there, I say, Yes, but it was not read to me, nor was I asked to read it." Steadily gathering public support, Fianna Fail was able, in 1932, to secure the largest number of votes of any party in the Irish Free State. And so De Valera found himself at the head of the government of a State which he had passionately denounced and

against which he had fought in arms.

In the period of sixteen years during which he has governed Eire, De Valera has done much to improve the living conditions of Irish farmers and to develop the country's industries. In the political sphere, he has, to all practical purposes, abolished the oath of allegiance and made Eire a sovereign nation in purely 'external association' with the British Commonwealth. The independence of Eire was strikingly established by its position of neutrality in World War II. Though, as an important exporter of food stuffs to Britain, and by permitting its citizens to volunteer in the British forces, Eire indirectly helped the Allies, the country was also the centre of considerable Fascist activity. When the U.S. Government asked, in February 1944, that German and Japanese representatives be expelled from Eire, De Valera refused to oblige. Eire's role during the war has enabled Russia to block that country's admission to U.N.O. De Valera's indifference to the outcome of the war illustrates the conservative and reactionary character of some of his actions. His encouragement of an intense self-absorption with national status and the imposition of a rigid press censorship, have kept the Irish people from taking an informed interest in international issues. De Valera's efforts to revive Gaelic as "the universal language of our people" is another instance. Though it ceased centuries ago to be a living language except in the extreme west, De Valera has made a knowledge of Gaelic a necessary qualification for many Government appointments. Once he went to the length of declaring that if he were obliged to choose for Ireland between the Gaelic language and political liberty, he would prefer Ireland to speak Irish and be otherwise unfree. Further, De Valera has done little to relax the pervasive clerical control over social life, himself holding to old-fashioned ideas regarding women's rights.

These considerations would seem to favour the growth of a more modern, forward-looking party in

opposition to Fianna Fail. The possibility of such a development was indirectly expressed by De Valera himself when he warned recently that "forces working for the overthrow of democracy will appear in Ireland disguised as groups of well-meaning people concerned only with social improvement." The General Election held this month has not, however, marked the emergence of any Left-Wing threat to De Valera's position. Fianna Fail is still the largest single party in the Dail, though it does not command an absolute majority. "It would be difficult, after sixteen years, to imagine Eire without 'Dev.' in power," wrote a commentator just before the election. But the outcome of the election seems to be yet another lease of political power to Eamon De Valera.



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Short Story

The Serpent Gem

Original Story
in Tamil by
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THE jasmine was in leaf again. The time it budded was also the time that quickened the mind of Ulundayi to thoughts and dreams—such dreams of delight. And it was in a hollow beneath this jasmine bush that the serpent, traditionally associated with the home, dwelt and dreamed.

A few days ago the jasmine was dense with foliage. It had not put forth even a single bud. Ulundayi would go round and round the bush. To no purpose. Could thoughts and dreams well up in her mind, could she be joyous when her hands were empty? She would feel deeply deceived; she would be filled with an endless yearning.

And it was while she gleaned buds from this bush that Manickam often presented himself to be the butt of her good-humoured raillery. He couldn't distinguish between a full and a half-blown bud, he would cull one and all. Howsoever much she instructed him, emphasizing their difference, his ignorance remained heavy. Again and again he made the same mistake. Watching him thus, Ulundayi would fly into a real anger sometimes; the next moment she would be tickled into laughter. She would snap at him, she would mock him. Nevertheless, Manickam bore everything with infinite patience. Now he had left for his village. Perhaps, knowing of his departure, the jasmine shrub had covered itself so closely with leaves.

At dusk, in the growing light of the moon, Ulundayi had culled many a time many a measure of buds from this brake. During the night she would put the buds in a pitcher filled with water; at dawn the following day they would have opened, wafting their exquisite scent. She would thread them nicely. Part of the wreath she would set aside for adorning the idol of Lord Ganesa at the foot of the village banyan; winding a little about her tresses she would distribute the rest among her girl friends.

Why did the bush that flowered all through the year go so suddenly dense with leaves without putting forth a

solitary bud? They say that even a barren Asoka tree burst into flower at the touch of a lovely maiden's foot. Why should this jasmine bush that was trodden over daily by Ulundayi when she went around it in search of buds remain mutinous?

And addressing her father, Ulundayi asked him, wrinkling her nose, aweary:—

"Why doesn't our jasmine flower at all, father?"

She was still a maiden, very lovely. How could she know anything about the mysteries of flowering plants?

Sami Chendan, her father, broke into a smile. This naive query of his daughter, his only child, amused him hugely. After he lost his wife he centred all his affection and love on his daughter. Poor dear, the motherless child!—ran his thought, keeping his heart for ever tender towards her. Was he lacking in riches? Was he wanting in respect? He lived in a storeyed house. He was good to all; he believed in the dignity of labour; he was a god-fearing man. So straight and god-fearing that the whole village called him a saint. He led a simple, selfless life. However, he had one desire, one supreme anxiety: his darling Ulundayi should be happy as the day is long; he couldn't bear to see her face cloud for a little moment.

"What makes you laugh, father? Will the jasmine flower again?"

"Inside of a week I shall make it bloom wildly, my dear. Don't you worry."

He scattered around the bush a generous heap of straw and set fire to it. The leaves of the jasmine were sere and blackened. Within two days, shedding all the leaves, the brake stood bare. Then Sami Chendan applied a choice fertilizer to the spot and flooded it with water. And quick and profuse of growth the jasmine bush rose up like a big white bubble of buds. Ulundayi went into raptures, she began to gather the buds.

And it was now that she remembered the serpent. She thought: The other

day father strewed a lot of straw about the jasmine and set fire to it. God alone knows what happened to the snake in the hollow beside the bush. Poor thing! And she clicked her tongue in sympathy.

To Sami Chendan all plants and creepers were like children. At a short distance he sat, pulling out the pest-eaten leaves from a brinjal plant and stroking tenderly the healthy ones.

If the serpent had not been burnt to death it was certain to be seen in the night, thought Ulundayi. But all these days she had never once thought about it. Was her memory cheating her or was the serpent really dead? Better watch for it to-night, she decided. But her troubled mind didn't find rest in the thought.

"Father, don't you remember how you burnt the hay about the jasmine plant? Might the serpent have died then?" she asked, loud enough to reach his ears.

"What do you say?" said Chendan, laughing softly. "Is it the snake? No, it can't have died. It's only among mankind that you see creatures who can neither face their enemy nor take to flight. The snake and the bird are different. Our snake would have scooted at the very first hint of smoke."

"Here I am, uncle. Ulundi is gathering flowers, I suppose," said Manickam, coming into view.

"Welcome, my boy," said Chendan, affably.

Ulundi hid herself behind the jasmine bush.

"Ah-ha! You think I've not seen you. Come out, my good girl," cried Manickam.

"Welcome, cousin," said Ulundayi, shaking with laughter. "Welcome to wring the necks of all these infants."

"O-ho! You alone are clever. The rest are stupid," said Manickam, walking toward the bush.

He began to cull the buds. Leaving aside the pure white ones he plucked those which were still tender and tinged with green. Arguments, snorts of sarcasm, and laughter followed in quick succession.

"To-morrow the cocoanut saplings have to be watered. Will you help, Manickam? It must be finished early, the heat will be unbearable later," said Chendan.

"I shall come, surely I shall," answered Manickam.

"Why to-morrow? The moon shines bright and cousin can do a bit even now. I shall look to the puddles, you needn't tire yourself," said Ulundayi, looking at her father.

"My! Hark to her, Manickam! Ulundi has grown. She doesn't want her father to do a spot of work and she is going to feed him plump," spoke Sami Chendan.

"Don't you be a whit anxious, uncle. If she doesn't feed you I shall," said Manickam, glancing at Ulundi with the tail of his eye.

Whereupon Ulundayi laughed a ringing silver laughter, while Chendan muted his, deep down his mouth.

Chendan knew that these two made the finest pair in all the village. No, he wasn't going in search of a groom for his daughter. Still, he asked within himself whether it was seemly for the young ones to be so free and boisterous, to cut jokes, to exchange sly hints and innuendoes. But he didn't like to interfere.

"All right then. Gather the buds with care and come in quick. I shall get the leaves ready for the meal," said Chendan, and walked towards the veranda of the house.

The serpent, no doubt, was intimate with the home and the family; but it was a poisonous creature. One had to be cautious. And Chendan warned his daughter against it, every time she went to pluck the buds.

But Ulundayi had no fears. Even if she had any Manickam chased them away. His faith was deep-rooted that the serpent of the house was incapable of hurt.

Of all the young men in the village Manickam was the most educated. He had imbibed his learning both from the pial school and the Christian missionary. None in the length and breadth of the village could read the *Tiruppugazh* so quickly as he. In the Holi Festival celebrated in commemoration of the burning of Kama, he, as one of the group that did not favour the burning, sang the songs with tremendous gusto. His store of stories was inexhaustible. He had recounted some to Ulundayi.

After Chendan's exit Ulundayi asked Manickam:—

"You haven't as yet finished the tale of the Serpent Gem. What happened to the girl?"

"She gleaned flowers," drawled Manickam, as though it were the burden of

a song, and laughing continued: "Look here, shall I pluck this bud? Tell me." And as if touching one that drooped over her shoulder he pinched her there lightly.

"Now, no billing and cooing," she snapped, shaking her body finely.

"Then you don't want the story. I'm off," said Manickam.

"O, you are incorrigible."

She smiled showing all her teeth.

"Look! All the buds have disappeared," he exclaimed.

"Where?"

"Into your mouth."

He winked mischievously at her.

And thus they whiled away the time in pranks and play.

"Ulundi, girl, time for your kanji. And bring Manickam along," called out the voice of Sami Chendan from the house.

But Manickam had already left.

Ulundayi and her father sat down for their meal of rice-gruel.

It was only when he stretched his body on the wider part of the veranda that Chendan got his sleep. Close by was the byre and he needed for his slumbers and snores the soft unbroken drone of the cows chewing the cud leisurely. Deprived of this drone his eyes will not close for a second. He retired for the night to his accustomed place in the veranda.

Ulundayi lay on the cot which stood farther away, where the veranda was raised and narrow. If a princess knew the bliss of slumbering on a bed of soft swandown then Ulundayi knew hers on her coir-knitted cot. With his own hands, for his darling's sake, Sami Chendan made the strings out of a variety of fibre and wove the diamond-checked mattress so cunningly that it retained its suppleness for all time. He had learnt the work from a wandering kurava; none else in the village knew this mode of knitting.

Ulundi lay on the cot. She would not sleep. She was so happy. Her thoughts were on the wing. She remembered the refrain of the song that Manickam was wont to sing often: *Dance, Serpent! Dance well, Serpent!*

The jasmine had flowered. Manickam was present. But what had happened to the snake? She must watch for it to-night; she was not going to sleep without spotting it; so was she resolved.

Gr-r-r-r-r!

O, was it the snake?

Ulundi listened intently. She burst into a low laughter. It was not made by the snake, it was her father snoring. "God, what a snore!" she muttered to herself, laughing softly.

In the courtyard the shadows of the cocoanut saplings were fading out slowly. The moon waned and darkness closed in. Ulundi's eyes shut in weariness. She was half asleep.

Sh-sh-s-s-s!

Biologists of the present day aver that a snake has no ears. It might be so. But Ulundi was endowed with the 'ears of the snake'—an acute reptilian faculty usually believed in.

Sh-sh-s-s-s!

Of a sudden Ulundi opened her eyes. From the transitory state of a half-slumber she was wide awake. She pricked up her ears to the sibilance. She heard it clearly. It certainly was the serpent. The scent of jasmine came floating through the air. And the reptile that dwelt under the bush breathed the very same smell. She had inhaled it often before.

Sh-sh-s-s! Sh-sh-s-s-s! hissed the snake.

In front of the house, beside the fence, where the red arali and the kartikai plants stood almost glued to each other, the snake lay curled up every night, hissing till the east whitened and then gliding into its hole. In the fitful intervals she was awake. Ulundayi had heard this hiss. She was not frightened, on the contrary she was all eager to listen to it. And quite deliberately she would rise from her bed and walking across the courtyard spit at the foot of the golden arali which grew a little away from the red one. While going a-worship to the temple of Draupadi Amman, Ulundi had listened to the stories from the *Mahabharata*. The snake was a garland round the neck of Lord Siva; the snake was the couch of Lord Vishnu. The robe which Kunti had placed in the box in which she immured child Karna sprang like a real live serpent at those pretenders who came to claim him as her own, as the one who had given him birth. And it seemed to Ulundayi that the serpent under the jasmine bush which was part and parcel of her home had come to stand guard over her, to defend her who was a virgin against all harm. Sometimes she even imagined herself to be a daughter of the gods.

Sh-sh-s-s!

So the serpent was not dead. Her mind was at peace. She slept the sleep of the just.

The day dawned. True to his word, Manickam presented himself for the work of watering the cocoanut plants.

He began heaving the picottah out of the well and tilt it at the mouth of the runnel which was padded with cast-off old thatch. Chendan directed the water through the branching rillets to flow into the neat little puddles.

Ulundayi finished her morning ablutions, collected twigs for the kitchen fire and began preparations against the breakfast.

*The rain, it may not rain!
It burns, the summer sun!
Yet O, Golden Well,
you'll not dry, you retain
the coolness of a dell!*

Ulundayi heard the song. It was Manickam singing while at work.

*And when the brave among
the heroes take the bow
into their hands, and strung
the string that doth propel
the shaft to flashing run,
at the selfsame moment then,
still, steadfast as the Cow
who stands, her teat to swell,
and spurt and stream,
as in a dream,
syrup hyblan,
you bide, O, Milky Well!*

Thus singing hilariously, Manickam drew picottah after picottah of water from the well and kept the rivulets babbling. And listening to his song, Ulundayi bustled about the kitchen cheerfully. To Chendan, however, the song was of no import; he was concerned more about the saplings which had managed to put forth a tiny cluster of nuts, as his roving eyes indicated the while he turned the water into the far-flung puddles.

Now and again Ulundayi came with her pot to the well to catch water from the flowing stream. And every time she came, despite her best control and mounting over her tightly-pressed lips, a smile travelled up and twinkled in her eyes. In sheer wantonness Manickam threw out the water wildly, splashing it over her saree and wetting it as much he could, and enjoying his mischief with puffs of laughter.

And hardly had he completed his work when there arose from the courtyard yonder the tumult and shouting of children. The cause of the excitement was a snake-charmer. A woollen blanket such as the shepherds use was flung

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across his shoulders. In one hand he held his pipe, in the other was the snake-basket.

From house to house in the village had he gone and caught a snake from every home and got the reward. The crowd of urchins followed him witnessing the fun.

Sami Chendan too invited him to catch the serpent that dwelt in his compound.

"Please, let the snake be where it is, father. The pidaran can go his way," said Ulundayi.

"Be quiet, girl. Let us see how he does the trick," cried Manickam. Then turning to the snake-charmer he asked:—

"Could you catch a king cobra?"

"Why, I've caught a king cobra from every house hereabouts," came the reply.

"And how should we reward you?"

"Oh, what does a poor fellow like me want? Every big lord in the village has given me a dhoti, a measure of rice, and a four-anna coin. These are but a trifle to my master."

Ulundayi didn't like in the least the man bearing away the snake. But she liked to see the fun. And her silence signified her assent.

The snake-charmer began to blow on his pipe. He blew for a long while.

"It's a dangerous snake, my masters. It's unruly, it gives trouble. It doesn't come out. But who's going to leave it alone? Not me!" And he blew on his pipe more vigorously.

At long last the serpent emerged. Like Vasuki darting straight at the breast of Partha it came pitching and hissing. But it didn't press on to where the snake-charmer stood. Wriggling this way and that it tried to scamper back. But the snake-charmer wouldn't let it slip so easily. Now stooping, now squatting, now rising, now swaying, he tripped and frisked before the snake, swinging his pipe as he blew on, round and round to a quicker and quicker measure. The serpent spread its hood; sniffed and snuffled; then planting the point of its tail on the ground it reared its body erect, crouched a quick crouch, and sprang forward to sting the pipe, its eyes streaming with fire. Like a fiend its striped and spotted hood tossed to and fro, following the pipe wherever it turned. The snake-charmer danced; the pipe danced; the serpent danced; all the crowd of children danced, as if possessed. Ulundi's heart alone trem-

bled and shrank within her. Was this the snake that night after night lay buzzing at the foot of the red arali? It was really a blessing that the snake-charmer had come to capture it.

Then quick as thought, playing on the pipe with one hand, he stretched out with the other something resembling a root at the nose of the serpent. Instantly, like a man etherized, the reptile collapsed in a heap, its head falling with a thud upon the earth. Simultaneously, pulling out the black woollen blanket from his shoulders, the snake-charmer threw it over the serpent and seizing it within its folds put it into his basket snapping down the lid. Then receiving the reward for his labours he departed, the children trotting after him as in a procession.

"Hereafter Ulundi need have no fears. She may pluck the flowers safely," said Manickam, laughing.

"Right you are, my boy," concurred Chendan.

But Ulundayi did not speak. She simply clicked her tongue. Yes, it was good that the serpent had been caught. Or, wasn't it a pity she would not see it any more. Whatever of the two sentiments her gesture palatal might have signified, it might be possible that it implied both.

"All right, now come in for your meal," she said, rising.

Chendan and Manickam drank the thin rice gruel from cups made of leaf. Afterwards they had their leisurely chew of pan and nut.

That night when Ulundayi retired to rest she couldn't get a wink of sleep. The refrain *Dance, Serpent!* haunted her through the wakeful hours. She remembered too the song Manickam had sung while he heaved the picottah out of the well. What was the cow he referred to in his song? Was it a black cow? And she harked back to yet another thing, now that the serpent had gone. In the story Manickam had told her, a maiden got the gem that the serpent shed from its head. Likewise she had hoped with such deep wistfulness that the serpent of her house would bestow the gift of its brilliant on her. Alas, it was gone! Her limbs loosened with longing, her heart ached keenly. She kept awake thinking and agonizing, sleep refused to be wooed. The shadows of the cocoanut palms were swallowed by the dark. The moon had set. She couldn't get even the half-sleep she had had yesterday.

The birds had all gone to roost, utter silence prevailed through the dead hours

of the night. A solitary gecko squeaked its idiom. Ulundi started in her bed. Having seen the other day the horrid dance of the serpent—like the dance of Kalinga of old, she imagined—the slightest sound as that of a lizard filled her with dread. She had no time to conclude her thoughts....

Sh-sh-s-s-s!

The serpent hissed. Ulundi shook with fear. So it was not the last of it. It had returned, returned along with the scent of jasmine. The perfume pierced through her nostrils. She lay doubled up, wrapping the mat of fronds tightly about her, without moving a muscle. Till the first streaks of the sun silvered the sky the hiss sounded without cease.

Mercifully the dawn broke.

Finishing his breakfast Chendan went out to survey the paddy fields.

Ulundi felt frightened to stay alone in the house even in the broad light of the day.

Time hung heavy for Manickam. Could he, the habitue, stay away for five minutes together from Chendan's house? He came, his lips parted in a wide smile, displaying his rows of parian. Ulundi felt highly relieved at the sight of him, the pressure of a nameless fear had been almost unbearable. She greeted him effusively.

"O-ho! A wonder indeed!" cried Manickam. "You are not running away, you don't hide yourself, you are receiving me so cordially. Surely we are going to have thundershowers to-day."

He took his seat in the veranda.

"Where's uncle?" he asked.

"Gone to the fields," answered Ulundayi.

"Then I too must be going," said he, making a pretence of rising.

"No, no. Don't go. Do stay," she pleaded.

"Why?" he chaffed.

"No jokes now. Please don't go."

"My eye! Am I to be the watchman of the house or—or—your watchman?"

"Of both."

"My wage?"

"Whatever you demand?"

"Sure?"

"Sure."

He leaped to his feet and lifting his hand high over his head, with a finger pointing aggressively, said:—

"Will you marry me this year itself?"

His look went sheepish. That was the first time she was seeing such an expression on his face.

Ulundayi held herself up proudly and gazed at him so ardently that it seemed as though she would devour him then and there. So burning was her passion for him.

"Have you any doubts still?" she gently asked.

He found it hard to answer her. He stood spellbound. A feeling too deep for words warmed his heart.

*It was the golden hind,
I did surmise;
it is the spotted deer
that now I find.
O, endless is my cheer,
my delight,
like to one who was blind
is restored the light
of his eyes!*

He sang, his emotions becoming vocalic in tranquillity. He was no urban man, he had not seen one motion picture. He did not touch her; he did not clasp her to his bosom and kiss her. In that instant she looked utterly holy to him. Wasn't she the loveliest of maidens round whose neck he was to

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tie the tail? He wanted to marry her in that state of perfection, without the faintest fleck to mar his ideal. He forgot himself in his introspection, sitting there in the veranda. Silently Ulundayi disappeared into the house.

"Ulundi!" he called tenderly.

"Yes," she answered, hurrying out.

He laughed to hide his confusion. She too laughed.

"The snake—" he attempted to open the talk.

"It's still there," she cried, "that's why I am so afraid."

Don't you know the secret? The snake-charmer didn't catch it after all."

"Then?"

It sounded like a puzzle to her.

"He had already got a snake inside his basket. He just let it loose near every house and went on catching it. Fine game, isn't it?"

How did Manickam discover this deception?

Under the shade of the banyan which stood in the outskirts of the village, the snake-charmer had taken his place one evening. He entertained a group of children by playing on his pipe and catching the snake which, unknown to them, he had already let out of his basket. Manickam who had gone to the tank near by for his bath witnessed the scene. The snake-charmer had with him only one snake. Manickam inquired of him if it were not so, but he couldn't get at the truth. Such a consummate rogue! Then he bribed him with a cloth and some petty cash; and he came round. Every serpent wouldn't show itself out so easily, he said, when it heard the sound of his pipe. Only such as had no lair, no hole of a permanent habitation, the nomads would be attracted. It was true he had but one snake, and he repeated the act of releasing and seizing it wherever he went.

"What a knave! He took us all for a lot of fatheads," said Ulundayi.

"But he has given me a bit of a root that has the power of hypnotizing a serpent. Why, in a noose at the tip of a cocoanut leaf you can strangle a snake. Flick, and it's done. No incantation, no magical gibberish. What's wanted is a cunning brain, just a pair of dexterous hands," said Manickam, his words a digest of the snake-charmer's lore.

Incredulous, her mouth agape, Ulundayi listened to Manickam. Then with a ripple of laughter, she said:—

"Let alone all that. What's the wedding present you are going to give me?"

"What would you like to have?"

"Fact that you know how to catch a snake?" she asked, hesitant, timid, the words faltering out of her mouth.

"I do know," he replied. "But what for do you want a snake? For a garland?"

"No. You told me the story of the Serpent Gem, didn't you? Could you make the snake that dwells beneath our jasmine bush vomit the gem out of its mouth?"

"It would die then."

"Let it."

"It must be caught alive. If it's killed the gem would vanish like magic. Living it must be made to vomit. But if it's forced to vomit it'll die. That's what the story tells," ended Manickam.

"I don't know all that, I don't need to know, I want only the gem," said Ulundayi.

"Poor creature, the snake! Should it die then?"

"Oh, you are afraid. Only you talk big." She spoke with a faint scorn.

It stung him to the quick.

"You think so, do you?" he said, huskily. "Here, in a trice, I shall bring you the snake." And he rose in a tearing hurry.

"Wait a minute. Wash your face and hands and come in. The kanji is ready. Drink it and then you may go snake-catching," she said, trying to detain him.

"No," snapped he, racing towards the bush.

For a moment Ulundayi stood stock-still. A strange feeling overpowered her. Her heart beat tumultuously. She tried to laugh away what struck her as an evil premonition but her taut nerves defied untampering. Silently she went into the house.

By now Manickam had reached the jasmine bush. He shook it with all his might. He poked at the pile of rotting leaves and other rubbish around with his stick. Presently the serpent shot out of its hole, hissing furiously. With hood outspread it darted forward. Manickam stretched forth the root he held in his hand. The creature ignored it, snuffling viciously, and stung him

arm. He didn't beat back, the instant he had bashed it with one of his stick.

"Ulundi! Ulundi!" he cried suddenly. "Back to me. I'll no more tie the tail round your neck. My life is over. Now give me a kiss, just one kiss!"

Seated within the house Ulundi was unaware of what was happening outside. Deep in her a joy welled up. It was not without alloy. An unknown pain mingled with it. Stirring and sunk in thoughts that blossomed in her mind the while bubbles rose and burst in the pot, she busied herself. Manickam would be with her, the gift of the precious gem in his hands, she dreamed.

"Ulundi! My life is over.....just one kiss!"

The voice broke upon her with the force of a sudden blow.

She ran out screaming wildly.

Meanwhile Manickam had gone dizzy. His head was in a whirl; his eyes darkened; his legs tottered. He crumpled down. Beside him lay the dead snake.

Ulundi gathered him in her arms and sloping him gently across her shoulder bore him to the veranda. And there she laid him, lamenting loudly. She sobbed, she raved, she was desolated. "Sinner that I am, I asked you for the Serpent Gem, and asking for it I lost the most precious of all gems! Oh, my treasure, my all, my life! Why should you have listened to me—me the imbecile, the crassest of creatures on the face of the earth? Oh, why should you cheat me so, Manickam, my Manickam!" She wept in a frenzy of misery.

Manickam was gone. The serpent too. Uncared for, neglected, the jasmine buds opened and faded and fell all over the bush. The serpent was gone; but that day Ulundi herself had changed into a serpent within her home. No youth dared to come near her house. A virgin pure she remained a virgin through the passing years, beautiful, unapproachable. But she didn't deem herself a virgin. Asked, that was her answer.

Did she say she was a bride forever?

She did.

ROSAMOND LEHMANN

by R. VENKATESWARAN

ROSAMOND Lehmann is one of the most distinguished novelists of today. She was born at Fieldham in Buckinghamshire of a well-known and talented family. Her father was a Member of Parliament who used to be a regular contributor to *Punch*. There is music in her blood: nobody can be said to have really understood her novels if he does not know at least the rudiments of the theory of music. Probably she inherited her musical talent from Liza Lehmann, a famous Edwardian pianist and composer who was related to her.

Writing came to her easily and naturally. She was quite young when her first book *Dusty Answer* was chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club in America. Here was a new kind of novel, a penetrating, sympathetic study of the life of a young girl. Judith Earle, the young

heroine, forms a passionate attachment for her girlhood playmates and falls in love with one of them. But unfortunately that young man is not interested in her at all. She risks everything in having him but it was obvious that the young man she loved did not care for her that way at all. Life had only this dusty answer to give to her passionate yearning. Her attachments were obsessions because she was brought up in seclusion; her temperament was introspective: she liked dreaming away how she would reconstruct the lives of those she loved. No woman novelist had ever succeeded in giving such a profound and such a true account of the mental life of a young girl.

Her second great novel, *Invitation to the waltz*, is equally remarkable though the range of emotions explored is much less than in the

previous novel. Here is a study of female adolescence under its English, middle-class, respectable environments. The whole novel is constructed like a piece of music; it tells simply what Olivia Curtis, aged 17, did, thought and dreamed on the day of her 'coming out' ball. First her home life is described in vivid detail—then the actual ball itself at the Spencer's where she was not quite a success. True, in the second part, the authoress introduces some very trite types of people who assemble at such functions but Olivia moves through the story like a flame. She is so

Rosamond Lehmann innocent, green and pure. Here again is a very delicate and truthful study of a girl's mind at the dawn of womanhood.



In her next important novel, *The Weather in the Streets*, Rosamond Lehmann tried a far more difficult theme—the agonized, insecure love of an unmarried woman for a married man, truly a subject for tragedy. Here is the portrait of the adult Olivia Curtis, and as such is an epilogue to *Invitation to the Waltz*. Olivia met Rollo Spencer at her first ball; he married into Society but the marriage was a failure as he loved Olivia. The affair between Rollo and Olivia might well be called sordid if written without charm and delicacy, as it meant mean shifts, continuous deception and a prolonged state of agony due to the uncertainty which it involved be-

cause of the risks of detection. It is on Olivia that the burden really falls, especially when she realises that she carries Rollo's baby in her womb. The major part of the novel is an account of the agonized thought-stream of Olivia who has to call in the illegal assistance of a doctor to have the foetus removed. And after this operation, the hysterical continuance of the affair and Rollo's increasing coldness tell more and more upon her.

Her latest novel, *The Ballad and the Source*, is a slightly difficult one to read. It is a Book Society choice. Here is a portrait of an old woman, Mrs. Jardine, living alone with a subdued husband and two children not theirs. Mrs. Jardine tells one of the children, Rebecca Landon, her own history. The author seems to be obsessed with heredity and its problems in this book. It lacks the warmth and feeling of *The Weather in the Streets*.

A careful reader cannot but notice the similarity between movements in music and the various stages in her novels. Each novel is like a complete musical piece: this evident similarity is due to something in the style, something in the rapidity of the narration. As an artist, Rosamond Lehmann has great powers, if not of creation in the Dickensian manner, at least of deep understanding and of delicate sureness of touch. Nobody has written about women as she has: Olivia Curtis is an even more challenging woman than Jane Eyre.

John Lehmann, her brother, is the famous editor of *Penguin New Writing*. Rosamond is married to a well-known painter. And they spend most of their time in the country busy with their own respective vocations.

"THE FAH EAST"

Might it not be laid down in hard terms that there is no more need for the *Indiar-office* and the *idear-of*, than there is for us to hear of *Mista Eden* and *Westminsia Abbey*. Yet in these things, I grieve to say, the compilers of the finest modern pronouncing dictionaries are on the side of the enemy. They tell us, following the calamitous ruling of Sweet, that we are not wrong in speaking of the *Bah* of the House. Must we then depend upon the *Fah East*?—S. K. Ratcliffe in a letter to the *New Statesman and Nation*.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

Leaders Must Rise To The Occasion

The imperative and urgent need of the hour is to make each one of the millions of India who has received the shock of Mahatma Gandhi's tragic death realise and appreciate the purpose of the supreme sacrifice. The masses will then dedicate themselves to communal harmony if only for the sake of Gandhiji and the noble way he has shown. Each one of us can do our bit in this direction. The leaders must rise to the occasion. They must turn this mass emotion for communal harmony. By this means they have to disinfect the body politic of communal poison and thereby sterilise the ground from which the communal organisations derive sustenance. I would very earnestly suggest that the entire Governmental and non-official machinery of publicity and propaganda for the next one month should be switched on in full swing to the promotion of the message of communal harmony. The message should be conveyed to the remotest villages in ways and forms that will penetrate deep into the mass-mind.

Muslims in the Indian Dominion must take the initiative for vigorous steps to remove the communal poison from the minds of the Muslim masses. As a first step in this direction, they must voluntarily dissolve their communal organisations instead of waiting for their suppression by Governmental action. They have also a duty to perform by Pakistan. It is the Muslims of the Indian Dominion that achieved Pakistan for the Muslims of Pakistan. It is they that must also inculcate in the Pakistan Muslims the lesson of communal harmony in Pakistan.

B. JAGANNADHADAS.

Gandhi Is Dead: Long Live Gandhi

Gandhi will never cease as a moral force. Gandhi is dead to the eye and the ear but Gandhi is alive to the heart, the mind and the soul.

The assassin's bullet destroyed Gandhi the mortal but unsheathed Gandhi the immortal. Gandhi is an institution, a philosophy and a force. If, unfortunately, the world and India refuse to

see the light that is Gandhi, then truly Gandhi will be killed, not by an assassin, but by his own people.

Every one of us should strive hard to achieve the following objectives:

(1) The State should be a social justice State and not a police State.

(2) Every citizen must be free and equal without any distinction.

(3) Moral force alone should be the basis of power.

His two page memoranda on the Congress organisation is verily a testament that should be followed with sacred reverence by every Congressman.

Gandhi is dead, long live Gandhi.

'SADHAK'.

Our Tarpana To Bapu

If Bapuji had been spared a few conscious seconds, his last testament would have been "Forgive him". Let our Tarpana to Bapuji be the translation of this unuttered behest so that his soul might rest in perpetual blessedness.

KOTA SUBBA RAO.

The Real Test

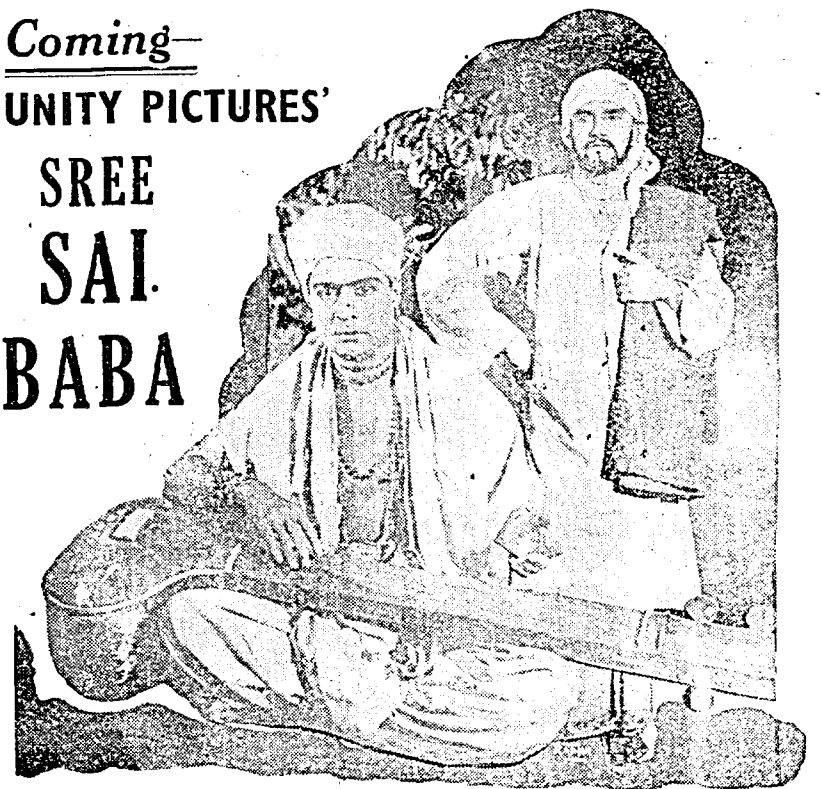
It is blasphemous to attempt to write or speak about Gandhiji unless we try to mend our ways by trying to give up our greed for power, for money and our hatred for other communities. Let Congressmen give up aspiring for positions. Let profiteers and blackmarketeers give up at least 50 per cent of their ill-gotten gains. Let the importance of truth and honesty prevail in every aspect of our life. Let the students in schools and colleges be guided by proper teachers to mould their character. Let them be taught to love one another and honour merit and character. Let their ideals be Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. Let us think of the man in the street and give our full support and loyalty to the leaders in the Centre who form the cream of the nation and who have no cause to serve except the cause of the country and humanity as a whole. This is what every woman like me feels.

R. S. ANASUYABAI.

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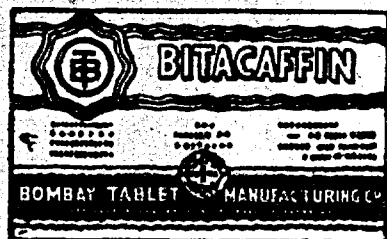
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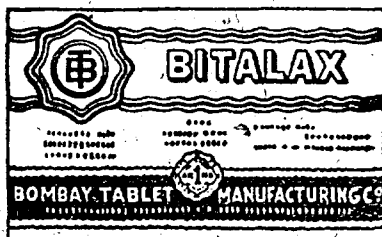


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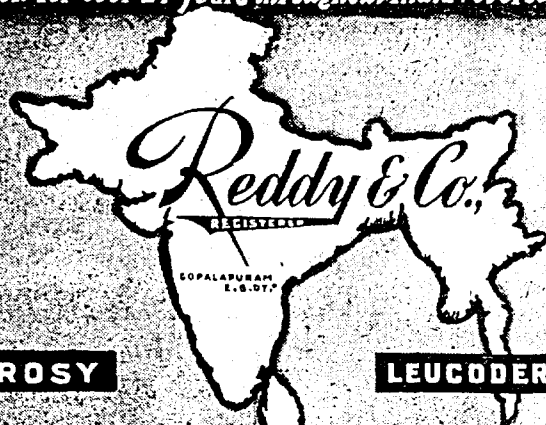
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SWATANTRA

VOL. III. No. 2.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1948.

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GANDHIJI

(30th January, 1948)

★

by *BURRA V. SUBRAHMANYAM*

He was the Indian multitude : and he
Fell victim to the fact of multitude.
He was the nation, near complete. A feud
Destroyed him—and a nation would not be.
He was an ancient faith which anxiously
He strove to save—and fell, by it subdued.
He was all mankind's hope. In death, so rude,
An epitaph on lost humanity.

We, in our millions, killed him, be it known ;
We, half-believers in his creed of love ;
We, cowards, arming 'gainst his anguished brow ;
We, conspirators, whispering by his throne :
We killed him ! And the poor deluded fool
Who shot the lead scarce knew he was our tool !

SWATANTRA

VOL. III
No. 2

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1948

ISSUED
WEEKLY

LINGUISTIC PAKISTAN

IT is very much to be regretted that the controversy between Andhra and Tamil should assume a growing acerbity which is highly disquieting. The aggrieved party, if any, has been the Andhras who have been clamouring for a separate province of their own for the last 20 years at least. But what we actually find today is a somewhat violent counter-offensive organised by the Tamils demanding the 'separation' of Tamil Nad and insisting upon making Madras the headquarters of it. This is an unfortunate move at this juncture for a variety of reasons.

First, the time spirit is in favour of federation and not fragmentation. The emergence of Sourashtra the other day has been justly hailed as a step in the right direction; secondly, while the Congress is committed to the establishment of linguistic provinces, the present demand is accompanied by many manifestations of a spirit of exclusiveness, intolerance and fanaticism which must be disapproved by all men of goodwill.

The original counter-blast to the Andhra demand was the setting up of the cry for the establishment of Dravidasthan. It was a much more ambitious platform as it included not only Tamil but also Andhra, Kerala and Kannada areas in one confederation on the alleged ground of all of them being Dravidian and hence non-Aryan; but when this

agitation fell flat upon the non-Tamil sections of this province, the Dravidasthan demand inevitably receded into the background giving rise to what is now holding the field, the movement in favour of establishing Tamil Kazhagam or Tamil Nad as a separate province.

On general considerations it is no doubt far more feasible to constitute a Tamil Province straightway, for the Tamil Nad area is compactly situated and runs from Madras due south to Cape Comorin and west up to Coimbatore. But the sponsors of the movement are not content merely with the demand for the establishment of a Tamil Province. They bracket with their demand for a Tamil Province a claim for Madras which is made in a provocative manner. For the truth is that if you go back far enough to historical factors, the only conclusion that will emerge is that no single linguistic community can claim Madras exclusively. If you take population count alone, Madras might become Tamil; but by the same token Rajapalayam in the heart of Tamil Nad will have to become an Andhra island because it has a Telugu majority. The argument that Tiruvalluvar was a native of Madras and that therefore Madras is Tamil might be countered by the plea that Thyagayya was a Telugu and that therefore Tanjore should become Andhra. There are no end of absurdities like this, once

our leaders on both sides commit the dreadful mistake of emulating the tactics of the architects of Pakistan.

A still further element of unreality renders these agitations dangerous. There can be no true alignment of linguistic provinces in South India so long as South India is a congeries of the old British Provinces, the Native States of Travancore, Cochin and Mysore and the unique conglomeration known as Hyderabad. A compact and integral Andhra cannot come into being without a part of Hyderabad coming into it. A part of some Kannada districts of our province must really go to Mysore before we can hope to establish Visva Karnataka. The Maharajas of Cochin and Travancore must come to terms with the British districts of Malabar before we can have Aikya Kerala. Such are the wide implications of any one part of our composite province pegging its own exclusive demand without reference to the needs of other parts. Having waited so long, could not the leaders on all sides wait a little more until the Centre is given breathing time to find its feet from the catastrophic events beginning from partition and reaching the climax with Mahatma Gandhi's death.

We are committed to linguistic provinces. There is no mistake about that. For even amidst all the shifting and double-crossing of British policy, they recognised the validity of the linguistic divisions at least in their later day dispositions. Trichy was devised as a radio centre with more than half an eye to its possibility as the future capital of Tamil Nad, with Madura a close second. Similarly we have Bezwada in the north with Vizag as an understudy. Calicut and Trivandrum for Aikya Kerala and Mysore for Visva Karnataka are obvious choices. When provincial capitals are thus established where they should be, in

the heart of their regions, Madras is freed from the untenable and embarrassing demands of too many people with the same degree of validity claimed by each. On the other hand, Madras would then become the metropolitan centre of a southern confederation of all these linguistic areas counter-poising the northern half with its headquarters at Delhi.

People who talk of the tyranny of the Centre or those who with much short-sighted glee exploit regional jealousies like North versus South, will find their occupations gone with the emergence of this pattern of linguistic provinces taking shape in the fullness of time. May we not therefore plead with all the leaders of all parties to bury the linguistic hatchet and to agree to pay some attention to the equally valid, equally strongly cherished objectives of all the parts.

In the present condition of frayed tempers, any attempt to think of the problem of a linguistic set-up from any isolated end would be fraught with irreparable disaster.

The Railway Budget

THIS year's Railway Budget as presented by Dr. John Mathai does not contain, as a natural consequence of the partition, the usual comparative tabular statement enabling us to see at a glance the estimates and actuals for three years running. It is a matter for considerable satisfaction that 1947-48 is expected to end with much less adverse effects than was at one time feared. For it cannot be forgotten for years to come how 1947-48 has been our year of difficulties in more senses than one. The partition of India and the avalanche of horrors which were let loose by it upset our economies in more than a budgetary sense and it is not to be wondered at

if traffic receipts should have been affected, and generally the resources of our railways severely strained. It is therefore a matter for gratification that we are now at a point where we can say that the worst of our disasters are behind us; and that our railway system has not only weathered the storm, but that it has been responsible for doing a fine job of work. Actual figures pertaining to the increase of expenditure in salaries and services have not been given; but that the new budget estimates provide for them and yet register a small surplus is a hopeful sign. It is no doubt difficult for years to come to expect the railways to yield us those bumper profits which they did in the war years, under abnormal conditions.

The estimated surplus for the coming year of about ten crores, after allowing for enhanced rates of pay for the great army of the railway workers, though gratifying in one sense, must be viewed with concern in another. This surplus is the result of reaching a level of passenger and freight rates which, taken as a whole, represent a doubling of the rates which obtained before the war. What is the extent of the shrinkage of traffic under both heads, and what is the contribution of the doubling to the present surplus? These factors are not evident from the figures published. This much however is patent, that we cannot afford to adopt an attitude of complacency in regard to the future. The present rates, specially of passenger traffic, must come down, the sooner the better. Otherwise, the regressive tendency in receipts under fares might become more pronounced in the coming years.

It is a wise decision to defer the allocation of the surplus, and to make it the subject matter of a committee decision under the Speaker's chairmanship. This is the first year

in which the Government draws so little by way of profit from the working of State railways.

The difficulties which the railways have to contend with are largely due to our dependence upon foreign sources for capital improvements, purchase of locomotives and even of many kinds of technical and other spare parts. Dr. Mathai points out that there was an immediate prospect of doubling the number of passenger coaches which would in its turn facilitate an increase in the number of services. But this, by itself, cannot be expected to increase our railway earnings while fares continue to remain at the present forbiddingly high levels. We must therefore devise methods by which further economies might be effected in maintenance and running costs. We must cut down much more stringently the expenditure under imports, specially of spare parts from foreign sources. It is encouraging to be told that a beginning has been made in regard to the manufacture of spare parts in Government ordnance depots and through indigenous private firms. This must be hastened as rapidly as possible.

With regard to decontrol of essential foodstuffs, we are told that it has caused further strain upon the railway system; since with the disappearance of Government priority, there is a scramble for bookings by private trade which do not have the same priorities which the Government had. From the prevailing conditions of scarcity in regard to foodstuffs, it looks as if the decision to decontrol food may have to be scrapped in the near future. If so, this source of uneconomical use of waggons will be automatically put an end to.

Superannuation

A SMALL press note quietly announces that the elections to the Madras City Corporation which must

have been held by the 1st May 1947 have again been postponed to August 1948. The excuse given is a piece of inexcusable puerility. There has been some languid discussion between the Corporation and the Government as to who should print the electoral rolls. Apparently it was a question of such baffling com-

plexity, that no unanimous decision could be arrived at in time. When the first postponement was announced for a similar frivolous reason, we raised the question as to who was responsible for such negligence to perform an elementary duty. We ask the question again.

Sotto Voce

Solomon at Lake Success



THE Marshall Plan may be pure philanthropy plus a very natural desire to make the world safe for Manhattan democrats. Or it may be just bourgeois Machiavellianism to undo the great work of the October Revolution. But not the slightest breath of dissent or suspicion can possibly soil the proposal to export a million American cats to Europe to deal with the rat menace. Or so you think in your innocence. But the knowing guys of the United Nations will be quick to point out, (as they did in the case of Kashmir), that it would not be possible to stop the war now on, unless the rat world could be assured that rats in Europe would get a square deal.

Under the sacred principles of the U. N. charter the rats have as indefeasible a right to self-determination as the community which they threaten to eat out of existence. If war-devastated Europe complains that the rat population has multiplied a hundredfold in the past ten years, the

Security Council, with that judicially blank mind which is greatly calculated to strengthen the public confidence, will retort that it knows nothing about that. All it knows is that on the day the United Nations' attention was drawn to the problem the rats were there in full possession. *Ipsa facto* they are entitled to protection as one of the self-declared nations.

It is the cats that are the interlopers. The President of the American Feline Society, who sponsors the proposal to introduce a million cats to make a meal of the rats, admits that there are practically no cats left in Europe today. Why? He might pretend that the prolonged war starved out the feline population. But the Security Council will hardly swallow that. It will ask how, if the cats could not survive the war, the rats did. And it will go on to demonstrate that the only explanation possible is that the cats, notoriously selfish as they are, deserted the moment they found that life in

Europe would not be all milk and cheese.

From this it follows that if there are still a few cats left in Europe they can only be stragglers who had not the wit to go when the going was good. Very probably, as a result of gross feeding and ingrained slothfulness, they had become obscenely obese and lost their nimbleness. It might be that under the stress of circumstances they, having in the war years been compelled to live on their own fat, were now lean and hungry and ferocious again. That no doubt explains their impudence in showing fight against the rats. But it would be a sin to pamper them or allow an American contingent to rescue them from deserved extinction.

It is, on the other hand, the rats who, having stuck to Europe through thick and thin, deserve a rich reward. They inhabit the European earth in their teeming millions and must therefore be deemed to have inherited it, possession being nine points of law. If you argue that rats are not particularly famous for their loyalty and quote the proverb about their uncanny instinct for deserting a sinking ship, the Solon from the Caribbees will tell you that every rule has its exception, even if it were not the case that proverbs are notorious liars. The rats have not only faithfully stood their ground like Casabianca. They have in the most difficult circumstances imaginable gone on discharging the sacred duty of multiplying the species.

Some one has to meet the bill presented each year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, if you refuse to pay your share by smoking, the money you save must be provided by other people With every packet of cigarettes you smoke, you know you are making a substantial contribution to the national income during a period of crisis. As you go on smoking, you will become more and more an altruist. You will be proving yourself a good neighbour—a man who does not shrink from assuming his share of the general burden.—Robert Lynd.

At this point I hear the exasperated advocate for common sense explode: "D—n you and your *a priori* reasoning! You can't just evolve facts out of your inner consciousness. The rats, like the hordes of Chenghiz Khan and the carrion crow, have an infallible nose for prey. The indigenous rats of Western Europe are not more than a minute fraction of the present inflated total; and the native cats left to themselves could have kept them in order. But these rats have come from all the rat-holes of Asia. Here are

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats, Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,

and they are led by the wily Mullasthan rat, "stout as Julius Caesar", though he, sitting on his haunches before you in prayerful pose, looks the very picture of injured innocence."

There is shocked silence in the Council Chamber. The Grand Panjandruns, their chaste ears insulted by this indecent trumpeting of truth, ask each other in awed whispers: "What is the world coming to? Would such impertinence have been permitted at Lake Geneva?" Meantime the harassed people of Europe may conclude that it is waste of breath to tell the mandarins, so earnestly engaged in stroking themselves back into self-respect, that the cats are their friends as surely as the rats are their enemies. They may even be so inconsiderate as to send the wise men packing and advertise for the services of a Pied Piper.

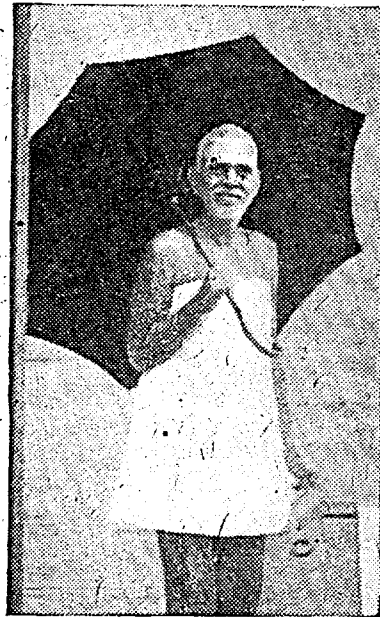
VIGNESWARA

SIDELIGHTS:

The heart of him who truly loves is a paradise on earth; he has God in himself, for God is love.—LAMENNAIS.

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, reverently and affectionately called Bhagwan in the Ashram, draws devotees from far and near. In most cases, people in trouble, unable to shake off some soul-devouring pain, go to him for relief. They do not speak to him about it, because without any need of words, his very presence soothes and quietens and confers peace. He is accessible to all that come. Any question can be put to him. But few take the liberty. They are content simply to sit and gaze, imbibing as best each can, the grace and comfort unceasingly flowing from that radiant face and figure. An influence more powerful than that of speech pervades the atmosphere.

The ordinary relation of people with each other is one of separateness. It is the consciousness of separateness that is responsible for acquisitiveness, fear, jealousy, struggle, violence and strains and miseries of all kinds. Bhagwan has no consciousness of separateness from others. He feels at one with all, not excluding animals, plants, the earth and the elements, and you feel in his presence that he feels so. Our consciousness is that of individuals in varying stages of isolation from others: of the individual who has to make his living, or look after his family, or fight for a group or community, or serve the country. Even the concept of world citizenship, the highest all-inclusive aspiration of our evolving humanity, leaves dumb creation out as beyond the pale of citizen rights. The consciousness of Bhagwan transcends all boundaries and extends over the whole cosmos. There is nothing external to itself to which it stands in a relation of aloofness. There is nothing which it fears or shrinks from or has to struggle against.



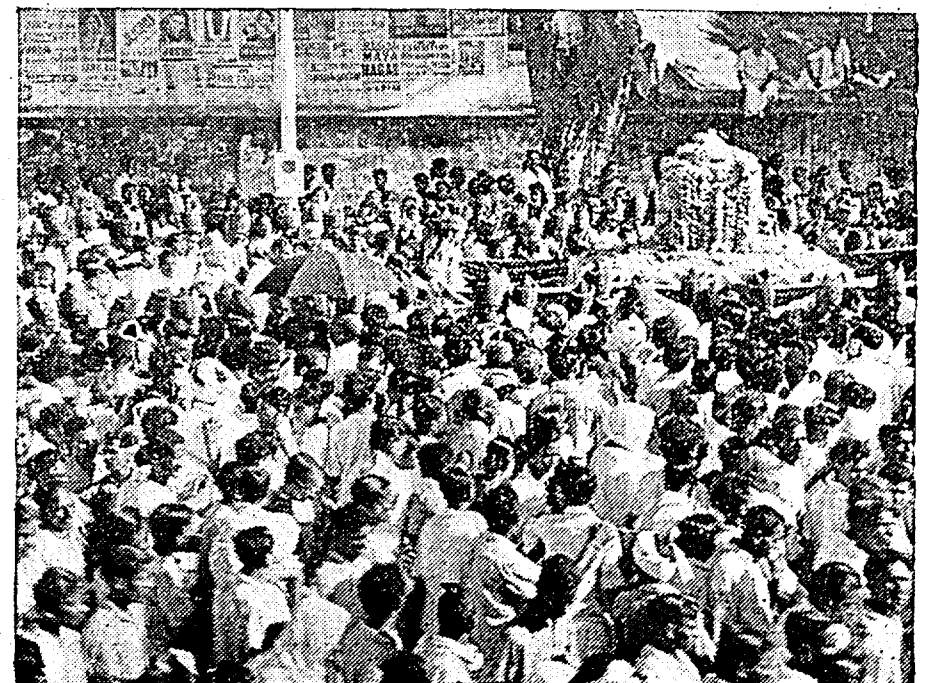
Sri Ramana Maharshi

This sort of consciousness is called cosmic consciousness. It is the fulfilment of the sadhana of the seeker of Truth or Reality. It is the goal of a science of the spirit of which the secret seems to have been lost to us moderns. We live immersed in material pre-occupations that have developed standards of great efficiency for accentuating divisions. Divisionalism, with its exclusiveness turning in swift progression into hatred and bloodshed has become the curse, a sort of decimating scourge of the modern world; the animus of the divisional impetus very nearly brought our humanity to the verge of extinction through world wars and mutual slaughter. At this stage Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the scene. He sought to refashion the structure of material economy to suit spiritual ends. His prodigious effort roused the conscience of the elite of all nations to the need of higher values in human affairs than those of mere brute power. But the

Mahatma alarmed the forces against which he fought into intensified defensive activity. Hence the convulsive orgies of the divisionalists rampant everywhere now. It would appear that it is part of their defensive strategy actually to stray into the Gandhian fold and capture its citadels by masking themselves with disguises. The intergrating humanism of the Mahatma is in this way being threatened by the disintegrating urges of a rancorous divisionalism that has taken to exciting the passions of mobs and employing for its advancement some of the very instruments of power developed with enormous painstaking labour by the Mahatma over a period of three decades.

Bhagwan represents a regenerative force for perfecting from the spiritual end the work started by the Mahatma from the material end. The transition henceforth is from the organisation of good on institutional lines, to the dissolution of evil in the all-conquering might of universal love. It is easy enough to talk of love, and most varieties of it are merely forms of self-indulgence made to look grand

under the illusion of a glorious name. Only when the dross of self-interest is completely burnt to ashes and one learns to shed all fear, will the full majesty of the vision of Truth appear, from which alone can emanate love of the highest potency. It is said that ants and snakes and scorpions used to crawl on the bare body of Bhagwan as he lay exposed to all inclemencies of weather on the jungle rock which for years was his only home. His sense of identity with surrounding nature was such, it was so devoid of any inhibitions of fear that it enabled him to exchange caresses even with cobras. Before such love which could disarm the poisonous fangs of even these dreaded death-carriers, every human heart must melt, and few that meet Bhagwan depart without being greatly bettered. He is a radiating centre of unceasing benevolence, in himself a university of the spirit to which there is free access to all, without fees or reference to sect or birth, and the spread of its beneficent influence is a promising factor for overcoming the hatreds that seem to threaten human welfare in our time.—SAKA.



BLAME THE CENTRE

by S. PARTHASARATHY

WE have begun to discount the importance of expertness and efficiency in the administration of the various departments of Government. And when, naturally enough, things often go wrong our ruling politicians have learnt the trick of laying the blame on the Centre. We blame the Centre for not supplying us enough rice when we have not added one cent to the acreage under cultivation; we blame them for not financing us when we have frittered away huge sums on moonshine schemes; we blame them for taking away our best men in the services, whom we are not prepared to trust; and we blame them for the short supply of manufactured goods whilst we sit with folded arms and watch complacently mills and factories close down.

It is one of the curious features of democracy that the task of forming the Government is generally entrusted to a man for irrelevant considerations. He is not chosen because he is most able to calculate and provide for the general welfare of the people. He is chosen either on account of his services to the party which he represents or because he is the only man with whom other indispensable persons can be induced to associate themselves. Scientific attainments, administrative talents or even familiarity with the subjects that their departments have to deal with, are not required of Ministers. The Legislature, again, is not a place stocked with talents. But these are inherent in any democracy and should be accepted as such. The Congress Cabinet in the Centre travelled outside their party ranks in search of talents. Actually, when they made their selection, they more than once forgot the idea with which they started and chose men more for their political values than for their administrative abilities. Anyway, it was a wrong step to contemplate in a democracy: for, what is most desirable in the highest counsels of any Government is

homogeneity and not administrative experience.

Here, our troubles have started because we began to tamper with the permanent executive. We assumed, or found it convenient to assume that the men who served loyally under the British or even under the previous Ministry, are incapable of serving us faithfully. In replacing the old executive, we have based our selection on considerations only germane to political appointments. Someone seriously argued the other day that when one had to choose between the known and unknown candidates for a particular job, it is best to choose the known candidate. If this principle were to be accepted, we must give way to unrestricted nepotism, communalism and provincialism. Society in India is far from cosmopolitan in outlook—and of whom, can we say that we know him well except of our relations and community men? The Gujarathi prefers the Gujarathi; the U.P. man and the Bengalee their own compatriots; and similarly with every provincial man. The brahmin and the non-brahmin prefer their own community men, and everyone prefers his relations more than any one else.

The permanent executives are the most essential and vital part of Governmental machinery. They are the depositaries of tradition, and they are expected to maintain efficiency and to continue unimpaired unexceptionable policies despite changes in the political atmosphere. Once the Ministry has settled the broad outlines of its policy, the permanent executive should be allowed to work out the details and execute it according to their independent judgment. Were the executive to be chosen either for their personal loyalty or for their identity of views with the Minister under whom they serve, we foresee danger to the administration. For the executive is expected to take a long range view of what is good for

the country and to exclude from consideration those matters which may only serve to enhance the popularity of their Ministers and their political party.

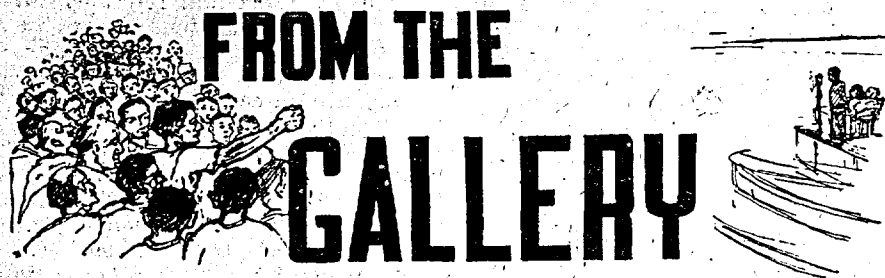
We have started doing things in the wrong way. In the Cabinet and in the Ministries, where we must speak with one voice, we have introduced discordant elements. On the other hand, in the administrative departments where talents alone should count, we are seeking to fill them with men who have no other virtue except subservience. It is inferiority complex that makes us fight shy of having efficient men with independent views under us. It is again inferiority complex that makes us put on the cloak of communal justice to justify our appointments. Talent, at least today, is not the sole monopoly of any one community. It can be found in each and every community. A Ministry

can be destroyed and reformed, all within twenty-four hours: but the traditions of efficient administration (which Madras enjoyed) once broken will need a century before it can be firmly re-established. If we must, let us give all reasonable scope for extraneous considerations in the selection of men for subordinate posts in Government. But for the key positions in our administration, let us keep people who are talented men. The main pre-occupation of a Ministry in a democratic Government should be to utilise all the available talents and resources of the country to the best advantage of its people. Men of talents who are prepared to serve the interests of the country giving away their best to it belong to no caste or creed but belong to the people. To exclude them from their proper spheres of usefulness is to rob the people of their true servants.



LAST RITES OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The vehicle, with the sacred ashes of Mahatma Gandhi, moving in procession to the Triveni Sangam. Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant, Mr. Pyarelal and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel are seen at front in the carriage. Mr. Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and Mr. Ramdas Gandhi are seated on the right side of the carriage and



"A child's among you taking notes
And, faith, he'll prent it."

ASKED in the days before the attainment of Swaraj what he would do if the British went and the country was plunged in civil war, the Mahatma was always consistent in the reply he gave, namely, that such killing would be brief and the people would resume their immemorial ways of life, and that he would promote the return to peace by his example and precept. It is necessary to draw attention to this aspect of the Mahatma's teachings because, at the moment there is much miscellaneous and ignorant exhortation by nobodies to everybody to follow the Mahatma. Though he held non-violence as the sheet-anchor of his message, it is not going to be the basis of the new State of India. Nor is communal peace a new message which we owe to the Mahatma. Rivalry among communities—sometimes in a friendly spirit of emulation, and sometimes more bitterly—has always been and will always be there. The Englishman versus the Scotchman, and both versus the Irishman are standing instances of it. Brahmin vs. non-Brahmin has been with us in the South for hundreds of years; Thengalai vs. Vadagalai is a variant of it. But it is the Unity of India—geographically and culturally—that Mahatma Gandhi died for. For that is the only condition of peace in this land. All this talk of sovereign States is merely to store up future trouble. A sovereign State that can't feed itself is India; a sovereign State that cadges for loans and equipment and services is Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah has to tout for Marshall millions or British bayonets to bolster up his

sovereignty. So long as these two neighbours snarl at each other, so long there will be plenty of trouble which will keep them engaged with protective or retaliatory measures.

The sundered unity of India might be achieved in one of three unpleasant ways. The first is for either of the new States to win a decisive military victory over the other, after a period of jitters, of a cold war, of a series of 'incidents.' The second method is for both parts of the country to come under the sway of a third party bigger than either or than Britain or America. And the third method is for the major party voluntarily surrendering his primacy in favour of the junior partner. As to which of them is likely to happen is something which no man can predict. But since the greatest cleavages, differences, rivalries and cupidities are to be found among the Hindus of India, it seems a safe bet to take against their making a success of their opportunities.

There is a strangely malignant Nemesis which is at work in Palestine. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem was Britain's enemy No. 1 in the Middle East. He was imprisoned, transported, detained in France, but escaped it all to come back to Egypt and plague the British. Now that he is in full official control of the Arab operations in Palestine, Mr. Bevin must reflect ruefully how the whirligig of time brings in its sweet revenges. Having supported the Arabs, he has now got to back the Mufti much against his grain.

How soon the Arab bluff is to be called will be known at the next meeting of the Security Council to discuss measures to enforce the partition of Palestine.

Pandit Nehru has spoken a number of times during the last fortnight, but with a dwindling force of suasion or conviction. Contrary to general expectations of a shuffle in the Central Cabinet, he has, in his latest broadcast, announced a decision to maintain the *status quo* which must be pronounced regrettable. It is of course satisfactory to be told that there are and were no differences between him and the Sardar. But it was not equally reassuring to hear him accuse his opponents of personal motives in pleading for a reconstitution of the Cabinet. It was a splendid opportunity to have rallied the support of the Socialists; but it was missed with a deliberate evasion of which I thought the Pandit was by himself incapable. To exhort all and sundry to promote unity, while in the same breath to admonish Jai Prakash Narain to bide his time was indeed curious. The present Cabinet is a medley; opportunism is writ large on it and on the nominees of it. There is not one leftist member in it. If Mr. Mukherjee who can bully his way with a Mahasabha flag should be kept on, why not Jai Prakash with his communism minus the hammer and sickle? One seat for the Socialists now would be a cheap price for a national front. And what makes their exclusion now worse than a blunder is that the Communists as such are at the moment nowhere in the picture. They have gone underground for the time being; for they do not care to join in the deification of the Mahatma in vague generalities which is choking off thought all round. With the negative or barren results of his foreign policy, it is possible that Pandit Nehru feels discouraged; in which case, he must rally to him elements and parties who promise sturdy support on the national plane and who are more progressive

than any other groups included in the Cabinet.

The Mahatma's prayer meeting records are said to run to forty hours. An excellent idea would be to cut them up into smaller discourses under specific topics with interpolated renderings in the Indian vernaculars by approved Gandhi Bhaktas. They could then be featured as five minute or ten-minute programmes with infinite variations and unfailing freshness throughout the year. They will further serve the cause of popularising Hindi itself—the Hindi versions followed by a Tamil or Telugu or English version crowned with one or other of the many musical favourites of the Mahatma as colophons.

The Madras Government has decided to continue the communal, separatist schools for five years, and then to scrap them in the interests of communal harmony. A more preposterous solution cannot be imagined. If the revulsion against communalism is strongest now, as claimed on all hands, prudence and policy indicate the immediate scrapping of them, the abolition being effective for five years as an experimental measure. Instead of such a psychological move, what is now proposed is but an eye-wash. For it is an elementary rule that you cannot lay down the law for observance in a contingent future. The then Government being a sovereign body like the present will naturally claim complete freedom of action. Consequently, the present Ministry is abdicating its present competence to legislate for the present.

The Indian Cricketing Team has had a topping good time of it in Australia in every sphere except in the field. Instead of acknowledging that we are not yet of Test class, and that we were unable to send out our best men, and that therefore our men did far better than could be hoped for, we have shown much bad form in falling foul of our players, and particularly of the captain.

Further still, it seems to be forgotten that we have been beaten by the giants of the game. The centuries that some of our players reeled off against the Australians are nothing short of miracles. We must leave it at that. If we may be permitted to indulge in a few reflections in a flippant vein, we must admit that we have created fresh records for the lowest score in any Test match. Secondly, our batting averages and bowling averages if exchanged will show our players in top form. For the batting averages look like bowling ones in the case of Test class players, and bowling averages seem like batting ones because of their costliness.

The holding of a Tamil Akhila Conference in Madras is a grim reminder that steps are being speeded up for a head-on collision between Andhra and Tamil over the city of Madras. The whole ghastly technique of the agitation which preceded Pakistan is reappearing, and it bodes no good. The stakes involved are not a tenth as serious as in some other burning topics of the day. And yet mass hysteria is being worked up from behind the scenes. Official Congress is taking sides with a partisanship which is deplorable. The President of the Conference inveighs against the tyranny of a Centre when that Centre has been most anxious to placate the parts. When the Centre under the British, ground him down with silent contempt, and refused to recognise his language, he kissed the rod that chastised him. His and his followers' love of Tamil is only paralleled by their hatred of Sanskrit and Hindi. It would be a poor look-out for Tamil Nad if its immemorial linguistic suppleness and catholicity should be overborne by this new-found linguistic intolerance. May better sense prevail, and the Mahatma's exhortation at least on this question which is specific enough be followed!

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Short Story

The Serpent Expiates

by Manjeri S. Isvaran

I wrote to the author of "The Serpent Gem": You have no business to kill Manickam. He was made for love, that superb specimen of rural manhood and rural naivete. I told the Serpent about it and the Serpent concurred. It expiated. Hence this story.—M. S. I.

MANICKAM lay as if in deep sleep although the world had vanished for ever from before his youthful eyes. The stars in his horoscope had foretold a cruel death for him, in the prime of life—death by poison. And fate had come personified in the snake that dwelt in the precincts of the home, in the hollow under the jasmine bush, and traditionally believed to do no harm to its inmates; so close to the family it was, an accepted member. Yet, such is the whim, is the waywardness of fatality. The grim irony, the utter hypocrisy of heaven shocks the innocent and credulous into reckless profanity, only to sober them to trust ultimately in its infinite justice and mercy. It is a divine balm that soothes and consoles—predestination; it is a pretty little enamelled fly that man has, while garnering the aftermath of his ill-disciplined despair, caught and preserved in the unguent of perennial philosophy.

Manickam lay as if in deep sleep. Except for a slightly darkish prick in his breast, caused seemingly by a pin, there was no discoloration, no distortion about his limbs; in that state of repose he looked ten years younger and more invulnerable.

The most swift-footed of villagers had been despatched to fetch his parents who lived twenty miles away from the home of Sami Chendan. And they waited for their arrival and for the day-break to begin the obsequies.

Continuously for an hour the pandaram of the local temple had struck his gong—a really dismal drone to the staccato notes of the tom-toms and the strangled blaring of the funeral twin-pipes. Then the melange of sounds burst lapping on the night, rising and falling abruptly, so full of melancholy, but the intermittent calms were the very depths of the saddest and, weirdest.

A tall brass lamp burnt at the head of the dead young man whose body

was covered with a white linen sheet. It gave a subdued lustre throughout the room, and now and then directed by the wind that loitered, in through the eaves, rolled a quick pageant of shadows on the walls, gathering them around the still supine figure and billowing them out, according as the flame twitched and trembled. Immediately beside the open doorway sat an old crone, keeping vigil over the dead. From time to time she rose to feed the lamp with oil or to mend the wick. She was the oldest living woman in the village, one who knew Sami Chendan from the time he was a child. More, she was a distant relation of his through his mother. She had assisted at his birth and wept when his mother died. She had seen him married, assisted at the birth of his daughter, and wept when his wife died. She sang the dirge in her loud cracked voice, loud and long, without the hint of a tear moistening her eyes; her repertoire of such songs was acknowledged to be the richest round about the entire village and even far. In his heart of hearts Chendan disliked the old woman—she was a gossip, a garrulous grump—but after he lost his wife he wanted some elderly person in the house to look after his growing girl. The hag had a hut to live in and an only son, a vagabond who visited her once in a blue-moon to inquire if she was not dead yet. Smoke never curled up through the thatch of that hut for she had no need to cook her food there, spending her time as she did at Chendan's. But when Ulundayi came of age her services were no longer called for; her grumpiness grew blacker and she went about whining and backbiting that she little deserved this gross neglect by a family to which she had literally given her blood, that the chit of a girl Ulundayi was eaten up with pride and the old fool, her father, was pampering her out of all decent limits. Sami Chendan heard and ignored. He was too good a judge of human nature

to expect gratitude as a spontaneous virtue.

Thinking her own thoughts the bel-dam sat, keeping vigil, and adding her grotesque shadow to the shadows that vacillated on the walls. She was not concerned too deeply about the tragic events of the afternoon, she was thinking of her boy. Though a bad egg a son is a son to a mother; her old rickety heart softened towards him and before her rheumy eyes she raised a composite picture of him and Ulundayi—a wedded pair. Once she had boldly broached the subject to Sami Chendan; and his answer which angered her and gagged her mouth outright was an immoderate fit of laughter. It was a case of betrothal in the cradle; Ulundi, darling Ulu was born to be the wife of his nephew Manickam. Ulundayi, Ulundi, Ulu—mimicked mincingly the toothless old hag. The peerless nephew had come on a holiday visit to his uncle; and surfeit with welcome and good food had joined the company of his forefathers. He shouldn't have attempted to hurt the snake while the snake intended no hurt to him. He ought to have curbed his animal spirits—Manickam, gem of the purest ray serene.

A flake of soot in the wick crackled and the lamp went out, breaking the trend of her thoughts. The room was sunk in gloom. She saw her son Chockan's star peeping hopefully through the dark and invisible hands weaving for her the mantle of a mother-in-law. Hobbling to a corner where shone feebly a small lamp made out of soapstone and fashioned like a peepul leaf and hobbling back with it, she lit the tall brass lamp and replenished it with oil. She sat down again, in her place by the doorway, and surveyed the body of the dead with a cold, stark detachment. With the rise of the sun it will be washed and laid out. The mother's tears will burst in torrents, she will beat upon her breast till the fingers raised thick weals and she could beat no more, and she will roll in the dust her piercing walls reduced finally to a squeak. But could she sing the dirge so well as herself, thought the crone. And bending over the face she scanned it, passing her palm over it; the next instant she drew back with a shudder. The cheeks felt so warm, the nose too, and she thought she saw the eyelids quiver. Was it mere fancy? Or was it the wind that strayed through the open door and disturbed the flame of the

lamp and the shadows on the wall? Nearly six hours had elapsed since the fatal sting of the serpent; still the body retained a remarkable warmth and smoothness. Had some strange quality of his blood neutralized the poison and was he only in a deep swoon from which he may awaken? A wonder, a great wonder. She peered into the face again, intently, and smiled at her own delusion. He was dead as a doornail. To some the stiffness of death came rather slow. He had been strong as a bull.

The night ran out its second watch and the stars wrought a different design in heaven's canopy. Outside the house, in the wider part of the veranda, Sami Chendan slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, like one who under a sentence of death has not the smallest degree of will or reason left to restore him to any kind of comprehension from an interminable vacuity which is the world. With the swiftness of the thunderbolt had the calamity descended on him. How could he face his sister and brother-in-law? They who should have come rejoicingly, in a party of kith and friends, for the marriage of their son were now coming for his funeral. And comforting his daughter he couldn't comfort himself, so terrible was the blow. In an access of grief Ulundayi cursed herself for not following Manickam to the jasmine bush; she had asked for the gem that the serpent wore in its head and she had sent him to his death. He had taken her at her word, she had teased him with her raillery. She was the vilest sinner on earth, she cried, she deserved more to be stung by the snake, and with such self-reproach was she very nearly demented. She threw all maidenly propriety to the winds, strained him to her bosom, kissed him, and wept over him. She was his affianced, all the village knew it. Nothing else mattered. Neither the defeat of her love nor her doleful future. She sat by his body and talked softly, fondly to him, as if waking a child from overmuch sleep. But he was gone, gone from her never to return.

She broke down under the strain but refused to leave his side. She stayed hiding her head in his breast. Out of sheer weariness her eyelids drooped in slumber and whilst lying thus, her father lifted her in his arms and carrying her out laid her gently on the cot, in the farther end of the veranda where it was raised and narrow—the place she usually retired for the night.

She stirred in her sleep, murmuring. It was too short an interval for reality to become memory.

She lived in the real.

"Ulundi, Ulundi," whispered a voice which stole on her ear like a caress, like a croon when music yearns in pain that is sweet.

Evening was closing in and she was busy in the kitchen.

"Ulundi, the jasmine buds are beckoning to you, come."

She stood stirring the pot of gruel on the boil over the oven, pretending she had not heard him, just to hear his loving voice call her again and again. A smile trembled on her lips.

"You want me to go all by myself."

"To pick out the whole lot of half-blown buds," she laughed mischievously, wheeling round quickly and facing him.

"Every bud is a flower, where's the difference?"

"True. But you don't allow it to blow into a flower, the tenderest and the greenest. It's like wringing the neck of a new-born babe."

"Like this!" And he pinched her cheek in amorous play.

"No nonsense now!" she tittered and started running round the bush.

He chased her and caught her in his arms.

Her firm young breasts heaved piquantly, a light leaped in her heart and emerged all over her face as a smile.

"Look!" he cried, in sudden alarm.

"What?" she asked, anxiously.

"All the buds have disappeared."

"Where?"

"Into your mouth."

They laughed together.

"Now tell me the rest of the story. Quick, before father comes. What happened to the girl? What happened to the serpent? Did it shed its gem for her?" she asked breathlessly.

"The girl.....the serpent.....the gem," he drawled.

She was startled at the altered note in his voice.

"Manickam! Manickam!" she cried, waking in a drench of sweat. The words died in her mouth with the distant echo of a rattle; she glanced around under the mounting tension of

an irresistible inner impulse and turned pale from terror at what drew her with an uncanny force and fascination. It was the jasmine bush, but not as she had seen it daily, so dear and familiar to her.

A late moon was waxing bright and the bush was a blaze of glory. And not the moon soaring so high but the close proximity of some object invested it with that abnormal glow. The object was a serpent.

In terror and fascination Ulundayi looked on. And her terror grew less when in a sudden flash the conviction dawned on her that perhaps Manickam had failed to kill it in his last moments of agony. But sure, he had said haltingly, when the venom burnt his blood, that he had given it a shattering blow with his stick; however, none had verified in that tragic hour of darkness and confusion. Or, was it really dead and its wraith like that of a departed mortal haunted the earth which it was loath to leave? Were there spooks in the reptile world?

Wraith or real serpent it mesmerized her with its blinding refulgence. Cirque-couchant and levant, buoying and swaying, it slowly uncoiled itself shooting beams and dissolving hues, till it stood erect on its pin-point tail, its hood outspread, its forked tongue darting in and out of its hissing mouth. Suddenly a strange thing happened. As though releasing all of a breeze it held within its bosom the jasmine bush shook and shed its buds and blossoms in a soundless shower over the hood of the hamadryad which, throwing off its imperial stance, flung full tilt toward the house, and was back again by the bush before Ulundayi, watching all, had time to run up to her father and wake him from his sleep. But she neither moved nor cried. She was rooted to her cot. The wish in her remained the still-born child of a thought that flashed across her momentarily panicky mind. She shivered as under a cold, physical touch. The panic passed.

Then was she a witness of the most amazing of proceedings. Upon the stillness of the night broke the soft strains of a music that she knew so well and had heard so often, strains like the purling of waters in a stream, purling over smooth pebbles and rolling down little eddies to die a gurgling death. She listened and listening, concentrated her gaze on the region of the jasmine bush to see the figure of the snake-charmer who played such

cunning trills and quavers on his pipe; he did not appear; but like her, the serpent too had heard the music, for it sprang up and stood graven as in a heraldic device. Galvanic the next instant it began to dance, rearing and revolving, as the tune ran tremulous, throbbing through its blood; then as the mode changed sharply, the grace-notes tumbling their jewels in a careless cascade and the cadence rose in pitch, it writhed and whirled in a dazzle of hoops, whilst hiss after hiss followed the phosphorescent sparks flying in endless puffs out of its mouth. Then quick as lightning it whisked round the jasmine bush and smote its dilated hood on the earth once, twice, thrice. Directly, a fire shot through the shrubbery, and as she looked on with a new awe and astonishment, in a few moments she could see nothing of the flowering brake. The ditty had stopped.....

She lay drowned in the deep slumbers of the morning.

Someone shook her by the shoulders, addressing her endearingly. She woke with a start. It was her father.

"Ulundi, my child, my joy, Manickam is calling you."

"Who?" she cried, amazed utterly. She went dizzy and caught her breath.

"Collect yourself, dear child," he said, supporting her in his arms, as she looked perplexed into his face: "It's Manickam, your own. He's a gift from the gods. The snake had only grazed him but not stung him. There was no virulent poisoning of the blood. It only sent him into a long swoon. He's just a little weak."

She couldn't believe her ears. The roses of the rising sun, the freshness of the dawn, the sweet choir of birds all seemed to her to come out of the very depths of her being. She rushed to the room where he lay.

Manickam and Ulundayi became man and wife.

The village had not seen a prettier, happier wedding, nor a prettier, happier couple.

In the privacy of the bridal chamber Ulundayi told her husband of the weird happenings of the night when he had been given up for dead. He remained sceptical till the discovery of the serpent gem in the hollow near the jasmine bush which he made while looking for some vestige of the serpent he thought he had killed. The serpent had vanished, none knew where.

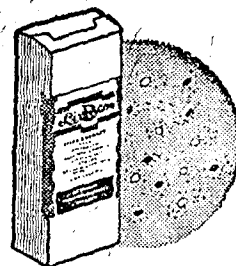
The gem is a secret in the Chendari family and Ulundayi firmly believes that the snake of its own free will had taken back its poison and resurrected the dead.

A tiny block of granite bearing the crude carving of a serpent marks the hollow beside the jasmine bush.

Every morning, with a grace which makes of her act a melting devotion, Ulundayi pours a bowl of milk over the stone.

The jasmine flowers the year round. The villagers say that the buds that come out of Ulundayi's creeper have a peculiar fragrance and loveliness not found in those of similar plants. They are ravishing.

However, there is one jarring note in this chorus of praise. It comes from the snivelling old woman whose services Sami Chendan has dispensed with totally.



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RETRIEVE THE PIE AND REDEEM THE PEASANT

by K. S. K.

THE Pie is the basic unit of the Indian currency system. Yet it is remarkable how this humble copper coin has gone out of circulation even in rural areas during the last few years. All monetary transactions are now reckoned in terms of the anna or its quarter. Pie calculations, particularly in ration shops where it occurs commonly, are rounded off to the nearest quarter anna—nearest to the seller, that is! Invariably, even the poorest buyer accepts this situation as a matter of course without a murmur of protest. Almost a generation has now grown up to which the pie must be a strange coin of only antique value.

The full significance of this quiet disappearance of the pie from the affairs of men in India can be fully appreciated by a study of the trend of prices and the phenomenal increase in the cost of living during the last decade.

According to the quantity theory of money, the value of money will be in inverse proportion to its quantity provided other things are constant. By "other things" is meant the total available supply of goods, the means of transport and exchange and the mental balance of men who take part in business. Thus it is at once obvious that these things can never be constant over a long period, and certainly not during a war when there is a sort of infectious mass hysteria of mental unbalance.

So, during the war of 1939-45 India, along with other countries, experienced an abnormal rise in the general level of prices, not because of more money alone but because of 'other things'. The Government of India was entrusted with the task of providing supplies to the allied belligerents. This meant the training, employment and organization of lakhs of men, and the production, movement and delivery of an extensive range of goods like textiles, building and

structural material, leather goods, chemicals, steel, etc., the construction of roads, aerodromes, camps and a thousand other military works. All this meant the release of money for circulation, for money had to be paid for the raw material, for the manufactured goods, for employees' wages and all the other expenditure incidental to a gigantic programme of war on many fronts. Incidentally, there were ample opportunities for a few to profiteer at the cost of the common people.

In August 1939, just before the outbreak of the war, there were only Rs. 4½ worth of notes in circulation per head of our population. By the end of 1945 it had risen to over Rs. 30 and today it is nearly Rs. 41 per head. During war time the goods produced were going out to meet the needs of the fighting forces and there were very little supplies available for civilian consumption. At the same time the money income of the individual had increased considerably. This situation has come to be known commonly as a state of inflation.

There is a mistaken impression that the then Government of India issued paper currency indiscriminately in order to liquidate their internal purchasing commitments. It should be remembered that every rupee note issued was fully secured according to the strict provisions of the Currency Act; and although the internal value of the rupee was falling, its value abroad has remained high.

In normal times currency expansion in a country like India with its untapped resources of manpower and industrial production could be used to very good advantage by diverting the extra money to more productive channels. But the scope for the utilisation of the expanded currency in war time was very limited. All equipments were keyed to war production and the diversion of plant and machinery to civilian requirements was impossible.

The influx of new purchasing power in the hands of a few—producers and dealers in goods and businessmen generally—at a time when production for civilian consumption was handicapped, had all the evil consequences of inflation. Prices of the scarcely available commodities and necessities on which the poor spent the bulk of their income, were soaring unchecked. Though the cultivating classes (as distinguished from the agricultural labourers) obtained larger net incomes than ever before, their advantage was to some extent whittled down by the steep rise in the price of cattle, implements, seed, manure and consumer goods. On the other hand, the business community indulged in speculative transactions, floated bubble companies and banks. Thus businessmen "made gay when the guns shone," at the cost of their poorer brethren.

Ever since the system of barter yielded its place in human economy to the more efficient system (?), of trade through the medium of money, prices have played a vital part in the affairs of mankind. Prices have built up nations; prices have brought about devastations like the Bengal famine; prices have made small men great (financially); and prices have made great nations small (economically).

The following tables show the level of prices in India *vis-a-vis* the cost of living at the end of 1947 compared with two war years:

(Index No. in 1939=100)

	Wholesale prices		
	1942	1944	1947
Food	155.5	276.4	282.2
Raw materials ..	163.5	203.7	366.5
Manuf. goods ..	175.6	260.7	277.4

Cost of living of industrial workers in 3 cities

	1942	1944	1947
Bombay	160	226	261
Nagpur	190	267	320
Madras	136	207	276

Thus it will be observed that in spite of the cessation of war, prices have continued to rise in our country and the cost of living has also risen simultaneously.

While the inflationary condition in war time was due to the large increase in currency circulation without any increase in the available supplies of goods, the post-war condition has been due to a steady fall in the production of goods. Political forces, unsettled labour conditions and civil commotion have prevented a normal transition from war to peace-time economy. The war-strained machinery, manpower and equipment have not been repaired or replaced in adequate measure. Capital goods could not be imported owing to international monetary difficulties. Our war-time monetary credits abroad were in terms of sterling while our present purchases have to be in terms of the dollar for which there is a scramble the world over.

Consequently our present rate of production compared to our actual capacity is deplorably low. The following table compares the prewar production of certain commodities with that in the last two years:—

	1938-9	1945-6	1946-7
Cotton piece-goods (in million yds.) ..	4,269	4,651	3,863
Iron & steel (in 000 tons) ..	3,489	4,044	3,723
Cement	1,512	2,146	2,016
Coal	24,815	25,489	26,216
Foodgrains ..	50,200	46,400	46,800
(excl. pulses)			

The crux of the situation in India in 1942-3 was to effectively bottle up the extra purchasing power in the hands of the public to be utilised at a propitious postwar period. Prompt control of supplies and prices and a prudent policy of borrowing with a view to sponge the extra money could have saved the situation. But official action was halting and there was a policy of drift while the forces of inflation were gathering momentum.

It was not till the middle of 1943 that any effective step was taken by Government to save the situation. Forward transactions in cotton, bullion, cloth and yarn, the main field of speculation, were prohibited by law. Heavy tax was imposed on excess industrial profits and mushroom growth of commer-

cial houses was controlled by restricting capital issues. Banks were also restricted from giving advances against commodities. A savings campaign was launched. But the policy of the administration was suspect and these measures achieved little success in checking public spending. The economic significance of the need for saving at a time of inflation was not properly brought home to the people. And the average man in India is still faced with an unending rise in the cost of living.

A comparison of the position in India with that in other countries indicates how progressive administrations have rigidly controlled their economy and are successfully averting a serious breakdown in their living standards:

Cost of living in various countries.

	1939	1942	1945	1947
United Kingdom ..	102	130	132	132
Canada	100	116	118	125
U.S.A.	97	113	125	149
Australia	105	125	129	133
India (Madras) ..	106	136	223	285

The case for controls has gone by the board ever since the Mahatma considered it on its demerits. Graft, muddle, delay, inefficiency, red-tape, together make a terrible indictment. But these apply, if they do, to the whole administration generally and not merely to the controls part of it. Absence of control does not bring about abundance or even absence of scarcity as a logical sequence. When there is general scarcity it is idle to expect that mere decontrol will lead to larger supplies or lower prices.

Saving, both by Government and the public, taxation and increased production are suggested as remedies to the situation.

As regards saving, the lower income groups, which means the great bulk of the population, can spare very little after their unsuccessful attempts to make both ends meet. Taxation of the kind to which we have been accustomed for a long time is of little avail in checking in-

flation. There are severe limits to direct taxation. The vast majority of the people earn much below the taxable level. Indeed, the section paying income-tax is not even 0.1 per cent of the population.

Our immediate objective must be more and better production. On the one hand Government have tried to meet the wishes of the producer by offering higher prices. But do higher prices to the producer necessarily result in higher production? Isn't there a margin of satisfaction and may not the contented producer be satisfied with producing less for a higher price?

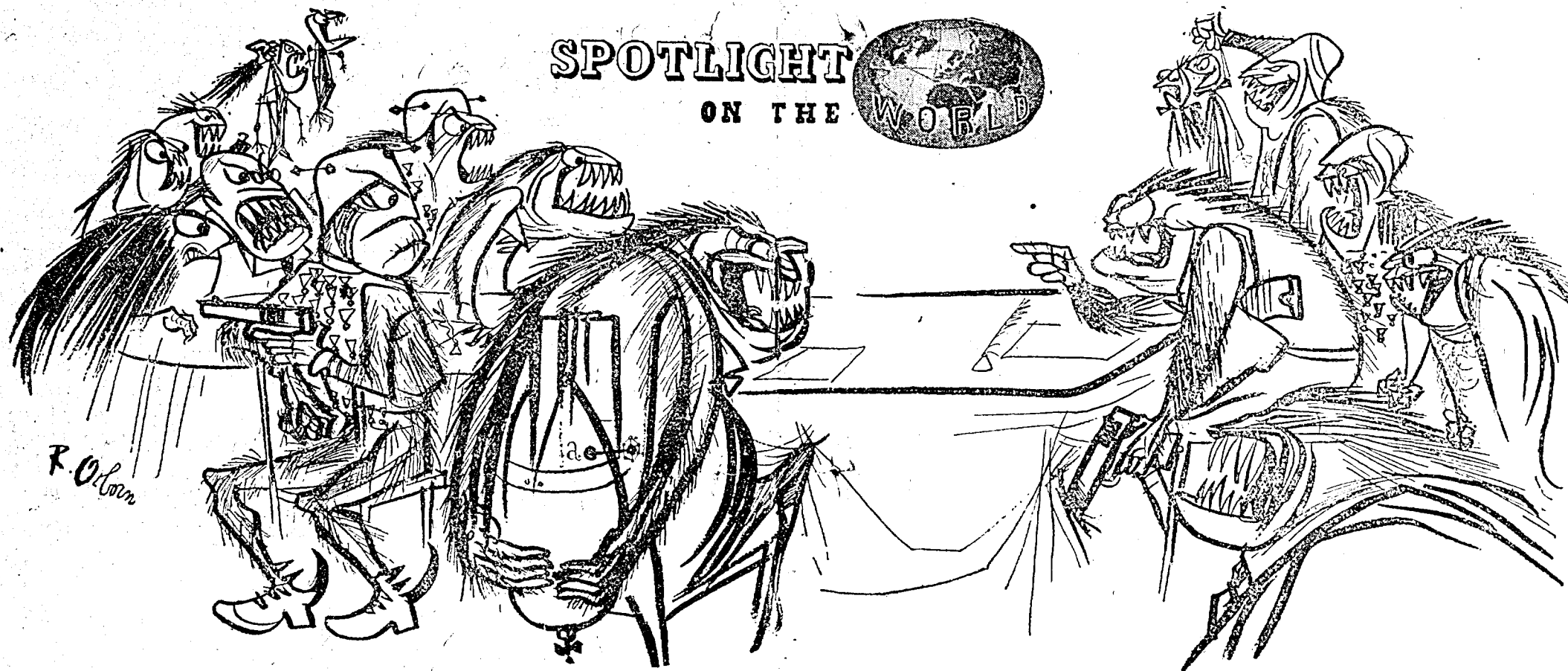
On the other hand, the Mahatma declared, "If people die because they will not labour or because they defraud one another, it will be a welcome deliverance. The rest will then learn not to repeat the sin of being lazy, idle or cruelly selfish." None dare question the ethics of this declaration. It should be brought home to the people, producers and labourers alike. And the emphasis must be on Work, Work, Work all the time, so that we may produce enough to sustain ourselves and enough to export and retain our position in the world.

It seems to be the law of nature that when humanity misbehaves and indulges in destructive warfare through jealousy and avarice, it reaps the consequences in periods of low living standards and by losing the comforts developed during periods of peace and amity. And the world at this very moment is paying a very dear price for having warred for vague ideals with dubious motives.

The fundamental object of all planning and development is to raise the standard of living of the masses. In order to achieve this object, it is essential that all parts of the country should develop a sound and balanced economy. This implies the co-ordinated development of the soil, water resources, electric power, agriculture, industry, health, education, trade and a just and equitable distribution of wealth.

One may almost say "Retrieve the pie and redeem the peasant."

SPOTLIGHT ON THE WORLD



“AND FOR THESE ENDS to practise tolerance and live together in peace . . .”

“Spotlight”, this week, is not a verbal but pictorial commentary. The above cartoon, which appeared in Henry Wallace’s *New Republic* of October 27, 1947, forcefully brings out the difference between the proclaimed ideals and the actual working of the United Nations Organisation. A handful of practitioners of power politics are betraying the high hopes which the formation of UNO created among people all over the world. The victim of the latest and sorriest exhibition of power politics is India.

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and to unite our strength, to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS.

From the CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

TWO IMMORTAL ONES

by T.S.P.

IT was Pushya Bahula Panchami day when the assassin's bullet placed Gandhiji among the immortal ones. On this very day, exactly 101 years ago, another Mahatma had shed his mortal coil and the celebrations which were being held in various parts of India in honour of Tyagaraja were brought to an abrupt end when the news of Gandhiji's passing away was announced. To those who believed in divine ordainment of things, the coincidence had more significance than as a mere concurrence of events. Although Tyagaraja, the poet and composer, and Gandhiji were poles asunder in many respects, there were aspects of the character of these two great souls which bound them together and stamped them as 'soldiers of God'.

Both were Rama Bhaktas par excellence and had unshakable faith in Ram Nam. It is said that Mahatmaji breathed his last with Ram Nam on his lips. While Ram Dhun was the life breath of Gandhiji, Rama Nama was the nectar from which Tyagaraja drew his never-failing inspiration. Gandhiji's writings on the efficacy of Ram Nam as a panacea for all ills, in recent issues of *Harijan* surprised many of his followers belonging to other religious persuasions and Tyagaraja's incessant glorification of the Lord's name in his kritis has made enthusiasts dub him as an adherent of the Nama Siddhanta school of devotees. Gandhiji who had probably not heard of this name at all, was in real life the foremost Nama Siddhantin of this century. The Ramayana of Tulasi Das was the Bible of the Gandhi Asram and strangely enough, Tulasi Das is the first devotee to be saluted by Tyagaraja in his Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam. Both Gandhiji and Tyagaraja were ardent Vaishnavites in the liberal sense of the term and it is well-known that the former's most

favourite song was "Vaishnava Jana Tho" composed by Saint Narasimha Mehta.

During his last tour in the South, Gandhiji mentioned Tyagaraja in one of his speeches. "Wherever I go in South India", he said, "I hear the songs of Saint Tyagaraj being sung. There is no doubt that this devotee of Ram has captured the hearts of Madrasis with his sweet songs".

Gandhiji was never tired of calling himself as a 'servant of God' and was very pleased with the name 'Khudai Khidmatgars' given by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to his followers. In a moving piece 'Bantu reethi', Tyagaraja too implores Rama to assign him the role of His servant and promises Him that he will turn out in good equipment. "The thrill of my body will be my armour and the title 'Rama Bhakta', my badge. Rama Nama will be my flaming sword" he sings.

Although it was left to Gandhiji to develop Ahimsa as a political creed, Tyagaraja was opposed to all forms of violence and deprecated 'para himsa' in many a kriti. His being an orthodox Brahman with faith in Vedic rituals did not prevent him from condemning sacrifices wholesale in his song "Yajnadulu" as they involved violence to living beings.

Gandhiji strove for the establishment of the ideal state in India which he identified with 'Rama Rajya'. His writings on this subject appear almost as a commentary on the sentiments expressed by Tyagaraja on good government in his piece "Karu baru".

Posterity will celebrate Pushya Bahula Panchami in memory of these two illustrious sons of India when the chorus of Ram Dhun from a million throats should mingle with the singing of the immortal Divya Nama kritis of Tyagaraja.



(From A Special Correspondent)

Karachi: The shadow of Gandhiji's Assassination fell across the social and political landscape of Pakistan and even the most fanatic Pakistanite feels that in Bapu's death, this dominion has lost its best friend. Not only in Karachi but throughout Sind condolence meetings were held to mourn the Mahatma.

On the political front, the refugee problem is still the dominating topic of discussion. Though Mr. Khuhro, the Sind Premier, wants to stop the unending stream of exodus from the Punjab, the Pakistan authorities are forcing his hands and making this province the dumping ground of more than three lakhs from the Punjab. Most of these are without occupation and come trekking all the way down. As they come, they strike terror in the minds of not only the Sind Hindus in the interior but the Sind Muslims as well. There is no love lost between the Punjabi refugee and the indigenous son of the soil in this province. He feels that the refugees are interlopers and their advent would act to the detriment of the local population. Instances have been reported of clashes between the Punjabi refugees and Sind Muslims who have tried to protect their Hindu brethren. The relations between the refugees and the sons of the soil in Sind will become strained from day to day. A big dynamite is being laid in the hinterland and any day an explosion may take place. The flare-up will be in the form of a guerilla warfare in which the Sindhi Muslims are adepts.

So far as the Hindus are concerned, migration is in full blast. More than fifty thousand out of Karachi's Hindu population of one

lakh have already left by sea to Bombay and other ports in the Kathiawar coast. By the end of February, another forty thousand are expected to leave. Professor N. R. Malkani, a leading Congress party member of the Sind Assembly who had recently been to Delhi to acquaint the Indian Union Government about the plight of Hindus in this province has come back and the first thing he did was to resign his seat in the Sind Assembly. He has accepted the post of Additional Deputy Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan and has started functioning. He is put specially in charge of evacuation of Sind Hindus. He has taken up the question of providing transport with the Pakistan Government. The latter have agreed to run special trains from Hyderabad to Marwar as also special trains from Sukkur to Karachi. With specials running regularly, it will be possible to evacuate about five lakhs of Sind Hindus in the interior who want to leave their hearths and homes.

Stories reminiscent of Jewish persecution in Hitlerite Germany are pouring in every day from the mofussil. The Hindus are living hunted lives. Their land is not safe and their business is paralysed. Travel is the most dangerous adventure in Sind, whether it be by train, bus or even by bullock cart. Dacoits abound in the countryside and challenge people who go by transport. The Muslims are weeded from the Hindus and the latter systematically stripped of everything. To travel by train, one has to get permits from the authorities and they are not easily given. Even if obtained, Hindu passengers travelling by train are harassed at



every stage. Their luggage is subjected to periodic examination and if they want to escape this harassment, they have to pay heavy bribes which are taken by railway and excise people. Even at the end of their journey their luggage is reweighed and sometimes penal clauses imposed. No wonder the Hindu is leaving the province.

Both the Sind and Pakistan Constituent Assemblies are meeting this month. The Sind Assembly has met for its budget session and Mr. Khuhro, the Premier had to unfold a sad picture of deficit consequent on the partition of the country. A budget which was expected to be a surplus one has been turned into a deficit one of fifty-two lakhs. Sind which had husbanded its resources had to fork out an expenditure of one hundred and one lakhs for the construction of offices to house the Pakistan Secretariat and its personnel. The money has not been refunded. The subvention which Sind was getting when she was part of the Indian Union has been stopped. On top of it, the exodus of the Hindus from Sind has vitally affected the economy of the province and excise revenue alone has suffered a landslide of over fourteen lakhs. It was but natural that the Premier had to resort to taxation. The sales tax has been doubled, entertainment tax has been increased, the betting tax increased by ten per cent, another anna added to the gallon in petrol tax and a cess of half-anna in the rupee has been imposed in land re-

venue. A feature of the taxation measures is that its weight will fall most on the urban population and Karachi will soon become the costliest city in Pakistan.

A big fight is at the moment proceeding between Sind and Pakistan Governments for the possession of Karachi. The Pakistan Government wants to convert Karachi into a Commissioner's province and drive the Sind Government to Hyderabad. It has been more or less decided to have Karachi as the permanent capital of Pakistan. The decision will have to be taken by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly but Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's voice will be final and he is very keen about having Karachi as the permanent capital. The Sind Ministry is kicking up a row about this and is offering land free in the vicinity of Karachi for Pakistan to build a new capital but the Pakistan Government has no money for it nor are there enough men to undertake a huge construction programme. So by April, the Sind Government will have to move to the interior. When that happens, Karachi will become an outhouse of the Punjab and the domination of the Punjabis on everything will be complete. It is a tragedy that Sind which afforded hospitality to the refugee Pakistan Government should have been asked to quit its headquarters and go elsewhere. Mr. Khuhro is wanting to make this a big political issue but people in the know of things say that he is waging a war in which he will be floor-

MUSLIMS IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

by Dr. P. C. ALEXANDER, M.A., D.Litt.

PARTITION and independence have brought a strange sense of frustration and disillusionment to the Indian Muslim. One would have naturally expected the Muslim to feel proud and elated at the speedy realisation of his political dreams, but strangely enough, the very realisation of his political aims seems to have created in him a sense of disappointment and confusion. It would be wrong to believe that the horrible holocaust which followed partition and the general insecurity, distress and distrust he finds around him are responsible for his present state of frustration. Even if there had been no communal violence in the country and its attendant dangers of insecurity, the achievement of Pakistan would have brought the same sense of frustration and dismay to the Indian Muslim. Till yesterday the Muslim in India had been living in a highly artificial and unreal political atmosphere, surcharged with dangerous sentiments of hatred and "suppression-complex". His leaders had created such an atmosphere for him, for without it, it would have been difficult to make him a fanatic crusader for a cause which was palpably ruinous to his interests. It is one of the strangest facts of Indian politics that the most enthusiastic support for Pakistan was from people to whom it was bound to be least beneficial. The Muslim in India never bothered to think calmly of the possible reactions and results of his own action. His passion and fervour were worked up to such a degree that to him "Pakistan or Death" became a convincing slogan. At last he got Pakistan, but when Pakistan actually came he realised the most terrible truth that it had not come to him but to some one else! The simple, elementary truth of political science that a State belongs only to its inhabitants dawned upon the Pakistan enthusiast in India and pricked the bal-

loon of his sentimental enthusiasm. He now finds himself in an atmosphere of confusion and distrust and is suddenly brought to face the unpleasant realities of politics.

We speak of the unpleasant realities of politics—yes, they are really unpleasant and hard. The immediate effect of partition on the Indian Muslims is that it has brought about a depletion of their bargaining power and importance. Till a few months ago, the bargaining power of the Muslim community in Indian politics was so high that Mr. Jinnah could audaciously claim for it even parity. With the British blessing of weightage in legislative councils and public services, Mr. Jinnah's trumped-up following of a 'hundred millions' could almost dictate terms to the remaining three hundred millions. In fact, there was no question of a "brute majority" in India as Mr. Jinnah was fond of complaining. Really it was a question of a "brute minority". But in the India of the new setting the voice of the Muslims as a community is bound to be feeble. The abolition of weightage for minorities in legislative councils very seriously affects the Muslim community, whereas it makes very little difference for the other minority communities. The following table gives an idea of the weightage enjoyed by the Muslims in the Provincial Legislative Councils. (Bengal, the Punjab and Assam are omitted as they have been partitioned).

Muslim Representation in Provincial Legislatures under the 1935 Act.

Provinces.	Total.	Muslim seats.	Seats Excess warrant- ed by po- pulation.
Madras	215	29	17 12
Bombay	175	30	17 14
U.P.	228	66	35 31
Bihar	152	40	20 20
C.P.	112	14	5 9
Orissa	60	4	1 3

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In independent India Muslims are to get their seats only in proportion to their population strength, and this means a reduction of 41% of their present strength in the Madras Legislature, 47% in Bombay, 47% in U.P., 50% in Bihar, 64% in C.P. and 75% in Orissa. Joint electorates are a new phenomenon with which the Indian Muslims have to reconcile themselves. For about forty years the Muslims in India had considered separate electorates as the sheet-anchor of their political rights and had almost associated with it an inviolable sanctity. Now they are to find their way to the Legislative Councils with the help and goodwill of their sister communities.

The session of the Muslim majority provinces from India, the abolition of weightage and the introduction of Joint electorates have radically altered the position of the Muslim community in India, and the Muslim leaders will be exposing sheer bankruptcy of statesmanship if they try to ignore or underestimate the importance of these factors. Slogans of yesterday like 'Muslim Unity' or 'Muslim Solidarity' are of no use to day, because, even if the Muslims are able to maintain their unity and solidarity unimpaired, it will be of little help to them. The ultimate aim of a political party, as any student of political science would know, is to capture Governmental power, and

the Indian Muslims with all their strength and unity can never hope to have an effective share in the administration of the country so long as they follow their policy of isolationism. Even as a party in opposition their voice is bound to be ineffective because of their insignificant strength in the legislature. The key to the happiness of the Muslims in independent India lies in the harmony and goodwill they are able to establish with their sister communities. Unfortunately goodwill between the Hindus and Muslims has become a rare commodity in India and leaders like Mr. Mohammed Ismail who flatter themselves with the vain belief that the Quaid-e-Azam's mantle has fallen on them are making it rarer still by their short-sighted policy. The opposition of the Indian Muslims to joint electorates is in fact more sentimental than sensible. The continuation of separate electorates for Muslims under the present circumstances would mean the perpetuation of their status as a minority. The Muslims, though a communal minority, need not remain a political minority if they are to make use of the splendid opportunities for inter-communal co-operation which joint electorates offer to them. But the League leaders seem to imagine that to be a minority is itself a privilege and an advantage. Obviously they find it difficult to remember that 1948 is not 1946.

The removal of the unique and beneficent personality of the Mahatma from Indian politics is likely in the long run to weaken the forces of peace and moderation. Nehru is even more isolated than before in a Cabinet which represents chiefly Indian Big Business. The Socialist Party, led by that attractive and impressive personality Jai Prakash Narain, is expected to leave Congress at its Conference in Bombay next month. The Communist Party, probably the best organised in India, is, of course, an open enemy of Congress, and is in head-on collision with the Socialist leaders.....Like the Socialists, but more effectively, they appeal to the workers to unite on an economic basis, and to think in class, not communal, terms. To them, the political significance of Gandhi's death will be that it will now be much easier to analyse and align the social forces of India in Marxist terms. Gandhi represented an incalculable and personal factor, sometimes exerted on the side of social progress, and sometimes, as in the case of the recent decontrol of some essential commodities, on the side of Big Business and reaction.—KINGSLEY MARTIN.

GURU GOVIND SINGH

by P. N. SAMPATH

WHILE Guru Nanak was the founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Givind Singh was the founder of its greatness. Guru Govind Singh reaped what Nanak had sown earlier, and also planted afresh new plants of lasting permanence. In the words of an English historian, "he engrafted the courage of a soldier upon the enthusiasm of the devotee".

Every foreign invasion saw the Punjab ravaged inside out. The people were forcibly converted, their lands were laid waste, and their coffers were looted. The Hindu princes and nobles were so very disunited and weak that the resistance they offered was next to nothing. The Hindu religion itself was caste-ridden, and the oppressed lower classes sought deliverance by embracing Islam, the religion of the invaders. The religious teachers that were, did not rise to the occasion. Rather, they were busy perfecting forms of dissent within their religion itself. In fact, in the words of Nanak, "true religion had taken wings and flown." Nanak realised what they had failed to realise. He saw that the need of the hour was a practical religion "which teaches mankind, not how to escape from the world, but how to live worthily in it; not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met and overcome." He attacked the citadel of the caste system by declaring that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes. The poor lower classes among both the Hindus and the Muslims readily flocked to his standard and became Sikhs.

The power of a prompt response to the call of the hour is not given to all. Thanks to Guru Nanak, a feeling of nationality was first instilled among the Indians. As Dr. Gokul Chand Narang says, "the sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was undoubtedly for-

ged by Govind Singh, but the steel has been provided by Nanak."

Guru Govind Singh was the most virile of the Sikh Gurus. Between Nanak's time and his own accession, Sikhism had had a checkered career. The powerful Mughal Emperors resented its growth and did everything to stifle it. A contemporary of the great Mahratta Sivaji, Govind Singh did in the North what Sivaji did in the South to break the communally corrupt Mughal power.

Born at Patna in the year 1666 A.D., Govind Singh was but 10 years old when he became the Guru in 1676. His worthy father Guru Teg Bahadur was the victim of foul play at the hands of Emperor Aurangzeb. He went to interview the Emperor on the latter's invitation, when he was treacherously killed. His head was severed and held up to public view.

Guru Govind Singh saw clearly the necessity for a more militant attitude for his followers. From now on he was God's soldier on earth. Enemies of Dharma were his enemies. He yearned to rid the land of oppression. "He who serves the poor and the needy serves me. The mouths of the poor are the receptacles for all gifts," he solemnly declared.

Govind Singh consolidated his power by a series of victories over neighbouring hill chieftains who were hobnobbing with the Mughal Emperor. He slowly increased his army and armoury. Lion-hearted as he was, he taught his followers "to fear none, and to strike fear in none". They were saint-soldiers, worshipping God and Steel. Like Cromwell's famous Ironsides, they had

".....no thought of flight. None of retreat, no unbecoming deed

That argued fear; each on himself relied."

Under the Guru's inspiring leadership, they gained at once the

cohesion, the mobility and the discipline of a standing army.

The mighty Emperor of Delhi found this stormy petrel going out of hand. Aurangzeb managed to trap him at a place called Chamkam along with his sons and a few of his chosen followers. Like the Spartans at Thermopylae, these handful of brave Sikhs held out for a considerable while, only to be overpowered in the end. The valiant Guru saw two of his sons and many of his close followers being slain before his eyes. The Imperial troops were treated to a display of archery from the quiver of the Guru. Very few among them went back to their homes to tell the tale. Eventually, Govind Singh managed to escape.

A fugitive in flight, with the soldiers and spies of the Emperor hot on his trail, Govind Singh revealed remarkable powers of fortitude. No stress could subvert his steadiness of purpose and dignity of bearing. In these sudden difficulties he took counsel from the valour of his mind.

He was ever on the move, defying capture. His tours increased his influence and following. In his Epistle of Victory or Zafarnama addressed to Aurangzeb, he warned the Emperor: "Thou art merely exciting a raging fire to rage the more."

After the death of Aurangzeb, during the wars of succession that followed it, Govind Singh helped Bahadur Shah to ascend the Imperial throne. Paradoxical as it may seem, he was for some time the Emperor's honoured guest at the Imperial Palace. Bahadur Shah offered him a Jagir coupled with riches, as a token of his reverence. But Govind Singh would not have any of the proffered things. Bahadur wanted to use the enormous influence of the Guru against the troublesome Mahrattas, which also Govind Singh summarily refused. They had come to the parting of the ways, and Govind Singh proceeded to Nanded or Abchnagar in Hyderabad State. There he met his end in 1708, when a Pathan in the employ of the Nawab of Sirhind stabbed him fatally.

Thus ended the career of a great son of India. At the altar of national welfare he sacrificed his father, his own sons and family, friends, personal wealth, home and comforts. He wanted to rid the land of enslavement to brute force. "He executed his design with the systematic spirit of a Grecian law-giver." He was a nation-builder who taught his followers a corporate life where common good and welfare were placed higher than individual interests. He instilled them with a feeling of nationality, and he was the right man for the needs of the time. As Cunningham brilliantly puts it, "Govind Singh had seen what was yet vital in the Hindu race and he relumed it with Promethean fire." While Sivaji was the political Colossus of the times, Govind Singh worked for political, social and religious emancipation at one and the same time. Superstition, idolatry, caste and its appendage untouchability, were all unequivocally condemned. He believed in the dignity of labour and did not countenance mendicancy. His system of organisation was based on the most modern ideas of democracy and sociology.

A first-rate organiser, a poet and scholar of no mean merit, an archer of known prowess, a gifted soldier brave and fearless, a zealous reformer, and a patriot to the very core Guru Govind Singh is a standing example for every Indian nationalist to emulate. His policy was based on a higher plane of moral heroism with the only object of serving national interests and not promote either communal hatred or sectarian mendacity. His cosmological outlook was the result of purely altruistic motives.

His cosmopolitanism and his bravery against odds are the vital needs of today. The Sikhs particularly must steadfastly adhere to the high ideals outlined by the Sikh Gurus. Sectarianism and political schisms are visible in their ranks as elsewhere. Conditions at present are very similar to those which obtained in the days of Guru Govind Singh. His illustrious example should serve as a lesson for Hindus and Sikhs to study and profit by.

THE FOOD PROBLEM

A PRODUCER OFFERS HIS SUGGESTIONS

by V. T. ARASU

ADDRESSING the Provincial Food Committee, the Premier and the Food Minister have made earnest and impassioned appeals to all citizens to come forward and offer suggestions to the Government about the ways and means by which the present food crisis can be tided over.

In the first place, this is a welcome change in the attitude of our Ministers. It is pleasing to note that they have, after all, come to realise that the system of price controls and rationing through the medium of an agency devoid of public spirit, honesty and integrity, set up at an enormous cost can never solve our problems. The Ministers unequivocally admit in their speeches that increased production can be the only sensible solution to the problem and nothing can induce increased production as much as the offer of a fair and square price. It must be a price which would not only enable the ryot to meet his increased cost of production but will also leave some money in his pocket to enable him to have a taste of the apparently improved standards of life now enjoyed by those engaged in industry, in the trades and professions, and in Government services.

Figures (particularly in respect of production) adduced by Government are based on guess work. They are the work of just the people who have been responsible for making procurement and rationing a farce by their malpractices. Much faith cannot be placed in these figures, and they cannot be relied on for any scientific investigation. The proper course would be for Government to ascertain the actual stock in the province, the sum of the stocks in the hands of the registered land-owners, cultivators, merchants, millers and owners of eating houses. This can be done by compelling these people to submit

returns before, say, the 15th of March. From the returns so submitted, after making allowances for personal consumption, seed, etc., (as may be appropriate to the party concerned), by about the 1st of April, Government can have an exact picture of the stock position and can then frame their measures.

In a nutshell, the position seems to be this: The total population in areas where statutory rationing is still in force is about 6 millions. The total of the population in deficit and other areas where normal local production has failed, and requiring supplies, can be taken at about 19 millions. Apart from these 25 millions, it can be safely asserted that the rest of the population of this presidency are able to look after themselves either from their own garner or by means of supplies from those of friends and relations. To feed these 25 millions at the rate of 10 oz. per day, for 215 days (from 1st April to 31st October 1948, the close of the Kharif year) the total quantity of food grains (rice, millets or wheat, leaving maize out of consideration) that would be required is: 1,499,721 tons, or in round figures 1½ million tons. How to obtain this?

I loathe the idea of reducing the overall rations to 8 oz. Everyone knows that even the most refined person—unless he is a chronic dyspeptic or a consumptive—is unable to live on 8 oz. of cereals a day. Therefore to reduce the overall rations to 8 oz. would be a vicious step, once again setting in motion on all four forces of greed and exploitation, which, with the de-control policy of Government, has been somewhat on the decrease.

In the last Kharif year, between the months of April and November over 1 million tons of rice and millets were procured by Government from the producers in this presidency. On account of the failure

of the monsoons in certain districts it would be too much to expect that quantity this year. Nevertheless, from the surplus Delta districts alone it would be possible for Government to procure very easily nearly 600,000 tons of rice, provided they come forward and offer Rs. 16 per maund as against the Rs. 12-8-0 or Rs. 13 now offered. If this increase is offered, no procurement staff would be necessary nor coercion in any form. The stocks would flow into the Government granaries of their own accord. To this, I know, the answer would be: What about the consumers? The average consumer who under the present 8 oz. rations is compelled to buy about one-third of his weekly rations in the black-market at prices anywhere over Rs. 1-4-0 per measure of rice, would not mind an increase in the price provided he is assured of an increase in quantity and is given the option to choose his quality. If the consumer in the cities and elsewhere must have his 1½ measures to a rupee, as at present, let Government shoulder the difference in the cost, which would be about Rs. 5 crores.

The supplies expected, through the good offices of the Government of India, for the current year is 400,000 tons. Taking this into account, the Madras Government would still be faced with an overall deficit of 500,000 tons. It is this deficit of 500,000 tons (rice and millets) that will have to be seriously considered. It seems to me that in spite of the adverse seasonal conditions it is not beyond the region of possibility for this province to produce this 500,000 within the next four months, provided Government tackle this problem bravely and generously. This is how it can be done.

A close and intelligent study of the season and crop reports for the past decade or two would reveal that in years when the North-East Monsoon fails in the months of October, November and December, as had happened this year, there are usually fairly heavy showers in the following April. On that basis,

therefore, we can expect a fairly good rainfall, in the districts where the North-East Monsoon failed, in or about April this year and the chances for a short-term summer crop are consequently fairly bright in many districts. Apart from a gamble on the favours of rain and weather, it must be noted that there are in all about 400,000 irrigation wells of all sorts and sizes in this presidency. Some are capable of irrigating about 2 acres of paddy and about 3 acres of ragi. The minimum that any well—even under the present parched-up conditions—is capable of supporting is one acre of paddy and one acre of ragi. The raising of crops by means of well-irrigation is naturally very expensive and mere wordy appeals to either the heart or the head of the ryot would not induce him to undertake this sort of production. What is wanted is a substantial subsidy on an acreage basis, and a definite undertaking to buy up the produce at a fairly decent price. I would suggest a subsidy of Rs. 25 per acre of paddy and Rs. 12-8-0 per acre of ragi. This would be a fair inducement to bring, at the minimum, 400,000 acres under paddy and 400,000 acres under ragi in the months of April, May and June. The subsidy would cost the exchequer Rs. 1½ crores and the overall produce of rice and millets would be in the region of 300,000 tons, and would very nearly wipe out the deficit.

The Ministers might twit me with the question: "Where is this money to come from? Five crores for an increase in the prices and 1½ crores for subsidy for summer crops!" I would only invite the attention of Government to the fact that during the last two years they have been spending every year about 5½ crores of rupees on their so-called trading schemes which, for all practical purposes, represented the pay, emoluments, allowances, etc., of an army of officers and men of the following departments: Food, Civil Supplies, Procurement, Rationing, etc. Well, to what purpose? Has that 5½ crores resulted in one additional ear-head of grain being produced? Again, there is the

wonderful Department of Agriculture over which the Local and Central Governments have together been spending something like 2 crores every year. All the great and good work of this department during the last thirty years has only resulted in a decrease in the overall average yield per acre, in respect of paddy.

Government should give up their present ostrich-like tendency of burying their heads in sand and

imagining that the creation and maintenance of departments at enormous cost would solve the food problem. That may be a solution for the problem of unemployment, but it will not enable them to feed the people. Instead, let them put the money into the pockets of the producers, and the problem will solve itself. The solution to any problem is not apart from it; it is always in the problem itself. The producer is the problem, and the solution is the producer.

ZAMINDARI ABOLITION—AN OPPORTUNITY

by N. R. BHAT

THE Zamindari abolition bill seeks to change the pattern of land tenure so as to bring the Zamin and whole-village inams into line with the system of Ryotwari ownership prevailing practically in the rest of the province. The class of Zamindars (and Inamdars to whom the Madras Estates Land Act is applicable) will be abolished; the tenants of to-day will become Ryotwari landlords. The removal of one class of landlords affords an opportunity for taking a bold step towards co-operative agriculture.

The deficiencies of Indian agriculture are legion. The farmer is handicapped by the impoverished soil. He works on small fragments of land, with primitive implements. He relies on emaciated draught animals; he is smarting under the Zamindari system or under absentee landlordism. He is continually in debt. The productivity of agriculture is low, while it is responsible for the sustenance of over three quarters of the population. The lever for the progress of the nation is an increase in the productivity of the soil. The increase in the yield can be brought about by well-planned consolidation of holdings, use of modern implements, chemical manures, and easy credit facilities to the agriculturist. Primarily, the land tenure systems need overhauling. When the system is abolished in Zamindari tracts, an op-

portunity is created for a rural recovery programme.

The estates about to be abolished are compact blocks of land, including many areas which are yet to be brought under the plough. The estates lend themselves to easy conversion into co-operative farms. The Government can avoid creating a new class of Ryotwari landlords or pattadars by encouraging the formation of co-operatives which should step into the breach. The Ryotwari demand (land revenue) can be borne by such co-operatives. If such co-operatives get sufficient encouragement, the farm can be improved; modern implements can be used, better seeds and manure can be utilised. The credit facilities will drive the village moneylender out of existence. The farm can be a centre of better farming, and better living. Cultural life of the village can be built around the co-operatives. The State should extend to such co-operative farms expert guidance. The efforts of the department of agriculture, to-day, yield very little result. Like the 'Grow more food' campaign, the official posters do not yield corn. The departments of agriculture, co-operation, industries, and the P.W.D. should create a joint commission to guide the co-operatives. The advices of the departments, which are now dismissed with a sneer as the actual tiller has not

the wherewithal to carry them out, will then be capable of actual implementation.

A statutory body, consisting of experts drawn from the different departments, must be created. The miles and miles of red tape within and between departments must be cut out. The statutory body must consist of experts capable of quick decisions on the spot. They must visit a farm and study its conditions and draft a rough and ready plan for its development. The educational officer must consider the educational needs and recommend suitable action; the industries member should recommend the utilisation of local raw materials, or unemployed labour for the production of some goods. The agricultural member can advise the farmers on the use of better implements, better seeds, chemical manures, rotation of crops, cultivation of cattle fodder, and so forth. The member for co-operation can advise the people to free themselves from the clutches of the middlemen by building up co-operatives; he must set the co-operatives in motion. The health officer can advise on hygiene. The veterinary officer will tell the farmer about the breeding of working cattle for agricultural purposes and also of milch cattle. The local administration officer can initiate the people in the art of good self-government. The cultural life of the farm can be built around the co-operative. But it is imperative that such a statutory body consist of men of imagination, drive, will, and energy, with a living faith in the arts of co-operative living. That body can move from farm to farm and otherwise make available to the farmer their expert guidance. Besides their usefulness in building up these model co-operatives of better farming and better living, such a team can devote its energy to reclaiming land, and opening up big colonies for the unemployed; and, driving malaria out bring under the plough large tracts of land now

pestered by malaria and make those tracts both habitable and productive.

On the other hand, the creation of the Ryotwari system hardly touches the fringe of the problem. The experience of the Ryotwari areas points to the gradual elimination of the cultivating Ryot-pattadars, the growth of the holdings of non-cultivating pattadars thus bringing in the evils of absentee landlordism and rack-renting. The Revenue Minister is not unaware of the evils of Ryotwari system, which he promises to remedy in subsequent legislation. Why then confer Ryotwari pattas now?

Indian agriculture can be modernised and its productivity increased manifold by initiating the farmer into the art of better farming and better living. That can be achieved only by living examples of co-operative farms which demonstrate the advantages of better farming, and not by posters and precepts. Here is an opportunity to carry the ideals of co-operation, self-government and cultural advance to the village by creating 'islands' of co-operative living in place of the estates. If "co-operative commonwealth" is not a mere election slogan, but an ideal to be seriously aimed at and worked for, then a bold experiment on the lines indicated should be undertaken. As the late Mr. Ramdas Pantulu said, "The State must look upon co-operation and allied activities not merely as part of its paraphernalia and administrative adornments, but must have a living faith in their potentialities as instruments at their disposal for the economic rehabilitation of the masses." (*Economic Problems of Modern India*, edited by Radhakamal Mukerjee, Vol. I, Chap. on 'Co-operation' by Ramdas Pantulu). Only a building up of these oases of co-operative living in the arid desert of primitive agriculture can prove the earnestness of any believer in the ideal of a co-operative commonwealth.

A good education enables a person to worry about things in all parts of the world.—WINNIPEG TRIBUNE.

MALABAR PROVINCE, OR UNITED KERALA?

by A. K. PILLAI

THE case for a separate Kerala Province is admittedly strong. The formation of United Kerala is both desirable and within practical politics. That, however, is not to suggest that the path is free from obstacles. Firstly, there is the existing division of Kerala into a number of parts, two of which happen to be Princely States, while others are Collectors' Districts. The presence of the ruling dynasties may appear to be an impediment. But these dynasties have, particularly in the recent past, given ample proof of their realistic and progressive outlook so much so that one is justified in the hope that they will eventually line up with the people of the land, once public opinion on the issue is made unmistakably clear. One ruler has already given his blessings to the Aikya Kerala movement.

There is another difficulty, namely, the presence of non-Malayalee minorities in the southern and northern corners of Kerala. Today, they seem to entertain in greater or lesser degree apprehensions that they might possibly be submerged by the larger bulk of the Malayalee population. Here is, indeed, a challenge to the imaginative statesmanship of the majority community who must rise equal to the occasion by devising a balanced polity, capable of removing all fear of domination by one section over another.

There is yet another difficulty which doubtless is real, but not so considerable as the other two. Due to their long separation into Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, the Malayalees have among themselves developed a certain parochialism and aloofness. Fortunately these local affiliations and angularities are fast disappearing and may altogether vanish, now that a new vision has dawned.

Some patriotic elements in their impatience seem to feel that if

United Kerala is not immediately possible, then Malabar District should straightway be promoted into a Province. It would be a ridiculous picture to contemplate. The part is never equal to the whole. The Malayalees will not care for the distinction of belonging to the tiniest and poorest Province of the Indian Union.

One need not have to go into any elaborate discussion to prove the utter unworkability of a province constituted by Malabar alone. Even if it is conceived as the first step towards the larger and genuine ideal of United Kerala, it is in the given circumstances foredoomed to failure. It will have in no time involved itself in serious financial and administrative difficulties. Far from the other parts of Kerala being encouraged to form a united State with Malabar, they will naturally be repelled by the spectre of poverty and the struggles of the infant Province threatening to crash down in bankruptcy. It should be plain that any attempt to bolster up the feeble structure by heavy taxation would only weaken it further and must tend to drive out whatever capital there might be left. Neither could any attempt to raise national loans prove much of a success. In such an unenviable situation even the idea of a separate Kerala must receive a fatal set-back.

Let us not allow the grand ideal of a United Kerala to recede into the background by raising the cry for a Malabar Province. That would be like leaving the substance and chasing the shadow. It is hardly ten months since a Convention was held at Trichur under the auspices of the Cochin Maharajah and the ideal of an United Kerala was with great ceremony proclaimed. We are not told if anything has happened between then and now for some of the leading protagonists of the Convention to change their mind and go about crying for a Malabar

Province. From the political events since the Convention one should have imagined that the prospect had improved for a Kerala Union. Cochin, for example, has been granted full responsible government and now has a popular Ministry. Travancore has similarly marched ahead. There is no formidable enemy to contend with in the fight for the Union. Only no serious effort seems to have been made to put the case for a United Kerala before the people of the States to secure their verdict. The major political parties both in Cochin and Travancore, as judged from the utterances of their leaders, have at all times been in support of the movement. They are of the same political persuasion as the Congressmen of Malabar. It is therefore not a little disconcerting to find that the latter, without any adequate explanation, have thought fit to take up the cry of 'Malabar Province.' If the greater ideal of a Kerala Province has become either obsolete or impractical, the leaders have the duty and responsibility to take the public into their confidence.

It is true that Malabar has not received its fair share in the general scheme of economic development of Madras Province as a whole; with the result that Malabar for its size and population is proportionately far poorer than other districts. That

this is by no means due to any inherent defect of the soil or the people of the West Coast is strikingly shown by the higher level of prosperity and development of Travancore and Cochin. In spite of the fact that the States have had to support a top-heavy system with all the paraphernalia of sovereignty they have nevertheless been able to render a much better account of themselves. If Travancore and Cochin feel any reluctance to come into union with Malabar, it is presumably due to the dissimilarity in the economic condition obtaining between the States on the one hand and Malabar District on the other. This circumstance ought to underline the urgency and validity of insistence on the part of Malabar District, not to be separated in its present anæmic condition but that it shall be accorded a special treatment for some years to come, like the treatment that Rayalaseema in Andhra has been promised, until the uneven conditions will have been duly rectified and the general level appreciably raised. The obviously wise course for Malabar would therefore be to stay put for some time while its own economic conditions were being levelled up and the progress towards the unification of Kerala accelerated. The present cry for a Malabar Province here and now appears, to say the least, short-sighted and ill-conceived.

MIRACLES

by M.S.K.

MANY men and women, some of them very sophisticated in normal life, have discussed the possibility of miracles while talking about Gandhiji during the last few days.

Miracles are ticklish and dangerous things. Their nature and functions could not be well defined. Even if three people agree that a certain occurrence is a 'miracle', their reasons, on investigation, often prove to be different. (My friend, Mr. X., and I both like greens—I, for the iron in it, and he for its cheapness. Again, what

is blue to you is not exactly blue to another; and the blueness of the same object is different when you approach it, from what it is when you go away from it.)

"Once a miracle, always a miracle"—is not true. And a good thing it is that it is not true. It shows that we are becoming more rational and scientific. It also shows that the gap between the stage and the gallery is getting shorter.

I have been duped, but never presented, with the close-up view of a miracle. If such an event should occur, I wonder if I would not re-

quest to be taken into the green-room for a reasonable payment.

....But in another sense, has not Gandhiji worked a great many miracles in his lifetime? Now, most miracles are associated with—

*creating something out of nothing (and, usually, feeding hungry multitudes),
spectacular healing, or reviving of the dead,
making something happen in a much shorter time than it usually takes, that is, compression of Time,
producing precious articles out of base raw materials,
appearing in many places at the same time, that is, compression of Space,
and so on.*

Gandhiji has done all these and more many times,—though not in the conventional sense.

Suppose there are ten mouths to be fed; and there is food for only nine. The people are either bemoaning their fate, or begging for more food, on the strength of panicky statistics. Gandhiji demonstrates that there could be a wasteful way of eating—stowing away more than is needed and, at the same time, putting a strain on the digestive organs; and also that skipping a meal occasionally is not a great sacrifice, and could be positively beneficial to many. Thus a deficit is turned into a surplus, a block of Time is presented to the people in which they could readjust their activities and produce more, and the coarse selfish act of eating is transformed into a sacred and co-operative effort.

"He did not heal or revive the dead, but expedited the death of a sick calf"—is the theme of the miracle-monger. This poor, purblind critic has no eyes for the revival of our national self-respect, the healing of our sick soul, the revival of our village economy, and

the creation of love for the simple and the essential. A dead skin made into a living skin passes for a miracle, but a dying nation made virile is just taken for granted!

When a juggler makes a mango plant grow and bear fruit in a few minutes, we stand awed; but when Gandhiji changes the heart of a die-hard Imperialist, or stays the bloody hand of insane thousands in a few days, we do not see a miracle in it, but rather question the correctness of coercive fasts.

"Change a bit of copper into gold—and we shall follow you to the end of the world with gaping mouths; but change a clod-hopper (steeped in misery and ignorance) into a hero with national outlook—and we shall have no eye for it"—that is the attitude of many. What poor, spiritless, self-centered material most of the people were who, touched by his magic wand, rose to incredible heights—made great sacrifices, suffered much bodily inconvenience, and vastly improved their mode of life and thought.

A stanza in the Gita describes the Creator as 'One Who lives in all beings and in Whom all creatures have their being. On the 31st of January last, one could sense with one's mental eye, crores of people gathered in lakhs of places around radios, their thoughts focussed on Birla House and Rajghat and the unseen avenues of Delhi. Has such one-mindedness ever been at any place at any time? Many unsophisticated people, not particularly Gandhian in their mode of life, felt the imminence of his Spirit so much that they experienced a sense of pollution as during the death of a near relative, and felt a restraint while about to touch clothes or bedding.

....I find that though I set out to affirm that there is no such thing as 'miracle', I have argued Gandhiji into the most authentic miracle-worker.

The Englishman is developing a lean and hungry look he never wore before.....Women look more strained than men.... Even the young have lines between their eyes.....London has lost its air of leisure and its aura of wealth.....ANNE O'HARE
McCORMICK in New York Times.

cherry his abode. V. V. S. Iyer, after his futile attempt to save Veer Sayarkar at Marseilles, had himself successfully given the slip to the Imperial police, over Europe, Turkey and West Asia. Bharathi had twice braved the Indian police in British territory in his escapes. Not even Socrates and Plato, nor Johnson and Burke had better company in their lives, than these three.

In their family lives, there is a basic resemblance between the two poets, for both enjoyed the happiest of family lives. It is a greater tribute to Bharathi than Tagore, for in spite of his rebellious nature and grinding poverty, Bharathi never allowed the least bitterness to creep into his family relations. He was one of the first among the Indian poets to sing of the greatness of 'woman' and hail the coming era as theirs. His affection for his wife and daughters, was most touching indeed. It seems V. V. S. Iyer once told Bharathi that in all his wide travels, he had never met a happier family.

Bharathi's ebullient humour and uproarious laughter were as well known in Pondicherry as Johnson's was in London. In the case of Tagore a fine account of his family life has been preserved for us in the memoirs of his daughter-in-law. We see here the simple Hindu householder, asking his wife to prepare sweetmeats and *dahibara* (his favourite dish and her masterpiece) for his many distinguished guests, and later, chiding her that even the Tagore estates could not stand such careless spending; chiding her again for wearing the golden earrings her insistent daughters-in-law had thrust on her.

Both were patriots in the highest sense of the word though they had a local chauvinism to a certain extent. Tagore was proud of the recent past of Bengali, enriched by Bankim Chandra, Romeshchandra, Iswarchandra, Sarat Chandra, and a host of other writers, while Bharathi was chiding the indolent Tamils, who allowed a rich literary heritage as old as time itself, to languish while Bengal—by com-

parison an upstart—was making giant strides. It should not be imagined however that Bharathi was a flag-wagging patriot while Tagore had a wider vision and perspective. The misrepresentation of admirers, along with his own burning patriotism in some of his poems have contributed to this misconception. But a calm study of all Bharathi's works, as also of his life, will easily convince us that his vision was as far-flung as Tagore's. Both denounced in full measure all sorts of puritanism and monomania in politics. Bharathi had a boundless admiration for Tilak because he considered him to be the right combination of intellect and action, caution and daring, opportunism and idealism. He had no patience even with Aurobindo in his philosophy of loneliness and inaction and he denounced some excesses of Gandhism in speech and writing. If he had not denounced it in as much detail as Tagore did, it was simply because he did not live long enough to see the Khilafat tragicomedy and the Bihar howlers of Gandhiji. His denunciation of puritanical and non-violent excesses is in fact more emphatic than Tagore's. Their warnings went unheeded in their time and today we are witnessing the evil repercussions of a quarter of a century of Gandhian puritanism, self-hypnotism and political unrealism.

In spite of much difference in the circumstances of their life, there is a fundamental unity in their character. Infinite courage was the key note of Bharathi's character as infinite simplicity and love were the key notes of Tagore's. Their ideals were the same and they had the same abhorrence of excesses in politics and life. This unity should be ascribed to that pattern of culture and ideal of manhood which the Vedas and Upanishads teach and which inspires every Hindu all over Hindustan. It is a sure proof to the vitality and breadth of Hindu culture that two men, so different in material circumstances, living so wide apart as Bharathi and Tagore should, with all their differences, have upheld the same lofty ideals to their fellowmen.



Rural Problems In Madras. By S. Y. Krishnaswami, O.B.E., I.C.S. (Government Press, Madras. Price, Rs. 5.)

This is the first book of its kind, giving in a compendious form the history and facts about each rural problem and suggesting lines of reform for the future. A reference to the chapter heads will indicate at a glance the variety of subjects and the versatility required of the author in dealing with them. The book contains 55 pages of charts, diagrams and photographs and 33 appendices. It is written on the basis of a synopsis issued by Sir Manilal Nanavati, the President of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics. Chapters X and XI of the synopsis relating to industrial development and administration are yet to be written and we hope that the author will find time amidst his official duties to complete them. The appendices contain useful statistical information about the province for ready reference. A forceful introduction from the pen of Sir S. V. Ramamurthi clinches the issues of the rural problem.

The book satisfies the author's test that it should supply "the necessary facts as a whole for knowing the possibilities as well as limitations of development." Though written by an official and issued under official auspices, it is not hidebound by the official fear of expressing an opinion or stating a policy. It is hoped that Government will take note of the observations of this writer based on facts and long experience as a revenue officer. Both the author and Mr. S. V. Ramamurthi plead for a larger unit for village panchayats quite against the proposals of the present Ministry. The author again proposes nationalisation of land, limiting proprietary right to that of land use for productive purposes, and cultivation in combination as distinguished from combined ownership in respect of new lands, particularly under irrigation projects. The Madras Government refuses even to think of this problem under new irrigation projects. It is gratifying to note however that it has radically changed its irrigation policy from one of considering the business returns from it to that of general well-being.

The author recommends a mixed farming economy (meaning farming supplemented by rural industries) in which the individual farmer and his family use their spare time to fulfil their wants and increase their income, and opposes the belief that 'all large-scale production is pernicious and that we should hearken back to a rural civilisation with cottage industries supplementing agriculture'. He wants 'a reasonable measure of self-reliance and self-sufficiency for the villager.' He further notes that hand spinning gives a lower return than mill-yarn and is an industry only for those 'who have little else to do'. But we should not forget that when we plan, we plan to absorb the idle hours of the people in gainful employments, and not on the basis of an eternal under-employment which cannot be filled up, or can be filled up only by unremunerative industries. As regards the handloom weaver, the author proposes that he should confine himself to coarser and artistic fabrics, and their excess number should be absorbed in the textile mill industry. The chapter on rural industries examines the costs of production and the return for the craftsman in respect of a large number of industries. A useful introduction to this chapter indicates that processing industries and not crafts can form the spare-time occupations of a small holder. We are today confronted with the problem as to what kind of industries can be best dovetailed into agriculture during the off-season. Can they be cattle and sheep breeding, poultry-rearing, fish culture, intensification of crops, processing of raw materials, or independent crafts? A more detailed discussion of this question would be helpful towards the planning of agricultural production.

The author appreciates the technological improvements in agriculture but is sceptical of their popularisation among the ryots. In this chapter he draws attention to the absence of a proper soil study of the province, and to the importance of soil conservation. One of the best chapters in the book relates to targets for agricultural production. Our rice deficit is about two and a half million tons. According to

the author the better strain of paddy has not been popularised over 3 million acres in twelve districts and the work so far done in the millet area of 12 million acres is 'a mere beginning'. He proposes an increase of one-fourth million tons by the introduction of better seed strains, a similar increase by control of pests and diseases, of one million tons by better manuring, and another one million tons by extension of cultivation and irrigation. He proposes too the use of power for lifting water in the place of bullocks, and for transport. According to him the use of power machinery for tractors is limited to the reclamation of new lands and areas of labour shortage. The author concludes this chapter with a useful programme for increasing the area under pulses, vegetables, fruits, milk, fats and oils, meat and fish which are the commodities in which the province is deficient from the nutritional viewpoint. Here is a definite target proposed with a definite plan if only the Government of Madras chooses to think and plan for itself, and has a will to carry it out.

The chapter on livestock development has some useful suggestions for increasing the fodder crops, for destroying useless animals, for selecting indigenous breeds for cattle rearing, for milk-recording, salvage of dry cows and rearing of calves. The author recommends the continuance of war-time controls over oil-cakes in the interest of livestock and manuring of crops. He suggests a small fee on all animals exhibited in cattle fairs and shows or taken to slaughter houses, for creating a fund for livestock development. He recommends the rapid application of the Livestock Improvement Act for castrating scrub-bulls and spreading better breeds in the province. We would add to these the importance of artificial insemination in the post-war plan of cattle and sheep-breeding.

Some of the reflections on rural industries should be taken note of by the authorities concerned. Hand paper cannot be easily marketed. The industry should confine itself to wrappers, envelopes, cardboards, blotting paper, and printing paper and thus 'avoid competition from the mills.' As regards hand pounding, the author recommends the country hand-huller while the Japanese model of hand-huller which shows a greater turnover is not referred to. The author prefers the power-driven chekku to the country chekku for extracting oil for the following reasons: "It requires a quarter of the floor space

necessary for the bullock-driven chekku and its out-turn is more than double while the cost of extraction is about 50 per cent less. Driving on ordinary country chekku imposes a severest strain on bulls. The bulls are unfit for any work at the end of about two years".

The author holds that the co-operative method is the panacea for all rural ills. He prescribes it as the type of organisation for all rural industries. There are however backward communities, distress areas, subsistence holders suffering from under-employment, and landless labourers for whom co-operation will hardly be the proper mode of organisation. Neither does the author give a rosy picture of co-operation in the province. Co-operative credit has touched only the fringe of the rural credit problem. About the turnover in marketing societies he says: 'Insignificant—poor quantity handled'. He calls official efforts in this direction as 'feeble' requiring 'an elaborate plan and a greater determination.' About the colonisation societies the author again says that the area distributed to each colonist is 'insufficient'. And even with a demonstrator in charge of each society, 2,666 members out of 3,257 members were alone active colonists. The figures of 210 co-operative societies for cottage industries indicate only a production of Rs. 1,750 per society and Rs. 31 per member. The author has little hope of the village moneylender being supplemented by the co-operative credit organisation as will be evident from these remarks: 'The village moneylender will continue to perform a useful function till the ryot's economic position and general education improve'. The schemes recommended for perfecting the co-operative organisation are the following: The village unit should be a group of villages. Intermediate loans should be issued. The

reserve fund should be allowed to be utilised in the village society. Private moneylending should be controlled. The author possibly hopes that only rentiers should evade restrictions on land alienation but not moneylenders in respect of their sharp practices. Regarding marketing he proposes that warehousing should be encouraged and that the Markets Act should make sale of produce compulsory in market yards. But the book envisages no plan and no target in respect of the assistance for the small holder. If the State takes the responsibility for credit, supplies, and sales, and for providing employment during the off-season, how is it to discharge it? What should be the agency for it, State or corporation or co-operation? How are the private agencies of moneylending and trade to be dovetailed into the scheme? What is the extent of State trading that could be undertaken? How are the defects of co-operation to be rectified if it is to be a responsible agency? It is hoped that the author will lay before the public in the next edition of his book his long experience in tackling this essential question of the type of organisation and the targets to be reached through State-recognised institutions regarding aids to the small holder.

The author does not recommend any tenancy right for tenants in ryotwari areas as 'the problem is not a huge social evil'. But he himself admits that 'one per cent of pattadars own nearly 14 per cent of the cultivated area. Their holdings vary from 40 acres to 305 acres with a mean of 63 acres. These are the bigger landowning classes of the province'. The author is against any control of land alienation as it will be evaded by mortgage of actual produce, and by subletting by the new cultivating tenant recognised in law, and as controls will lead to fall in land values and restriction of credit. These arguments are unconvincing. A fuller discussion on the question including the experiences of regulation of leases and transfers in all the provinces would have been more useful. The author sees the logical plan in the following words:

"An ideal land policy should see that everyone who owns land should cultivate himself, second, should take steps to prevent the land from passing into the hands of absentee holders, and third, should see that the minimum size of economic holding is maintained by further restrictions on the right to partition the property amongst one's heirs." But he concludes 'it may very well be asked if such a logical land policy can be carried out in this country'. A study of existing legislation in several provinces is bound to convince the author of the feasibility of this land policy. In passing we may refer to a slight error in facts regarding inam tenures. Even though a fifty year possession was considered as valid title to a land, the rights of tenants as they existed on the land were saved. This 'saving' provision should find a place in a statement of inam tenures.

In the chapter on prices the author recommends guarantee of a minimum price by the State and discusses the mode of fixing it. The formulae laid down will require a more detailed elaboration for being understood by the lay reader. The author's observations on the mode of calculating cultivation expenses are well worth noting.

The chapters relating to education and public health are a resume of the post-war plans of the Adviser Government. The proposal of creating a qualified staff and accommodation to precede compulsion, it is hoped, will not delay the introduction of compulsory primary education. A housing plan for rural areas is an unreal proposal as better housing should be the consequence of a fuller employment and a greater income and not an irredeemable liability on the State or the consumer. The plan of village centres for every 12,000 population comprising a staff of a doctor, compounder, midwife, a man of all work, and a sweeper, and a health inspector, health visitor, and two midwives for preventive work to be carried out within 20 years is a welcome proposal which we hope the Madras Government will carry out.

K. G. SIVASWAMY

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BHARATHI AND TAGORE

by V. SUBRAMANIAN, M.A.

BHARATHI and Tagore were the high lights of India's literary renaissance. It is not my purpose here to compare their poetical genius or literary ability, but a comparison of their life, and character is interesting from many view-points.

No two men were born and bred under such totally different circumstances as these two. Tagore was heir to great wealth and a greater tradition. The wide Tagore estates devolved on him in toto undivided, while Maharshi Debendranath Tagore had writ the Tagore name deep in Bengali minds. Bharathi had 'a long poetic tradition' in his birth place, if not in his family, but his constant poverty in life is a by-word now. Tagore suffered from a répletion of worldly goods and all its spirit-crippling restrictions. His constant prayer in *Gitanjali* is to strike at the root of penury in his heart, to give him the strength never to disown the poor, and to lay his head so low as to reach the feet of his father among the haunts of the poor. His life was that of a spirited soul revolting against the tyranny of wealth. But Bharathi's poems are a mighty challenge to death and poverty to do their worst, he sings again and again of war and victory. His life was that of a mighty soul conquering material poverty by the pursuit of spiritual riches.

It was said of Tagore that if he had not written a single line, but his portrait alone were preserved, the grace and charm of his face would have assured his immortality. Living amidst portrait painters and cameramen, his wonderful face has been preserved in print and paint, in a most pleasing variety of aspects. Of Bharathi's face, his contemporaries aver that his eyes spat fire and a look at him was enough to lick a coward into a hero, but few good portraits or photographs of his inspiring face are available. But Bharathi was infinitely more fortunate in another more important

respect than his famous contemporary. Living in the public eye all his life, Tagore still had almost no good biographer to record his life in its true greatness and beauty, and excepting the book of memories by his daughter-in-law, all other accounts of his life are just a narration of events and a collection of speeches. But Bharathi had in his friend V. Ramaswami Iyengar, one of the most gifted Boswells in India. His book on Bharathi's life in Pondicherry is a classic, treating about the most eventful period of the poet's life.

But Bharathi's life itself is an epic of heroism and does not require the adventitious aids of a great biographer to make it interesting. It may be said more truly of Bharathi's life than of Tagore's face, that a simple narration of his life alone would have placed him among the immortals. His life is a matchless combination of act and speech, of high adventure and scintillating wit, of both the Johnsonian and Napoleonic elements. Giving the slip to the police bloodhounds, almost everyday, and facing the storms of criticism not only from enemies but from friends and relatives alike,—that was the stuff of which Bharathi's life was made. The wide Tagore estates had made Tagore's life easy and hence uneventful. Again Tagore rarely had the company of his equals to enjoy and often suffered from a painful solitude of mind. Bharathi was more fortunate in his company in Pondicherry, that asylum for the victims of imperial wrath. To have shared the company of Aurobindo and V. V. S. Iyer over long nights, albeit over an empty stomach sometimes, is certainly given only to a fortunate few. All the three were men of wit as well as action and had a past to be proud of and talk about. Aurobindo, had, after a brilliant academic career, and the luxuries of high office, suddenly faced the wrath of Government and after a mysterious disappearance made Pondi-

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

Memorial to Mahatma Gandhi

A fitting memorial to Mahatma Gandhi must be engaging the attention of many by now. It is rumoured that two statues are under contemplation.

The memorial must be creative and dynamic. It must be capable of continuing his work and fulfilling his mission. (Capt.) S. A. RAGHAVAIENGAR.

(II)

Various suggestions as to how best to raise a fitting memorial to the Mahatma are pouring in every day.

A suitable site should be chosen at some invulnerable spot in our country and a new city should be built on it under the latest city-planning schemes and made the capital of India. It should be named Gandhinagar.

Our national flag may be revised again to include the Mahatma by the side of Ashok Dharma Chakra.

Khadi caps should be made part of the dress of all Government servants to remind them constantly that they are servants of the people.

P. VENKATARAYAN.

Sulurpeta.

(III)

What is it that we can do to cherish Gandhiji's beloved memory? Let men of peace and goodwill awake and follow in his footprints and annihilate the communal poison, which is eating into the vitals of India; let them establish communal concord, amity and peace. That way alone can lead us to peace, prosperity and plenty. If, in our ignorance, we do not pay heed to his warning there will be anarchy, utter ruin and desolation in both the new Dominions.

Let us search our hearts and devise ways and means to establish the communal peace which was ever uppermost in his mind, recollecting that Gandhiji bade us good-bye with a bullet in his heart.

Bapuji was a friend of the poor and the common man. It is the task of the Government to alleviate the distress of the common people with regard to food and clothing and unless and until that is achieved, and economic security established, it is impossible to expect tranquillity in the troubled waters of our time.

M. S. CHARI.

IV

The sudden impulse of the Government and the people to name almost everything after Gandhiji is quite characteristic of us. Let us all search our hearts and examine boldly whether Gandhiji stood for this kind of thing. The answer, to my heart, is No. He lived for the welfare of humanity as a whole and died for that noble cause. The only way to perpetuate his memory is to follow him right earnestly. The people of India should not leave his name to posterity in the shape of streets, reservoirs, banqueting halls and the like. They should live up to his example and hand over the same to future generations in the pure and practical shape Babuji left it to them.

Bangalore. T. S. T. RAJAN.

Responsibility of Pandit Nehru

After the tragic demise of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the only unifying force in India, who can carry out the task hitherto done by Mahatma Gandhi.

Recently Sri. Jayaprakash Narain, the Socialist leader explained the stand taken by the Socialists in view of the national calamity and stated in unequivocal terms that the Socialists would never shirk any responsibility either in the Central Cabinet or in the Congress Working Committee, if invited to undertake it. It is therefore necessary that Pandit Nehru should take the initiative and take the Socialists into the Cabinet as also in the Working Committee, and thus bridge before it is too late the gulf between the Congress and the Socialists. It is also to be hoped that the Socialists would unreservedly co-operate with Pandit Nehru in the governance of the country. If the Congress and the Socialists work hand in hand in harmony and goodwill, by closing up their ranks and by ignoring their past petty differences, the nation will progress and the high ideals for which the Father of the Nation has fought and died all these years can be upheld. Let us, therefore, hope that Panditji will act correctly at this critical juncture.

S. V. SURYANARAYANA.
Vizianagram.

India's Guardian Angel

Tributes have been paid to Mahatma's glorious services from all parts of the world. The keynote of his service and its inspiration yet remains to be touched. Soon after his return from South Africa in 1915, a number of meetings were addressed by Gandhiji in Madras at which he said that it was in 1896 he found in Gokhale his Rajya Guru and that it was in Madras that he found that deep abiding sense of religion which carried him through all trials. He also paid tribute to Madras Province for its instinctive power to distinguish between a right cause and a wrong cause, which marks the religious. He acknowledged that he wished to be guided by the saintly politician who had embodied his message in the constitution of the Servants of India Society. That message was to spiritualise political life and the political institutions of the country. Gandhiji called himself an unofficial and unattached member of the Society, and Gokhale his guiding star throughout his life.

The meaning of this expression puzzled many patriots; Gandhiji observed that, for him, it meant that political life must be an echo of private life and that there cannot be divorce between the two.

I asked the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastriar how far the message of Gokhale had been carried out by the Servants of India Society. He was good enough to write to me in October 1941: "Spiritualising public life is a matter admitting of many degrees of realisation—just like 'good.' Gandhiji and his followers have carried it farther than others. One is glad to admit it."

Gandhiji was the guardian angel of Indian public life during his life-time; and now he has exercised an unsurpassed hypnotising influence all over India which should be utilised for evolving a sane, disciplined and spiritualised democracy.

R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR.

Peelamedu.

Congress After Gandhiji

Until August 15, 1947 Independence was our sole objective. Gandhiji was our single accredited leader. The Congress which made immense sacrifices and valiantly fought for the attainment of our freedom was held in great esteem by all people.

But today the political situation has changed with astounding rapidity. We have attained political freedom. Mahatmaji is no more. The Congress has gone into disrepute on account of the conduct of the self-seekers that have

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crept into it. Congress leaders quarrelling among themselves for the spoils of office have made a mess of our public life with the result that the Congress is losing its hold on the people.

A difficult and critical situation has arisen now and it is necessary for every one of us to deeply ponder over the shape of things to come. Whatever may be in store for the Congress in the future there is no doubt that the Congress is the most important political organisation today. But it is not correct to presume that simply because the Congress is in power at present, it has the mandate of the people for all that it is doing. During the last elections the people had no alternative but to vote for the Congress on the question of Independence. In fact we could not have done otherwise. Though vague utterances were made about various beneficial measures and economic programmes it was not possible for us at that time to cast our votes on those issues. We deliberately voted for the Congress organisation irrespective of the merits of the candidates and in several cases knowing full well their moral and mental deficiencies. It may even be urged with considerable force that the persons now holding power in the Government are not truly democratic representatives of the people and had no authority to bring about revolutionary changes in the national economy.

Further the Congress is responsible, much against the people's will, for the partition of our country. The opinion is gaining strength that the Congress has bungled miserably over various questions connected with the partition. These and several other causes have presented the Congress to the public in a very bad light, and has resulted in religious organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha gaining unprecedented popularity and support. The Congress personnel and the Congress programmes are far from being attractive to the public.

For retrieving lost ground, much depends now on how far the front rank leaders like Nehru, Patel and Prasad can infuse confidence in the public—how far the Congress can present an economic plan and programme beneficial to the country—and how far there could be real unity among the big leaders themselves. On them will depend mainly the position that the Congress will have in future.

SEETHAMRAJU SAMBASIVA RAO.
Chicacole.

Plight of Librarians

It is a sad fact that though local bodies have been maintaining libraries since nearly twenty years and the Government have been aiding them with liberal grants, there has not been noticeable anything like a unity of purpose and design in the progress of the library movement. The Government have recognised this deficiency and introduced in the Legislature the Public Library Bill with a view to helping the library movement in the province to attain the same strength and position as similar undertakings in the sister provinces and in foreign countries. We congratulate the Government on their move.

But we regret they have not bestowed any thought on the question of improving the lot of the librarians.

The Government have passed a G.O. (No. 1361 dated 27th June, 1947) raising the emoluments fixed for librarians in the year 1944. But at the same time they restricted the application of their G.O. to certain local bodies. The Government have sanctioned revised scales of pay only to 16 district boards and 42 municipalities on the criterion of their possessing a sufficiency of financial resources to admit the grant of the revised scales to all their servants.

The Government should issue orders immediately making the revised scales of pay applicable to librarians in all local bodies.

P. ANNAJI SARMA.

Amalapuram.

Aboriginal Uplift

In "Swatantra" of January 24, under the caption "The forgotten pioneer" a correspondent makes a laboured effort to draw my attention to the existence of pioneers in the field of aboriginal uplift. His letter does not affect the correctness of my statement that "the problem of the aboriginals has not yet attracted much public attention." Knowing as I do what is going on around in the country in the matter of tribal welfare work, the correspondent need not fight shy of agreeing with me that precious little has been done so far and that there has not been yet an organised effort by any central organisation on any appreciable scale. I do not certainly grudge to compliment any sincere worker who has contributed his humble mite to this noble cause. One or two swallows do not make a summer.

V. RAGHAVIAH, M.L.A.

Nellore.

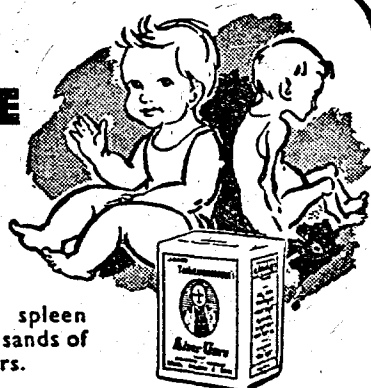


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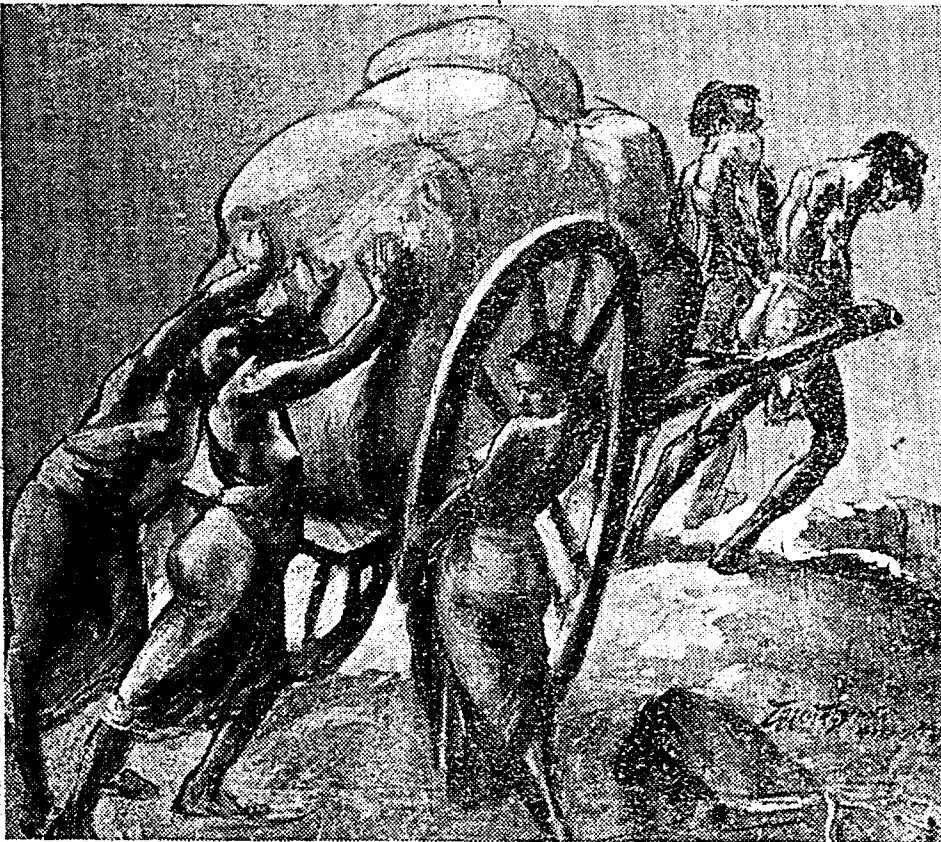
"....AFTER GANDHIJI"

WHEN the Mahatma was alive and guided the destinies of the country there was no need, there was no use, for anyone to worry about what to do. The voice of Gandhiji was clear, sharp, all-powerful. Under his direction the Congress organization grew up into a mighty political force and proved overwhelming as against opponents whether within India or without. The creed of the Congress, drawn up and enforced by Gandhiji, was the attainment of complete independence by India. The object of the creed was fulfilled within the lifetime of the Mahatma. Sometime before he fell as the victim of one of the vilest crimes in history, the Mahatma had exercised his mind about the future of the Congress. Many a time during his prayer talks he referred to the disillusionment that overtook him in the wake of freedom for the people of India. While apparently his object was realised, the means which to him was more important than the object was given the "go-bye" by his followers. The original impetus which gained power for the Congress in 1920 seemed to have been dissipated and prominent members in the Congress were openly playing at power politics without regard to the ideals which had inspired the leader.

The problem, therefore, for Gandhiji during his last days was how to recapture that original impetus

of the year 1920 which had given the millions of India their political consciousness and instilled into them the power to achieve freedom. The dominating feature of that impetus was the readiness for self-sacrifice and suffering for the common cause. When the call is for martyrs there is no need and there is no meaning in power politics whose essence is competition and the attempt to over-reach the other fellow. When it is a question of sacrifice and suffering, every body who dares is welcomed with open arms. We cannot have too many in the ranks of the army of martyrs. The more the merrier. This condition obtained as long as the Congress struggle allowed scope for self-sacrificing service but the moment power was obtained the spirit of sacrifice was gone and erstwhile comrades-in-arms fought against each other for the loaves and fishes of office. It is this ugly scramble that Gandhiji wanted to put an end to. After much deliberation he came to a decision on the matter and, fortunately for the country, he formulated his decision into a well-planned scheme and left it as a signed document which has become the testament of the Father of the Nation to his children.

The wording of the testament leaves absolutely no room for either quibbling or hair-splitting. The idea is crystal clear. The object of the



—by Devi Prasad Roy Chowdhury

creed of the Congress having been attained, there is no further need for continuing that organization with a huge roll of four anna membership. Hereafter the four anna members of the Congress will have to be the entire body of adult voters who will be electing the various legislative bodies in the country. Active servants of the nation who would take on the name of the Congress and Gandhiji will be a missionary body pledged to carry out the Gandhian ideals, especially the eighteen-fold constructive programme. This missionary body will not directly interfere with general political activity except that by their devotion to the Gandhian tenets they would automatically raise the level of political activity and keep in check the fissiparous and corrupt forces which are inevitable in all politics. Under the scheme of the testament there will be new political parties which will carry on the normal political life of the country while the Congress, as such, is to be an extra-political force which will however wield great power because of its close association with the work hallowed by the great Mahatma. Such is the idea, such is the vision, that the Mahatma had of the future of the Indian National Congress.

It is tragic that the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. should come forward at their very first meeting held to mourn the loss of the Mahatma to repudiate his testament. The A.I.C.C. under the guidance of the Working Committee has now decided to continue the old Congress in the old, old manner of an extensive voluntary electoral roll and an elected hierarchy with a Parliamentary Board at the apex nominating candidates for the seats in the various legislatures. By no stretch of imagination can this decision be considered as on a par with the dying testament of the departed leader. Any amount of special pleading will be put forward to justify this repudiation. Lack of

faith in the existing parties, the need to fight communalism, the paramount need to preserve law and order during the coming critical days, all these may be valid reasons in themselves; but all of them together will not afford sufficient justification for the betrayal of the Mahatma towards which Congress leadership is undoubtedly tending. There is a temptation for people installed in seats of power to preserve their hold on their offices as a perpetual monopoly by exploiting the physical remains of the leader while at the same time giving the go-bye to the principles which his life signified. The disappearance of the Congress as a vote-catching device will not necessarily mean the coming into power of the communalists. Neither the Hindu Maha Sabhaites who can never emerge out of the shadow cast by the great murder, nor the Communists who have become the international untouchables, nor the Muslim Leaguers who are apprehensive about their very existence in the Indian Union dare hope to secure political power in the immediate or even the remote future. Other parties do not count for much politically at least immediately. The seclusion of the Congress for non-political service as visualised by Gandhiji involves the emergence of new leaderships under new political parties. This may not mean the personal shutting out of many of the present Congress leaders. It may mean only the fresh emergence of the best among them in alliance with other new elements. But they will have to emerge under new labels. For the purification of politics in this country, the hallowed name of Gandhiji and the Congress should not be drawn into the mire of political controversy. Exploitation is wrong even if it be the exploitation of one's own past, and the country needs a respite from the rule of the "1942 heroes" and their near relations. Gandhiji drew up the blueprint of his own memorial in his

testament. Instead of fulfilling his wish the Congress leadership is going about collecting money after the manner of the Tilak Swaraj Fund, not realising the great change brought about by the advent of freedom from foreign domination that has happened since the death of the Lokamanya. Gandhiji collected one crore for the Tilak Memorial. We may collect ten or even a hundred crores for the Gandhi Memorial. But money and anything that money can buy will not be a fitting memorial for the unique personality of the Mahatma. Only the frank and forthright fulfilment of his dying declaration will enthrone his memory in the heart of the nation for ever.

Bumbledom

THE proceedings of the recent meeting of the Senate disclose a sad state of affairs. Apparently the Syndicate is composed of a batch of Bumbles who are shocked at academic Olivers asking more questions than usual. Hence an official resolution was brought forward to curb the rights of members on such an elementary and fundamental matter as the right of interpellation with a view to eliciting information. The alacrity with which the Senate, composed of educated and enlightened people, hastened to register its approval of the proposals brought forward by the Syndicate is indeed even more surprising. In a preamble to the resolution it is stated that an unprecedented situation in the annals of the University had arisen. The reason for this portentous statement would seem to be that at a recent meeting of the Senate, one or two members had the temerity to ask about 100 to 150 questions. Now therefore the Syndicate has ruled that no one should ask more than 15 questions! That the remedy is worse than the disease may be easily inferred from the fact that there are 200 members of the Senate, and if each one of them put 15 questions,

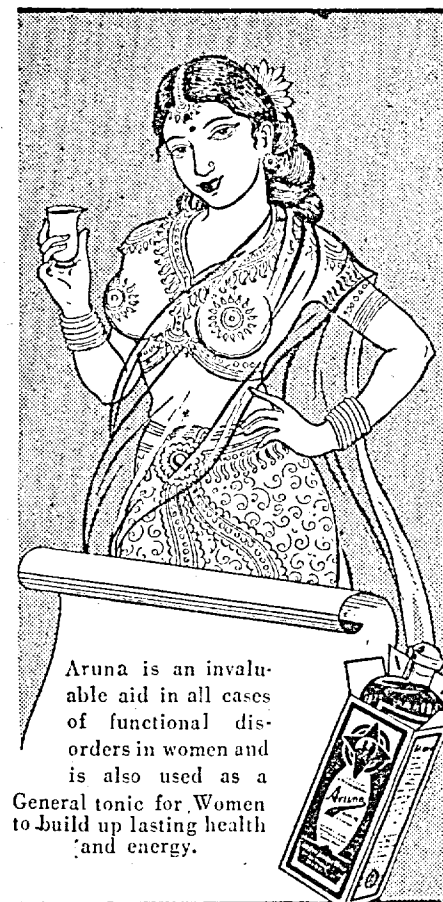
the Syndicate would be confronted with the ridiculous situation of having to answer some three thousand questions at every one of its sittings. That would be a still more unprecedented situation of comic futility. By restricting every member to 15 questions, the Syndicate is not really choking off either questions or questioners. For nothing prevents a member passing on questions above 15 to others, and thus creating in the academic field a kind of blackmarket in regard to questions.

New heights of ineptitude were reached by the addition of a new clause which says that the Syndicate might disallow, at its discretion, any question which involves the preparation of elaborate statements or statistics or any question the answer to which involves an excessive amount of time and labour. This reminds us of a recent episode reported from one of the North Indian Universities when a whole batch of examinees walked out of the examination hall in protest on finding that the examiners had dared to ask questions which, in the conclusive opinion of the students concerned, involved an excessive amount of labour, of study and preparation! It is unfortunate that the members of the Syndicate, whatever their other qualifications and virtues, do not seem to be blessed with a sense of humour. What they have done is to disfigure the University Act, by framing rules thereunder which are repugnant to the elementary principles of democracy and government by discussion, negotiation and compromise.

It is undoubtedly true that every democratic body will throw out a crank or two. But it is the glory of the democratic system that it provides even a minority of one with the major compensation of having the privilege of free speech and free utterance, subject of course to decency and decorum. Otherwise, democracy would not be worth cherishing as an institution or as an ideal. Even ventilation of ima-



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ginary grievances by factious people is one of the safeguards of democracy. The Senate may be a supreme body in its own narrow sphere, but by passing a self-stultifying ordinance like this, it is merely making itself the laughing stock of the wider

public and bringing down its own prestige in the estimation of the dispassionate. It is unfortunate that rules have been framed to meet an admittedly abnormal situation. Abnormalities are thereby given statutory and legal recognition.

Sotto Voce

Playing With Fire

IT is rather difficult to associate the People's Park—that home of Fairs and strange fauna, of bawling Cheap Jacks and vacant-eyed loungers—with Yoga. Not that noise is a deterrent to the adept: it is in the heart of a crowd that he finds a pool of serenity. Thus, under the banyan tree in the compound of the choultry on the other side of the road, I have seen oddly assorted men engaged in laconic conversation, punctuated by long pauses, the subject of which would have surprised you if you were near enough to hear them. But few in the busy throng that was always eddying about the place paid them any attention. And they seemed to ask for nothing more.

But the Park is a place consecrated to amusement, that form of busy idling which is the very antithesis of the recollectedness of the Yogin. And to the man who rejoices in the Self few things could be more unwelcome than gaping curiosity. So when I read of the demonstration of "samadhi" given at the Park Stadium under distinguished auspices by a holy man from the North, I was rather puzzled. And the reported reactions of some of those present do not seem to have been quite what might have been expected.



After the Swamiji had emerged from the "samadhi", the Mayor confessed that at first he had been rather sceptical, and went on to say that he was glad that all had ended well; which is at once scientific and non-committal, as becomes a prominent medical man. Curiously enough, the Yogi himself is reported to have observed that he was glad that his "Nirvikalpa Samadhi" had ended successfully. Coming from one who had done it for the fifty-fifth time this excessive modesty can only be set down to downright good nature. The large and enthusiastic crowd present having thus been put at its ease, it was the most natural thing in the world for Mr. O. P. Ramaswami Reddler to exhort them to take a lesson from the "samadhi".

It may seem ungracious to say anything that might damp the ardour of potential Yogis among the Swamiji's audience. But, in view of the fact that the thing is becoming a fashion, it is perhaps necessary to point out that Yoga is not just another physical exercise—like Sandow's dumb-bells or Muller's system—and that it does not lend itself to mass production. Certain states of mind brought about by breathing exercises are no

more Yoga than is the hybernation of the polar bear. To invoke the powers of the Self to flush the colon is about as intelligent as to wish to harness Niagara to the service of the kitchen sink.

Let it not be supposed that I am against breathing exercises as part of an intelligent system of physical education. I would only emphasise that in order to be effective they should be not only carefully directed but supported by the cultivation of right mental attitudes. Pranayama is nothing new in India; it is part of the oldest religious discipline in the world. I shall no doubt be told that the handful of obscurantists who observe the sandhya ritual do it in a mechanical way. That may or may not be true. But is it more intelligent to fill your lungs with air and expel it according to a formula without allowing your mind so much as for a moment to think on the Dweller in the heart?

The greater the power the greater the responsibility. Hatha Yoga has fallen into undeserved odium because too many launch upon it light-heartedly. They have no clear notion of the goal and would indeed

be appalled if they were given foreknowledge of the razor edge on which they would have to walk. At the first assault of pleasurable sensations with which the awakening psyche beguiles them they succumb. They set up as soothsayers and miracle-workers and pass for illuminati. They work havoc all round, not least on themselves. Their last condition is far worse than the first.

Dilettantism and insincerity are the Scylla and Charybdis which lie in wait for the foolish adventurer in the realm of the spirit. It was touching to see hundreds of thousands taking a bath in the sea in memory of Mahatma Gandhi, because the leaders had suggested that as an appropriate way of showing reverence. But how many of the elite who partook in this public ceremony would dare to brave ridicule by taking a purificatory bath on the death of a near relative, enjoined though it is by the Sastras? Yoga widely advertised as the Science of Keeping Fit has achieved respectability. But let those who would dabble in it pause and think. They may catch a Tartar. For it is also the science of self-naughting.

VIGHNESWARA.

MONEY IN FASCISM

One of the facts which was brought to light following the end of fascism in most of Europe was that fascism was completely tied to big business, was part of big business, and that all fascists made great fortunes. Even Mussolini, who claimed he was never interested in money, was caught fleeing with a treasure of hundreds of millions.

Almost every day in the American Congress, honest Congressmen state that (1) Chiang Kai-shek's Government is fascist; (2) that it is one of the most corrupt in the world; (3) that Chiang's immediate family robs the nation.

This news is not reported or played up. But every falsehood in favour of Chiang gets the front page.

On page 11407 of the Congressional Record (U.S.A.) of Dec. 11, there is a statement concerning China typical of the many suppressed or buried. Declared Rep. Earl Lewis of Ohio:

"Mr. Chairman, I was in China the first week of Oct. . . . I bring you the statement of every American I met . . . and that is that the Government of China is utterly corrupt and that every dollar that we put through into the hands of the Chinese will go into the pockets of private individuals . . . Large parts of it will go into the pockets of T. V. Soong, who already has a large part of the wealth of China in his accounts . . ."—In Fact.

SIDELIGHTS: :

True joy is only hope put out of fear.
—BROOKE.

LORD Mountbatten thinks that it is due to Pandit Nehru and the civilizing impetus of his internationalism that a departing imperialistic power like Britain has been able to win the friendship and goodwill of the Indian people—a phenomenon without a precedent in history. Pandit Nehru has no hatred in his composition. He is a true Gandhian in the sense that he could be anti-imperialist without being anti-British. The essence of the Gandhian political technique is this: that it evolved a series of struggles with exploiting vested interests with vigour and without rancour. It won the regard of the forces it overcame. The Mahatma dethroned from their high pedestal many elements that had been previously dominant. But he ended by capturing their esteem. The acquisition of his enormous personal influence was a process of conquering hearts through giving fight. He is as much adored by the sections of people whom he wiped out of prestige and importance as by those whom he led to power and position. His gift of constructive artistry lay in his ability to win the allegiance and deep affection of opponents whom he trounced and to whom politically he gave no quarter. Pandit Nehru would seem to have inherited this great and unique gift of the Mahatma.

Pandit Nehru can fight without illwill. The black hatred which supplies so large a part of the motive force of ferocity for all belligerent engagements is foreign to his nature. He has valour without hatred and so he cannot help making friends of erstwhile foes. His international stature which is second to that of none in the world is due to the rare blend in him of the qualities of both a fighter and a peacemaker. Henry Wallace resembles him in this, but Wallace is far removed from any access to the administrative machi-

nery of his country: whereas Pandit Nehru has a secure hold on the helm of affairs in India. He has the people at his back. And the people are such that, however much they may quarrel among themselves, they have a keen sense of forbearance and hospitality to the foreigner in their midst. Alienness which elsewhere is an invitation to hurt is in India a shield of protection. Through all the rampant butcheries of the communal spirit in recent months, few outsiders have suffered any loss. In this land of amazing contrasts, intensely passionate communalism flourishes cheek by jowl with a grand humanitarianism. There is no bigot of a narrow creed that has not in his blood some complex of world citizenship.

The character of the people and the quality of national leadership have helped each other in the creation of an atmosphere of goodwill for the British, but Lord Mountbatten's own contribution to such a result has been far from negligible. This is the more creditable in view of the incentives to distrust lavishly provided by several mystifying acts of commission and omission connected with the British withdrawal. They might plead that the terrible communal holocaust was unforeseen and hence not provided against. But no such excuse can be made with reference to the States. At least in the case of Hyderabad, a firm decision on the part of Lord Mountbatten a day prior to August 15 would have averted all the trouble that has since been given by the Nizam to the Union Government. Why did he refrain from such a decision if not out of a lingering impulse not to make things too smooth for the Indian successors of British power? The benefit of inadvertance cannot be given to so intelligent and wideawake an actor as Lord Mountbatten. Nor is his perfect and cheerful confidence that before the end of the year all disputes between the Nizam and Delhi would be settled in an entirely satis-

factory way, any comfort to the many harassed victims of the present arrangements. There is also the performance of the British delegation at Lake Success staring the world in the face. Through Noel-Baker the British Government have blessed the inflictors of loot and rapine in Kashmir, thereby placing in serious jeopardy the wisdom of Lord Mountbatten's counsel for reference of the case to UNO and the whole basis of his reputation as a trustworthy friend of India.

That to this day the Governor-General's popularity has survived the fatal consequences of some of his own acts and those of the British Government is itself a fine tribute to the puissance of his personality. Lord Mountbatten seems somehow to have mastered the elixir of eter-

nal youth. He retains the bloom and freshness of a juvenile just on the threshold of adolescence. He has, too, a Rudolph Valentino manner. No hint of any dark care ever clouds his brow. He exudes joy, buoyancy and vitality. He is a personification of the invincible effects of charm and beauty when applied with skill and subtlety to the opportunities of high office in the atmosphere of glamour that is created when an aristocrat of royal blood democratizes himself and takes to winsome ways for winning the hearts of multitudes. Lord Mountbatten has managed to cast off the slough of imperial status as a representative of British authority in India. He has almost become a national hero running Pandit Nehru close in public favour and popularity.—SAKA.

In a province like Madras out of the 215 members in the Lower House and 60 in the Upper 100 Andhras do not know the languages of 175; 120 Tamils do not know the language of the rest. Do you call this a Legislative Assembly or a babel? Would you consider the voting of the members intelligent, discriminating and deliberative or compulsory through party whips?

What is true of Madras with its four languages (five before Orissa was separated) is true of Bombay with its three (four before Sind was separated) and C.P. with its two and a good admixture of a third, Telugu in the Chanda District. If the Andhras, the Malayalis, the Kanarese and the Maharashtras are unreasonable in their demand for a separate province, why did the 1935 Act separate the Oriyas, the Sindhis and the Frontier people into three separate provinces, even at the risk of their not being ready for it?

The nine provinces of India (divided) will become 12, for while Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujerat will become new provinces, Bombay and C.P. as such will disappear. Are 12 provinces too many for 1,300,000 sq. miles? The future Andhra Province will be twice the size of Scotland, five times the size of Belgium, nine times the size of Switzerland, as big as Italy.

Verily there are Rip Van Winkles, even in 1948, and we have to spend our time in posting them up with events which occurred in the past 35 years.—Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, in a letter to *The Statesman*.



Life is communalised experience and any attempt to sidetrack that experience to your own whim for seclusion, though bound in the end to fail, is theft or sabotage or both. The Ivory Tower is permissible as an occasional retreat but not as a permanent abode. Art for art's sake should not be a substitute for art for life's sake. It is better to live in a beautiful city without an art gallery than in a noisome factory town with an art gallery of distinction.—Holbrook Jackson.

COMMUNISTS IN THE NEW SET-UP

by "G. N. S."

THE Indian Communist Party is due to meet in Congress shortly. The role of the Communists in the recent past has been negative and not strikingly fruitful of results. When Britain formally relinquished her imperial sway over India and transferred power to the leaders of the Congress and the League, the Communists characterized the event as a betrayal of the interests of the masses by the Indian bourgeoisie, a collaborationist deal between foreign imperialism and bourgeois nationalism. Further, they criticised the partition of India under the Mountbatten Award as an imperialist manoeuvre to keep the two Dominions mutually at strife and dependent on the goodwill of Britain to support the one against the other. But the vast majority of the people, obviously, did not share these fears sufficiently to repudiate and revolt against the arrangement which the leaders agreed upon. The transfer of power looked quite real to the people, and the partition was welcomed by the Muslims who had wanted it, and reluctantly accepted as inevitable by the Hindus and Sikhs who had previously opposed it. Apart from the Communists themselves, few people noticed the subtle distinction drawn between the national self-determination for Muslim-majority areas advocated by the Communist Party, and the frank acceptance of the communal basis for the partition that was actually effected. During the political parleys that began with the end of the war and the release of Congress leaders from prison, and until the present moment the voice of the Communists has been, for all practical purposes, a voice in the wilderness. Their opinions and actions have had little influence on the evolution of the country's constitutional set-up.

But the conditions are now ripe for the emergence of the Communist

nists from the state of isolation in which they have found themselves so far. In contrast to the trepidations and hesitations of the Socialist Party which is the only other Left party of any significance in the country, the Communists have a clear and positive attitude towards the two crucial problems which have distorted and almost threatened to nullify our new found freedom, communal warfare and economic disintegration: whereas, the Congress and the Governments manned by Congress leaders, have shown themselves inadequately equipped, in moral courage and in the understanding of economic realities, to deal with the two problems successfully. The assassination of Mahatma Gandhi was, in part, the result of the failure of the Congress to solve the communal problem. The failure in respect of the economic crisis is only too evident in the mounting chaos of arrangements for food supply and in the growing industrial unrest and breakdown.

Hyderabad is a striking instance of the truth of the Communists' contention that communal obscurantism goes hand in hand with political reaction and that the appeasement of vested interests will intensify, far from solving, the communal problem. When Sardar Patel concluded the Standstill Agreement with the Nizam, he in effect impeded the struggle that had already been launched by the Hyderabad State Congress for securing responsible government and the accession of the State to the Indian Union. But it may be doubted whether the appeasement of the communal vested interests in Hyderabad has resulted in any easing of the tension in that State; on the contrary, it has given a longer lease of life to the extremist Muslim faction within Hyderabad and has, besides, increased the

communal tension in portions of South India surrounding Hyderabad. To appeal to the people in the Andhra districts on the border, constantly harassed by the incursions of the police and the Ittehad men from Hyderabad, to observe restraint and desist from retaliation is merely an exhibition of ineptitude. Citizens can reasonably be exhorted to keep the peace and not to take the law into their own hands, only if the State is able to assure peace and enforce the law. What the Government of India have done in the case of Hyderabad is to treat the vested interests with exceptional solicitude in the vain hope of buying communal peace. What is true of Muslim communalism in Hyderabad has proved to be equally true of Hindu communalism in certain other States. It is now suspected that there have been links between the gang responsible for the killing of Gandhiji, and the administrations of the States of Alwar and Bharatpur. Here lies the significance and relevance of the Communist position. The Communists rightly point out that it is to the interest of the autocratic Rulers to encourage communalism and thus divert into other channels the united struggle of their subjects for responsible government and democracy. It took the tragedy of Mahatma Gandhi's death to open the eyes of the Government of India to this truth. And it remains to be seen whether they will, even at this late hour, act firmly and quickly to suppress the communal obscurantism which stems from the feudal element in the country's life.

Communist criticism of Sardar Patel's handling of the Home Department has gained added force as a result of his total and disastrous failure to assess the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh correctly. The Home Minister had lauded the Sangh in no uncertain terms, and warned Congressmen holding positions in Government against thinking that the Sangh could be put down by force, just a month before he himself was compelled by events to order the arrest of hundreds of

R.S.S. members, and ban the organisation. According to the rules of the parliamentary game, Sardar Patel ought to have relinquished the Home portfolio. In this context, it is not reassuring—it is indeed disturbing—to be told that there is not and has never been any significant difference of opinion between Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru. Nor is the cause of communal harmony strengthened by the retention of well-known communalists in important ministerial posts and in key-positions of the Congress organisation, or by the continued exclusion of representatives of even the Congress Left from the Cabinets of the Centre and the Provinces.

But the Communists themselves can do but little with regard to the communal question since they can only, at best, offer unwanted advice to an administration over which they have no control. It is in the economic sphere that the Communists can, and may be trusted to, make themselves felt. For, the days are now gone when industrial strikes were looked upon by the middle class as remote events that impinged on its life occasionally as a nuisance. Being hit as hard by the rising cost of living as the workers themselves, the lower strata of the middle class have themselves adopted the weapon of strike as the only means of securing redress. The field for Communist activity has widened considerably during the post-war period. But the fight for increased wages and salaries, whether by industrial workers, agricultural labourers or urban employees, can only secure an immediate, partial, and—in the present period of spiralling prices—merely temporary solution to the problem of living. The first steps towards finding a permanent solution by stabilising prices at a fair level and by increasing both agricultural and industrial production, have to come from the governmental end. But the steps taken by the Government so far have been retrogressive, and have only worsened an already intolerable state of affairs. By aban-

doing controls and by submitting to the pressure of the industrialists, the Government have allowed the prices of several food-grains, of sugar, coffee, cement, and steel to increase. Simultaneously with this, they have called for an industrial truce which, in the present context of scarce goods and rising prices, can only be achieved either by a miracle or by the unilateral enforcement of the truce through Fascist methods of suppressing the right to strike. A miracle being out of the question, the Government would have to adopt the other alternative, unless they make an immediate departure from the path, which they have so far followed, of letting the vested interests free to make uncontrolled profits at the expense of the people's well-being. It is sickening to watch Congress leaders who until the other day were freely mouthing the slogan of kisan-mazdoor-praja raj, throwing all concern for the kisans and mazdoors to the winds and assuring businessmen that Free India will be safe for uncontrolled capitalism. Characteristic of this repudiation of the past promises of the Congress was Sardar Patel's address to a gathering of businessmen at Calcutta on January 5. "When I ask you to bury the past and not to bother at all about it," he said, "I should like to remind you that our Finance Minister belongs to your own class... We deliberately appointed him to create confidence in the industrial future of India, the confidence which had been rudely shaken by the last Budget (Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's). Our Commerce Minister is also an experienced industrialist. Dr. Shyamaprosad Mukherjee, the Minister for Industry and Supply, is not a Congressman, but an able, painstaking and conscientious public servant. I am quite certain that all these Ministers would like to secure your co-operation in making India industrially great." The statements of Pandit Nehru, albeit liberally padded with vaguely uplifting and progressive sentiments, are no different in substance from those of his franker colleagues.

It is not surprising that in this atmosphere advantage should be taken by communalists and vested interests alike to hide their own conduct from public scrutiny by raising the bogey of Communist anarchy. Thus the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha, which met recently under the guidance of Dr. Shyamaprosad Mukherjee, has made a thinly veiled appeal to the Government to ban the Communist Party and other Left groups. "We should point out," says the resolution of the Mahasabha, "that class warfare is just as senseless as communal strife. There are groups and parties whose activities have not yet been banned by the Government, whose aim is to exploit the present situation for political purposes and to foment chaos and disorder in the country." It is doubtless true that class harmony is as important and desirable as communal harmony. But in a situation, like the present, fraught with conflict between the profit motive of one class and the welfare of the people as a whole, the Government have to make a choice; otherwise the conflict will continue. The disharmony of capitalist society can be replaced by a Socialist harmony or by a Fascist harmony. The men at Delhi, however, seem simply to hope to muddle through somehow, without any radical reorganisation of the economic system. Which means that the Communists will have their work cut out for them.

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Short Story

Change of Heart

by S. Roberts

ALL day long, the sounds of riotous gaiety filtered into the quiet of the bedroom in which Krishnaswamy lay ailing. At first his senses had received the sounds with a vague feeling of discomfort and resentment. He had felt annoyed at the interruption of his repose, then his feelings had changed to bafflement and curiosity.

Stirring restlessly in bed, he had, at midnight, heard the musical chimes of the clock in his room and a moment later, clear and metallic in the night air, came the clanging of bells and the blowing of conches and trumpets. Fireworks burst like volleys of gunfire some distance away. But Krishnaswamy felt too weak and sick to feel anything beyond a passing irritation. The harsh sounds had broken out again just towards the small hours when he would feel most drowsy, jerking him back with rough hands into full consciousness.

Drums began to beat out a ceaseless tattoo of agony; steady and unrelenting hammer-strokes threatened to split his head. His tongue felt parched, his vision hazy, he drifted into a misty consciousness, a semi coma, and the rollicksome sounds became muted and unintelligible as though the revellers had stepped further away. He was borne down by an aching weariness.

A beam of sunlight shot across his face and woke him again. The drumming in his brain had died down to a low throb, the furnace in his body had burned down from fever heat to a smouldering glow. Concomitantly, his reception of outside sounds grew keener, he became aware of an intensification in the tumult. There seemed to be an unprecedented flow of traffic along the road which the windows of his room overlooked. He could hear the rolling of ceaseless wheels over the macadam, the honking of horns, the clanging of cycle bells, voices raised in excited exultation, a reverberating drone of activity. He cudgelled his mind for the explanation. Could it be some important festival that had set into motion the complicated and gigantic mechanism of mass rejoicing? But no ordinary carnival could account for this commotion.

Krishnaswamy turned to his side, tried to settle down to sleep again, but his awareness was disturbed by the sound impressions it continued to receive. Irritatedly, he glanced at the timepiece on his bedside table. It was well past time for his cup of morning tea. Certainly the household had not overslept, judging by the sounds of domestic activity. The sick man's self-centredness overcame his curiosity. What could they be doing? They had forgotten him, a very ill man. Damn them, nobody cared whether he lived or died, nobody sympathised with him over his sickness.

He reached out for the bell rope and pulled as hard as he could at it. He heard the clanging of the bell somewhere in the interior of the house. There came no response. He tugged at the rope again. He made a feeble vocal effort to summon help but the fever had made his throat dry and only a harsh, grating noise issued. But someone had either heard the bell or had suddenly remembered that his tea-time was overdue, for the door was pushed open and a girl stepped in with a cup of steaming beverage. She was smart-looking, gaily clad, dressed obviously for outgoing.

"Jai Hind, dad," she said cheerily, dispensing with the usual form of greetings. "Hope you are better, dad."

Krishnaswamy did feel a trifle better but that did not prevent him from venting his spleen on her. His voice was querulous. But his daughter was not offended at these evidences of ingratitude in a patient whom she had looked after so painstakingly. She raised her father into a sitting posture and smoothed out the bedclothes and the pillows for him. Her cool hand felt his fevered brow, soothing him. His ill-temper thawed and suddenly he recalled the inexplicable sounds that had puzzled him and also perceived the grandeur of his daughter's attire. He enquired into the cause of the uproar and her gay dress.

"Don't you recollect, dad?" his daughter answered with excitement creeping into her voice. "Today's August 15th. The greatest day since

1857. Every schoolboy knows it. Independence Day."

Krishnaswamy remembered. He had been lying seriously ill since several weeks and was out of touch with world events. With his sickness, the world had shrunk about him, he lived solely for himself, forgot everything except how ill he was. Illness was obsessing, it filled your mind, became more engrossing till you had no thought to spare for anyone or anything else. A sick man was the most egregious egotist, perfectly self-centred. But he did recall, now that she had prodded his memory, his daughter having said something to him about independence a few days back, though her words had left only a blurred impression on his memory. Now that he was feeling better, the world was stretching out again, his circle of interests was widening. He listened to her enthusiastic voice outlining recent events with vividity.

She painted a colourful picture of a town in a riot of gaiety which Krishnaswamy found difficult, despite oral evidence, to reconcile with his lifetime's experience of that sleepy town which was in fact only an overgrown village, where men lived almost as peacefully as the sheep that grazed on the pasturelands, where, during the decades he had known it, life had remained as unchanged as the rugged mountains, a town that was not responsive to the changes of a dynamic era.

Independence indeed, he thought. No sooner had the talk of it been bruited than the country had split into two dominions. God knew into how many infinitesimal regions it would be split, now that it had actually attained freedom. For generations, under the sobering and impartial influence of a foreign power, the country had been held up in cohesion despite various fissiparous tendencies, and a satisfactory degree of law and order had been maintained. In the recent past, the country had had a taste of the stew it had brewed for itself. He was convinced that the majority of the people shared his own reactionary views. It was all the work of ambitious politicians who unscrupulously exploited hunger, starvation, unemployment, disease and religion for the furtherance of their own selfish aspirations.

It was tragic, he ruminated, how easily simple minds could be deceived and imposed upon by the eloquence of

fiery speakers who had nothing more concrete than words to offer, how easily people could be persuaded to sacrifice the factual security of reality for the doubtful promises of the visionary. He pitied the poor, deluded fools who had fallen into the beautiful, exquisite web which the politicians had spread out for them. Often in the past, it had fallen within his grim duty as a police officer, to deal severely, sometimes even cruelly, with these misguided fanatics but, under the crust of his official callousness was a half-pitying tenderness for these poor nincompoops who had to suffer for no stronger reason than that they were pawns in the game of high treason and revolution which their leaders were playing.

One incident especially, he recollected with painful clarity. It had happened on a day of August in that momentous year 1942. Following the arrest of prominent political leaders, certain elements had plunged the country into disorder. A Government whose very safety was imperilled, could not afford to mince steps in putting down a movement which had calculated to take advantage of the critical international position. The fire had spread even to this peaceful town where the rowdier political elements had organized a protest meeting and a procession to march defiantly to the Collector's office and hoist the tricolour on the flagmast where the Union Jack fluttered proudly.

The police were aware of their intentions, but not willing to stir up the hornets' nest, had decided not to intervene unless the affair assumed the proportions of the inexcusable. On Bose maidan, radicalists mounted the rostrum and with incendiary speeches, lit up a conflagration of revolutionary enthusiasm in the hearts of the audience. With maniacal fervour, the mass formed itself into a procession, and marched with the tri-colour aloft, yelling frenzied slogans, to the stretch of open land facing the Collector's offices.

A cordon of blue-uniformed policemen had been drawn around this band of potential rebels and at intervals in the police circle, khaki-clad sub-inspectors and sergeants waited with intent watchfulness for any suggestion of extremism in the mob. Slogans flew like missiles in the air, weighted with high treason and rebellion. Ensuing events had developed too quickly for clear understanding, but, suddenly, in the corridor of the building, the Collector had appeared and a rash firebrand had

pelted a stone at him. The stone whizzing past him had enraged the official who had rapped out an order to the police officer to disperse the assembly. Verbal warnings having demonstrated their impotence to move the mob, the police lathis began to enforce the command. Krishnaswamy had himself struck several heads with his cudgel, the crowd began to fly before the hail of blows but one man, bolder than the rest, had stood up to the blows that Krishnaswamy had rained upon him. The turban from the man's defenceless head unwound itself under the torrent and Krishnaswamy heard the sickening thud of the staff as it fell on the bare skull time and again. And as the man stood unmoved and immovable, calm and imperturbable, with not a muscle raised in self-defence, a paragon of non-violence, seeming to mock the might of law, Krishnaswamy had felt his impotence against the man's faith and a devil had taken possession of him.

He belaboured that bare head with his lathi and though, finally, the body that held the proud head had sagged and collapsed, it was Krishnaswamy's spirit that had been bludgeoned and defeated, it was his soul that had been bruised and battered by a superior spiritual force he could not understand. The incident had disturbed his security of conviction, his peace of mind, his stability of views. Surely a faith that could give such transcendent power to its holders, over pain and suffering, a faith that could exalt the spirit so above the body, must have something more fundamental than delusion and idealism as its base, and something more live and lasting than credulity to sustain it? His mind was ruffled....

From outside, as he lay on his bed, Krishnaswamy had continued to hear the revels. Independence! What he had conceived to be a chimera had been captured and caged at last and the country was in jubilation over it. What madness had seized the slumbering town to stir up that tempest of activity?

It was later in the day. Krishnaswamy was feeling restless though the fever had abated and the pain had diminished. The house was deserted but for himself, all its inmates having gone to ramble about the rejoicing town. They had sought and secured the sick man's permission to leave him but, nonetheless, Krishnaswamy felt annoyed that they should have left

him desolate in his sickness. The ceaseless sounds agitated him. All the houses seemed to have emptied their human contents on to the roads while himself alone lay in bed, ailing.

Suddenly, he felt he could no longer lie in patience. He rose and got on to his feet. His legs felt very unsteady through long disuse, the soles of his feet had become hypersensitive, but he put on his clothes and his heavy greatcoat, muffled up his neck to ward off the cold and stepped hesitantly out of doors for the first time in several months. He felt weak and as he walked, a huge wheel was set in motion within his head so that he felt dizzy, but the cold wind cleared his brains.

The town had changed complexion. Before him stretched the same familiar labyrinth of streets and the conglomeration of houses which did not conform to any definite architectural pattern, but it had been transformed. It was as though the beggar girl in tattered robes whom you pitied and had often given alms to, had suddenly come to your door in a Rolls Royce driven by a liveried chauffeur, herself decked in stately grandeur and followed by a retinue of servants bearing tray-loads of gifts. The place was a riot of colour. It looked exotic. Triumphant arches spanned the wide roads, festoons were strung across streets and lanes as though to form a verdant canopy over the pedestrians. The bungalows of the plutocrats and the hovels of the proletariat, petty shops and large emporiums, pleasure palaces and business offices were all adorned with tri-colour flags, bunting and streamers. The roads were spotless, housefronts were ornamented with kolams of exquisite artistry and chromatic beauty. Everywhere flags fluttered, flags of various sizes and materials, all alike in design alone. The vehicles were also decorated with national flags and evergreens. Huge lumbering lorries passed by with full loads of white-clad volunteers in the best of spirits, shouting slogans.

Krishnaswamy walked on with a dazed look. Men in their best set of clothes, women in gay saris, children in attractive finery, wearing tricolour badges in place of broaches and buttonholes, passed him by. A decorated police van with the flag fluttering on its bonnet, glided past. Never had he seen such a gay carnival in all his born years, never an occasion so festive, never had he witnessed such unanimity of emotion, such a cama-

raderle in the heterogeneous population of the town. People seemed to have risen above the low levels of parochialism and religion, above the squalor of party politics, above considerations of class and sex and age, and met on the higher plane of nationalism.

Again he found himself recollecting that incident of 1942. He remembered the doubts that had sprung up in him at the man's manifestation of a faith that passed all understanding, suspicions he had dismissed as the reaction from the performance of an unpleasant but essential duty. Had he deceived himself and were those discarded doubts his first glimmerings into the truth? Had he deluded himself, refused to see beyond the narrow limitations of his duty as a police officer? And were those whom he had thought as the deluded mass been the crusaders for a right cause, the champions of righteousness over tyranny?

Such thoughts tortured him as he walked the streets, under the grand arches that had been set up to commemorate a triumph in which he had had no positive part. Shortly he reached Bose Maidan, scene of a hundred political rallies, and found there a mammoth gathering which the small field had been unable to accommodate and which had overflowed into the road. From the rostrum, a speaker thundered forth to a crowd that listened with bated breath. His eloquence was compelling, his statements forcefully credible, and elbowing closer to the platform, Krishnaswamy recognised him as the man who had left so deep an imprint on his mind that unforgettable day of an immortal August. A magnificent ovation, in which Krishnaswamy found himself joining, greeted the conclusion of the speech. Surely, he thought, that man was no charlatan who had so moved them, surely it was not a fantasy that had enthralled all of them.

Krishnaswamy walked on and came to the Collector's office building. Here was a flag-hoisting ceremony being performed by the Collector himself at another mammoth meeting. In a minute, a huge national flag had been unfurled and hoisted to the mast-head by that official himself, where it waved in all its proud splendour, symbolising to the world the birth of a nation. An electric thrill of excitement coursed through the crowd. Slogans and hand-claps rent the air, people shouted

themselves hoarse with emotion. It began showering and the glowering skies gave warning of approaching storms but that did not damp the enthusiasm of the celebrationists.

Krishnaswamy was touched to the core. The impressive ceremony, amounting to a grand ritual, swayed his heart. The chromatic combination of the flag took on a personal symbolism and significance for him; the orange for the deep saffron of the penitent's robes, the white for atonement, purgation and absolution, the green for the sprouting of a new faith.

In a penitent's humility did he now bow before that flag and as he stood thus reverently, a healing warmth seemed to flow to him, curing him of pain and puzzlement, filling him with supreme satisfaction. He felt one with the huge gathering, his individuality was lost in contemplation of their unity. They were all his brothers and sisters who stood beside him before the flag that was the incarnation of the spirit of their motherland. The rain was falling in torrents now but their hearts were aflame with enthusiasm and the drenching did not overcast their happiness.

In the thrashing rain, Krishnaswamy stood, his illness forgotten, his ego merged into the oneness of them all, cheering vociferously. A wave of understanding surged through him; complexities and doubts dissolved in his mind. His was the secret that had given such forbearance and courage to the bludgeoned victim of the lathi charge, his was the knowledge of the deep forces that drew men to make wonderful sacrifices, his the power that could make martyrs of mortals.

"My country, my country," Krishnaswamy breathed. He was no more alone, no more an atom of life; he was all, he identified himself with every unit in that dense mass, he identified himself with the water that played upon him, with the red ground he stood on, with the universe, and with eternity, with that beautiful flag that symbolised all things that were his glorious heritage. He felt a deep urge to hug all these strangers to his bosom, irrespective of their caste and class, to gather up the rich, red mud in handfuls and hold it to his bosom. This was the Independence which he had shunned, this vision of beauty.

"My country, my country," he breathed.....

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

by V. SUBRAMANIAN, M.A.

WITH the emergence of India as an independent nation speculation is rife as to her foreign policy. Optimists have predicted for her leadership of the East, leadership of Asia and even leadership of the world by sheer moral greatness. The partial but spectacular victories of India in the U.N.O. on 'South Africa' and 'Indonesia' and the equally spectacular facade of the pan-Asiatic Conference have given a basis for such bold predictions. Sober writers have tried to outline a foreign policy for India analysing it country by country and with regard to power groups. (Book by Iqbal Singh). All these have left out of calculation two important factors, viz., the emergence of Pakistan as an independent State, and the declaration of independence by Hyderabad, both with their own foreign policy. Even in a shrinking world our nearer neighbours affect our foreign policy more than far-off countries. The exceptions are States which by their power and resources occupy a commanding position in world politics like America and Russia.

The sudden emergence of Pakistan as an independent State seems to have dazed our leaders, and they still seem to be taking in the consequences of partition. The constant talk of reunion which we hear from our leaders, is either due to mental bankruptcy or wishful thinking. The methods of effecting reunion are as vague as they are varied. Some talk of Pakistan realising its weakness and insufficiency and asking humbly to be taken in. Others talk of a friendly policy towards Pakistan, the discovery of common bonds and ties and what not making both States come closer till they fuse. Such vague vapourings do far greater harm than an actual threat of conquest. Mr. Jinnah will make capital out of India's friendship for his own purpose and utilise the vague talk of re-union to poison the minds of Pakistanies with tales of a Hindu

conspiracy to annex Pakistan. Let us remember that Pakistan is an empire born out of hate and nurtured on hate. It is time that our leaders adjusted their minds to the realities before them and thought of a sound foreign policy towards Pakistan.

It is again a bitter fact that Hyderabad comes rightly in the sphere of foreign policy in spite of the fiction of its assignment to the States Department. Congress has not paid due attention to the problem of States in the past. But in the case of Hyderabad negligence has been visited with dangerous consequences. Against the fact that Hyderabad is bounded on all sides by the Indian Union and that the Nizam rules over an actively hostile population, must be urged the equally forceful argument of his ruthless military machine, the helplessness of his subjects and the secret alliance with Pakistan. Pakistan wants to make it a trouble-spot in the south while it engages the Indian Union in the north. There has been quite open talk of expelling the Hindus from the State and settling Muslims there to make a southern Pakistan of it. In the face of the Punjab happenings this cannot be dismissed lightly. South India with its scanty and thinly distributed Muslim population and its comparative isolation must naturally be the safe arsenal of the Indian Union in a crisis. But unless the Nizam is got under the control of the Centre early in the day all talk of an effective Indian foreign policy is futile. It is time that our leaders realised this and acted without splitting hairs over diplomatic etiquette.

In the face of the achievement of Pakistan people are not now prone to underestimate the possibilities and dangers of pan-Islamism. Leaguers like the former Khan of Mamdot talked of Pakistan as only a first step to pan-Islamism and world revolution on Islamic lines. A pan-Islamic combination would

be strongly sponsored by Pakistan for her own ends to secure peace and co-operation on the West to pursue a forward policy in the East. Such overtures will only be too warmly welcomed by weaker Islamic States like Persia or Egypt, for Pakistan is by far the largest, most advanced, populous and well-armed of all Islamic States. It is true that the idea of territorial nationhood has made headway in Muslim countries. But Pakistan has put the clock back. It is also true that the Persian, the Turk and the Arab are different in language and customs and even mutually hostile and also that Muslim Indonesia is geographically separated by miles of sea and land from Muslim Morocco. But there still exists a common bond of sympathy and a substratum of interest between Muslims of all countries. Its political or military consequences cannot be gauged or predicted accurately. But there is the possibility of foreign power-groups fomenting hatred against infidels elsewhere to divert attention from their own exploitation in Muslim countries. The Muslim Middle East is the cockpit of power politics and hotbed of intrigue. Mr. Jinnah will most adroitly utilise all such opportunities to feather his own nest. Congress leadership has failed to appreciate this danger. The Khilafat movement sponsored by the Congress culminated in the tragedy of the Turks kicking out their Caliph while the Indian Muslims cried themselves hoarse in his support and Gandhiji preaching Hindu-Muslim unity while the Moplahs slaughtered their Hindu brethren. Later, the Congress exhibited an unwarranted zeal in defending Muslim interests in Palestine thus purchasing trouble, gratis. In view of the complications involved they might at least have kept neutral on such issues. The recent telegram of the Mufti of Jerusalem to Mr. Jinnah must come as an eye-opener. That an American Senator, Wheeler, should have called attention to the insolence of the Indian Muslim delegate to the Jews is bad indeed. To combat the possible danger of pan-Islamism, either spontaneous or

fomented, we must have solid alliance with our eastern Buddhistic neighbours, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, China and Ceylon. A similar culture and a wide community of interests makes such an alliance easy and natural. But besides the usual run of the exchange of cultural and other missions solid work to that end is yet to be done.

The assumption by Pandit Nehru of the foreign policy portfolio has caused hearty jubilation in India and abroad. His knowledge of international politics through deep study and wide travel, his personal friendship with almost all great leaders in the world and his high stature in world politics as a great democrat and a friend of the oppressed, these are all wellknown. He it was who made the Congress keenly alive to the existence of international issues and tried to correlate our freedom struggle with similar struggles elsewhere. But he is an idealist lacking often in realism and vacillates so long that he is swept by the current of events. During the last war he found it difficult to reconcile his hatred of Fascism and Nazism with his equal hatred of British Imperialism and love of Russian Socialism. He is anxious to keep out of power and group politics because he fails to see right and truth completely on either side. But wearing his heart on his sleeve he makes offers of sympathy and help to all and sundry. His indecision may contribute to the richness of his miasmic personality, but will hardly make him a good diplomat. His blindness to the power of religion over men, even now, and the consequent dangers of pan-Islamism is also patent. He has still to reconcile the worldly wisdom of fighting evil with its own weapons with the philosophical dictum of fighting evil with good. His personal popularity and international position are no true measure of his real power. For never were prestige and power so widely divorced as in him. His internationalism has an ominous Trotskyan and Wilsonian touch about it, in a world of real-politik, peopled by Smutses and Stalins. In his negotiations with Mr. Jinnah in

the past he always had the worst of the encounter. The problem of the disposal or reclamation of the assets of evacuees from Pakistan territory is sure to give him endless trouble. Admirers who hastily predict the crown of Asian leadership for him and the emergence of a Nehru doctrine for Asia like the Monroe doctrine of America will do well to remember that Pakistan alone is sufficient to sour his life and whiten his hairs.

We have yet to build up an efficient diplomatic and foreign service, as well as to evolve a sound and realistic foreign policy. Nehru, the great pioneer, has unfortunately created a number of blind admirers in his trail with whom a flabby sentimental internationalism has

become fashionable. Such an internationalism is more harmful than blind isolationism or unabashed opportunism. But even more important than an official foreign service is the creation of a thirst for real intimate knowledge of foreign countries. England's position in world-politics was built up no less by the individual efforts of scholars, publicists and soldiers like T. E. Lawrence, John Philby, Cecil Rhodes, etc., than by her official diplomatic services. Most Indians who have travelled and lived in other countries have rarely made a serious political study of them, or acquired the right type of influence there. The zeal of the Englishmen mentioned above deserves emulation by many of our young men.



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SPOTLIGHT ON THE



DURING the election last year of non-permanent members to the Security Council of U.N.O., the U.S. was willing at one stage of the proceedings to back Czechoslovakia—but not any other country belonging to the pro-Soviet East European bloc. It was only when Russia insisted upon the selection of the Ukraine that the Americans switched their support to India's candidature, and tried to deprive Eastern Europe of the representation which the area had from the beginning been accorded on the Security Council. American willingness to support Czechoslovakia was due to a recognition of the special position that the country occupies on the frontier that divides the Russian sphere of influence in Europe from the Anglo-American sphere. Though Czechoslovakia is a socialist State and therefore, by American standards, 'totalitarian' in its economic structure, and though it is governed by a coalition presided over by a Communist, it enjoys the political freedoms which the Anglo-Americans profess to cherish. Judged by the standards of Western political institutions, Czechoslovakia is the 'freest' of the East European countries. Russian unwillingness to back Czechoslovakia arose presumably from the same considerations, which, however, led to misgivings on the part of Russia to the same degree as they appealed favourably to America. Czechoslovakia's Foreign Minister is Jan Masaryk who is not a Communist, not even a Social Democrat, but an unattached political independent. In the present state of West-East tension, Russia naturally preferred to have as its sole friend in the Security Council a more certain

ally than Czechoslovakia could be safely expected to be.

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

As a highly advanced industrial nation, Czechoslovakia trades with both Western Europe on the one hand, and with Russia and Eastern Europe on the other. Ideologically, too, it lies between the two worlds. It is inevitable that each should strain to draw the country more firmly to its own side. American hopes for the dislodgement of Czechoslovakia from the Soviet bloc flow, as usual, from the expectation that the moderate 'Centre' parties and the Socialists would unite in order to exclude the Communists from power. It happened in France. The French Socialists, by joining hands with the M.R.P. and the Radicals, succeeded in removing the Communists from the Cabinet last year, though the latter formed the largest single party in the National Assembly. It could happen in Czechoslovakia too, where also the Communists (who now number 1,200,000 in a total population of 12,000,000) are the largest single party in Parliament but do not command an independent majority. The elections to the Czech Parliament held in May 1946 were contested by five parties: the Communists, the Social Democrats, the National Socialists, the People's Party (Catholics) and the Slovak Democratic Party. These parties stand from the Left to the Right in the same order. The result of the elections was that the Communists secured 40 per cent. of the votes in Bohemia-Moravia, but less than a third of the votes in Slovakia, the most backward region of Czechoslovakia industrially and politically. Over two-thirds of the

seats from Slovakia were won by the Slovak Democratic Party, which is a loose assortment of various groups rather than a unified party. The Communists and the Social Democrats together command a small majority in Parliament, but the Government that was set up was a coalition of all the five parties that contested the election—none of the extreme Right-wing parties, which had collaborated with the Nazis during the occupation of the country, were allowed to function. Under the Premiership of Communist Klement Gottwald, the National Front—as the five-party coalition is called—has been ruling Czechoslovakia ever since June 1946. Edward Benes has been the President of the Republic since its liberation, as he had been before the German invasion.

Unlike the Socialists of many countries in Western Europe, the Social Democrats of Czechoslovakia have not attempted to make a Right-wing alliance directed against the Communists. The Communists, for their part, have reciprocated by acknowledging that, in Klement Gottwald's words, "experience and the principles of Marxism and Leninism tell us that the dictator-

ship of the proletariat and of the soviets is not the only road to Socialism." Yet the U.S. has not given up hopes of witnessing the fall of the present regime as a result of disunity. A correspondent from Prague, writing in the *New York Times* magazine of October 26, 1947, said: "The revered and aging President Benes undoubtedly has exercised a restraining influence on the Communists. There are some critics of his policy who feel that he has not been vigorous enough lately. But the truth is that Benes is ill and it is believed he is saving his strength, both physical and political, for a vital issue...he is waiting, it is believed, until the Communists attempt to restrain civil liberties. Incidentally, troops guarding historic old Hradcany Palace, the President's official residence, are all drawn from the Western Brigade, as the troops who fought with the British and American forces are called." The resignation on February 21, of twelve members of the Czech Cabinet drawn from the three parties other than the Communists and the Social Democrats, has provided an occasion to test the correctness of the belief expressed above. The



'Western Brigade' notwithstanding, President Benes has told his Communist Premier that, should an attempt be made from any quarter to oust him from the Government, "my answer would be that to me there exists no Government without Communists." What is equally significant, the Social Democrats, the National Socialists and the People's Party have all of them declared that the Cabinet crisis can be solved on the basis of the National Front, that is, through continued co-operation between the parties comprising the present coalition. The only group whose attitude is not yet known is the Slovak Democratic Party.

A REGION OF TROUBLE

Slovakia has always been a region of trouble for the Czechoslovak Republic, and in the last two years it has been the scene of attempts at armed insurrection by Separatists and by the surviving remnants of Nazi sympathisers. It was only in 1918, when the Republic was created, that the 3,500,000 people of Slovakia were united with the 8,000,000 Czechs. A predominantly agrarian region, Slovakia has achieved a measure of industrial development only in recent years. With a peasant population deeply under the influence of the Church, Slovakia was fertile ground for the growth of Nazi influence during the war years. Playing upon the discontent of the Slovaks at their backward position *vis a vis* the Czechs, Germany sought to win support for its rule by declaring Slovakia independent. Hitler appointed Heinrich Heydrich (who won the sobriquet 'Hangman of Prague') as Protector of Bohemia and set up Tiso's regime in Slovakia. The Germans organised the Separatist-Fascist Hlinka Guards as a trained and armed force. After the Republic was restored in 1945, Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia were once more unified under the terms of the Kosice Agreement which assured a due share in government to the Slovaks and recognised the Czechs and Slovaks as two Slav nations with equal rights. But, as a writer in the *New States-*

man and Nation (October 25, 1947) points out, "this agreement has never been sincerely accepted by the Right-wing Slovak Democrats, who include in their ranks a large proportion of Roman Catholic former Hlinka separatists." This is the background to the news appearing now and then from Czechoslovakia of arrests of plotters against the State, and throws some light on the report that the recent Cabinet crisis developed over the disclosure, by the Communist Minister of the Interior, of the details of an alleged plot. "Civil servants, priests and members of Roman Catholic orders predominate among the civilian plotters already caught; and—a disquieting factor—they include two Slovak deputies," says the same writer, "and there is evidence to substantiate a charge of working for a foreign power against some of those implicated in the plot, whose basis, here as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, is to be found in the disastrous assumption that events are moving inevitably to a Third World War."

BOOKS

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SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI, MY THIRD CHIEF,

by K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO

(Editor, *Triveni*.)

"SO, this is the lawyer from Salem who wished to practise in the High Court at Madras, but was caught up in the maelstrom of Gandhian politics! What a balance he has achieved between intellect and emotion, and between speech and silence! And how simple, yet elegant he looks in his closed-collar coat of white khaddar and his khaddar turban." Such were my thoughts as I followed Sri C. Rajagopalachari's arguments, delivered in soft, measured tones, during the discussions in the Subjects Committee at the Nagpur Congress of 1920. I saw him again, a year later, at the *Swarajya* office, and liked the gentle smile and the words of kindly humour with which he returned the respectful greetings of 'subs' like me. The Working Committee of the Tamilnad Provincial Congress Committee used to meet sometimes in the *Swarajya* office in Broadway. I 'listened in' one night when the decision was taken that 'C.R.' should defy the order under Section 144, Cr.P.C. banning meetings in Vellore. Sri E. V. Ramaswami Naicker grumbled like a recalcitrant child that he was not given the first opportunity to offer civil disobedience. But 'C.R.' argued him into acquiescence and the next day he went to Vellore and disobeyed the magistrate's orders. He got some months in Vellore prison, and wrote his *Jail Diary*. One passage, in particular, dwells in my memory. The music of a piper in some near-by village floated down to 'C.R.' from beyond the prison walls, and put him in mind of village homes and simple festive gatherings. The artist in 'C.R.' appealed to me. Twenty years later, we were together in that same prison—he as the ex-Premier of Madras and I as an M.L.A. from Guntur district. One day, in our walks, I reminded him of that passage in the *Jail Diary*. He smiled and said, "Ah! You remember that! Now, I am back here."

Though I was an M.L.A. for six years and displayed those magic letters on the front page of *Triveni* and on my visiting cards, I never functioned as a legislator. Thus, 'C.R.' the leader of the Congress Legislature Party was my chief only in name. I did not get a chance to work with him in the Legislature, as I worked with Sri Prakasam on *Swarajya* or with Dr. Pattabhi at the Kalasala. It was, in fact, *Triveni* which brought us into fairly 'intimate' association in the years before he became Premier. And it is *Triveni* which today serves as a golden link between him and me.

Sri Chandrasekharan, son of the late V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, was a guardian of *Triveni* before the migration to Bangalore in 1942. On Saturdays and Sundays, when he did not have to attend the High Court, we used to call on prospective contributors of articles and possible life-subscribers from whom we wanted cheques for a hundred rupees to spoon-feed *Triveni*. 'C.R.' of course could not pay money. But he had leisure in those days when he was not in active politics, and Chandrasekharan, my charioteer in the battle of life, drove me to the secluded spot in Thyagarayanagar where 'C.R.' lived in comparative retirement. We made the usual request for literary contributions, and, to convince him that *Triveni* was a worthy medium for the expression of his views on life and letters, we left with him quite a pile of old numbers of the journal—the two-monthlies of the early years and the monthlies of the current period. We called again after a few days. Like the workman who loves his work and is eager to win a word of appreciation, I asked him what he thought of the journal. A little sadness clouded his brow as he said: "You have given years of devoted labour to this journal. You have

spent a small fortune on it. You have tried to maintain a standard in get-up and in contents. You have given me these copies free. And now, all that you are seeking is a word of encouragement from me! All this only proves that cultural effort is not having its due reward in our country." Our visits to him became frequent, and we used to meet also at the 'Ashrama' in Mylapore where 'C.R.' called occasionally in the company of Sri Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, the great Tamil scholar. He always refused a chair; he preferred the pials of red cement at the 'Ashrama', clean and polished, reminiscent of village homes in South India. He would spend a quiet hour with Sri K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar, K. Chandrasekharan and their gifted sister Srimati Savitri Ammal. Very early in our acquaintance, I noticed that his style of conversation—in its humour, its gentle raillery, and the many similes and parables—was closely akin to that of Sri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar of Bangalore. I had learnt to call it the 'Masti manner.' Now I found it was also the 'C.R. manner.' I ventured to mention to him this resemblance between himself and Sri Masti. "Don't you know," he said, "we passed through the same college, breathed the same atmosphere, and came under similar influences?" Then he said he liked Sri Masti's writings published in *Triveni* in the English garb. "I read through the story 'Masumatti' and thought it very good. After finishing, I turned to the first page and noticed it was written by Masti in Kannada and rendered into English by Navaratna Rama Rao. It was as if I liked a pretty child playing in the street, and then was delighted to find out afterwards that it was related to me as a granddaughter or a grand-niece." He rendered 'Masumatti' into Tamil, and later wrote an Introduction to the four-volume edition of Sri Masti's stories in their English garb. Thus, our acquaintance ripened into friendship.

After the Satyagraha prisoners—mostly legislators—were transferred from Vellore to Trichinopoly early

in 1941, we had a long spell of leisure in which to meet oftener. We spoke of common friends in Mylapore, Madras and Basavangudi, Bangalore. When the news of the premature demise of young Thirutharappan, son of Chidambaranatha Mudaliar came through, I felt desolate, for I had known Thirutharappan for some years and felt a fondness for him: he was so tender, so gentle and so gifted. I yearned that day for the company of someone who cared equally for poor Thirutharappan. I sought out 'C.R.' and felt comforted by his kindly, reminiscent talk. "Did you read Chandrasekharan's note on Thirutharappan in *The Hindu*?" he asked me. "There is an unsigned note," I replied, "but why do you think Chandrasekharan wrote it?" "I know the style. All of you express yourselves in the *Triveni* way!" So, I saw more of my chief in prison than in the Legislative Assembly.

Of his work as Premier of Madras and as leader of South India, a great deal has been written. He has been, by turns, the most loved as well as the most distrusted of leaders. The storms gathering round him have sometimes forced him into retirement from politics or into threats of such retirement. But about his intellectual eminence and his outstanding administrative ability, there is not the slightest divergence of opinion between his admirers and his traducers. He has not always followed the lead of the Congress, and some sections of Congressmen have found it difficult to reconcile themselves to his attitude to the 'Quit India' movement of August 1942. But one can understand his point of view, even without complete agreement. He claimed and exercised the right of an individual Congressman to go out of the organisation and criticise its methods. There is neither dishonesty nor disloyalty in such an attitude. It is the correct position for any citizen to take up in a time of crisis, when frank criticism of public policies is needed for clarifying the issues.

I like to think of 'C.R.' the scholar and philosopher, the lover of poetry and music, and, above all, the man with a genius for friendship. Only last month Sri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar mentioned to me that 'C.R.' had written a letter to Sri Navaratna Rama Rao telling him that he liked his story—'A Woman's Heart'—in the September issue of *Triveni*. Next week, I met Sri Rama Rao in Sri D.V. Gundappa's house by accident and enquired about that letter. "Well," replied Sri Rama Rao, "it is true he has written to me. But he always addresses me as 'Dearest Rama Rao' and signs himself 'yours

most affectionately.' Now, can such a man judge my writing properly! His affection for me predisposes him in my favour." Here is an instance of C.R.'s great cordiality; it is also an example of Sri Rama Rao's great modesty, the modesty of one who, like Sri Masti, was an ornament to the Civil Service in Mysore, and is today held in the highest esteem, for his scholarship, all over Karnataka.

So I end as I began, with Bangalore, the City Beautiful, and *Triveni* the dream-child who has taught me to kill out ambition and to prize kind hearts above coronets.

DISSOLVE THE LEAGUE

by J. T. KALLUKAREN

ACCEPTANCE of the vivisection of the country by the Congress inspite of the passionate desire of millions for a united India was mainly influenced by the sanguine hope that the Hindu-Muslim problem would be solved once and for all. But partition, instead of ending the Hindu-Muslim deadlock, only opened wide the flood gates of communal fury and reduced the fair land of the five rivers into a veritable hell. The Punjab holocaust, coming on the heels of partition, has unequivocally refuted the claim that division will solve the Hindu-Muslim discord. On the contrary it has only complicated the position and opened new problems to be faced.

Partition has made the position of the Muslim community in India highly distressing. Black clouds of suspicion and distrust surround them because of their past association with the League. Many even consider them as fifth columnists and men of doubtful loyalty whose activities are to be closely watched. Thus Indian Muslims have become suspects in the country which had been their homeland for centuries, all due to the fantastic two-nation theory aggressively advocated by the League.

Muslims themselves have been thoroughly shaken by the sudden

political changes. Their smug confidence in the League leadership has given place to confusion, bewilderment and uncertainty. Disillusionment and despair have crept into their ranks. They are like a rudderless ship lost in mid ocean. Conflicting currents of opinion assail them from every quarter.

True, these cataclysmic changes have opened the eyes of many a Leaguer in India to the perils and pitfalls that lie ahead if they still harp on the two-nation theory. They have realised that the continuance of this politico-communal body in the new set-up is inexpedient and quite harmful to the interests of Muslims themselves. Hence they have demanded the dissolution of the League organization in India and the burial of the two nation theory. In fact many local League organizations have been already dissolved. Yet no uniform step for the complete liquidation of the League has been taken.

The anxiously awaited Karachi meeting of the League Council, instead of taking the obvious and expected course of dissolving the League, has only re-emphasized the two nation theory by deciding to create two new Leagues under apparently independent control for India and Pakistan. The decision

to continue the League in India is doubly unwise. Mr. Mohammed Ismail is faithfully following in the footprints of his erstwhile master Mr. Jinnah and has declared that the League will continue to exist and that it is the only representative organisation of Muslims.

The League leaders and their militant followers are not the only people affected by this wrong policy. The future of nearly 40 millions of Muslims are closely related to the policy of the League. It is the future of these credulous Muslim masses who have been misled by League fire-brands, that is to be safeguarded. They are to be rescued from the communal whirlpool which will only estrange them from the great mass of Indian humanity who are no different from them. To them must be given the correct lead so that they may march hand in hand with the rest of India confidently.

In this respect the lead given by Maulana Azad at the Lucknow Muslim Conference is most opportune. It should be welcomed by all Muslims who genuinely seek the advancement of their community politically, economically and socially in close co-operation with the other communities. It is not anti-national to work for one's own community's development. The real danger to national unity arises only when communal bodies overstep their legitimate boundary and enter the domain of politics in opposition to the political parties. But even for the restricted purpose of working for communal development, the League with its unholy reputation is singularly unfit. It will never be able to restrict itself to the cultural and social spheres and even if it does, it will be unable to bridge the gulf between Hindus and Muslims. On this question the Maulana's view that the Jamait-ul-Ulema is the fittest body to look after the cultural, social and religious interests of the Muslims is worth adopting.

The only right course for the League leaders as Maulana Azad pointed out is to dissolve their

organization and thus close a very unhappy and bitter chapter in the history of Hindu-Muslim relations. That will be the greatest service the League can render to the Muslims of India. In the changed political situation the existence of the League will do no good to the Muslims.

The Constituent Assembly stands unequivocally for a democratic secular State where the people will have complete freedom of worship. Hence there is no place for a politico-religious party in India. It will only poison the political atmosphere by injecting communalism into the body politic and transform political platforms into communal platforms for fighting communal issues. Further the very constitution itself is built on the solid foundation of joint electorates; and separate electorates under which the League flourished will be no more. In this context the League as a political party can never hope to secure a large support which alone can make it an effective party. On the contrary, the League will be condemned to the position of a perpetual minority without any decisive voice. It will only prevent the Muslims from playing an effective role in the affairs of this country and take away their opportunity to shape the destiny of their land in close co-operation with the other communities. Do the Muslims of India wish to be a voiceless minority? Do they wish to sign their own political death-warrant? It is not yet too late to take the right decision.

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WHITEHEAD AND VEDANTA

by DR. R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

IN the death on the 30th of December, 1947 (in Great Britain) of Dr. A. N. Whitehead, news of which appeared in the Indian Press some weeks ago, the western philosophical world has lost a virile and dynamic thinker who, by suggestion of parallelisms between Mathematics and Metaphysics, and by the working out of creative and constructive philosophical speculation, on the methodology of mathematics, had endeavoured his utmost to enhance the prestige of philosophy as a distinct and independent special science. I shall take this occasion to place before the readers of "Swatantra", what I deem the central and cardinal contribution made by Whitehead to the world's philosophical thought and system-building vis-a-vis the *Vedanta*, from which it could easily be discerned that Whitehead kept the pursuit of pure philosophy intact and unsullied in an age that is steadily moving in the direction of godless materialism, and callous and cynical repudiation of ethical values, and moral principles as amply evidenced in two world-wars, colossal and unprecedented in devastation and destruction.

The relation between Abstract and Concrete has been discussed since practically the dawn of reflection. In a godless age, Whitehead was anxious to demonstrate the existence of God on the basis of reasoned verification. In the evolution of the world-process, there is something like a permanent passage or transition from Abstract into Concrete. In mathematical reasoning, Whitehead found a striking analogue and illustration. The *idea* of a geometrical figure, say, a circle or square is *Abstract*, and the geometrical figure actually drawn in space is *Concrete*. Likewise, the entire world-process which is evolving in a time-space continuum in a definite direction the exact and precise nature of which must forever remain an insoluble mystery,

must have had a prior *abstract existence*, as a plan, an abstract idea in the *MIND OF SOME PERSON*. Subsequently, the abstract idea of the Universe, must have been translated into concrete reality by the same *PERSON*. Some such concept must have been responsible for Whitehead explaining and defining God as the *Ground of Concrete Reality*.

The vast and fathomless Universe of matter and spirit, of organized and un-organized patterns and wholes, systems and totalities, can never be a blind process heading blindly towards final destruction. There must be a Ground of all the Concrete Reality collectively constituting the Universe of matter and finite selves. In such a line of thought, Whitehead comes nearest to Leibnitz who was responsible for the theory of this strange world being regarded and evaluated as the best of all possible worlds. Prior to actual concrete creation, God or the Creator must have had several abstract possibilities in his mind and eventually the best of all found concrete expression in creation. Thus, Whitehead understands God as the *Ground of concretion and concrete reality*.

Whitehead must have startled some pious and religious folk by emphasizing that God's existence is "the ultimate irrationality". Here is precisely deeply coloured mathematical thinking. That *Plus* infinity and *Minus* infinity meet has been a well-known mathematical fad of fashions, and so far, I take it, no teacher or professor of mathematics has witnessed or presided over the said meeting between *plus* (addition) and *minus* (subtraction) which are logical opposites or contraries. On a piece of analogous thinking, Whitehead must have argued that God's existence is ultimate irrationality which means that it is *ultimate rationality* as well. In this strange and fascinating doc-

66 Here's Arand Misra ...

just home from office, longing for a good cup of tea. It's a pity he won't get it because the water in the kettle has been boiling all day. Good tea demands freshly boiled water."



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SOCIAL EQUITY OR SECTIONAL HITTING?

by D.V.R.

ALTHOUGH a good many have ceased to view Socialism as a revolutionary doctrine and have come to accept it as a natural and desirable reform attainable by purely constitutional means, yet, to a considerable section of the intelligentsia who profess to be votaries of some brand or other of Socialism, the term "Socialism" seems to be more an escapist cry from the apparent defects of capitalist economy than a clear and definite socio-economic plan.

While western thinkers as, for instance, the Fabians have been contributing to post-Marxian socialist thought, in our country the term "Socialism" tends to be viewed more as a fixed dogma than as a growing idea which requires ever fresh thought in the light of new and growing data. Then, too, many do not seem to realise that without having a comprehensive and complete picture of the pattern of society envisaged and a thorough blue-print of the socio-economic plan with all the successive stages and full understanding of all the implications, Socialism would continue to be hazy and amateurish. And as long as Socialism continues to be a vague and amateurish ideological doctrine, whether one calls himself a Socialist or not can be of hardly any significance, since no one would be in a position to assess definitely the merits or defects of the pattern of society envisaged and the practical implications in working it out.

Thus, for instance, although "abolition of feudal landlordism" has been a familiar slogan for the last nearly two decades no one seems to know or enquire seriously into what exactly is meant by the term "feudal landlordism". The one concrete thing that has emerged so far is the principle of zamindari abolition. But the term zamindar, it may be

noted, is not of a definite connotation; for, while every well-to-do landowner, even if he be a farmer, is called a zamindar in North India, in the South only the permanently settled estates which seem to have originated largely on the basis of revenue farming are called zamindaries. Then, also, although enquiries with regard to liquidation of zamindaries started more than a decade ago, to-day, when actual legislation is contemplated we seem to be confronted by more and more complications. We are slowly beginning to realise, too, that the mere liquidation of zamindaries may not result in the end of "feudal landlordism." If the rent or revenue collecting authority is transferred from the zamindar to the Government, what is the particular benefit to the cultivator? If our objective were to be the fixation of reasonably low and fair rents and the extension of irrigational and such other facilities to cultivators, that can be obviously done by suitable legislative measures even without liquidation of zamindaries. Then, too, how does the liquidation of zamindaries affect the tenants of those estates, particularly in Tamilnad, where the zamindari rents are lower than Government rates? The really substantial argument in favour of zamindari liquidation would seem to be that, since the Government has no need for the continuance of revenue farmers as it has a well developed revenue department to do the job, the Government might as well dispense with the services of revenue farmers and appropriate to itself the surplus revenue received by the zamindars over and above the *peishkushes* they pay, in which case the primary beneficiary would be the Government and not the cultivator. Evidently, lack of clear objectives, added to the usage of vague terms, has resulted in some confusion with regard to the correct implications

trine again, Whitehead comes nearest to the thought of Dostoevsky according to whom God is pure *caprice* that stands in utter repudiation of all guarantees.

It would be a grievous error if the existence of God were understood to be dominated and permeated by irrationality. The point that Whitehead was anxious to drive home to his audience or clientele must be, surely, that the type of reasoned proof or demonstration you get in the laboratory sciences based on qualitative and quantitative analysis cannot be had in proving the existence of God. Further, no human being, howsoever gifted, can adequately and satisfactorily explain God's ways some of which might seem dominated by irrationality. If God is said to be beyond good and evil, then, He must be beyond rationality and irrationality as well. You may not be so foolhardy as to measure the Almighty by means of your tiny footrule of reason and intellect.

In all systems of philosophy, the central concept is the concept of Godhead to which all other theories and doctrines are centripetally drawn. Whitehead makes a near approach to the Vedanta in connecting Godhead with irrationality. As the Katha-Upanishad arrestingly puts it, the nature of God and the Absolute must remain inaccessible to reason, knowledge, and attainments of the finite. ("Naeshatarkena na-pravachanena na-medhaya...." 1-2-9 and 22.) Secondly, the Vedantic conclusion that Brahman is the ground of concrete reality is also emphasized by Whitehead. I do not suggest that Upanishadic thought had made any profound impression on Whitehead, but, anyone reading the well-known Upanishadic text—"Yato-va-imani bhootani-jatani...." would forthwith realize that Brahman is defined as the ground of concrete reality or as the ground of concretion. There is yet another significant contribution made by Whitehead.

Whitehead is not an illusionist as far as I am able to make out. His

system has no prominent or pronounced affinities with that of Sankara. Whitehead should be classified as a Theist. Whitehead's God seems to me nearer to that of Ramanuja and Madhva. No doubt Whitehead speaks of God as a "limitation". The Vedanta would summarily reject the doctrine. A limitation-ridden God is a contradiction in terms. Thus, the Vedantic God stands on a superior speculative and metaphysical level as free from all sorts and conditions of limitations. Nevertheless, Whitehead's unqualified emphasis on God in a godless age deserves commendation. Whitehead's God is in charge of the governance of the Universe. He makes for righteousness. He will save aspirants who pray and worship. May be the problem of sin and suffering, evil and imperfection is not finally solved by Whitehead. For the matter of that, no final solution can be found for such permanent and persistent problems of philosophy. Whitehead is not nihilist or absolutist. He does not contemplate any merger of finite selves into Infinite as the chief ingredient of salvation (Moksha). Whitehead seems to me to have expounded the Christian counterpart of the message of metaphysics embodied in the Gita. The Universe is a theatre for the struggle between good and evil. Morally and ethically cultivated aspirants should endeavour in their daily duties and in relation with their fellowmen to fight for upholding the good as against evil. The theism of Whitehead conveys a like message.

Whitehead has been accused by certain contributors to the popular Sunday Press of "obscurity of expression". That is an utterly baseless accusation. Whitehead has written for serious-minded thinkers and students of philosophy, *not* for lotus-eaters and for the man-in-the-street. To make the available terminology in English an effective vehicle of his terse and orderly thinking, he has had to coin comparatively new linguistic units which may sound odd and even out-

landish to those not habituated to methodical metaphysical speculation. William McDougall has classified Whitehead as a "Holist" or "Monadist" ("The Riddle of Life" Methuen-London—1938). Others may endeavour philosophically to place him differently. The issue is now between the glorification of the deeds of mankind as revealed by the march of Science in the direction of Atomic weapons of destruction and the pious religious glorification of the deeds of the Almighty as revealed in the starry Heavens

above and the moral law within the hearts of mankind. Whitehead's contribution consists in active and dynamic support to the glorification of the deeds of the Almighty. For this contribution, Whitehead must rank with the classic system-builders like Descartes, Spinoza and others. With wonderful detachment and penetrating philosophical insight, Whitehead has given the erring and warring world a theism pursuit of which alone would usher in the era of universal peace and brotherhood.

PRESENTS AND FESTIVALS

by K. G. NARAYANA

HE stopped and stared at the pair of ear-rings in the show room till the durwan began to regard him suspiciously.

As he moved away, he instinctively turned over his pockets but the chill feel of the small change in them froze his feelings.

The next day was the New Year's Day and he grimly reflected that he had something less than a rupee to buy a present for Kamala.

During their one year of married life Kamala had made very few requests that he with his limited means could not grant. But there was one particular wish of hers, which he wished his circumstances would allow him to fulfil. On the occasion of her marriage she had been presented with a pair of costly ear-rings by a well-to-do friend of hers; but she had mislaid and lost one of the pair with the result that she could not make use of the other one too. Woman as she was, there was in her that lurking love for ornaments, and do what she would, she could not help letting her husband know how much she would like to possess an ear-ring to match the one she was having.

"She should have it at least this year," Murty said to himself as he raced along the city pavements in the cold winter night. It was already chilly and he envied all

those that walked along wrapped in warm woollen clothing. He thought of the woollen coat he had—a costly luxury that Kamala had forced upon him out of the hard savings out of her yearly budget—and wished he had it on. But as he passed a lamp-post he looked at his shabby and worn-out dress and recollected how on the very first occasion that he had put on the coat, people had looked at him queerly, because of the absence of decent trousers, and had made him feel that he had come into possession of one not his own. That night when he returned there were tears in his eyes and he had told Kamala that a costly thing like that was not for a poor mechanic like him and he swore that he would not put it on till he owned a complete suit.

He suddenly stopped and put his hands to his head. He had hit on a way out. He would dispose of the coat, he thought, that Kamala might have her ear-ring.

No sooner had he resolved, than it was accomplished. With the modest sum that a close and pretty hard dealing with the shop-keeper had brought forth, he hastened to the jeweller's and secured the ear-ring.

It was with a triumphant step that he entered his house that night. Kamala was still busy in the kitchen and he went up to her.

"Can you guess what I have brought you for the New Year's Day?" he asked.

"Any present?" she asked, coming up to him eagerly. "Won't you let me see it?"

"You shall," he said. "But first put on your ear-ring."

She looked taken aback and the glow of pleasure on her face gave place to surprise.

"Ear-ring? Did you buy one for me?" she asked.

Deliberately he took it out of his pocket and held it bare in his hand.

"Oh, how wonderful!" she cried. "But—but I have sold off the other one."

There was a shade of darkness on her face but it was only for a moment and a radiant smile appeared instead.

"It was only for you that I did it," she said, trying to explain. "I wanted to buy a present for you. See what I have got."

She rushed into the room and came out with a packet.

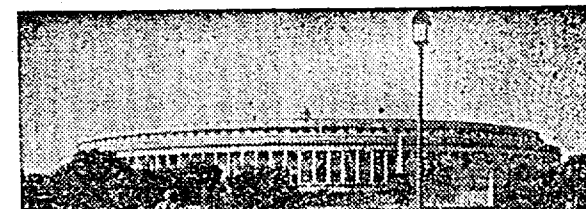
"What is it?" he asked.

"Suiting cloth," she said. "You need no longer be ashamed of wearing your coat."

Murty felt a choking sensation in his throat. There were tears in his eyes as he slowly went up to her and clasped her to his heart.

"Kamala, we are like two foolish children," he said. "It was wrong of us to suppose that any external tokens were needed to cement our bond of love. Neither of the two presents can be of much use to us, for I have already disposed of the coat."

NEW DELHI DIARY



by V. V. PRASAD

PANDIT Nehru has now been accepted by the country and by legislators here in New Delhi as successor to Mahatma Gandhi and as the controller of the political destiny of India. This is a welcome development.

Reactionary elements which felt somewhat powerless as far as Gandhiji was concerned, seem to think that Panditji is easier to oppose. That was the reason why some years ago Feroz Khan Noon suggested from San Francisco that Mahatma Gandhi should hand over his leadership of the Congress to Pandit Nehru. It was Bernard Shaw who pointed out that leadership was not a plug of tobacco to be handed like that. When a friend was talking to one of the Executive Councillors on Feroz Khan Noon's demand, the Councillor, hardly concealing his anxiety and his wish, asked, "But will the Mahatma do it?" In those days, Executive Councillors used to believe that whatever Press Correspondents told them must be gospel truth, because they themselves were hopelessly far away from the people. The Ministers of the Nehru Cabinet are in touch with the people to a much greater extent. Mr. Gadgil, for instance, has a good knack for mixing himself up in crowds and in coffee houses in a most unobtrusive manner. This enables him to feel the popular pulse. It has become more difficult for him to go about so freely now because of the rather stringent security measures taken by Government for the protection of Ministers.

Pandit Nehru stands far above his other colleagues in the Cabinet, and is the only man in the Cabinet whom the capitalists do not regard

as their friend. The *Hindustan Times* has launched a subtle offensive calculated to discredit Nehru and the Nehruites in the Cabinet. The paper's attacks on Dr. John Matthai, with the Railway Budget as pretext, were rather crude. The *Hindustan Times* regards Dr. Matthai as a dangerous man holding rather unorthodox views on economic affairs. It never forgave him for his Rotary Club speech some days before August 15 in which the Doctor declared that the problem facing the country was how to escape from the clutches of vested interests. The thesis of the Transport Minister was that the vested interests allied themselves with nationalist forces in all subject countries during the struggle for liberation. After freedom was won, the vested interests found themselves in positions of power, and would not let go their hold easily. This speech of Dr. Matthai's was supposed to have cost him the Finance portfolio, but he was quite unconcerned about such consequences.

A good lot has been spoken and written about India's reference of the Kashmir issue to UNO. Mahatma Gandhi was said to have been opposed to it. Now we have had first-hand experience of the United Nations, its limitations and its power-politics-ridden atmosphere. Mr. Kingsley Martin has done the sensible thing by going to Jammu and seeing things for himself. What he has written in *New Statesman and Nation* is bound to help India to put herself right with the rest of the world. I had occasion to speak to Sheik Abdullah on foreign propaganda against India on the Kashmir issue. The B.B.C. also had been putting out some rather juicy stuff



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about it. Sheik Saheb said that he knew from the beginning that such would be the outsiders' attitude. Every country at the UN looked to its own interests, and seemed not to care much for world peace. The Tiger of Kashmir finally said: "We have to rely on our own strength, and we should drive out the invader from the soil of Kashmir." The Security Council went on debating and debating. They hardly ever came to any decision, said Sheik Abdullah.

Mr. K. Santhanam has made a valuable contribution to the formulation of India's foreign policy by an article in the *Hindustan Times*.

He belongs to a small group of active legislators who take a keen interest in the affairs of the country. There are probably only a dozen members who seem at

all concerned with the problems of Government. There is need for many more like Mr. Santhanam in India's Parliament. Other members who form the ginger-group in the House are: Dr. Pattabhi, Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Mr. H. V. Kamath, Mr. R. K. Sidhwa, and a very few others.

Provincial Ministers have been asked to resign their membership of the Constituent Assembly, and members of Provincial Legislatures who are members of the Central Legislature are also to be shortly asked to resign. It is to be hoped that since eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, Provincial selectors will nominate for membership of Parliament those who can contribute to the proceedings of the House in an intelligent way instead of as vote-recording machines.



FEARS OF A SLUMP

by "ECONOMICUS"

PRICES, especially those of some chief commodities like wheat and cotton, fell recently to some extent in the New York Stock Exchange; immediately, there were news dispatches saying that "the world's post-war inflationary bubble seemed at long last to be punctured." To the common man, this talk about booms and slumps must seem extremely mysterious; the prices rise to some dizzy heights for no particular reason so far as he can see and when they fall, they fall with an even more surprising suddenness; it almost looks as though the price-level had an independent mind of its own, with its own peculiarly unpredictable whims and fancies, whatever privation and misery such variations may mean to millions of people all the world over. The common man, whose age the present is supposed to be, knows only this: that, when prices rise, the income that he gets either in the form of a wage or in the form of a salary never seems to rise fast enough to keep pace with the prices and when they fall, for no fault of his he is told that his services are no longer required and sent out in the name of "economy", if he is a Government employee, or in the name of "rationalisation", if he is an industrial employee. Naturally the whole system appears to him as a set of ununderstandable or inexplicable contradictions. In calmer moments, he probably would like to know the economist's explanation of this mystery; just as he would expect the astronomer to explain to him the complexities of "this mysterious universe". And, much to his surprise, he finds that every other economist that he meets has his own answer to the problem and all these answers seem to be so many personal opinions rather than definite conclusions drawn from the application of scientific laws to known facts; the manner in which the answer changes from economist to economist seems to him as ununderstandable as the changes in the price-level itself! I,

for one, would not blame him; it is not his fault nor is it the fault of the economist, for the latter finds that many facts that he requires for an accurate analysis are denied to him and he is left to make vague guesses which often prove to be incorrect; and, even if he can secure all the information relating to a particular period, by the time he studies them, most of the data would not be true of the new period that has once again to be studied almost anew. If he is suddenly asked whether the slump has come, therefore, in all probability, he will tell you that he is not certain; but still, a few guesses can be made even though none can say exactly on which date the slump will begin.

A slump is that economic situation in which businessmen find that they cannot sell out all their stocks at prevailing prices and, in order to do so, have to lower prices. The most obvious reason why businessmen can't dispose of their stocks is that the people who buy those things do not have the money with which to pay for them, even though they want those goods very badly indeed. This the economist calls, "the deficiency of effective demand". A boom is a period during which effective demand is too great for the productive capacity of the system and so prices rise to such an extent that the money that people have in their hands is exhausted on the available supply of commodities; it is a common fact that the costs of production do not rise as fast as the prices and so a greater part of the money-income that people spend on goods appears as the profits of the capitalists. But the capitalists do not keep these profits idle, for then it would yield no profits to them; so they invest the money and increase the productive capacity of the country. This again creates incomes which the people spend at higher and higher prices; but, sooner or later the consumers find the prices too high for them and so the prices begin to come down; the exact moment when this

occurs depends on the rapidity with which and the comparative height to which the price-level has risen. Why this occurs is not an easy thing to explain for it is on this point that the economists differ most widely in their answers. Some would say that the rise in the price-level alters the proportion of income which is spent so much that the high price-level becomes unsupportable at the existing supply of goods, which has greatly increased owing to new investment. This is, at present, the most commonly accepted explanation among 'orthodox' economists though it must be made clear that it is not at all so simple as this. There are others who find the cause of 'the business cycle', as it is called, in the interference of the State with the economic system by, for example, increasing the amount of spending power in the country and thus artificially 'distorting' the economic structure or by establishing wage-standards by law and thus making it unprofitable for the capitalists to manufacture goods. Whatever the explanation may be and whether the fact that people can't buy goods is a cause or a result in this cycle of variation, one thing is certain: namely, that the intensity of the slump and the suffering it causes are dependent on how soon people find their spending power exhausted.

During the war period, in most countries, the productive capacity of the people was used for military purposes; armament-production was greatly increased and the production of consumers' goods was severely curtailed. But all the time the workers were being paid incomes and they could not obtain for their money the things that they were normally buying with it; so they were asked to save and not spend their money, for that would not only mean that they will get far less goods than they would have normally got but it would have produced a severe inflation which would have hampered the war effort itself. Also, to ensure an equitable distribution of the goods in short supply, notably food and cloth, rationing and controls were imposed, thus making it impossible for the people to spend their

incomes even if they wanted to. Thus most people in countries where the war economy was efficiently organised accumulated balances either in the shape of Government savings bonds or in the shape of cash in their banks, hoping that immediately after the war they could buy the things they wanted. But even after the end of the war, it takes some time before the pre-war supply of the commodities can be resumed; that is what is known as the transition period. It is during this period that the patience of the people gradually gets exhausted and the capitalists bring all sorts of pressure to bear on the Government; in some countries, the Government yield to this pressure, especially if the Leftist movement is weak, as for example, in America; in some countries, they don't, as in Britain. But, where the controls are relaxed, the pressure of purchasing power being still great in relation to the available supply of goods, what is familiarly known as the inflationary spiral begins. Soon the idle balances in the hands of the people get exhausted

and the prices fall to some extent. This is the first phase of the post-war transition leading gradually to the normal level of production later, as industry becomes better and better adjusted to its peace-time demands. This seems to be what has happened just now, just as it was what happened after the First World War. In other words, we are probably witnessing the end of the period during which people spend the "pent-up purchasing power" of the war period.

It does not mean, therefore, that the slump has come; it only means that the artificial conditions created by the war have ended. In many countries, especially those which were ravaged during the "occupation", the war-time shortages continue and reconstruction is most certainly not yet complete so that the world demand for commodities is still high and will continue to be so for some years to come. In addition, the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction will put Western Europe in possession of the necessary purchasing power for getting goods from America. Thus there is no immediate danger of a slump overtaking us. Only after the whole capitalist world has got itself adjusted to its normal structure, (which will definitely take at least three or four years more), will the "inherent contradictions of capitalism" reveal themselves and precipitate a depression in the real 1929-sense of the term. This is exactly the same course of events that took place after the First World War. After the end of the war in 1918,

the world saw a severe inflation as a result of the pent-up purchasing power of the war period exerting itself on a very short supply of goods in the immediate post-war period; then, there was a recession round about 1922 or 1923. Then the real post-war boom began with prices rising rapidly until the crash came in 1929, altering the whole perspective before the capitalist world. It is by no means certain that after World War II also, the same course of events will repeat itself *exactly in the same manner*. The broad picture will more or less be the same with a number of significant changes in detail. For one thing, a greater part of the world has become socialist, with the result that the market for the capitalist powers has become much smaller; the independence of most of the South-East Asian countries ought to mean that they will undertake economic planning in the interests of the people and that would mean a further shrinkage in the market for the products of the capitalist powers. On the other hand, Japan also has disappeared as a formidable competitor in addition to Germany, so that the agony may be postponed for some more time. Thus, taking into account all the political and technical changes that have taken place, we may say that the artificial boom of the immediate post-war period seems to be coming to an end in the near future but this is not the real slump, which will come much later, probably round about 1950 or 1951—unless, of course, in the meantime, some revolutionary changes take place.

Clemenceau was of tougher material, physical, mental, moral, than any of the statesmen of his time. In the course of the Peace Conference—he was seventy-seven years of age at the time—he found that his officials were unable to settle some tiresome point with the British Treasury. He said he would go to London himself and ordered a destroyer. There was a winter gale in the Channel and he was thrown heavily against the side of the ship. He did his business and returned. When he got back to Paris, and only then, he said, 'You'd better get a doctor: I've broken a rib.' About the same time he was shot by a would-be assassin; the bullet stayed in him till the end of his days. Shortly afterwards, presiding over a meeting of the 'Big Four', he looked more like a corpse than a living person; but he had a complete mastery of the meeting.—Sir Arthur Salter.

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K. VARNASY,

M.A., B.Com., LL.B., C.A.I.I.B.,
GENERAL MANAGER.

of zamindari abolition. This is not said with a view to criticise the move for zamindari abolition, but only to point out that its scope of benefit from the cultivator's viewpoint is strictly limited and that it covers a section of tenants and not cultivators in general. Had we paid more attention to substance with the wholesome object of bringing about social equity instead of indulging too much in slogans, possibly we could have made a clearer and better approach to the problem.

Then, again, if as proposed, inams too were to be treated on the same footing as zamindari estates, undoubtedly a large number of middle and even lower middle class people would be badly hit unless they were to be awarded equitable or adequate compensation. Whether from considerations of equity, or collective social well-being which constitute after all the basis of socialist doctrines, the disproportionate hitting of one particular section which is no more guilty than several other equally well-to-do and even better-to-do sections is indefensible. What is after all the position of the inamdar? He is either a farmer or more often an investor like any other investor whose main object is to have a fixed and secure income. Every person who has money to spare invariably invests it in some manner which the law permits; he invests the spare money in buildings, bank deposits, Government bonds, shares in companies or on inam or patta lands. Whether one chooses to describe them as investors, intermediaries or exploiters, the fact remains that all of them essentially belong to the same category and no particular section is more guilty than the other sections. Even if our aim were to be the elimination of intermediaries we should have a clear and definite notion regarding the term "intermediary" and should also know as to how far it would be practicable and consistent with the traditions of democratic civic

rights. We should also bear in mind the possibility of "intermediaries" appearing in another guise even after elimination in their former shape. In the gradual process of such elimination, after all aspects have been well thought out, measures taken should be such as not to unduly disturb social equilibrium; they should be as far as possible such as to affect all sections equitably. Thus, for instance, the attendant burden of loss resulting from the liquidation of inams need not be entirely thrown on the inamdars but steps devised so that the loss could be equitably shared by all well-to-do or at any rate by all kinds of investors. Suppose the investments on inams or inamdars' interests represent an amount of ten crores of rupees, and suppose all other kinds of income-fetching investments or investors' interests represent an amount of ninety crores; if inams were to be liquidated the loss to be borne by the inamdars should not be more than ten per cent of their interests since their monetary interests constitute only ten per cent of the total interests of all kinds of investors. In other words, the inamdars' share of loss should be one crore and nine crores should be collected from all other groups of investors to be paid as compensation to the inamdars. This suggestion is made only to illustrate an equitable principle and possibly improved methods on the same principle could be devised. Since our aim is to attain an equitable sharing of national dividends, —in the process of achievement of our object, incidental losses to particular sections should also be equitably shared. It is interesting to note in this connection that Bernard Shaw makes a similar suggestion in his book "Intelligent Woman's Guide To Socialism" (chapter 57, pages 269 and 270). Let us not forget that to lose a sense of social equity at any stage of reformist measures might easily result in an indiscriminate sectional hitting.



GRAHAM GREENE

by R. VENKATESWARAN

FEW careful readers of modern English literature can be ignorant of the works of Graham Greene. Though he does not belong to the highbrow school of novelists, he is a brilliant psychological novelist. Graham Greene was born in 1904 and was educated at Balliol College. As early as 1925 he published his first book of verses. He has lived a rich and varied life, first as a member of the staff of *The Times*, then as literary editor of the *Spectator* and thereafter as an official in the Foreign Office.

The remarkable thing about his novels is their power; and when this is accompanied by vivid narration and acute observation, the result is most satisfying. First let us consider that group of novels which he calls 'entertainments'. Chief among them are *A Gun for Sale* and *The Confidential Agent*. In the first novel, a singular character, Raven, is presented to us. Raven is born of criminal parents, he saw his mother commit suicide, he has a hare-lip which makes him look most hideous. This background makes him a sour, suspicious person, hating the whole world and afraid of it. He has not known love or friendship. He is hired by a Steel and Armaments Combine in England to murder a European Socialist President in the hope that war might break out. After doing what he was told Raven finds that he has been paid in phoney notes and that he is wanted by the British Police. Raven's blood is up, he is determined to kill those who had tricked him. He dodges a whole police posse and reaches the Armaments town. There a girl, who could have betrayed him if she wanted to, unexpectedly befriends him in spite of his ugliness and sympathises with him. This affection of an utter stranger, this unasked for love and understanding



Graham Greene

overcomes Raven. Light breaks in on the darkness of his soul; the night he spent with the girl in a narrow railway carriage in mortal terror of the police waiting outside, chastens him. The girl risks her life that he might escape and so Raven is enabled to shoot down the head of the Combine and the manager who had betrayed him, and is in turn shot by the police.

In *The Confidential Agent*, we are told the adventures of a Professor D. from Republican Spain, in England where he has arrived to try to get coal for his people. But the Falangists are everywhere, thwarting him and trying to murder him. The novel is an account of his hectic stay in England. A slatternly girl in a filthy London restaurant loves him and gets killed for it. D. avenges her death and with the connivance of Rose Cullen, the daughter of a coal magnate, is enabled to escape to Spain in a tramp steamer.

Again, in his novel *England Made Me*, Greene studies a single person, a ne'er-do-weel and scamp who cannot stick to any job while his patient twin-sister helps him out as well as she could. Finally, she takes him to Sweden where she is employed as secretary to a big-business boss. There is a strike in the works and it is broken very

cruelly. The brother's sense of fair-play is hurt by this and he threatens to reveal the shady transactions of the boss to the papers, to prevent which, the boss marries his sister. When the brother tries to flee Sweden, they try to prevent his escape by engaging him in gambling; but the fellow wins every time. So the henchmen of the boss push him into a river where he is drowned.

Even more fascinating are his two other novels, *Brighton Rock*, and *The Power and the Glory*. The theme in these stories is simply this: Can a man or woman be guilty of crime and sin and still have a chance of individual salvation? In *Brighton Rock*, a sixteen-year-old boy-criminal Pinkie kills a cheap journalist who had double-crossed him. A waiting-girl in a tavern knows of his guilt, but she loves Pinkie and marries him so that she might not give evidence against him. He loathed the girl and ill-treated her, and when he realized that he would be found out, he tries to make the girl commit suicide, but she is saved in time and Pinkie breaks open an acid bottle in his pocket and dies a painful death. Still the girl is faithful to Pinkie, she confesses her sins to a

priest and comes out proud of having Pinkie's baby in her. The novel is a veritable *danse macabre*; it is ghastly, nevertheless convincing.

The Power and the Glory is Greene's most remarkable novel. It won the Hawthornden Prize in 1940. The scene is laid in anti-clerical Mexico of revolutionary and Prohibition days. The central character in the novel is the whisky-priest Montez. Montez, a Roman Catholic padre, comes to Mexico as cure to a congregation of natives and half-castes. He drinks heavily and has many other petty vices; the revolutionaries with Marxian enthusiasm hound him from place to place, but Montez, though he knew he would be done to death, has faith, and is therefore deserving of grace. In spite of his failings, he proudly addresses the congregation for the last time and receives confession, because the inner self of his was pure, was in God.

Graham Greene is a writer of remarkable power. He is occupied not with saintly men but with people as they are, in their meanness, in their ordinariness. Being an Anglo-Catholic himself, he emphasizes the value of faith, the efficacy of repentance.

ANTIDOTE TO CASE-LAW

by S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE illuminating comments both of Mr. Ananta Rao and of Mr. K. S. Pathy in the columns of "Swatantra" regarding the implications of judicial precedents, appear to coincide more or less with what the authors themselves seem to feel. At the hearing of an appeal in the House of Lords sometime ago, the Lord Chancellor, we are told, observed thus: "In this case, the facts are admitted: the law is plain; and yet it has taken seven days to try, one day more than it took the Almighty to make the world." Whereupon his colleague added "But then He was not bothered by precedents". Indeed the first Indian Law Commissioners (Macaulay was one of them) who drafted the substantive laws of this coun-

try in the early half of the previous century, were fully alive to the defects of judge-made law which one of them described as "a hideous chaos which we call law at home which no layman understands and no lawyer can practise without having a library at his elbow." And they suggested that "Enacted law ought at intervals of a few years, to be revised and so amended as to make it contain as completely as possible in the form of definitions, rules and illustrations, leaving nothing to rest as law on the authority of previous judicial decisions"; for they said, "an addition of a few pages of the code will stand in the place of several volumes of reports."

It has however not been possible for statute law in this country to keep pace with case-law and in consequence the "flood of law reports" has remained unchecked. No doubt something has been done in recent years in regard to the Criminal Procedure Code and the Transfer of Property Act, but the overwhelming mass of statute law, especially in procedural matters, has not been tackled as yet. As it is, interpretation of enactments is the one prolific source of case-law. The courts of law endeavour for the most part to get to know the intention of the legislature and a good part of their time is spent (or wasted) in speculating on it. Faulty draftsmanship may be one cause for this confusion. But it is true to say that no legislature can possibly succeed in making every law properly worded. Perhaps the Indian Penal Code drafted by a man-of-letters (Macaulay) may be said to come somewhere near the ideal. In law, as indeed in any other writing, the plainest of words might be interpreted in ever so many ways. Even the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahma Sutras have been understood in at least three different senses giving rise to three distinct schools of philosophy; in our own day the Gita, essentially a book of war, has been the source-book of India's Apostle of Non-violence. Two radically different schools of Hindu legal system, namely, the Mitakshara and the Daya Bhaga have sprung up on account of two different interpretations of a single work, Yajnavalkya Smriti.

Simple words in legal enactments may occasion grave complications. Take, for instance, the recent Hindu Woman's Right to Property Act XVIII of 1936, which was enacted to improve the lot of the Hindu widow and the widowed daughter-in-law and give them a share in joint family property. The draftsman of the Act wanted to be a bit emphatic and so framed Section 2 as follows: "Notwithstanding any rule of Hindu law or custom to the contrary, the provisions of Section 3 will apply where a Hindu

dies intestate." Now the cardinal rule of interpretation is that the plain grammatical meaning of the words employed in a statute should be adhered to strictly without any extraneous aids. In consequence, these words have been understood to mean that any Hindu woman could inherit in spite of the rule of Hindu law disentitling an unchaste woman or a remarrying widow from claiming a share in the husband's properties.

What, then, is the remedy? The eminent jurist, Mr. Vasey Fitzgerald has shown the way. In construing an enactment, the courts are forbidden to refer to the "prenatal" history of the legislation, that is to say, the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the Select Committee reports and the debates in the legislature and, within the enactment itself, the marginal notes, the illustrations and sometimes even the preamble itself.

The rule rests on an obiter dictum of the Privy Council in what is known as Premal's Case. As it is, it is not surprising that in far too many cases, by reason of these limitations, the courts have never been able to get at the intention of the legislature and hence the ever-increasing volume of case-law. In the case set out above, the object of the legislature was solely to confer a right to property for Hindu women and never by any means to abrogate the pre-existing rules penalising unchastity and remarriage. But this can be gathered only if we can refer to the Statement of Objects and Reasons, Select Committee report, etc. Hence until this basic difficulty in interpreting statutes is removed, mere remodelling of statutes with the aid of the judicial commentaries thereon, which Mr. Pathy suggests, as a way out of the difficulty, may not serve any useful purpose. Codification is no doubt a temporary solvent, but an effective antidote is to be found in enabling a code to interpret itself; and that perhaps may lessen the flow if not mitigate altogether the ever-increasing flood of judicial precedents.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

Levity

To a question by Mr. Kameswara Rao in the Legislative Assembly why urban consumers are asked to partially starve while landowners in villages are allowed to eat bellyful, the Food Minister replied that it is because they do not produce. Does the Food Minister mean that every one in India should produce food grains irrespective of aptitudes and geographical conditions and existing division of labour? Can he prove that all the owners of land in villages produce food grains? Is every tenant-producer allowed to take the produce for his family use and pay his rent in cash? Has every owner-producer sufficiency of land to meet his food needs? Does not he too suffer for certain months in the year for want of food grains? This naive answer from a responsible Minister is nothing but levity and is childish.

K. G. SIVASWAMY,
Servants of India Society.

Way Out Of Famine

According to the Madras Food Minister, "the famine is complete in Ramnad, while in Tinnevely, there is a major famine." What is the immediate operative cause of the famine and what is the remedy?

In Ramnad and Tinnevely, the district production for the current year commencing from 1st November 1947 is estimated by the Government to be as low as 30% and 33% of the normal requirement. When rural rationing was abolished in these heavily deficit districts on 28th December 1947, one expected that as a substitute for State ration-supply, normal trade supply from outside would be allowed to come in. This is the object of decontrol. The Madras Cabinet, however, did the very reverse. It imposed an inter-district ban on the movement of food-grains into the de-rationed famine-stricken districts. Famine is the logical and inevitable consequence of the ministerial decree.

What is the way out? The situation demands a four-point programme:

(1) The inter-district ban on movement of foodgrains into the heavily deficit districts from the less deficit and surplus districts should go. Ram-

nad, Tinnevely, Madura, Trichinopoly and a portion of Tanjore should be joined as a composite group for free internal movement. Similar other groups may also be formed. This will be a transitional stage until there is complete de-control in the Province.

(2) The so-called relief shops should be replaced by ration shops temporarily with the ration scale suitably adjusted from time to time. This also will be a temporary measure pending complete de-control.

(3) The Union Government should be pressed to meet the current year's entire provincial deficit of 21 lakhs tons and not merely 4 lakhs tons as agreed to so far as a special case in view of the colossal monsoon failure in the Province.

(4) There should be increased production, restoration of all irrigation works to optimum efficiency and a well thought-out plan to increase the paddy yield by 50%. Such an all-out effort alone can save the Province from a major tragedy.

A. S. KUPPUSWAMY,

Member,
Provincial Food Advisory Committee.
Tinnevely.

Example Versus Precept

The Government of Madras did a lot of honour to the mortal remains of Gandhiji and the local leaders are exhorting the public to follow Gandhiji's teachings and live up to his ideals. Now, sir, will the Government of Madras scrupulously adhere to the famous Gandhian doctrine of "Forgive and Forget", by cancelling the orders of victimisation on the N.G.O.'s in the recent strike?

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN.

Madras.

(II)

Repeated appeals are being made to the public by the Madras Premier and other Ministers in public meetings and communiques to follow the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. It can, without doubt, be hoped that the public will, due to their reverence, scrupulously do so. At the same time, the Government also should observe the Mahatma's cardinal advice.

The communal G.O. which splits society into fragments, may aptly be

cancelled in accordance with Gandhian teaching.

The Government should not wreak vengeance on their servants for any improper action done, especially when the servants had actually surrendered. Gandhiji had pleaded for compassionate treatment of wrong-doers.

S. V. NARAYANAN.

Madras.

Restore Rations Immediately

The recommendation of the Madras Food Advisory Committee for complete decontrol of food-grains in Madras is very regrettable. When there is scarcity of food-grains the only rational and practical method of ensuring food to all is rationing. Decontrol of food-grains at a time when we are confronted with an unprecedented food shortage and when to meet the shortage we are capable of doing no better than applying for increased food supplies from abroad, would be exposing the people of this province to famine. But Dr. Rajan assures us that no one will die of starvation. This can only be if, with the help of a favourable press, no man whom famine kills will escape catching some disease or other to which his death may be attributed.

The safety of the lives of the people of the province calls for the immediate restoration of rationing. Let the Government stop this gamble with the lives of the people.

K. S. SUBRAHMANYAM.
Rajahmundry.

"Self-Contradictory"

M.K.'s "Thoughts on the Assassination" in your issue of February 7 are remarkably self-contradictory.

To "M.K.", Gandhiji's influence in recent months appears altogether enervating. "M.K." probably recognizes Gandhiji's past services to the nation. Gandhiji led us to freedom as Churchill led England to victory. But after the war Churchill became superfluous; and after August '47 Gandhiji became positively harmful. "M.K." is free to think so. But his feelings are opposed to his thought. He regrets Gandhiji's death.

Sentiment prevents "M.K." from drawing the logical conclusion of his own assumptions. Gandhiji drew it in one of his last writings, on page 6 of 'Harijan', dated February 1, 1948:

("To say or to believe that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel have weakened under my influence is to betray gross ignorance of their

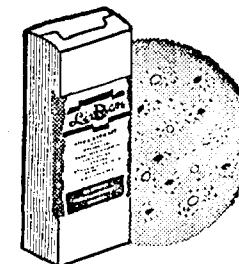
character. And if my influence has really the enervating effect imputed to it, it is a thing for me to be ashamed of and for the country to deplore as detrimental to its very existence.—M.K.G.")

V. BALASUBRAHMANYAN.

Lecturer in English,
Vivekananda College, Madras.

Deification Of The Mahatma

Nothing would have been more repugnant to Mahatma Gandhi's mind than to be idolized in temples for ritualistic worship. Those who understand the spirit of his teachings and the ways of his life will not fail to see the folly of such actions. Gandhiji himself had given up idol worship long before he came to be known to the public as a great leader and has never expressed himself in favour of it. It will be an offence to his spirit and a violation of his teachings to worship him as an idol in a temple instead of



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enshrining him in our hearts by fulfilling his life's mission.

Apart from statues and sculptured mementos to be kept in houses, no idols should be erected in temples for worship of Mahatma Gandhi. Pandit Nehru has rightly deplored all attempts to raise temples or erect memorials which would savour of idolatry and has appealed to those who contemplate taking such steps to desist from carrying out their intentions. "The surest and the most pleasing memorial to Gandhiji", as Pandit Nehru has pointed out, "is to follow his inimitable teachings and to devote oneself to the constructive ideas which he preached and practised." Alas! how few of us who have shed tears understand this?

S. SRINIVASAN.

Cheyar.

"Gate-crashing Into Popularity"

"Groundling" seems to be really one "from the Gallery". How aptly has the artist caught his spirit in the cartoon leading his weekly exercises in attempted smartness.

Right in the midst of the "tumult and shouting over the 'successful' conclusion of the Mahatma's fast", "Groundling" after dilating on the "objective assessments" of its effect as whispered by his "small voice" and "Gallup Poll" very generously conceded: "He (Gandhiji) did indeed lead us into the promised land of freedom and independence", and pathetically added, "But should he also be in such a hurry to lead us out of 'it'?" (Swatantra, Jan. 24, '48). That the Mahatma was only trying to consolidate the freedom gained by his various acts after August 15, 1947 is the view of many, who take a long-range view of things.

Be that as it may, one should have however thought a super-intellectual political giant like "Groundling" would not have bothered about how and where the Mahatma's ashes were distributed, once the Mahatma was not there to "backfire and weaken our Government," "pillory the Hindus and blacken our face abroad" any more. But that was not to be. Again (in Swatantra, Feb. 14, 1948) he magnanimously "by-passes the fundamental question whether such a lot of propagandist dust should have been generated out of these ashes, specially in these days when we are all very enlightened, very advanced and very much emancipated indeed". The obvious answer to the "fundamental ques-

tion" by-passed by "Groundling" in the plenitude of his large-heartedness is that people and their leaders, unlike "Groundling," not having reached the pinnacle of unsentimental pure wisdom, and not having been as much enlightened, advanced and emancipated, and being simple folk smitten by the sudden overwhelming tragedy, wanted to share the grief and get some consolation by enabling as many people as possible to participate in the last rites to the Father of the Nation conducted in widely scattered places all over India.

It seems our leaders should also thank "Groundling" for his not twitting them "with their odd zeal for transforming a Hindu" (what if he did indeed lead us into the promised land of freedom and independence) "burial service into a State funeral", for have they not shown obscurantist tendencies in not devising a secular burial service, as it were, to conform to their protests "of running a secular Government?"

Writing with "sceptical contempt" and a bit of high-brow cynicism is not altogether new to journalistic vanity. But striking permanently a supercilious pose and firing scintillating sparks of pseudo-intellectual criticism couched in words with semi-literary frills at the "high" as mark of one's own intrepid critical acumen seem to be the favourite stock-in-trade of the ambitious journalists attempting to gate-crash into popularity.

Calcutta.

K. LAL.

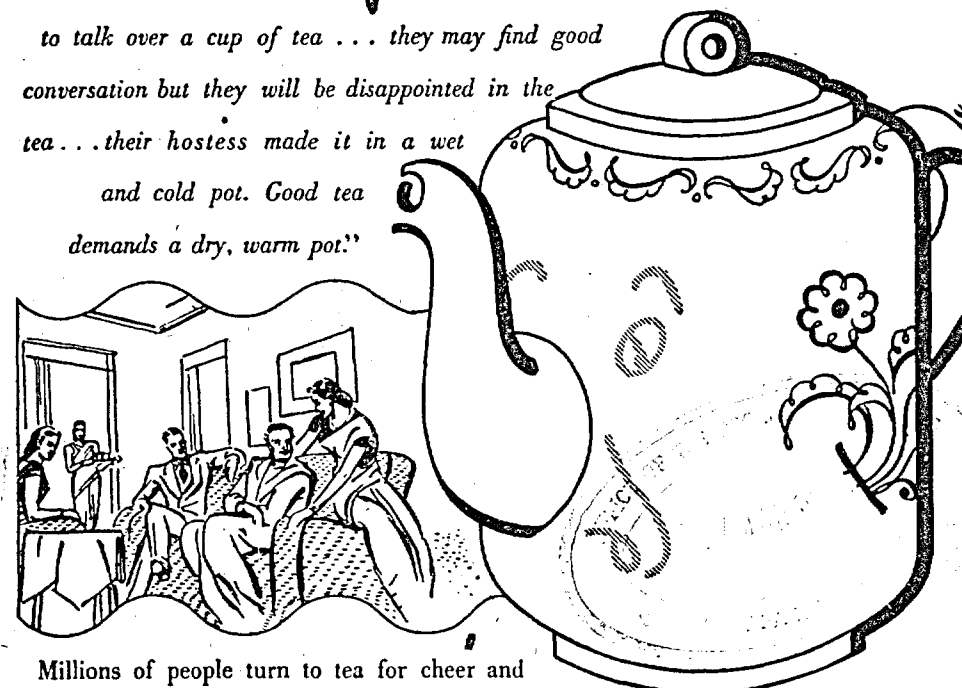
"Groundling" replies:

I am unrepentant even though excluded from grace by a fellow-groundling notwithstanding all indications to the contrary. Had I cared for popularity, I should have sobbed loudest with the rest. Nor could 'gate-crashing' be deemed the recreation of one who is permanently 'not at home', and who on evidence is seen to have preferred an unpopular line. It passes my comprehension why sincerity should be denied wherever there is intellectual or emotional disagreement.

However the best part of the joke is that my plea in favour of traditional methods of our honouring (or our being hallowed by) the mortal remains of our revered leader has not caught the lynx eye of Mr. Lal. As for Groundling's criticism of Gandhiji when alive, I can only say that it is not incompatible with deep veneration for him—alive and dead—this side of idolatry.—(Ed.—S.)

“The guests have come ...

to talk over a cup of tea ... they may find good conversation but they will be disappointed in the tea ... their hostess made it in a wet and cold pot. Good tea demands a dry, warm pot.”



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THE LAST PRAYER

FRIDAY, 5-40 p.m.

30th JANUARY, 1948.

By
MANJERI S. ISVARAN

WORDS can only record
with the jar of a broken
chord,
when he met a martyr's death.
Pain cannot sound its tone
on the dull marrowbone,
nor raise its flood
on the frozen blood.
He held out the goblet of
peace;
Come, drink, drink all, to its
lees:
his gentle chant
amid the rant
of many an evil tongue.
He is gone, not his godlike
spell;
his spirit's knell
will never be rung.

SWATANTRA

VOL. II
No. 52

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1948

ISSUED
WEEKLY

MAHATMA GANDHI

THE power that Mahatma Gandhi exercised over the hearts of men is revealed in the tributes which since his death have been pouring forth from all corners of the world. The whole universe has gone into mourning. For centuries no one else has touched the heart of humanity as he has done.

In serving India, the land of his birth, he served the whole world. It is his distinction to have made patriotic effort the equivalent of human welfare. The ordinary method of national service is an exclusive one. It is the pride of the leaders of each country to confront the world primed for situations of struggle in which they seek to do their best for their own people unmindful of how the others fare. Conflicts are therefore the order of the day in international gatherings. Mahatma Gandhi cut across all boundaries of national striving with appeals for human understanding that tried consciously to replace armaments and other similar instruments of brute power for gaining one's ends.

The vindication of his method lies in the accomplished feat of the country's liberation from the British hold. When he started his Quit India movement, those that thought themselves realists, cried it down as the inopportune, impractical freak of a visionary unversed in political sagacity. Yet it was on the crest of the Quit India movement that freedom came to India. The cost of Gandhian leadership for the attainment of freedom actually turned out to be much less than that of any other conceivable alternative leadership. It brought quick victorious results. It left no trace of bitterness behind. It converted erstwhile political foes into friends.

The Mahatma gave to all that he taught the name Satyagraha. It happens that the crowning moment of the political vindication of Satyagraha in the form of independence, witnessed also the beginning of a revolt against

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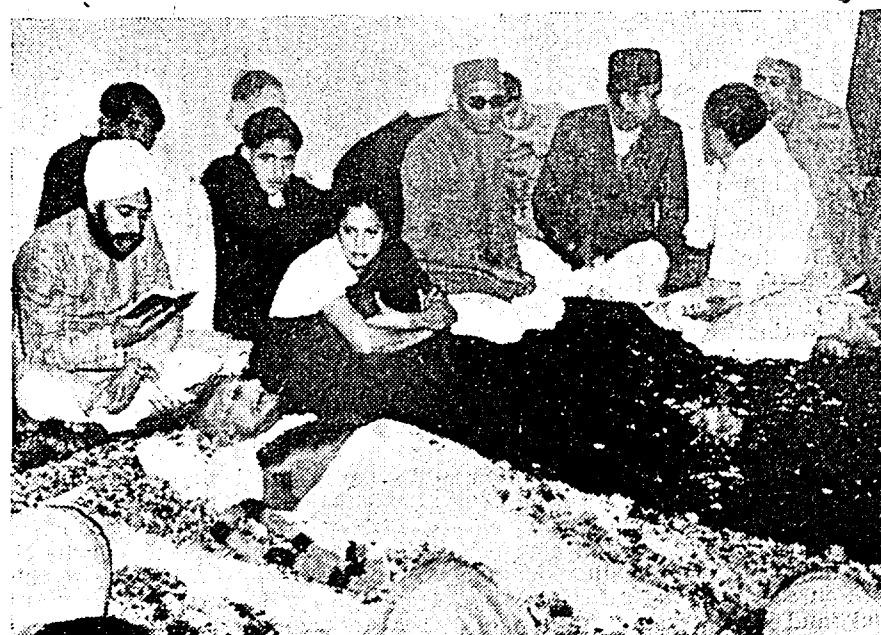
its essential tenets. Satyagraha became the discarded ladder for the attainment of political power, and from the position of vantage made possible by it, other ways and values were brought into practical operation. It was as a protest against this perversion that the Mahatma went on his last fast. Death at the assassin's hand was part of the price he paid for such a protest.

The cause for which Mahatma Gandhi laid down his life continues in jeopardy still. He found that in the wake of freedom, patriots had become communalists, and tyrannical trends drawing strength from brute majority force had begun to manifest themselves; and that their promoters had no compunction to prey on weak, helpless minority elements and to turn the State into an engine of oppression against them. He perceived in communalism the seed of destruction for India's newly acquired freedom. He died in order that equality for all might be established in the country. The communalism against which the Mahatma staked his life is not restricted to Hindu-Muslim relations alone, though on account of the violent storms of anti-Muslim retaliatory sentiment generated by the misdeeds of Pakistan, they assumed an urgency calling for immediate checkmating action on his part. Wherever majority power transgresses on minority safety or proceeds to interfere with the citizenship rights of numerically weak minorities, the ugly spectre of communalism is at work. All the energies of the Mahatma were spent in preventing the spread of its mischief.

The removal of a powerful dominating personality cannot but create a vacuum, and where there is a vacuum air will rush in to fill it. Grief over the death of the Father of the Nation will not for long delay the inevitable competitive struggle among aspirants for the vacated place of supreme mastery in national affairs. Pandit Nehru who of all the great Congress leaders has been closest to the Mahatma, faces now a future of immense difficulty. He is the architect of a foreign policy which it is now known he pursued on the advice of Lord Mountbatten despite the disapproval of the Mahatma. With the patent failure of that policy, the sensitive Pandit Nehru, steeped in international constitutional lore, is apt to feel far from comfortable in administrative harness, and hints have already appeared in some quarters that he may ask to be relieved. We hope they will never come true, if only because the Pandit inherits the championship of the Gandhian point of view over the communal question. Sardar Patel who seems to have been rapidly swerving towards the goal of a Hindu India as a counterblast to the theocratic Pakistan State, is not at the moment happily

placed for any effective rally of mass sentiment in favour of such a goal. If the assassin had been a non-Hindu, the Sardar would have had the whole country in the hollow of his hand by now, wielding the power of a Stalin and idolised as a saviour. As it is, mass hysteria is getting worked up against communal Hindu organisations like the Hindu Maha Sabha and the R.S.S., and it has afforded some refuge to the Muslims of India after they had lost the protection of the Mahatma.

The chapter of accidents would thus seem to have brought about conditions favourable to the fulfilment, after the death of the Mahatma, of the great cause which he held so dear while he lived. It is for the leaders left at the helm, in particular Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, to take full advantage of these conditions and work jointly in amity for the nation's good. We plead for suppression of the aggressive spirit of narrow communalism, wherever found, as the true way in which the revered memory of our great and beloved leader can be worthily cherished by those who take his hallowed name to their lips.



Sotto Voce

The Grand Solitary



THE assassin's bullet has removed all that was mortal in the Mahatma. Generations to come will perhaps speak of this as the second Crucifixion. Certain it is that the world which saw him live and labour can never be the same again. At a great divide of history he stands alone, dominating the spiritual landscape. The manner of his dying has set the seal of perfection on that dedicated life and he takes his place with Jesus and Socrates among the great liberators. He strove incessantly—and in this he was in the true line of our rishis—to deliver man from the phantoms of his own mind.

History reckoning up tangible results may set him down for a splendid failure. In that sense the Buddha too was a failure. But it is these failures and not the Big Noises that have helped our kind to make its slow and painful ascent. Like the action of wind and wave upon the rocks the influence of such men on the hard substance of human nature is imperceptible but real and irreversible. In the chemistry of Providence these are the anti-bodies that society in a toxic condition throws up in instinctive self-protection. A good man may be a historical accident, but he is a permanent addition to our human heritage.

When Bharata asked, "Where is my father gone?" Kaikeyi quietly replied, "He has gone the way of all flesh—yea, he has, he the Raja and Mahatma, splendid in his virtues, great in sacrifice, the refuge of the good and the true". That magnificent epitaph, proclaiming at

once the vulnerability of the clod and the Promethean fire that informs it, may be applied with equal appropriateness to Mohandas Gandhi. To such as he Death comes, secret and shame-faced, like a thief in the night. One instinctively thinks of that glorious figure on the lonely beach at Prabhasa absolving the piteous wretch Jara with a word of cheer and a benediction.

May that divine forgiveness illumine India's heart! Then indeed will Gandhiji's great faith, his noble audacity be vindicated. In trying to solve the problems of society by the application of the technique of self-conquest he played for high stakes. He knew what the forfeit was; and if he was as ruthless with others as with himself it was because his eye was sternly fixed on the distant goal and he was urged by an overmastering sense of impending doom. No wonder that he often stumbled and the laggards fell by the wayside. But it is no small thing to have had that faith and to have made others share it, however briefly and fitfully.

Whether non-violence in the plenitude of his conception was not an impossible counsel of perfection for those entrusted with the tasks of Government is and must for long remain an open question. It is a measure of the Mahatma's triumph in the realm of ideas that it is not nowadays dismissed outright as a chimera by thoughtful men; whereas the Communists' notion of the gradual withering away of the State is not taken seriously outside the ranks of the elect. Hinduism always

cherished the ideal, as for instance in the concept of the Krita Yuga. But it took our state of imperfection as a hard reality and sought in the ideal an inspiration rather than a programme of action.

The materialist philosophies dominant in Europe today lay all the emphasis on the ends and in the process corrupt them. Gandhiji considered the means all-important and was apt to over-simplify them. He too often ignored the diversities of heritage and equipment, the inequalities of capacity and the conflicts of temperament. We had in the past great sages who were also statesmen, such as Vidyaranya, who laid the foundations of Vijayanagar, and Samarth Ramdas, the guru of Sivaji. They were samadarsis who,

however, never forgot that politics was the art of the contingent.

For them the only infallible means was the pursuit of swadharma; and the end the transformation of society into a fellowship that found its true harmony in self-realisation. They recognised, no less than our modern scientists do, the vital role of rhythm, the play of change in life. But they lived their lives simultaneously on two planes, the vyavaharic and the paramarthic. And they took care not to mix up the two. Gandhiji was too much in a hurry to escape this temptation wholly. But in his immortal longings as in his noble rage against the limitations of frail humanity he was a Titan.

VIGNESWARA

MAHATMA

by DANIEL THOMAS

CHRIST preached His saving evangel of love and performed His miracles of healing and redemption; but was crucified on the Cross. Mahatma Gandhi, who all his life, was a devout follower of Christ's life and teaching, has achieved a similar end. Christ, Buddha, Mahomed and Gandhi: These names are abiding land-marks in the history and progress of mankind. Scientists tell us that, though a star may be extinguished in the heavens, its light will continue to shine on earth for millions of future years. Though the physical presence of Mahatma Gandhi is ended, the light of his life will continue to shine and irradiate the hearts of millions of people for long ages to come.

Everyone in the country, man and woman, bemoans personally the loss of a beloved father. That enchanting smile of his and that inspiring voice can be seen and heard no

more. But let us go forward and treasure in our hearts the spirit and example of Mahatma Gandhi and rededicate ourselves to the cause and service of our Motherland and for the spreading of peace and goodwill for all mankind.

In his life, Mahatma Gandhi was 'the pillar of the people's hope and the centre of a world's desire'. In his death, his country and the world experience the bitterness of death and of desolation. But he is not dead. His spirit will be a living inspiration and a beacon light to guide the people of this country to a destiny worthy of its great traditions and worthy of the life and death of Mahatma Gandhi himself.

"Dear Friend, far-off, our lost desire

So far, so near in woe and weal
Behold, we dream a dream of good
And mingle all the world with thee".



SIDELIGHTS :

Love was to his impassioned soul, not a mere part of its existence, but the whole, the very life-breath of his heart.—MOORE.

IT was through Young India that many came for the first time under the spell of Mahatma Gandhi. Young India of those days was unlike any other journal in the world. People read it not for knowledge, but for guidance. Week after week, the Mahatma issued his commandments, and what commandments they were! Two of them in particular I still recollect. They have stuck in the memory through all the intervening years. They ran thuswise: "There should be no privacy in a house." "Husband and wife should sleep in separate rooms." In view of the fact that houses are mostly built for the sake of privacy and in order that husband and wife may sleep together, only the Mahatma and none other in the wide world could have calmly put in words utterances such as these in defiance of the derision of critics.

Yet the strange thing was that injunctions that would have been laughed at had they come from anyone else, were considered with respect when they came from him and in some cases acted upon. Those that failed to act upon them felt somehow uncomfortable and penitent. One cause of this was the transparency of the whole process of his thinking. Most of us spend half our time window-dressing ourselves by way of preparation to make our appearances in public. The strain of the difference between what we are and what we appear to be in public was by the Mahatma knocked out of the economy of his life at a very early age. What anglers for credit take pains to hide, he conceived it to be his duty to drag before the public gaze in a relentless discipline of introspection. As everyone has something to hide, people trusted him as one who had nothing to hide. He eschewed privacy, lived in public, thought in

public and made a public laboratory of himself for experiments in truth in which he invited all to participate without any gate-fee or conditions for entrance.

The common quest of mankind is for money, power, the pleasures of the flesh and exclusive acquisitions of many kinds enjoyable in homes. Cravings of self and family or other attachments create all the barriers between man and man, and because of them, qualities like fear, rivalry and hatred emerge in our inter-relations. They are brought into play by the defensive apparatus of the self as protective devices against dangers external to itself which it dreads. If the sense of externality as between oneself and the rest of the world could be got rid of, there would be no need for possessions of any kind, no fear of any danger, no exclusions. Life would become one all-inclusive feat of identification with every variety of being under creation. This is what has happened in the case of the Mahatma. He gave to all what everyone reserves to himself or family, with the result that the whole world became his family. Which is the reason why his death is mourned all over the world as no death was ever mourned before, as if it were a bereavement for every nation. All fears and animosities were dissolved in his boundless love for fellow-men. Wrong-doing, while it elicited from him condemnation for the act, did not land him in anger or hate, it only increased his compassion for the wrong-doer. He cared for the poor without hostility to the rich. Perhaps he thought that the rich were more possessed by their wealth than they were its possessors and so stood in need of all the beneficent aid which he could give them as an expert exorciser.

Before Gandhiji's advent, political guidance was usually confined to platform exhortations which were mostly rhetorical flourishes and no

more. The role of the public, then, was just that of spectators while the performers indulged in their oratory. But Gandhiji gave work for all to do. His economic prescriptions may not survive for long the onslaughts of this machine age. But they were unbeatable in their time for promoting peaceful organisation of the energy of the masses to national ends—and for making the humblest of them feel important with a sense of their stake in national affairs. The pattern of the leadership of the Mahatma was such as made his evolution from an apparently ordinary childhood into ever mounting altitudes of higher power and glory a stimulus for collective effort for all citizens to join in. Had he appeared on the scene as a congenital prodigy, inspiration would have been lacking for any widespread movement of striving on the part of those impressed. But as he narrates in his Autobiography he was at one time haunted by fear of thieves and ghosts and serpents; he was afraid to go into the dark at night; he was consumed by incessant sex-hunger; he was so susceptible to stage-fright that when he had to argue his first brief in court, his heart sank into his boot and he sat down without uttering a word, later returning his fee to the client with shamefaced misery and humiliation. Public ventilation of disabilities like

these was the Gandhian way of heartening an enslaved people back to valiant manhood. It was thus he made heroes out of common clay, drink addicts sober, that he revolutionised the life and spirit of his generation and gave the impetus to men like Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C.R. and Prakasam to discard the path of lucrative employment and dedicate themselves entirely to public service.

The replacement of violence with love as the means to life's highest fulfilment was the greatest of the many mighty achievements of the Mahatma, the source of all the strength he put forth in the course of his conflicts with the mighty. With the force of love he built a power and influence before which the stature of heads of States looks small. Nothing like the reverence and homage now being paid to him at death ever graced the memory of the most formidable wielders of political and military power that shaped the fortunes of the world with their deeds of conquest. In this universal appreciation of the greatness of the Mahatma there is hope of future survival for the standards he set, however terrible might seem for the time being the vogue of the forces of violence and hatred. —SAKA.

I HAVE never met a man who had such intimate personal acquaintance with the lives of his innumerable friends (as Mahatma Gandhi). You always felt that he really cared about your personal and family life.....

He made friends (in London) with the two Scotland Yard detectives appointed to protect him during his stay. Before he left, he went one afternoon to visit the home of one of these men in South London. The detective's comment was: "Of all the big men I have had to look after, Mr. Gandhi is the busiest, except perhaps Lloyd George. But he is the only one who has found time to visit me in my home".....

I was leaving Delhi one morning last month, and he asked me to come in to see him before I left. As I left Birla House I was saying to myself: "How amazingly joyful and buoyant he is." Nine hours later, when he broke his silence, he announced his resolve to fast until communal harmony was restored to Delhi. Through all the agony that he had been enduring, he had been able to be buoyant and gay with his friends. But perhaps his carefree spirit that Monday morning arose from the resolve he had just made to "do or die" for the peace of India.—HORACE ALEXANDER in the "Statesman".

UNIQUENESS OF GANDHIJI

TO HIM LOVE OF COUNTRY AND LOVE OF

HUMANITY WERE PART OF ONE

GREAT HARMONY

by S. PARTHASARATHY

BARRING the assassin and his confederates, there is hardly anyone who has not been sunk in the deepest gloom and sorrow ever since we heard the tragic news of the passing away of Mahatma Gandhi. The feeling that the foundations of life had given way coupled with a sense of having suffered a great personal loss has overtaken us. We do not mourn because we have lost a great patriot or the architect of a nation or even our spiritual leader. We mourn because we have lost one who loved us and whom we loved in turn. Gandhiji loved us not just as his countrymen but as humanity, nay, as so many individual human beings. His love for the human race was not limited by considerations of nationality, religion, caste or creed. Herein lay the eternal quality of his greatness. For, other patriots have not been able to reconcile love of one's own country with love of humanity as a whole. The liberation of a country or its material progress was considered possible of achievement only by hatred and violence against the ruler or at the expense of the neighbour. But to Gandhiji, his love for his country and his love of humanity were part of one great harmony. Many of us laughed when Gandhiji shed tears when he saw the picture of bombs being dropped on London. We could not comprehend the solicitude for those whom we then regarded as our enemies. When he pitied the Germans and the Japanese as misguided people instead of condemning them as fit for wholesale extermination, the

British thought he was a fifth columnist. And lastly, when he pleaded for justice to Muslims, we thought he was betraying Hinduism.

It is very difficult to say whether Gandhiji would have enjoyed living if he had not been called away so suddenly. The political freedom which he sought so earnestly for his country was no doubt achieved during his lifetime. But the freedom that was obtained gave him no cheer: for it was freedom not granted to an able-bodied person but freedom granted to a person with attenuated limbs. The seedlings of love which he planted all over the country ran the risk of being overwhelmed by poisonous weeds. And in the temple of faith he built round him, there were many in the congregation whose hearts were black with greed, hatred and violence.

It is not for us to assess the work of Gandhiji. Tributes from every part of the globe are being flown: but, to us in India, these tributes make a poignant appeal, for we have come to very near forgetting his great message. Gandhiji lives in eternity as a disappointed man but not as one vanquished. No great soul ever abandons courage and hope. Let us not be content with paying lip homage. Let us try to materialise Gandhiji's message at least after his earthly end. Religious intolerance, narrow communalism and political bigotry must give place to a new life where love for the fellow-being and faith in a just Destiny are the only abiding influences.

WHAT EXPIATION CAN WE MAKE?

by "CHITRAGUPTA"

LITTLE did I dream that I would live to see the day when I would come to feel ashamed of being a Hindu. But the fall of the Mahatma by the hand of an assassin—a 'high-caste' Hindu as the Daventry Radio put it—has made us all Hindus accursed in the eyes of the world. Ever since I heard of the catastrophe, I have been sinking amidst the dark depths of a growing inferno that is encompassing me on all sides. That he who came to revive Hinduism should be done to death by a Hindu is a portent; that he who began his political career in India with a memorable victory over the forces of anarchic terrorism should fall by the hands of a terrorist almost destroys human faith in humanity. It would be just retribution if Hindus should perish through this great betrayal. To the dangers from outside are now added dangers from within, and the future is fearful as never it was in our age-long annals.

Assassination as a short-cut to quick results has been unknown to us in the days of our greatness. But then we had so little of it at any time to brag about. What ineffable pathos in the situation! A frail, old man with none of the pomp and power of the world, one who has been tempting death every day, to be killed in such cold blood, with such calculated perfidy—it shocks our holiest impulses, makes us feel desecrated as if with the touch of a worse than Satanic uncleanness.

The Mahatma had so long been with us that we had come to accept him as part of the geography of our ancient land. Towering over the rest of his fellows like the Himalayas, he was as firm-set and as deceptively near as they. As yielding as the waters of the ocean that girdles us, he was yet as invincible; as subtly efficacious as the medicinal airs that cleanse and vivify

our hills and plains, our rivers and lakes, our temples and topes, our hearths and homes in this—universe in miniature—which is India. How blest were we to have claimed kinship with the latest in an infinite line of blest spirits who, as Sages have called this land Punyabhoomi, and who as Saints have approved it our Karmabhoomi! And now, like the base Indian, we have thrown away a pearl of great price, richer than all our tribe!

Never in all our history have we rejected our prophets. Are we forfeiting the proud privilege at last?

Like pampered children becoming naughty, most of us who have grown in the light of the Gandhian Revelation argued with him and criticised him out of the excess of our devotion to him. We thought that we were being better than Gandhi; but we thought so in the plenitude of our conceit! We sat on his shoulders like the pygmies we are, and, imagining that we saw farther than he did, even dared to twit him with the shortness of his stature. God help us all! Behold how venerable monuments are continually disfigured by the autographs of the obscure. Even so was the impulse in some of us to bandy words with the Mahatma. In ungrateful haste, through littleness of faith or absence of vision, I at least rejected him in what I thought was the moment of his greatest secular triumph. Now in the dust that has been hallowed by his blood, I feel I have no right to claim even a particle, because I am of the new race of untouchables.

His death is not a tragedy to him but to us. He had won his place among the immortals at least a generation ago. He but absented himself from his pre-ordained fellowship awhile to lend us faltering souls a helping hand in our onward march. He was great in a fashion

unparalleled in the history of the world. For he treated his soul as his workshop, which many have done before him; and the world as his confessional from day to day which no one had dared to do till now! His triumphs are his failures, his failures are his triumphs—for both stretched the line of his evolution in an infinite straight line.

He knew the way of escape, but consciously rejected it. Like St. Thomas a Becket, he must have been aware of the impending martyrdom, if indeed, he did not hasten it to some extent by a reversion to first principles in extremis. Swaraj was dead-sea fruit to him as to the finer spirits in the land, because it came with a negation of everything that he held dear. The convictions of a life-time, the inexorable realities of our history reasserted themselves to bring home to him the futility of partition. But it would have been dishonourable to go back on our pledged word. So the Mahatma made up his mind to yield on every other ground in hopes of salvaging peace. He was unabashed by the reproachful epithet—appeasement. Had he been spared, he would, I feel, have gradually come round to the declaration of this point of view in his own unpredictable fashion. Whether peace would have been salvaged by such means is a very large and very different question. But the visionary, the idealist, the Christ who carried the cross for our time clinched his claim to immortality by disdaining the soft option that was open to him, and ending an epoch with an exquisite gesture of abounding charity and universal benevolence.

There is a deeply tragic strain in Indian literature which has been noticed only by a few thinkers and students of Indian thought. The sombreness of it has been draped by a convention that has served to keep the crowd in order. The chastening effect of the Greek Chorus is amateurish by the side of the intense grief and baffling emptiness induced by the concluding scenes of either the Ramayana or the Mahabharata. Virgil put it more ter-

sely when he spoke of the tears due to mortal things. What tears have we not shed these few days since we heard of the passing of the Mahatma! I never imagined that I, an Indian middle-aged Prufrock was capable of such tears, or that they would leave such a healing, balsam-effect behind them.

I have heard it exclaimed how much better it would have been if the Mahatma had gone, off in one of his fasts. I don't agree; Destiny is a better artist than poor mortals, and the tact of the present termination will grow more and more obvious with the passing of time.

Of the flood of obituary notices, I salvage a few for their unexpected excellence or their equally unexpected banality or malice. After all, the light is thrown not on the Mahatma but on the speaker himself.

Mr. Amery has no doubt that all the carnage of our post-partition era is directly due to the Gandhian ideology. Mr. Jinnah says that it is not an occasion for controversy, thus proving that he is obsessed with nothing else even in the face of death. Mr. Joshi finds in the murder a stick with which to beat the Nehru Government for supineness in not making proper arrangements for the safety of the Mahatma.

In another category are the words of Sir A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar who struck with wonderful felicity and deep emotion a responsive echo in all Hindu hearts by quoting from the Gita about Avatara Purushas. Gandhism will be the youngest religion, as well as the purest to take shape in this land. Mian Iftikar-uddin of the West Punjab League put us all in the pillory by saying that all of us who did not fight against communal trouble were collaborators in the murder of Gandhi. Last comes Shaw, the greatest of those who paid their tributes to our leader. How concise, how mordant, how feeling, yet how just is his estimate! By describing him as an institution, he underlines the Mahatma's universality: by stressing his goodness, he acknowledges the divine!

FAREWELL TO GANDHIJI

by BAROO

New Delhi, Feb. 1: It took time for the news to sink in. A friend of mine was staging a show. A few minutes before it was due to begin I told him what had happened. "Don't shout it out like that", he said, "or you will interfere with the booking". But he soon realised what had happened and cancelled the show.

A society dame said, "We should all go into a year's mourning". Reasonless fear came over a few. A friend advised me; "I wouldn't knock around the streets tonight if I was you." Some did not know how to react to the news, what exactly to say. People whose lives have been a flat contradiction of all that Gandhiji lived for stood embarrassed and strangely crest-fallen. A bright young thing said, "Are you quite sure he is dead? Did you hear the announcement yourself?" A life-long hypocrite said, "The father of the nation is dead".

I walked down to Connaught Place. There were no lights tonight. The shops lay shuttered and dead. Even the pavement stalls had packed up. For a moment I thought the town was under curfew—my subconscious had travelled back to the Lahore of last summer. All the eating places, all the cinemas, all the tea houses were closed.

People stood in twos and threes, talking in subdued tones. There was a little group in front of the "Hindustan Times" office, watching the spot news. The spot news read, "Gandhiji shot dead. Assassin arrested". Every Sikh and Punjabi Hindu whom I met was worried more about the identity of the assassin than about the incident itself. But things came into slightly better perspective for them when it was known that a Maharashtrian had committed the foul deed, and not a Punjabee refugee.

Like many thousands of other people, I too drifted down towards Birla House. Birla House was an island in a seething ocean of huma-

nity. By about ten in the night I had been whirled sufficiently near it to catch a glimpse of the body as it lay on the roof under the beams of a single spot-light. People wept openly, unashamedly.

Later, I met a friend who had sat near the body in Gandhiji's own room. He said he had found it difficult to believe that Gandhiji was dead and not sleeping. The face was serene and peaceful as ever.

Early on Saturday morning, people began to move towards Birla House or towards one or other of the van-tage points along the five-mile route of the last journey to the Jumna. Men, women, children, trudging out in their hundreds of thousands. I scanned their faces carefully; I do not think many realised the exact extent of their loss.

I watched the procession pass under India Gate. Gandhiji's face was uncovered; the rest of the body was draped in white khaddi and in any case blanketed under a layer of rose petals. I thought I saw a tinge of turmeric-yellow on the skin.

Flanking the bier sat Nehru, Patel and Baldev Singh. Nehru's fine face was ashen grey. Patel sat impassive as ever. Baldev Singh did not move a muscle. I wondered what lay in store for the nation, the orphaned nation.

But I knew that Gandhiji was not dead. He was here with me, with you, with anyone who cared for his company. But how many did care for his company? A doubt assailed me. Were there not many, a very many, who were subconsciously, but nevertheless very truly relieved at Gandhiji's death? A sacrilegious thought to think, but there are few who have not at one time or the other secretly disliked the Mahatma's inexorable and relentless stand on principles that he sooner died for than compromised. There were many, alas, too many who had secretly or unconsciously hated (and feared) the man's un-

deviating adherence to the inconvenient dictates of truth, and withal dared not challenge him. How would these men behave in the days to come?

In the last analysis, things must work themselves out, however painful or costly the process might be. Gandhiji will not have died in vain if his death quickens the process,

removes at least some of the dross from our minds. More than that in the circumstances one cannot hope for. I was reminded of the poet's words:

Do not hasten the future; in agony too there is time

For the growth of the rose of the spirit astir in the slime.

VERDICT ON CASE-LAW.

by K. S. PATHY

Mr. Ananta Rau's article "Should case-law prevail" which appeared in *Swatantra* of the 3rd January, constitutes a most daring handling of the case against case-law. His vehement onslaught is bound to please the idle apprentice as well as the work-shy lawyer inasmuch as it promises to lighten the load of legal learning which case-law is continually piling up. But any sincere, hard-working student of law who has a firm grasp of the fundamentals of Jurisprudence will be tormented by a feeling whether Mr. Rau has not committed himself to a hasty analysis of the function of judicial decisions in a legal system.

Mr. Rau asks "Is not legislation a far better method of laying down the law than leaving it to a series of over-ruled and over-ruling decisions?" Most certainly it is, when it is a question of evaluation of the relative merits of statute law as opposed to unwritten customary or common law. In all modern societies legislation has tended more and more to become the exclusive source of law. But is it ever conceivable that legislation should supplant case-law wherever it is found?

Mr. Rau proceeds: "Once case-law is deprived of the power (to clear doubts) all necessary care is bound to be exercised to make every law as clear and unambiguous as is humanly possible. Should doubts arise later on, they can easily be removed by the people's own representatives in the legislature by suitable amendments instead of being left to the varying decisions of individual judges. This is putting the cart before the horse. No legislative skill could ever dream of an anticipatory comprehension of all possible complexities and varieties of facts and circumstances to which a piece of legislation may have to apply. Judicial decisions are the only reliable means to fill up the gaps, remedy the imperfections and resolve the ambiguities and incoherencies, which unavoidably creep into even the

most-carefully drafted codes. However, one has to admit that the reporting of purely declaratory decisions, where the law is already set forth in the statute in fulness and clarity, is a needless burden which can be reduced with advantage.

Mr. Rau sums up: "To make laws clear and unambiguous, or to leave doubts to be cleared by case-law—there can be no two opinions as to which of these two ways is by far the cheaper, the sounder, and in all respects the better way." The truth of the matter is that the two propositions are not alternative options but complementary and co-existent processes in the growth of law. Codification must not be understood to involve the total abolition of judicial decisions as a source of law. Case-law will continue to grow even when the codes are complete. While codified law remains the substantial body of law, case-law is its inseparable supplement, investing the terms of its provisions with precision and definitiveness of meaning. Out of any written code, however finished, a body of case-law is bound to evolve as a judicial commentary. The only expedient to put a restraint on the unwieldy and clumsy overgrowth of case-law is to incorporate, from time to time, this expository and supplementary law into the code itself resulting in a constant revision, rearrangement and restatement of the provisions of the code in the light of judicial decisions. The process is a continual one going on in an endless circle.

Mr. Rau sighs: "Cannot a legislature make every law properly worded, without leaving it to judicial decisions for interpretation?" That it can never be, is an experience too obvious and familiar to be stated. The history of the laws and interpretation of the various written constitutions of the world proves that Mr. Rau sighs in vain and that his verdict on judicial decisions bears the impress of a juristic delusion.

MAHATMA GANDHI

by M. S. SRINIVASAN, M.A.

"He (Gandhiji) was obviously not of the world's ordinary coinage; he was minted of a different and rare variety, and often the unknown stared at us through his eyes.....Having found an inner peace, he radiated it to others and marched through life's tortuous ways with firm and undaunted step."—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

"If India takes up the doctrine of the sword, she may gain momentary victory. Then India will cease to be the pride of my heart. I am wedded to India because I owe my all to her. I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world."—Mahatma Gandhi.

To estimate what we owe the Mahatma is to reason what the utility of the Sun is to us. To ask what we do not owe him today is to realise the versatility of his genius, the manifoldness of his achievements, and his paternal care and solicitude for the ennobling of the mind, body and spirit of the 400 million souls of this land of myriad differences.

Gandhiji is a gift of the Almighty. India, "the contemned of the world but the beloved of the Gods", lay prostrate, famished, helpless and meek. He appeared as if from nowhere and with the magic of his wand, with a divine stroke, resuscitated her and unloosened her bonds. He gave her "backbone and character". It was with the silvery note of Love, Truth and Non-violence that he achieved this miracle of the age. Any other means employed by him would have been exotic to and unworthy of her spirit and traditions.

Max Muller in "India: What Can It Teach Us?" said, "In order to have a religion, a man must have religion.....With them (the ancient Indians), first of all, religion was not only one interest by the side of the many. It was the all-absorbing interest; it embraced not only worship and prayer, but what we call philosophy, morality, law, and government,—all was pervaded by religion. Their whole life was to them a religion—everything else was, as it were, a mere concession made to the ephemeral requirements

of this life." The same ideal is the background of all the messages and actions of Gandhiji. He proclaims: "No man can live without religion. There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But that is like a man saying that he breathes, but that he has no nose.....Those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."

His religion is not dogmatic and ritualistic, but it is a philosophy, a way and a conduct of life. It is not seasoned with intellectual subtleties, but it is influenced by character and piety, Truth and Non-violence. It is more a rationalism of the heart than that of the head.

He has brought the message of Truth and Non-violence to the common people and tells them that they are to their species even as "violence is the law of the brute. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit".

It was the weapon of Satyagraha that he used to spread his simple teachings and made them efficacious by personal example, by practising what he preached. This weapon not only cut the tap-roots of imperialism in India, but trained the people, again and again, to keep time to the music of the Soul. He says, "Satyagraha and its offshoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering." As H. C. Armstrong observes, "It was

the old trick of the boxer to withdraw from a blow and so absorb the punch and damage in the blow."

He believed that his non-violence was infallible. Amidst a warring world he was not tired of reiterating its efficacy and strength. But he preferred violence, or "leonine courage" as he called it, restricting its uses and variety, to cowardice. "I do believe," he writes, "that when there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence...I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless victim to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment."

He chafed at the strength and cravings of the flesh. "Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will." "Courage is the one sure foundation of character...There is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self-control." "I must declare with all the power I can command that sensual attraction even between husband and wife, is unnatural."

What is peculiar about the doctrines of the Mahatma is that he fashioned their first principles by constant experiments and experiences in South Africa and India, several decades ago, and has not changed them ever since. Those who read now the Rules and Regulations of the Satyagrah Asrama founded in 1919 would find them the same as his last pronouncements and they need to be understood and practised in these perilous times in India.

"I am no visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist," he used to say. The truth of this claim is apparent. There is no aspect of the nation's life which he has not touched, reformed and improved. Diet, clothing, village administration, untouchability, temple entry, Harijan uplift and cottage industries—all these have originated anew from him and claimed his constructive and

idealistic genius. The cross-roads of Indian freedom, Champaran and Kaira, the Rowlatt Bills, the No-tax campaign, and the Khilafat, Civil Disobedience and Quit-India movements, have been laid out by his statesmanship. He had an amazing knack of reaching the mind and heart of the people and knew when and how to start and end a non-violent fight even as he understood the whole logic of his fasts.

He was a born democrat, and his democracy was based on right conduct, the rhythm of the heart, rather than on the device of the majority, the counting of heads. A State is known not by the rights that it maintains, but by the duties it propagates. "Our religion consists in four letters 'DUTY' and not in five letters 'RIGHT'".

His creative enterprises have been symbolised in the Basic scheme of education, the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, the Village Industries Association, the All-India Spinners' Association and the Hindi Prachar Sangh. His faith in 'Villageism' is unintelligible only to those whose ignorance of real India of the past and present is matched by their contempt of it. He has no attraction for the Machine Age because it promotes and perpetrates class hatred and prejudices, and disturbs the harmony of the soul of the individual and the nation.

He is a model of journalistic rectitude and persuasive propaganda. His language, spoken and written, is simple and limpid. None exemplifies the truth of the dictum 'Style is the man' more than he. Vivid phrases and striking images give strength to his periods. Contemporary vocabulary is enriched by his gift of word-coining and phrase-making. Mark 'Deenabandhu', 'Desabandhu', 'Rashtra-pathi', 'Sardar', 'Harijan', 'Rama Rajya', 'Purna Swaraj', 'Civil Resistance', 'Satyagraha', 'Inner voice', 'Fast unto death' and 'Himalayan blunder'.

But what are these achievements when compared to the man himself, "so luminous a contemporary—a beacon for generations to come"? Pandit Nehru writes in his

"Autobiography", "His smile is delightful, his laughter infectious, and he radiates light-heartedness. There is something childlike about him which is full of charm. When he enters a room he brings a breath of fresh air with him which lightens the atmosphere...A man of keenest intellect, of fine feeling and good taste, wide vision; very human, and yet essentially the ascetic who has suppressed his passions and emotions, sublimated them and directed them in spiritual channels; a tremendous personality, drawing people to himself like a magnet, and calling out fierce loyalties and attachments." To Jawaharlal, Gandhi is always an "amazing leader" and a "magician". Gokhale said, "In all my life I have known only two men who have affected me spiritually in the manner that Mr. Gandhi does,—our great patriarch, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and my late master, Mr. Ranade—men before whom not only are we ashamed of doing anything unworthy, but in whose presence our very minds are afraid of thinking anything that is unworthy"; and when Gokhale said these words Gandhi had not yet become the 'Mahatma'.

Yet this is not the whole man. As H.L.S. Polak said many years ago, "You cannot say this is he, that

is he. All that you can say with certainty is that he is here, he is there. Everywhere his influence reigns, his authority rules, his elusive personality pervades; and this must be so, for it is true of all great men that they are incalculable, beyond definition. They partake of the nature of the Illimitable and the Eternal from which they have sprung and to which they are bound. With their feet firm-set on earth and their hands amongst the stars, they are pointers of the way to those who search, encouragers of the faint and weary, inspirers of those breathing in deep draughts of hope." The Rt. Hon. Sastri spoke of him these noble words; "Only on half a dozen occasions have human hearts yielded themselves up in such complete thrall to one without birth, beauty of form, possessions, force of arms or honours to distribute.....Pacifism, non-violence, 'ahimsa'—whenever and wherever these words are pronounced, the name of Gandhi will occur to the minds of people all over the earthGreat Soul, in a vision of glory, go up the Mount of Expectancy of a weary waiting world, raise high the right hand of blessing, and solemnly utter the word which is in all hearts and which comes full of hope and full of meaning from your inspired lips."

Socrates: "I am not an Athenian nor a Greek, but a citizen of the world."

Seneca: "The whole world is my country."

Thomas Paine: "My country is the world, and my religion is to do good."

William Lloyd Garrison: "Our country is the world—our countrymen all mankind."

It is in the mind people begin to grow old and disintegrate. While there is fertility and imagination in the mind youth shows in eye and face. Thought is the substance of life and a new thought a new lease. In fact, the birth of a thought is the rebirth of the man or woman and it often happens that one that is speeding to the grave finds oneself in the thick of the battle if one comes by a new warning or a new wisdom to disclose. So the lamp shines, undismayed by age, and even if life oozes out the flame goes on. The soul is immortal because thought cannot die.—(N. K. Venkateswaran.)



The Cart-Puller

by J. Dharma Teja

OVER a faded "Gangaravi" tree a jet black crow sat, listless, its feathers drooping; gurgling noises came from its throat, its beak kept alternately opening and shutting, while its pupils contracted for it was the hottest day of the year. Through its half-shut eye, it saw a man (if possible darker of skin than itself) far back where the slope that led up to the bridge began.

Rupayya the cartpuller, the human bullock standing in the traces of his properly-loaded hand-cart bent his neck and looked down at his dirty toenails begrimed beyond recognition. He settled a little back of the front beam of the cart and pushed it a little more firmly. He watched the ground under his feet, the melting asphalt of the road yielding to the impress of his foot—his jaws set a little higher, his neck cords bulged, he flexed his knees and the long ripcord muscles on his thighs and the broad bands of flesh that ribbed his waist tingled and he spat a minute gob of saliva that splashed on the asphalt and evaporated. It was years since with an expert's knowledge he learnt not to keep the seductive piece of tobacco in his mouth while he sweated to pull his cart. For having it either in the recesses of a cheek or churning it with his tongue always made his calf muscles hang looser and the cart somehow seemed more difficult to pull. With a smooth motion of his torso right up from the hips he now bent and pressed himself on the front beam, some lumps on the beam pressing into his naval, and got set to heave the cart up the slope leading to the bridge.

He started slowly keeping an even step, knee capsizing more than a foot into the air and feet dropping gently on to thick heels indifferent to the heat of the melting pitch. When he was about the middle of the slope his knee action became faster, his steps fell short and choppy, he slumped forward more on the front beam and the soles of his feet pounded the ground more often than the heels. Chord-like muscles fanning out from the hips and framing his back pulled tighter, each separate bone in his spine twisted and held his hip muscles dragged on the pelvic bones

and he pulled himself into the air in a final effort. It was as if he were attempting to shoot himself into the sky as a projectile. The cart wheels creaked once, twice and again; he dully remembered he had greased them only yesterday—of course the grease had been like lumps of clay, not enough oil in it and the cart was creaking now. The sweat that had started at the roots of his shock of hair under the head cloth, trickled into the tips of his eyes, it fringed the eyelashes and made him blink. Pausing in mid-step just before he topped the rise of the bridge he shot out a chestful of air and immediately with open mouth and dilated nostrils drew in as much fresh breath as his broad chest could ever contain and pushed on.

Rupayya was at the zenith of his life, his strength as a cartpuller at the limit and way back from when he began his career had been a nerve-racking pull. The rest of his journey in life, as the downward rush down the incline of the bridge would be, inexorably accelerated, feet pattering faster and faster than he could check with his spine bent back into a hollow, neck stiff on shoulders, taut arms pulling the front beams up. The cart gravitating down the incline would push him beyond the bridge and he would be lost to view across the bend where the road curved.

He vaguely remembered a broad hairy chest, with eyes bloodshot with drunkenness, a fist that beat him down as a sledge-hammer whenever he came within reach. That was his father. Curiously enough he did not even remember his mother. At one time he used to think he was born without a mother. He even now would laugh loudly at the joke one of his companions, a smart urchin, invented one day when they were playing together outside Mariamma's church. The fellow it seemed was told by some fare he picked up, that Christ, the white man's God, was born to a virgin, he was born without a father. Queried the urchin, who prided himself on the possession of both a mother and father living on a pavement, "Rupa, where is your mother?"

Rupayya grinned stupidly and said, "I have not got one." Kuttan (that was his name) laughed loud and long, he had a nerve-racking derisive way of laughing that tempted one to knock his teeth out, and said, "You are the Indian Christ, born to a virgin father, born to no mother." That joke stuck to Rupayya for some time and there were moments when he sat back and idiotically imagined how he was born to no mother. Now though a childless man he knew better. "How smart was that Kuttan, where is that fellow?" he wondered as he often did of his many childhood acquaintances.

Some time at an age when he had strength perhaps to lift a half maund basket to his head, his father took to pulling a rickshaw and left the neighbourhood. He came twice or thrice in the evenings to the street where Rupayya was playing with bricks and torn bits of cloth amongst other children, and loudly demanded why his own son chose to stay away from him, got into a quarrel with some women who lived on the pavements (for aught they cared, Rupayya might be their own son) and kicked his child soundly, cursed the neighbourhood and went away. He never came back and no one cared where he went. Since then the pavements adopted Rupayya and the people who lived on the pavements.

Since the time he remembered anything, he was eating with these people spread all over George Town; as a child, he had the privilege of demanding, cringing for, and begging food from these pavement dwellers who were his people. It was unusual for him to go hungry and sleep on an empty pate. He asked and he was given food. Not one of these folks demanded who he was, he seemed to have been branded as one of them and accepted accordingly. And he grew to be an ungainly strong lad, dirty as any of the pavements which were never swept, filthy as the torn rags which all of them wore and rugged as the streets in which they lived.

One thing marked out Rupayya from the other lads who were his friends. His build and strength and his stupidity. As with them, before he took to cartpulling, he offered himself for coolie, carrying small headloads of purchases from the Kotwal market, Chengayya Angadi and the shop fronts in George Town to the tram, bus or taxi. Only unusually he used to remember that he should demand more fare than he was given and then he was obstinate and

demanding an unimaginably high fare. He never managed a reasonable fare that way and all his friends mocked at his stupidity. Neither could he take to the smarter trades, boot-blackening, fetching taxi-cabs on commission, peddling small ware on the market pavements, nor could he become a newspaper boy, or a member of a caravan carrying posters and join in the advertisement racket for the theatre people or the beedie merchants. He was not smart enough for any of these avocations and he got left on the pavements, mostly picking fares for coolie. Otherwise he used to sit stockily on his haunches and blink the whole day through and eat whatever he could get through begging from his folks.

Thus he continued right through his adolescence, his stupidity preventing him from even getting addicted to betel-chewing or tobacco though he tasted these on occasions. Also he was too poor to afford buying these luxury items and he got on without them. When he was about sixteen, strong enough perhaps to lift a bag of sugar on to his back and carry it down the streets, he was found caressing a girl in her teens on a doorstep by her man (also a cartpuller) and he got whacked on the head. The man pulled his girl away. But Rupayya standing in the middle of the street blinking in bewildered but resentful stupidity, was heaped with abuse by a destitute woman who styled herself every able-bodied man's aunt and she finally threw a full-sized brick at him. It caught him squarely between the shoulders. It was curious that Rupayya never fought with anyone though sometimes he got so angry his eyes he imagined grew blood-shot. To Rupayya smarting under the insult, a veteran cartpuller standing in the traces of his heavily loaded two-man cart for which the girl's husband was a party, said, "you ox! why don't you push this cart for him? you overgrown pup! after licking the face of his girl! Come, do a good turn for him! I am dying standing here with this load waiting for that boulder." Rupayya shrugged his well-built shoulders, got behind the cart and pushed. "Aha!" said the rightful owner of the girl, "You pay me for the insult you did me, aha!" Rupayya looked up at him from beneath his heavy eyebrows and sullenly pushed the cart away.

On the following days he joined the old man in his cartpulling and absently never asked for a share of the fare. Only he accompanied the old man to behind a cinema house where he

drank his pot of toddy and nibbled at a meat sausage, and sat by him in silence. The next day the old man introduced him to the master of the warehouse who usually gave him fares, and was the owner of the cart, and Rupayya got into harness properly as a cartpuller. His great strength got him assigned a hand-cart, a single man affair. The master looked slyly at Rupayya after fixing his job, "Hey, you overgrown ox, you are given a light job pulling that handcart. It does not carry even a ten maund load. Don't pull it fast through the streets. Otherwise the axle will break, the tyres get worn out and the wheels will fall apart. I will have the very devil of a time putting money into repairs for your cart. Get on with you. I shall pay you 8 annas for a full day's work." Rupayya nodded his head and went away.

All through his career he never could estimate what a full day's work meant. Sometimes it meant pulling four well-packed cartloads over comparatively small distances, sometimes pulling the cart from George Town at one end to Mylapore, sometimes he was a party of three men, he being the man who pulled the maximum-sized cart, pulling for what he was worth for three to four hours in the day. It was always the master who computed his fare, always deducted an anna or half-an-anna for damage or late coming or loitering or towards repayment of the money he said Rupayya owed him. Rupayya never asked him what money he owed the master. He perhaps never quite knew what owing money meant. Only once the master apparently presented a red loin cloth during Dasara festivals. Then on succeeding days he deducted twelve annas for the cloth he said he bought for Rupayya cheap. On the third day when Rupayya found that he got only four annas as his fare, he tightly bound the turban cloth to his head, went back to the master and with heaving chest and bulging neck, loudly demanded all the money the master robbed him of, all these years. Someone asked him, of how much he was robbed. He, as in his childhood days, blinked for some time and obstinately named an unimaginable figure. "Why, that much money will set me up as a Chettiar! You could buy 10 carts with that you pig, and you say I owe it to you. I pray God it were owed to me by some rich merchant. I would have got rid of the whole lot of you" growled the master. And amidst derisive pats on his back and mocking laughter from his fellow cartpullers who pulled his head

cloth in fun to pieces in the process, Rupayya clutched at his four anna bit firmly in his fist and walked away. That was perhaps the only occasion he got on the wrong side of his master. He was known to be a good servant.

Romance came to Rupayya when his skin in the space between the hip bones beneath his navel got hardened like shoe leather. That day in the hot sun they were pulling a long cart loaded with huge boxes of hardware. Rupayya was taking a turn at pushing the cart from behind, head pressed into the hollow of a turban pressed against the back beam of the cart. On a sudden the man pulling at the traces coughed repeatedly, the cart lurched forward and settled down on the front beam and Rupayya hanging on at the back to pull it down to level found himself with heels kicking in empty air. Periaswami at the traces had sat down head held between his palms and was bleeding through the nose and mouth. Within an hour he was dead. Rupayya pulling the cart away after getting a substitute, was scared. He did not know how scared he was till he came back home to the shelter of the pavement at midnight. The moonless dark night and clouds gathering as dark curds, threatened him with sudden death. He felt his blood pounding through the arteries in his head and instinctively drew near a small lamp burning in the shelter of a tin can on the pavement. In the light where all could see, with firm breasts peering up at him through a ragged breast cloth, slept the girl Angamma. He had seen her, yes he remembered, on a number of occasions selling food to rickshawpullers and something stirred in him. He forgot he was scared, swept away the perspiration from off his forehead, wiped his lips with the back of his hand and sat by her on his haunches. After a time he touched her and to his great surprise she opened her eyes and looked at him for a long time and said nothing. Rupayya gazed at her youthful limbs in the hazy light of the burning wick, flickering in the slow breeze that blew down the street, pulled out the money, twenty annas, he had in a knot at his waist, and said, "Look I earned that much in one day." She smiled at him and he patted her thigh. That night he slept with her behind a smoke-grimed sack-cloth which held them from view on a narrow pial jutting out on to the street from a ware house. She was his wife.

Next day when he returned for his afternoon siesta in the shade of a tree

on a pavement behind the high court, he found Angamma waiting for him with a food laden basket, her hair oiled and combed into a soft knot. Her red lips coloured with betel, parted in a smile for him. "Rupa, will you buy food from me," she said, "you know I will charge you nothing." He laughed uproariously and the very unbashful way she said it touched him, without his knowing why. He climbed the tree, it seemed it flowered for him that day, and plucked a bunch of golden yellow blossoms for Angamma. She in turn laughed at him putting the flowers crudely into her hair and serving him food. When he slept after having eaten his fill, she took his headcloth to the nearby pump and washed it for him first time since he began wearing it.

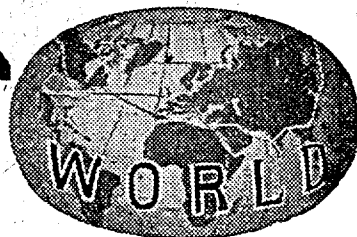
He lived with her and only once went to live in a low hut, built of wire mesh, rusted tin sheet in holes, and mud near the railway crossing in the Fort Area. The seventh night Angamma got a touch of fever and on the tenth she was down with small-pox and they took her away to the corporation hospital. Rupayya attributed this to living under shelter hid from the sky and close to the soil and grew scared and quitted the shelter. It was a pock marked Angamma who a year later died in child birth on the very pavement where he first made love to her. While she was in agony, Rupayya kept dancing on his feet, his ungainly muscular arms flapping, like the trimmed wings of a wild pigeon getting domesticated and striving to fly. She died in his bewilderment with the destitute aunt helping in her agony. After an hour of bawling when the destitute aunt settled down into hiccoughs of crying, Rupayya wept salt tears to the ground, silent tears that reminded him of the first night when he patted her thigh. And Angamma left him. Rupayya did his cartpulling as of yore but he seemed to bear a malice towards the world and never spoke with his fellow pullers. He sometimes used to get drunk but never rowdied and he took to opium. That was all that Angamma left him with.

Before he pulled that cart that hottest day of the year up the slant of the bridge where the crow sat listless on the Gangaravi tree, Rupayya had one experience of which whenever reminded, he spat out a gob of saliva on to the asphalt in evident satisfaction. This happened when that young woman, belonging to that rickshaw puller, got crushed between a lorry that was backing and the wall. The rickshaw-

pullers as a set mocked the cartpullers at sight of whom they turned up their chins. The cartpullers stuck out their chests in derision at sight of these human horses picking up their heels fast, dragging the sahebs. "Living fare, to pull it is shameful," said the cartpullers and treated the rickshawpullers with withering contempt. While the rickshawpullers looked on them as at a species of overgrown oxen and said the same on all occasions. There was a feud between these two sects carried on, on the city pavements. The cartpullers' womenfolk sold food at high prices to these cockney rickshaw-wallahs who made love to them at mid-day and the feud grew in proportion the year round. And such a rickshawpuller kept his woman on the same pavement as Rupayya slept on! They had a child who was dressed in knickers and shirt and had rolled-gold bangles on wrists and anklets. Rupayya spat whenever he passed this woman who did no work except cooking food for her man and caressing the child. On that day when the lorry backed up and crushed her, they took her to the hospital, Rupayya being on the spot to call the help of a policeman. Rupayya running after the lorry to the hospital remembered the child and picked him up and bore him on his shoulder to the hospital. In the hospital he gave evidence before the burly inspector who looked keenly at the child and at his bangles and anklets and said, "Gosh, they are gold." He said to Rupayya clutching at the child, "You villain will you rob the child of her gold ornaments" and he took him away from Rupayya. That night when the rickshaw puller returned, Rupayya told his story at great length to the husband who burst out in loud wailings and said "The child is not mine but I never knew the ornaments were of gold". Later on Rupayya learnt that the child was taken care of by the corporation in a sort of school for the delinquents. The rickshaw puller who informed him complained at the injustice and "they kept my gold" he cried. "Serve him right," thought Rupayya and spat a gob of saliva on to the melting asphalt with gleeful satisfaction. Though he congratulated himself, it was not for the good deed indirectly done in saving the child from perhaps the life of a cartpuller living on the pavements, but only at the agony of the rickshawpuller.

And at Rupayya running down the incline of the bridge the jet black crow on the Gangaravi tree half shut a derisive eye, blinking in its wisdom.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE



IT is ironical that Anglo-French differences regarding monetary policy should have followed so closely on the heels of Mr. Bevin's call for a Western Union. The need for economic co-operation between the nations of Europe has been evident ever since the end of the war. Mutual help was essential both in order to remedy the damages inflicted by war and to meet the new problems created by the loss or destruction of investments overseas belonging to the many imperialist Powers on the European continent. But little progress has been made in the direction of joint economic planning in Europe, though the need for it was further accentuated last year by Marshall's offer of American aid to European recovery. The prolonged and impressive deliberations at Paris of the sixteen nations participating in the Marshall Plan produced no machinery for continuous consultation. In August 1947 came the sudden announcement of Britain's decision to suspend the free convertibility of sterling into dollars. This step was taken without the prior approval of the countries that would be adversely affected. And now the French Government has taken similar 'crisis' decisions in disregard of British protests. Thus an economic basis for the proposed West European Union has yet to be found.

What has dictated the action of M. Schuman's Cabinet is the alarming growth of inflation in France with the consequent shrinkage of exports. A comparison of the prices of French goods with the exchange value of the franc during the last ten years will reveal the factors that have compelled the French Government to devalue the franc. In 1938 the franc stood at 176 to

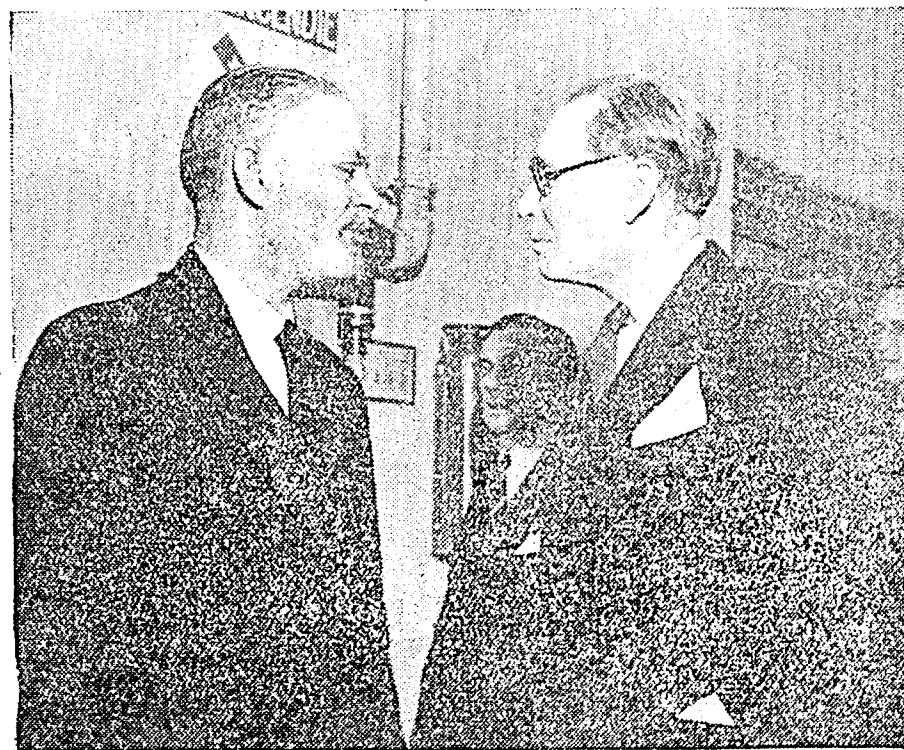
the pound sterling. Until January 26, 1948, when the devaluation became law, the exchange rate was 480 francs to the pound. But the general index of prices at present is estimated to be thirteen times what it was in 1938. Thus French exports were being offered at prices that were too high to be attractive to foreign buyers. Since France, like Britain, must export goods in order to find the foreign exchange needed for financing essential imports, something had to be done to make French exports competitive. Devaluation was the obvious solution. Hence the Government has now fixed the exchange rate at 864 francs to the pound. The dollar-franc rate has similarly been re-adjusted to stand at just above 214 francs to the dollar. French authorities calculate that, as a result of this large degree of devaluation, the purchasing power of all foreign currencies will be increased by 80 per cent as compared with the exchange rates that prevailed until January 26.

That there is a strong case for devaluation of the franc is conceded by Britain as well as the International Monetary Fund. The exchange rates originally determined have ceased to bear proper relation to the existing state of inflation in France. What the International Monetary Fund and Britain have protested against is the simultaneous decision of the French Government to create a free exchange market in gold and in certain hard currencies including the American dollar. French exporters will be required, under the proposed arrangement, to sell half their earnings of dollars, for instance, to the Government at the new, official rate, but they will be free to sell the other half to whatever rates they might

fetch in the free market. This means in practice that whoever has a hoard of hard currencies in France will be free to make a profit out of the difference between the 'free' and the official rates of exchange. The existence of such differing rates is not supposed to be permitted by the I.M.F. but there appears to be no intention on the part of administrators of the Fund to take any action against France for violating the terms of international agreements. Britain will be hit worst by the kind of unscrupulous transactions that will be possible in the legally permitted free exchange market of France. For instance, American traders will be able to buy sterling and other European currencies cheaply in Paris, instead of at the official rates in London. Such a process will inevitably bring about a devaluation of sterling and other currencies vis a vis the dollar. This

will be brought about even in the absence of any voluntary and "competitive devaluation" by other countries.

The attraction for the French of such an arrangement is, of course, that it will bring in goods that are in short supply. As Sydney Gampell points out, "The higher the free dollar rate goes in Paris, the bigger the inducement to Frenchmen to sell their illegal foreign assets (hoarded currency, etc.) to finance their country's imports. In Italy this system produced so large an amount of imports of many goods as to cause a slump in prices and a glut of supplies—which would be very welcome in France." But while the immediate result might be the encouragement of French foreign trade, devaluation and the creation of a free exchange market will provide no lasting solution of the



Sir Zafrullah Khan, leader of the Pakistan delegation to the Security Council of U.N.O. in conversation with Mr. Philip Noel-Baker, during the consideration of the Kashmir issue.

French economic crisis. For one thing, the prices of imports will go up in proportion to the fall in the prices of French exports and so the ordinary consumer in France will be no better off than he was. Devaluation is no solution to the problem of the rising cost of living. The internal value of the franc obviously needs quite as much strengthening as its foreign exchange value. In the absence of the stabilisation of prices and wages at a healthy level, the French Government's monetary policies, however adroit, will not lead to the industrial peace which that country desperately needs.

The nations of Western Europe cannot go on attempting to solve their problems at each other's expense. If the Western Union is to be anything more than a political war cry against Communism and a transparent device to induce America's confidence in European survival, an economic basis will soon have to be created for inter-European co-operation. The 'New Statesman and Nation' writes: "To imagine that Britain and France can, each in isolation, be saved by the Plans of Sir Stafford Cripps or M. Rene Mayer from an indefinite dependence on dollar aid, whose consequence would inevitably in the end be loss of economic and political independence, is a fatal illusion."

If the nations of Western Europe are to have any chance either of avoiding bankruptcy or of ensuring that any credits which may be forthcoming from the United States are used, as Socialists would use them, to lay the foundations for genuine independence and planned recovery, then they must work together, not in isolation." The forging of such unity is a stupendous task whose fulfilment looks hardly possible in the present state of polarisation of the Right and the Left and of hostility between the parties of the Left in each country in Europe.

We wrote in these columns during October last: "Brought into being as a result of sustained British patronage, occupying a position of strategic importance since its territories extend very close to the Soviet frontier, and ruled by a semi-feudal and anti-democratic clique whose political strength derives solely from the exploitation of religious fanaticism, Pakistan is marked out for the friendly attention of the Anglo-American group in the United Nations Organisation." The treatment of India's complaint against Pakistan by the Security Council hasn't disproved the expectation.



(With apologies to O. Goldsmith)

There in his thatched-roof hutment, skilled to rule,
The village school master taught his little school.
Scant was his dress, and scantier still his fees,
A paltry sum of twenty-five rupees.
His coat was torn, his dhoti quite unclean,
And half-starved days had made his body lean.
Well had the clever schoolboys learnt to trace
His life's disasters on his withering face.
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
His abject poverty was surely in fault.
In spite of odds, he showed his power of will,
For even though famished, he could struggle still.
With words of learned length and thund'ring sound,
He told the other schoolmasters gathered round
To fight for higher wages and the like
And issue threats of unconditional strike.
Full well the busy whisper circling round
Coveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
And the wondering villagers failed to interpret
How such a small man could carry out the threat.

"JUNIUS."

DEVALUATION OF THE FRANC

by "ECONOMICUS"

FRANCE is the 'key-country' in Western Europe. Its importance becomes all the more heightened when we see that it is in that country that the Leftist movement is strongest and the Government of the country, contrary to all standards of parliamentary democracy, excludes from the Cabinet the biggest group in the Legislature, namely, the Communist bloc. It is not hazardous therefore to suggest that as France goes, so goes Western Europe. Moreover, as a result of the Second World War, France emerges easily as one of the most horribly devastated countries and consequently, it is the efficiency with which any Government deals with the problem of economic reconstruction that determines its success or failure. What then should be the economic policy of that Government? This question has been differently answered. On the one hand, we have the Socialists and the Communists arguing vehemently for the most stringent controls, better incentives to production in the form of a regulated wage-level adjusted to the price-level and to accepted indices of production and, following from these, severe penalties for black-marketeers and other such anti-national elements. This policy is very similar to the policies pursued by the Eastern European democracies and so would bring France nearer to the Soviet Union and her allies. But within France, this policy would also mean greater State planning and greater control of foreign trade; it is also acknowledged on all hands that even with the utmost tightening of the belt, France, like Britain, cannot regenerate herself without external aid. And it is here that America comes into the picture and herein lies the immense significance of the Marshall Plan. All parties in France and, indeed, all the world over, are not against external aid as such but the conditions attached to such aid. The Marshall aid envisages ultimately a Western Europe

in which customs barriers disappear almost completely and private enterprise is given the greatest scope; they must also abide by the terms of the International Trade Charter which has been given only a half-hearted welcome even by liberals in almost every country except America because it so well suits her. It has also been made clear in so many words that any Government which includes Communists may not get the Marshall aid. On the other hand, the French Government is asked to take advantage of the Marshall Plan and take the necessary measures to encourage private enterprise, the success of which would seem to require the speedy removal of all controls and regulations. It is in these circumstances that the policy of the Rightist-dominated French Government has to be understood. It is caught between the horns of a dilemma—whether to adopt the policy of the Leftists which would mean going against American wishes and possibly foregoing American help or to take steps so that the return to a regime of free enterprise becomes as painless as possible, which would also mean certain American aid. The French Government seems to have chosen the latter alternative with its instinctive fear of Russia and her allies. The possible outcome seems to be dictatorship.

The present price-level of France compared with the pre-war price-level at 100 in 1937 is 1260. It follows that at the pre-war exchange rate, the franc will be highly overvalued, being completely out of correspondence with its internal purchasing power and unless imports are restricted most stringently, America will flood France with cheap imports; we experienced this phenomenon in this country last year. So if we assume that sooner or later international trade must be freed of all restrictions and that the exchange rate of the franc, like all other exchange rates under the

terms of the International Monetary Fund, must be fixed and not be freely variable, it is clear that devaluation is inevitable; the present official rate of 864 francs to the pound sterling is the result of the second act of devaluation since the war ended. Though the underlying economic policy and its political implications are extremely undesirable, the move is at least understandable, in the present French context. The objection of the I.M.F. and Britain, in particular, interested as she is in unifying Western Europe at least economically, is more to the establishment of a free market in hard currencies and gold than to the act of devaluation as such. This proposal of a free exchange market goes fundamentally against the ideal of the I.M.F., namely, fixed but flexible rates. In other words, while the I.M.F. does not allow freely varying exchange rates because of their harmful effects on trade, encouraging speculation to the extent of its becoming sheer gambling, it does not mean to adhere to exchange rates fixed for ever as under the gold standard and permits temporary variation in special circumstances and even a permanent change in the rate of exchange if the circumstances have also shown a permanent change or "a fundamental disequilibrium" as it is called. In the face of such a clear stand taken by the I.M.F., the French proposal, which has since become law in spite of the opposition of the Socialists and Britain, is an open breach of accepted principles.

What, then, is the motive of the French Government? This takes a little understanding. Clearly, the free market rate will depend primarily on the supply of and the demand for hard currencies, especially the dollar. But private traders can earn dollars only by exporting to America and other hard currency areas; devaluation is thus seen as a move to encourage French exports in spite of pressing internal shortages and this would naturally imply the relaxation of export controls. Secondly, the demand for dollars will come principally from French

importers and possibly from the French Government itself; from this point of view, devaluation must be accompanied by some relaxation of import controls; for it can only be understood as an antidote to the high profitability of importing from abroad on the basis of an over-valued franc. Moreover, whoever earns dollars has to surrender half of them to the French Government, getting francs at the official rate. This condition would appear to be laid down because of the expected high franc-rate of the dollar in the free market though initial indications seem to contradict that impression. Undoubtedly, it would lead to very undesirable forms of speculation, encouraged by the possibility of freer exchange transactions implied in the idea of a Western Customs Union. It has also been suggested that this is a move to secure possession of secret dollar reserves believed to be held by a number of traders. But these dollars will be spent in the open market only if it is profitable to do so; so, unless restrictions on the importing of those commodities on which these 'secret' dollars are being now spent are relaxed (and these imports if freely allowed may hinder French recovery), there seems to be little reason to expect that these hoards will come out into the open. Thus the French Government's action can be understood: firstly, as one of a series of transition measures designed ultimately to usher in an unregulated system of foreign trading as painlessly as possible and to get at as many dollars and other hard currency-units as possible. It is too early to say whether the French Government will succeed at least in the second objective while the first objective will quite definitely mean economic instability and in its wake industrial strife.

This brings us to the question of the Rupee. It is curious that while almost everyone including the National Planning Committee and the Congress Working Committee talks of economic planning, the actual measures taken by the Government in our country seem to indicate a

disinclination to face the consequences of a planned programme of large-scale State investment. It is recognised by every economist that economic planning in India cannot be financed completely by taxation and loans and that inflation must be resorted to to some extent. In a backward economy that would not show proportionally increasing output in response to monetary expansion; inflationary financing would clearly mean a fast-rising price-level. Thus economic planning, especially in India, implies an efficient system of controls, the most important of them being those over food and cloth. But these have been already abandoned and the control administration is being rapidly wound up. Are we returning to private enterprise and giving up planning? That would spell ruin. In the field of foreign trade, last year our import restrictions were liberally relaxed, probably as a result of pressure brought to bear upon our Commerce Minister. We wasted precious dollars on silly 'comics' and large quantities of waste paper; this year again we have re-imposed these controls.

This sort of uncertainty in our policies must end soon. In any case, by our acceptance of the terms of the I.M.F. and of the I.T.O., we stand committed to the removal of exchange and import controls within three or four years from now. Such a policy would require a reconsideration of the question whether the rupee is over-valued or not; and there seems to be little doubt that it is, in view of the fact that financing planning by currency expansion would send up the price-level still higher. It is to be hoped that the Dominion Cabinet will soon reconsider their economic policy as a whole, keeping in mind the accepted view that planning alone and that too very large-scale planning at that, will mean rising standards of living in this country. Of course it is absurd to imagine that the implications of economic planning would ever be understood by the Provincial Government. Economic Adviser or no Economic Adviser, the present regime cannot be expected to do anything that goes against the vested interests. Our only hope is an able, efficient and progressive Centre.

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BURMA—A RETROSPECT

by V.P.K. NAMBIAR, M.A., B.L.

ON the 4th January 1948, Burma slipped out of the British Commonwealth as a full-fledged Republic, being the first among the British possessions in the Eastern Hemisphere to declare her independence. It was in 1886 when Lord Randolph Churchill was the Secretary of State for India that Burma was annexed to British India after a strenuous campaign against King Thilaw who was deposed. In 1897 Upper Burma and Lower Burma were constituted into a single province under a Lieutenant-Governor, and in 1921 the Montford Reforms were extended to Burma which became a pucca Governor's province like the rest of the Indian provinces in the matter of Governmental machinery and administration. The Montford Reforms had dimly visualised the future constitution of India to be a federal union of all the provinces, and Burma in those years had no serious idea of separating from India.

But Burma had the misfortune to have as its Governors a succession of sundried bureaucrats of the steel frame who had distinguished themselves as reactionary Members of the Viceroy's Council in India, and had no faith in democratic government or representative institutions. A large number of Indians had settled down in Burma, and more were migrating every year and all had made Burma their home. The Indians who so migrated were imbued with notions of political liberty, and their exile from the motherland only tended to cement the bond between them and the Burmese. The ordinary Burman was economically backward, and the enterprise of the South Indian Chettiars who had flocked there in plenty with their wealth, gave Indians a position of influence among the Burmese.

The increased influx of Indians and the great wave of political awakening among the indigenous Burmese swept even that part of

the continent which had so far served as a backwater to the political storm in India. The European in Burma became more and more apprehensive. He had expected that Burma, rich in mineral resources, oil, petroleum, rice and other products could profitably be exploited as a colony where the westerner could rule as in South Africa. 'Divide and rule' was the favourite weapon which Britain had successfully used in India and elsewhere and she decided to try it in Burma too. Sir Charles Jones who was Governor of Burma (1927-32) started a political crusade against Indians, and by his utterances in season and out of season, he instilled a fear-complex in the mind of the Burman that his homeland would soon be swallowed up by India on one side and China on the other. The only alternative political future was separation from India. In 1928 when the Simon Commission was appointed to recommend the future constitution of India, Sir Charles put the suggestion to them, who plumped for it, that Burma should be separated from India. Due to the economic and political unrest in Burma in those years (1929-32) the Burmese people were themselves divided as to whether the future of Burma was to be linked up with India or was to be outside it. On the resolution expressly moved by the Government in December 1932 in the Burma Legislative Council as to whether Burma should separate from India or not, the members failed to arrive at any definite conclusion or to give a clear lead. But the British Government in their review of the debate stated that though the voting was inconclusive, the discussion was predominantly in favour of separation.

During the Second Round Table Conference in 1932 and later before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament in 1933, the Burmese delegates were inclined to join the Indian Federation but wanted a reservation to opt out of the Federa-

tion at any time, if Burma felt it to be disadvantageous to remain in it. That was a dangerous concession to grant at the inception of a Federation. The claim to walk out in future was vigorously resisted by the late Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri and others. Finally at the Round Table Conference, it was decided that Burma should be separated from India.

Meanwhile Sir Charles Jones had retired and Sir Hugh Stephenson had succeeded him in December 1932. He had been the Governor of Bihar and Bengal for a time and unlike his predecessor he felt the future of Burma lay with India. Sir Hugh's supposed leanings against separation found their reaction in his premature recall in 1936 and the arrival of Sir Archibald Cochrane as the new Governor to implement the policy of separation. On 1st April 1937 with the inauguration of provincial autonomy, Burma was separated from India, and in January of that year Lord Linlithgow as the last Viceroy and Governor-General of United India and Burma paid his farewell visit to the country. Under the Government of India Act 1935, Burma was given a new constitution more or less on the lines of the provincial constitution in India. But the Reforms were hedged in with several restrictions on the popular ministry and wide powers were given to the Governor who could have his own Financial Adviser to advise him in financial matters. A large section of the Burmese people were disappointed with the new Reforms and the years that followed constitute a history of unstable ministries moving about the political chessboard, and a sense of lawless discontent enveloping the masses.

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 changed the situation rapidly. As the war progressed and a possible conflagration in the Pacific was more and more imminent and Japan's entry certain, Burma assumed a strategic importance as a possible springboard. The mission to England in 1941 of the then Premier U Saw for the grant of

self-government to Burma proved abortive—notwithstanding the famous Burmese cheroots which he carried for Mr. Churchill as a rare delicacy. The British Premier turned down the request and U Saw returned a disappointed man and was ultimately detained in Uganda for his Japanese leanings. Now he is under sentence of death for the murder of Aung San.

On December 7, 1941 the Japs invaded Malaya. Singapore fell on February 16, 1942 and in the great victorious sweep of Japan that followed, Burma was overrun by May 1942. Aung San as the leader of the Burmese allied with Japan but when the tide turned, he joined forces with Britain to drive out the Japanese who were worse imperialists than the British. In April 1945 Burma was fully reconquered by Britain; on August 7, 1945 came the V-J Day and in October following civil Government was restored in Burma. The old Governor Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith whose term of office had been extended, announced that the new government of Burma was to be by the Governor and an Executive Council of 12 members selected from the leading political parties. However there was split and division among the parties who were unable to work as a composite cabinet. Following the Cabinet Mission's visit to India in May 1946 it was declared by the British Government that Burma was to have a Constituent Assembly to draw up its constitution. On August 1946 Sir Hugh Rance replaced Sir Reginald as Governor. On June 18, 1947 the Constituent Assembly unanimously resolved to proclaim Burma as an independent sovereign Republic and the resolution was moved by Major-General Aung San, the Deputy Chairman of the Executive Council. On June 23, 1947 a Burmese Goodwill Mission visited Britain and was able to arrive at a large measure of political settlement with Britain. Soon after, in July, Aung San and some of his colleagues were murdered and in August a new Executive Council was formed and Anglo-Burmese relations were entrusted to the respective High Commissioners in London and

Rangoon. With Thakin Nu as Premier the new Government of Burma came into existence on the 4th January 1948 when the Burmese elected the President of the Republic and the last European Governor of Burma Sir High Rance sailed home. Though Burma has blossomed into a sovereign Republic it has several problems confronting it. The most important is perhaps to check the great wave of crime, lawlessness and political gangsterism that has marred the political life of the country. Like Lancas-

trian England, it should not be said that in Burma constitutional progress has outrun administrative order, and the Burmese Government have to keep a vigil to enforce law and order in the land. Also, Burma was the battlefield for two devastating campaigns in the last war. Reconstruction is a heavy task but if the Burmese can show the same tenacity and the "will to win," which ultimately won them the Republic, then Burma will take a high place in the new Asia.

NEED FOR INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SURVEY

by I. K. EZHUTHACHAN

INTENSIFIED production is essential not in the industrial field only but in the agricultural field also. An industrial and agricultural survey should precede the production drive in India. Production, to be effective, must result from scientific planning and scientific planning has, perforce, to proceed on ascertained facts and statistics. That India lacks statistics, full and relevant, in both spheres is a notorious fact.

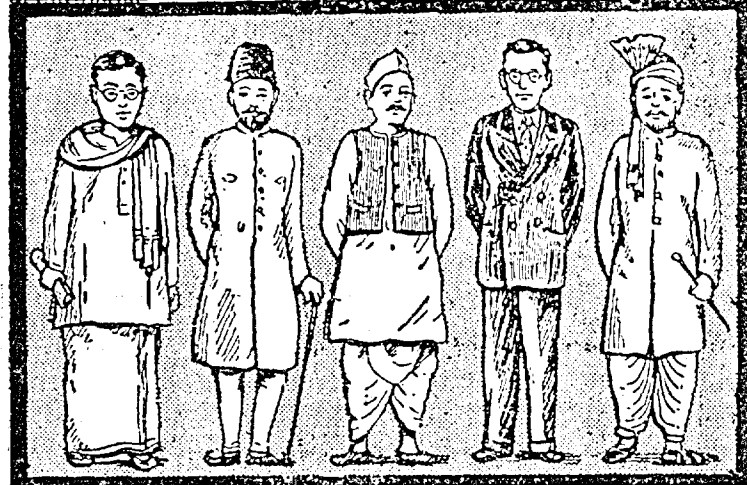
The decision of the recent Industries Conference in New Delhi for the rapid industrialisation of the country constitutes undoubtedly the biggest hope of Free India; for the newly acquired freedom can be real only if it raises the standard of life of the common man and ensures the corporate national life against aggressive designs of others. Both these purposes can be served only by largescale industrialisation.

Agriculture in India has suffered the neglect of centuries. The country is now familiar with the heroics of the war-time "Grow-More-Food" campaign which has presented the riddle of increased acreage under cultivation with reduced output. None would seriously contend that the food campaign has increased production any more than the conventional fashionable animal and flower shows have improved the fauna and flora of the land.

That agriculture has not ranked with industry in recent high level confabulations is, perhaps, due to the several irrigation projects in the offing which, on materialisation, it is anticipated, would inaugurate plenty or at least tolerable self-sufficiency in food. The unravelling of our food potential through a survey would serve to step up agricultural production. Planning for production in the industrial field, to day and for the future, is not merely essential but indispensable. Production has to aim not only at output but serve also the wider social purpose which includes national, regional, strategic and ideological considerations.

The proposed survey need not arrest or even delay plans and proposals already formulated. The field is vast and ready enterprises can as well go ahead. The survey would help considerably the formulation of proposals for the long term plan of production on both fronts and incidentally a healthy co-ordination of the total national economy. A combined industrial and agricultural production drive is what Free India stands in need of and scientific and planned production can be built up only on facts collected through a properly conducted survey.

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THOUGHTS ON THE ASSASSINATION

by M. K.

THERE was a discussion going on around the mighty Julius as to which type of death was the most desirable. Caesar himself was very busy attending to his work. Somebody asked him: "What type of death would you choose?" "A sudden one", was the terse answer and the master builder was immersed in his work again. "From sudden death O Lord! Save us", was a part of the Lord's Prayer which Lawrence of Arabia studiously avoided. The assassination of Mahatmaji only underlines the fact that those who feel that they are the Chosen of God very often have to pay for that belief with their lives. The Son of God was tortured to death on the Cross. And Abraham Lincoln, who once wrote to a friend as follows, was shot dead by a brooding Booth: "I know that there is a God and that he hates injustice and slavery. I am nothing but truth is everything. I know that I am right because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand and Christ, and reason, say the same thing. I may not see the end but it will come and I shall be vindicated". Lincoln was referring to the slave question and the vital need for preserving the union of the American states but the words apply with a rare appropriateness to our beloved and revered Mahatmaji and his mission in life. His 'Inner Voice', the subject of laughter for unbelievers, has led him inexorably to be assassinated just as survey as Jean d'Arc's voices led her to the stake. The earth is no place for Saints; for them a heaven is always ready.

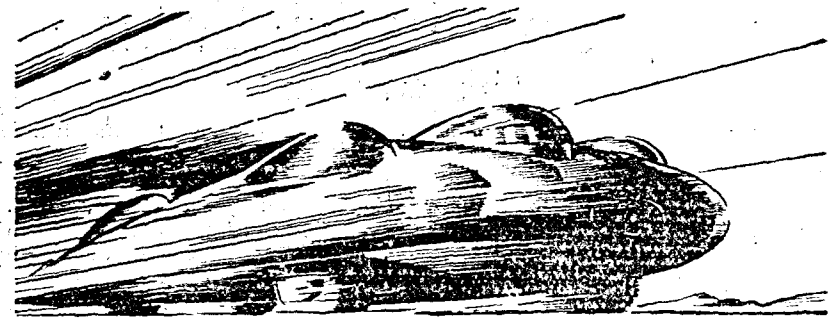
The aptest comment I heard on the murder of Mahatmaji was made by a bureaucrat. Said he, shortly: "Under Sec. 93 rule Gandhiji would never have been permitted to be murdered". At the height of the

Mahaduragraha in Nagpur Gandhiji visited the city and there was tall talk among the misguided Harijans of killing the Mahatma if possible; but behind every duragrahi was a C.I.D. man in mufti who would certainly have prevented any attempted assassination. It is no fanatic Muslim who shot down our Mahatma. The Sikhs who have suffered most by the partition of the country, have had no hand in his death. It was left to Hinduism, for which he has toiled and slaved so much to remove from its escutcheon the blot of untouchability, to produce a man who would dare to kill the Father of the Nation. The British put the Mahatma in prison and Linlithgow was even willing to let him starve to death if necessary but the British would never have permitted him to be murdered. Only a few days ago a grenade was thrown at Gandhiji and press reports had it that the man who threw it was one of a gang. There is no use quoting Gandhiji against himself; he had often avowed his utter fearlessness and absolute disregard of death. On many occasions he said that even if one person did not want him to live he could kill him. For, Gandhiji had a profound sense of his own mission in life. It was God's will that he should do a certain job of work. As long as God wanted him to do it no harm would happen to him; when God had no more use for the Gandhian instrument no power on earth was going to protect him. Gandhiji disliked the very idea of being guarded; but our Government in Delhi should have disregarded his wishes in this respect. Disregarding Gandhiji's wishes is not a thing unknown to Congressmen and Congress administrations. He himself never valued his life overmuch but the loss to the nation is irreparable. When Gandhiji undertook a tour of Noakhali and other portions of East Bengal, the

Muslims were none too friendly to him. The Government of the province had shown itself incapable of preserving law and order but yet Shaheed Suhrawardy protected the precious life carefully. And it was left to an Indian Government to allow the great man to be slain in the very capital of India. No excuse can be made and the nation will accept no excuse. We have always been hearing of a thorough breakdown of administration in our land; the killing of Gandhiji proves to the hilt how desperate are our straits. We can only hope that at least in the future the Government will be more careful in protecting the precious lives of our tried and veteran leaders; we cannot afford to lose a Patel or a Nehru after a Gandhiji. Now that the appeal has been made from the civilised ballot box to the brutal bullet one never knows where it will all end. Chaos is often a necessary concomitant of new found liberty as we in Asia are now learning to our cost.

The bitterness which Gandhiji's last, ill-advised fast bred in India, especially in Eastern Punjab and elsewhere where Hinduism wears a militant aspect now-a-days, was intense. Again and again it was said that by his fast he had blackened our faces in the eyes of the world. Politically there was a great deal of opposition in the nation to the referring of the Kashmir issue to the U.N.O. The payment of the fifty crores of rupees to Pakistan was considered a national humiliation. Having taken the stand that the money would not be paid to Pakistan, it was felt by many genuine Indian patriots that the transfer of the money as a consequence of Gandhiji's fast was an act of weakness. In practical politics it is not always possible to guide a nation's conduct purely by moral standards to the complete exclusion of expediency. Gandhiji's fast undid much of the splendid work which the Sardar had been doing in consolidating the position of the Union Government and strengthening its hands. It was an open secret that Mr. Patel disapproved violently of

Gandhiji's last fast, which would do irretrievable harm to the Union Government and to the Hindus. Secularism is very good indeed; but the subjection of Hindu hopes and aspirations to the appeasement of Pakistan and the alleviation of Indian Muslim fears as a consistent policy created bitterness of an unfathomed quality. To expect the Hindus to forget the atrocities wrought upon their coreligionists in the Punjab, in Sind and in the Frontier Province was too much. There were tales told in the Indian bazaars of Hindu children being sold for four or five annas in the markets of North-Western Pakistan. The rape and abduction of Hindu and Sikh women had created a grief and anger which have spread far beyond the borders of the provinces where the communal killings took place. After the end of the fast there came the shocking news of the Gujrat killing. To the refugees, and those Hindus who sympathised with them deeply, it was a mockery of justice to see the mosques in Delhi and elsewhere cleared by force of the refugees who had taken shelter therein. One must remember that these self-same refugees had lost women, children, money and houses in what had been their homes for countless years. The people were eager and anxious to go a very great length towards appeasing Pakistan and assuaging the fears of the Muslims but Pakistan showed no sign of appreciating the repeated gestures made by the Indian Government in deference to Gandhiji's wishes. Instead, Pakistan behaved even as Hitler's Germany did when poor Chamberlain tried to trust Hitler. The Pakistan delegate in the U.N.O. had the cheek to get up in the assembly of the nations and accuse our nation of genocide! Barefaced lying could go no farther. In dealing with Mr. Jinnah and his myrmidons and Mr. Jinnah's new state, Gandhiji's moral values have always been a severe handicap. As the 'Kumarasambhava' has it: The evil person tones down only when you return evil for evil. For being too good a man Gandhiji has paid with his life.



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A TEACHER'S TRAVAIL

by SRIKANTESWARA

I REQUEST you to publish the following in your valuable weekly. I belong to the cursed profession of which I have penned a few lines. You say in your paper that letters should be typewritten but I am not ashamed to tell you that I can neither get at a typewriter nor can I pay for its being typed. I cannot even afford decent paper to write on. It is with great difficulty that I can spend even on postage to send this letter to you. It is the depth of feeling and suffering in my heart that has impelled me to write this. I may not have expressed all I wanted to in the proper form or language but you can very well gauge that it is the heart that is speaking. If you can give me the hospitality of your columns and publish this letter you will be doing immense service to the lakhs and lakhs of suffering humanity.

Recently there was a news item in the daily Press that a Kurnool teacher committed suicide. The reason given by him in the letters left behind was that he was disgusted with life. Every teacher, everyone who knows something about the living conditions of a teacher, understands what he meant by the words "disgusted with life." There is every reason for teachers to be disgusted with life under the present circumstances. The particular teacher represents only one of the lakhs and lakhs of teachers who are likewise placed in life, but who do not have the courage (or cowardice) to quit the world.

Our leaders are never tired of proclaiming from the house-tops that teachers are charged with the duty of training the citizens of Free India. But how can one expect teachers to discharge their duties properly without first overcoming

the demon of poverty and hunger? It will be sheer fraud to say that teachers are doing this duty properly with their present scale of salaries. In addition to the low scales prevailing, the working conditions in most institutions are highly scandalous. I wonder how many of the teachers have one square meal a day.

Teachers fondly hoped for a National Government and it has come. It is doing everything except bettering the conditions of the members of this Cinderella of the professions. And now comes the appeal of Maulana Azad for teachers to work on salaries ranging from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50. It looks as though there is no future for the teachers. The pittance that they draw is driving them to desperation and they are cursing the day they chose to become teachers.

It has now been established beyond all doubt, (in spite of the sweet words that are thrown at the teachers from time to time about high thinking and plain living) that the persons at the helm of affairs are utterly callous to the needs of the suffering teachers. They are out to please only the 'haves' and the 'have nots' are being driven to the wall. Only the other day the Sardar spoke of enhancing the compensation to the zamindars on the plea that it is robbery to deprive them of their fair price. True. "It always rains in the ocean." This one instance is enough to show that "our Government" is out to satisfy and keep the 'haves' alone in good humour.

My appeal to the younger generation is that they should not ever dream of becoming members of the teaching profession until circumstances radically alter. Those who are already in it have to continue as they have no other alternative.

THE NEED FOR AN INDIAN ACADEMY OF LETTERS

by D. V. RAMA RAO, M.A., LL.B.

EXCEPTING the works of a few Bengali authors, modern Indian literature can hardly be said to be an influencing factor in world thought or literature. It is just possible that the works of several Indian authors deserve to be included in the best world literature. But there is little scope for the outside world to have any idea about the literary trends and attainments in our country. Indeed, even in our own country, but for an occasional translation or review appearing in some journal published in English, language groups for the most part continue to be strangers to each other's literatures. Thus, for instance, few people outside Kerala have any idea about modern Kerala literature. The Kerala poet, Vallathol has become well-known outside Kerala chiefly as the reviver of the classical art of Kathakali, but not perhaps through any knowledge of his poetic genius. The same is true of the Tamil poet, Bharati whose name has become familiar outside Tamilnad largely because of the recent grand scale memorial celebrations at Ettayapuram. Non-Tamilians, however, have better opportunities to appreciate the literary talents of one like Venkata Ramani because some of his works have been translated into English and some Indian languages. Similarly few non-Andhras have any idea about the literary attainments of such as Guruzada Apparao, author of the famous play *Kanya-sulkam*, or Ch. Lakshminarasimha Kavi or the later writers of *Sahiti Samiti* while Veeresalingam is known more for his social reform activities than for his fine literary output. The same is true of other Indian literatures.

Then, too, as K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar points out in his book *Literature And Authorship in India*, "There are no reliable or comprehensive histories of most of the

Indian literatures even in the respective Indian languages. If there are hardly any good histories of Tamil literature in that very language, it goes without saying that there are in Tamil no histories of other Indian literatures at all." Nothing, perhaps, better illustrates this than the slight mistake the author of the book above referred to himself makes on page 34 with regard to modern Andhra literature when he mentions Satyanarayana as the author of the novel *Malla Palli*. It may be noted that the name of the novel is *Mala Palli* meaning *Harijan Hamlet* and the author is the Guntur barrister, W. Lakshminarayana (who with his wife founded the *Sarada Niketan*) and not Satyanarayana. It may be mentioned, however, that V. Satyanarayana is the author of equally well merited but more classical works. In the present state of things when reliable books are wanting such mistakes are inevitable.

Then, also, there is little of critical estimation or appreciation. It is not uncommon to find in the Indian language journals, articles of high literary standard along with cheap trash unworthy to be included in literature. While we have cut ourselves adrift from the classical ancient traditions we have yet to establish new literary traditions and worthy standards without which it would be practically impossible either to properly evaluate our literatures or to enable them to occupy a place in world literature. Both in the matter of correct appreciation and discerning encouragement of worthy literary talent, a national academy on sound lines can be of great help. Besides serving as a synthesising and guiding body it can also promote inter-provincial as well as inter-national cultural contacts. By a periodical and systematic review of the indi-

Don't speak ill of the Twentieth Century. We're not half way through it yet and we've already had two World Peaces.—
NEW ZEALAND WEEKLY NEWS.

genous literatures and, perhaps, literatures of other countries too, it could facilitate not only the best works of a province being translated into other provincial languages, but it could also facilitate the rendering into English and other foreign languages the best works of the country as a whole, besides rendering into the Indian languages the best works of non-Indian world literature. It can also foster the healthy, systematic and wholesome growth of the Indian languages.

The academy should be so constituted as to be the premier cultural association in the country reflecting and representing the best cultural and literary talent of the nation. It would be desirable to associate not only the universities but also the recognised *Parishads* such as the *Hindi Sahitya Sammelan* and cultural institutions such as Viswa Bharati in Bengal, the Adyar Culture Centre in Madras, the Bhandarkar Institute of Poona and the P.E.N. Centre of Bombay, with the academy.

Whether there should be a single academy of arts and letters or separate academies requires to be considered. But that an academy of letters is an urgent necessity can hardly be gainsaid. In this connection a study of the well-known academies functioning in countries like France and America as well as the Royal Societies in England would naturally prove of immense benefit. Whether the proposed academy should be in the nature of a federal body with constituent linguistic units or a central association with provincial branches has also to be considered. It should be noted, however, that while both the Central and the Provincial Governments may be expected to provide adequate help, financially and otherwise, the academy should be so constituted as to be free from all governmental and political domina-

tion. This is of fundamental importance, as otherwise the academy might be in danger of becoming the handmaid of political opportunism. It is also desirable that the academy should function as a guiding body rather than as a dogmatic authority, for it is by its work and worth that it should come to be looked up to as the premier cultural association and not by any imposed constitutional authority. It may not be forgotten that in the long run the utility of cultural bodies often tends to be in proportion to their freedom from all authoritarian control.

The institution of literary awards, as proposed by the Madras Government, whether it be for literary art or scholarship, could be greatly facilitated if it could be done in consultation with a duly constituted academy. It may also be suggested that, while the academy may be located in some central place, preferably with cultural traditions, with a first class library of its own and well equipped staff, it may hold its periodical sittings in different provinces.

It is a happy sign that besides various journals several eminent persons including Dr. J. H. Cousins, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Sardar K. M. Panikkar and Dr. G. S. Mahajani have been evincing keen interest in the starting of an Indian academy of letters. The name of D. Visveswara Rao of Andhra, to whose persistent and painstaking enthusiasm in this cause Prof. B. S. Mathur refers in an article contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari* (Oct. 1946) deserves to be mentioned in this connection.

It is to be hoped that the leading figures in the cultural and intellectual spheres in our country would spare no efforts to bring into existence before long a duly constituted national academy worthy of our traditions.

"With the single exception of Homer, there is no eminent writer, not even Sir Walter Scott, whom I can despise so entirely as I despise Shakespeare when I measure my mind against his."
—G.B.S.

WORLD'S HOMAGE TO THE MAHATMA

Following are some of the tributes paid to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi:

U. S. A.

President Truman: Gandhi was a great Indian nationalist, but at the same time was a leader of international stature. As a teacher and leader his influence made itself felt not only in India but everywhere in the world. Another giant among men has fallen in the cause of brotherhood and peace.

Alben Barkley, Senate Democratic leader: I regard the assassination as a great international tragedy. Notwithstanding the great sorrows this will cause the world I sincerely hope it will not retard the peace of India and the world.

Pearl Buck: The death of Gandhi by violence struck a blow not only to India's rising prestige in the west but to the whole cause of freedom of people. Today the enemies of this cause rejoice while others mourn the passing of one of the greatest men of human history.

M. Fernand van Langenhove, President of the Security Council: Mr. Gandhi set to the world a great example of absolute devotion to the most noble ideals. The far-reaching effect of his life and teaching will continue despite his death. All those in his country as well as in the rest of the world who remain faithful to his memory will go on spreading his ideals of non-violence and understanding on which the United Nations is founded.

Byron Price, the Acting Secretary-General of UNO: The tragic death of Mahatma Gandhi is an irretrievable loss to mankind, particularly at a time when the world is in such need of spiritual leadership to surmount grave problems besetting peoples.

England

His Majesty the King: The Queen and I are deeply shocked by the news of the death of Mr. Gandhi. Will you please convey to the people of India our sincere sympathy in the irreparable loss which they, and indeed mankind, have suffered.

Prime Minister Clement Attlee: Mahatma Gandhi was one of the outstanding figures in the world today, but he seemed to belong to a different period of history. His moral and spiritual leadership have been an inspiring example in a distracted and troubled age. The loss of his unique personality will be received with sorrow not only in this country but in all parts of the world.

Lord Listowel: Mahatma Gandhi has been the outstanding figure in the struggle for peace in the present generation. His loss will be felt everywhere.

Lord Halifax: There can be few men in all history who, by personal character and example, have been able so deeply to influence the thought of their generation.

Sir Stafford Cripps: The assassination of Mr. Gandhi is a tragedy of the deepest intensity for India and the world.

Philippines

President Manuel Roxas: The tragedy has removed from the world one of the greatest men who ever lived. Gandhi was one of the foremost champions of human freedom of our age.

Vice-President Elpidio Quirino: The death of Gandhi is a loss to the world of its greatest spiritual leader.

France

Premier Schuman: In the person of Mahatma Gandhi, the Assembly honours a friend of France, a patriot and above all a thinker whose example we hope will show the world that love is stronger than hate.

Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault: The life, work and the enlightenment of the distinguished victim are to mankind a gift that will last for ever.

Australia

Prime Minister, Joseph B. Chifley: Mr. Gandhi will be remembered in Australia as a man who worked for the good of humanity and the ways of peace.

China

Dr. Hollington Tong, Director of Chinese Information Department: A great spiritual leader has been taken from us. The world can ill spare him. Gandhi was the architect of India's freedom. Without his heroic leadership and sacrifice the country would still be far from its goal.

Burma

Foreign Minister U Tin Tut: All Burma mourns with India the loss of a great Indian hero and saint.

Indonesia

Republican Premier, Mohamed Hatta: We mourn Gandhi's loss as our own.

Sir Hubertus Van Mook: The whole world has become poorer. Gandhi's influence will outlive all the violence and animosity of mankind blinded by war.

Ceylon

Prime Minister Senanayake: I am too shocked to be able to think what result this tragedy will have not only on India but the whole world.

Minister of Home Affairs, Sir Oliver Goonatilleke: This is an unthinkable tragedy not only to India but to the whole world.

Ireland

Premier Eamon DeValera: The Indian people are bereaved to-night and we grieve with them. They have lost a leader who brought them to their present freedom. Our prayer is that the sacrifice of his life by which he gave to his country this last full measure of his devotion will bring to the Indian people that brotherly peace which was so dear to him.

South Africa

South Africa Premier, General Smuts: A prince among men has passed away.

Argentina

Dr. Jose Arce: Mr. Gandhi was without doubt one of the great leaders of his time. He proved by his life and preaching the force and power of the spirit.

Egypt

King Farouk: The East has lost a patriot and the world and humanity one of their greatest figures.

Egyptian Premier, Nokrashi Pasha: Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest men the world has ever seen, for he always worked towards uplifting the lot of his people.

Iraq

Kamil Chandroht, leader of the National Democratic Party: I regard the Mahatma as one of the greatest men who have ever lived. His death is not a loss to India alone but to the world. India has lost her greatest history builder and the world has lost one of the great humanitarians who has continuously fought evil and has done his utmost for peace.

Pakistan

Governor-General, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Whatever our political differences he was one of the greatest men produced by the Hindu community and a leader who commanded their universal confidence and respect.

I wish to express my deep sorrow and sincerely sympathise with the great Hindu

community and his family in their bereavement at this momentous historic and critical juncture so soon after the birth of freedom for Hindustan and Pakistan.

The loss to the Dominion of India is irreparable.

Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan: Gandhi was a great figure of our times and was working unceasingly to bring back sanity to the people and to establish communal harmony. His loss will be felt and mourned by all.

It is a strange irony of fate that a man who had been preaching all his life the doctrine of non-violence should himself be made the tragic target of violence.

Revenue Minister, Kazi Fazlullah: Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest man in the world.

Mohammad Yusuf, convener of the Convention of Socialist Party of Pakistan: The unfortunate millions of Indian Muslims have lost their protector. Mahatma Gandhi was the best friend of Pakistan.

THE GRAMMAR OF GOOD GOVERNMENT

by S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE apophthegm that good government is no substitute for self-government, might have served us well enough in wresting Swaraj from a foreign Government, if not to condone serious shortcomings of our own in some spheres. But it is high time that self-government really strives to become good government. Government should be not merely of the people and by the people, but for the people as well. That indeed is the meaning of a socialistic State for which our Education Minister yearned the other day at the Coimbatore Tamil Nadu Congress Convention. Elimination of poverty and disease, full and adequate employment for all, equitable distribution of wealth and of the incidence of taxation, ample educational facilities without discrimination for all classes of population, cheap and speedy justice and an economic yet efficient running of the governmental machinery manned by an able, incorruptible, courteous and independent set of people—these ought to receive immediate attention.

Obviously the most disquieting feature of the present Government of Madras is the parlous state of its finances. The expenditure is not keeping pace with the income, the lion's share of which is consumed by the salary bill and food subsidies; and the position is likely to get worse with the introduction of total prohibition. The need for augmenting provincial revenues has become imperative. At present the only source of income that is tapped off and on is the sales tax, but that cannot suffice for long. A thorough overhaul of the fiscal system is long overdue. As it is, the existing mode of taxation spares the rich and hurts the poor. A poor agriculturist owning but an acre of wet land has still to pay land revenue, which in the depression years might swallow up his entire holding, but salaried employees with an annual in-

come of Rs. 2,000 and less are exempt from income tax. There is a minimum exemption limit even for the sales tax but none at all for the agriculturist. Even amongst agriculturists, people who nowadays make tons of money by the sale of commercial crops like sugar, jaggery, chillies, red gram, cocoanuts, etc., and horticulturists who carry on a roaring business in fruits, oranges, and vegetables, and large-scale dealers in milk and milk products are left scotfree. The only method to remedy the glaring inequality, and incidentally to fill the coffers of the Government, is to abolish the land revenue system altogether and substitute in its stead a graded system of income tax leviable on all kinds of income howsoever gained, exempting people with an annual income of, say, less than Rs. 1,000. The essence of a socialistic State is that everyone should bear the burden as well as the benefit of the administration, and taxation too ought to proceed on that footing. One direct result of this will be the scrapping of the very costly and cumbersome revenue administration, the interminable revenue accounts and the huge army of revenue officials from the village Karnam to the Revenue Board member. Administratively it seems to cost less to run an income-tax machinery than the land revenue administration. Furthermore our country is gradually getting industrialised and land revenue cannot long remain the main head of income.

The question of re-imposing the salt tax should merit active consideration. Its abolition was dictated solely by sentiment and salt has not become any the cheaper on that account. The argument that it forms part of the poor man's food loses all its force when it is realised that even his food does not escape taxation. At any rate, provinces

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with a deficit budget ought to be permitted to re-impose this tax.

Primary education must be compulsory but why should it be free to children of even well-to-do people, especially in urban areas? Why cannot the system of charging fees for hospital treatment from people exceeding a certain income be adopted in regard to primary education as well? Similar considerations apply to the grant of scholarships and fee concessions to "backward communities" and in the case of medical education to girl students. In all cases people who can pay should be made to pay.

Nationalisation of key services and industries has often been put forward as a ready solution for financial ills but it is wise to go cautiously in that direction. Industries are still in the nascent stage and it may be too early to assess which of them will have a survival value. Further, until the present governmental machinery is scrapped and remodelled on efficient, economic and truly businesslike lines, nationalisation may not merely lower efficiency (as is alleged in the case of Madras Telephones) but may prove too onerous for the Government itself. Some key services, however, stand in immediate need of nationalisation not merely for augmenting the finances but in the best interests of the vast masses of the population. Nationalisation of banking is urgently called for, especially to protect the interests of the large body of depositors and shareholders to whom the liquidation of

a bank has been a major, and in recent years a somewhat recurring, calamity. This is applicable to insurance business also and people will stand to gain enormously if it is run by the State. In these matters, the Government will not be undertaking anything new or foreign to its normal routine. The Government now maintains a provident fund for all its employees and in times of necessity advances loans to them. There is also a system of 'postal insurance' available for Government servants. The post offices offer savings bank facilities to the public and there is also the system of postal cash certificates. All these can be reasonably expanded and consolidated into a pucca State banking system, available to all classes of population.

The State can take charge of the exploitation of the forest and the mineral wealth of the country. Forest produce such as timber, fuel and charcoal should become Government monopoly, just like quinine. It would really be a great boon to the people at large if essentials like clothing, food (including tea and coffee), paper and even petrol are vended by the Government. With regard to electricity, the Government should buy out as early as possible all the existing private electric corporations in the country and offer better yet cheaper lighting facilities to the public.

The administrative machinery of the Government should be run on economic and business-like lines and this indeed must precede the establishment of a socialistic State. The

present Government is not run on businesslike lines for the obvious reason that, as the Premier complained the other day, the establishment charges absorb nearly 60 per cent of the income. Every industrial concern or bank takes particular care to impress on the public that the establishment charges bear but a minute part of its expenditure; otherwise it would be fit to be wound up. Retrenchment has become more than ever imperative but it should be effected, not as is usually done, by sending away a few clerks or peons, or as was done in the Justice Ministry days, by abolishing the Philosophy and Sanskrit courses in the Education Department, but should commence at the top. The administrative machinery has become very costly and complicated, especially after the Montford reforms; and the advent of Congress Governments had not made any difference. Certain high posts are still left untouched. For instance, where one honorary Vice-Chancellor previously functioned in an area covering Travancore and Hyderabad also, we now have three Vice-Chancellors on fat salaries, with corresponding increase of Registrars, Superintendents, etc., not to mention the huge army of Senates, Syndicates and Academic Councils, although the number of colleges has not trebled and the efficiency of their products has not improved very much. Witness the periodical reports of the Public Services Commission about the quality of the graduates examined by them. Further, all this paraphernalia is only for university education; primary education and secondary education are dealt with by different and altogether independent agencies. Education, however, from the lowest to the highest, ought like the judiciary function as a single indivisible unit; and it should be in the hands of educationists and retired educationists. That would make for economy as well as efficiency. It should be possible to devise a three months' refresher course of teaching in place of the existing training college courses, which may as well be abolished. For the teaching staff in law, medical and veterinary col-



Miss Kowtha Yasoda Devi, M.A., M.Litt., who was awarded a doctorate (D. Litt.) by the Madras University for her thesis "The Andhras: 1000 A.D.—1500 A.D." She is the first Andhra lady to achieve this distinction. "The Reddys" was her thesis for the M.Litt. degree.

leges, no special coaching in the "art" of teaching has been found to be necessary. The present one-year course in teaching is wholly superfluous. In regard to the services, we have a very costly Public Services Commission who seem to recruit the clerical and subordinate staff but not at all the staff for the higher appointments. Each department has, besides, a superior officer in charge of "personel"; a special Deputy Director of Public Instruction attends to the personnel in the Education Department. The Law College with but two university classes has both a principal and vice-principal, although many arts colleges with numerous annexes and thousands of students function without a vice-principal. Even the Congress Governments are not setting good examples. An "Economic Adviser" has recently been advertised for on a salary of Rs. 1,400—1,800 per month. It would be more economic to appoint the

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The craze for appointments is the root cause of the communal malady in this country; and today the communal bitterness between the Moslem and the Hindu, the Brahman and the non-Brahman and, thanks to the recent G.O., between the forward and the backward classes amongst Non-Brahmins, is more potent and sinister than even racial antipathies. Their influence in the body politic has been so great that even the stability of Ministries has been affected. The late Rajah of Panagal used to exclaim that for every single appointment that one made, one got a doubtful friend and ten positive enemies. In any democracy, the public services should not be over-paid: at any rate the emoluments, should bear some proportion to the actualities of the common man's life. That is so in England; it was so in the Moghul and Hindu administrations and even now in this country it is the rule in the foreign missionary institutions operating extensively in the fields of education and public health, in the institutions of the Deccan Education Society, the Servants of India Society and the Ramakrishna Mission. The idea that the more the pay the greater the efficiency, must receive a rude shock when one notices the splendid work turned out by these agencies.

Communal representation in public services rests on no logical principle. To apply the 'rule', for so it has become, to initial appointments is bad enough, but it is worse to apply it to promotions, and worst of all to admission to seats of learning. This kind of thing has no parallel anywhere in civilised administration. If this system has been able to produce a set of able, loyal and incorruptible public servants, then indeed it should be continued. But the pub-

lic statements of the Premier from time to time, and the recent scathing condemnation by Dr. Rajan of the food control administration, give the lie direct to any such assumption.

In recent years the major portion of the work of the Secretariat and the Ministry has been taken up with matters relating to the public services rather than to public welfare. Take for instance the Education Department and observe its working for upwards of a quarter of a century since education came into Indian hands. Successive Ministers have been preoccupied with the application of the communal rule to appointments, promotions and admission to Government educational institutions. Today education is still in travail. The truth is that communalism has been played out.

The question whether the Ministers individually or collectively should concern themselves with the day to day administrative routine and have the final say in regard to appointments, promotions, transfers, supersessions and punishments of Government servants, cannot be easily solved. All that one can say is that in this matter the principles followed by the British Cabinet Ministers may be adopted by our Ministers also with advantage. After all, the Ministers will be judged by posterity not by the appointments made, but by their solid contribution to the sum total of human happiness, which indeed is the aim of good Government.

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The Boundaries of the Andhra Province. By 'Kowsika' with a foreword by Sri K. Bhashyam. (Published by 'Anbu Nilayam', Ramachandrapuram, Pudukkottai State, Price Re. 1.)

This is one of the missiles of the Tamils against the Andhras in the present controversy over the city of Madras. The author is championing the cause of the Tamils, and the book is nothing more than a party pamphlet, presenting a biased view. Taking it for granted that Madras is Tamil territory, the writer proceeds to examine the views of three wellknown Andhras, the late Mr. V. Ramadoss Pantulu, Sir S. Radhakrishnan and Mr. Vavilla Venkateswarulu. Basing his arguments on old census figures the writer states that the Tamils are a majority in Madras. But the Andhras do not accept these figures as correct. Brushing aside the historical evidence adduced by the Andhra writers, he states that "Madras is part of Tamil Nad." That the writer's knowledge of history is loose is clear from his statement that the dynasties that ruled to the south of Pennar were all Tamil. Tamil scholars themselves do not accept this view. 'Kowsika' accuses the Andhras at every step of invading Tamil land and makes bold to claim Nellore and Chittoor districts as parts of Tamil land on flimsy philological and false historical grounds. To say that Pennar and Nellore are Tamil names is about as correct as saying that Man-nargudi is Telugu because the name ends in 'gudi'. Quoting some passage of uncertain origin and date in Sangam literature, the author states that Tirupati is the northern limit of Tamil land but he is not able to cite anything to show that the Tamils were ruling there. He seems to forget that the early Tamil kings were confined only to the extreme south and only after the fall of the Pallavas were they able to extend beyond Kanchi and Palar. While Dr. N. Venkataramanayya has clearly argued that the Pallavas were of Telugu origin and Vengadam was part of their territory, Kowsika's statement that "from Dr. Venkataramanayya's silence we can infer that there is no clear and continued reference in Telugu literature to Tirupati as part of Telugu Desa" is really surprising.

So is his reference to Vedam Venkataraya Sastriyar as a Tamil!

A Guide To Dravidasthan. By S. Muthaiyya Mudaliar, C.I.E. Dravida Mani Padippagam, Madras. Price, as. 10.)

This is the presidential address of Mr. Muthaiyya Mudaliar at the Dravidasthan Conference held in the middle of 1947 at Trichy, and is in Tamil.

Mr. Muthaiyya Mudaliar was an obscure and apparently well-meaning gentleman who became soured by a brief spell of authority which did not however return! The plea for Dravidasthan has gained validity in direct proportion to the success that has attended the demand for Pakistan. In the second phase, we are tackling the demand for linguistic provinces. On top of it rests the demand for Dravidasthan. It has a pseudo-ethnic and pseudo-historical basis. The present trends are in favour of the more practicable aspects of the conception being worked out in the administration of the province. Madras is vulnerable from the linguistic stand-point; and one way in which the more untenable theories of Dravidasthanies could be exposed is by the establishment of linguistic areas in the South which may then be counted upon to act on the principle of the parallelogram of forces, ultimately promoting political rest and administrative stability.

Mr. Muthaiyya's most curious obsession is with Brahmins whom he holds up for ridicule and hatred; next is his anti-Aryanism which expresses itself in a phobia of Baniyas whom he dubs exploiters, forgetting that we have other indigenous Dravidian varieties of them in many communities.

The independence of Dravidasthan may be conceded in a Pickwickian sense to assuage provincial vanities. In actual practice, Mr. Muthaiyya Mudaliar will have to carry with him the supporters of Andhra, Kerala and Kan-nada states as well. That his political outlook is rather amateurish is proved by the fact that he leaves the Nizam severely alone in all his calculations concerning a South Indian Confederation.

A good case is weakened by vituperation; while with urbanity even a bad

case can be won at least temporarily. A handful of Brahmins cannot be dubbed villains of the piece specially as the Brahmins are as eager as any one else to take their chance in Dravidasthan without fear or favour. But if pogroms are to be an article of state policy in Dravidasthan then the result would be Fascism, and many more would suffer including the Brahmins.

Our Heritage and its Significance. By S. R. Sharma. Hind Kitabs Ltd. Bombay. Rs. 6-8.

This is an extremely readable book, and is well displayed. Its contents are said to have been given as a series of lectures to British troops in India during the years of World War II. History, literature, philosophy, art, archaeology and almost all relevant information concerning the teeming wealth and continuity of the Indian tradition are here found summarised and analysed and docketed with a neatness, a precision and an admirable economy of phrase that call for unstinted praise.

If Mr. Sharma gave these talks as here presented then he must be reckoned among our most accomplished speakers; the British personnel whom he must have addressed must also have been remarkably well educated. However, the result is a wholly delightful

addition to good books dealing with the Indian history and culture in a popular fashion without at the same time alienating the respect of the expert.

This is a book which we feel might with advantage be prescribed for general study by our students in the degree courses. Historical knowledge has been one of the most neglected aspects of Indian education; this book might stimulate the right kind of interest in Indian history which will pave the way for an over-all picture of our own history through the ages for our own children.

Tamizhum Angilamum. By Purasu Balakrishnan, Tamizh Puttakalayam, Chennai. Re. 1.

This is a collection of five essays by Dr. Balakrishnan who has made himself a Chekhov fan in a special and intimate sense. He is one of those who is both sensitive and industrious. For he has laboured to enrich Tamil through translations as well as by original creative work. These are mostly critical or expository essays, and show a zeal for attempting literary criticism after the English manner in Tamil. An essay on Kalidasa's similes and another on the origins of his own short stories are pleasant reading and, beyond the beaten path.

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