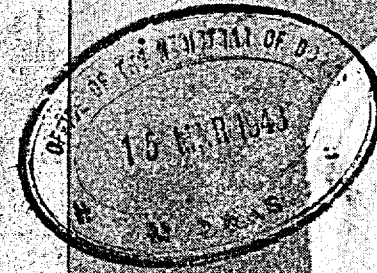


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# SWATANTRA

EDITOR: KHASA SUBBA RA



Vol. III No. 4  
MAR. 6, 1948  
SIX ANNAS

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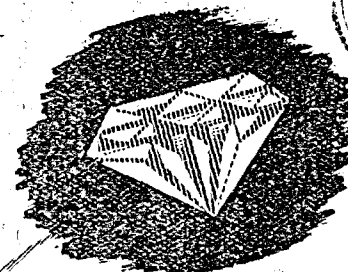
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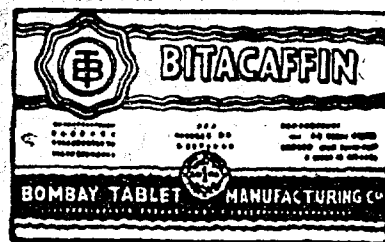
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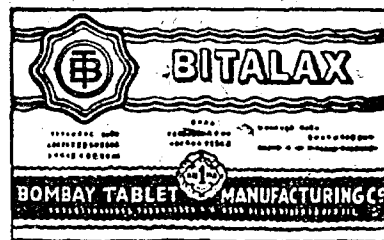


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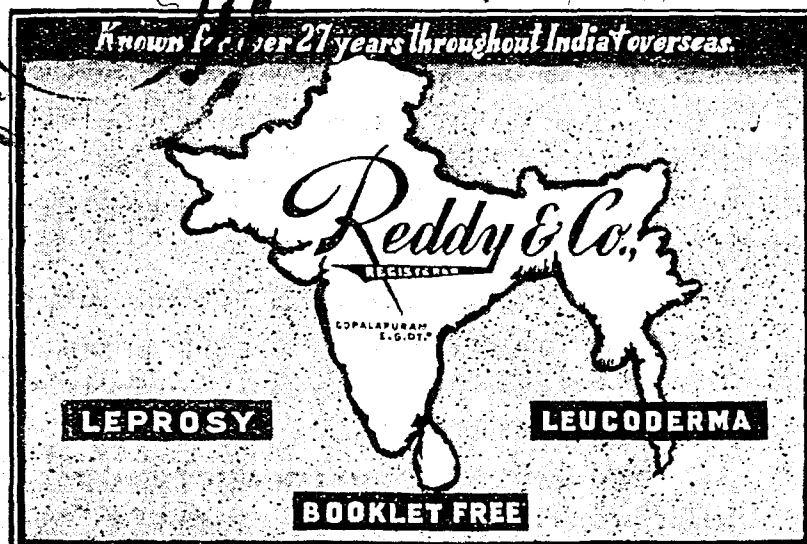
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VOL. III. No. 4.

SATURDAY, March 6, 1948.

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when Pandit Nehru (or was it the Sardar?) chose him for this post. But they leave 99.99 per cent. of the people unaffected. Let us hope that the capitalists in India will adequately respond to this gesture from one of themselves. The discrimination against foreign firms in the matter of corporation tax will also be welcomed by Indian capitalists. The altering of the present scheme of indirect taxation will to some extent affect the middle classes who are already hard hit by rising prices and stationary incomes. The increases in excise duty on coffee, tea, tobacco and vegetable-ghee might together mean a substantial increase in the cost of living of this class of people, while the increase in the price of a commodity like matches might be said to have a more universal application. Looking at the whole picture it would appear that while the Finance Minister has gone about the business of making things easy for big business in a systematic manner, there seems no rhyme or reason in his proposals for increases in indirect taxation. The most objectionable of these increases is the increase in telephone trunk call charges which in all conscience are already very high compared to the rates obtaining in many other countries. With a notoriously inefficient and unreliable telegraph system it is cruel to increase the charges of the only alternative means of communication while it also seems to us to be unwise to restrict this amenity to the relatively richer classes of people by making the charges prohibitive.

The concluding part of the Finance Minister's speech appears to contain both a portent and a warning. A series of mixed metaphors seems to indicate that the age of bondage under a foreigner is over but a perhaps worse form of slavery under the domination of short-

sighted and greedy capitalists of Indian origin exercised by their chosen tools seems to be in store for us. Sri Shanmukham Chetty's budget is assuredly not the journey's end. The common man still remains engulfed in darkness, groping for a way of escape from it, notwithstanding the flash of light that was witnessed by him on 15th of August 1947.

### Pandit Nehru's Dilemma

THE cry against communalism started by the Prime Minister is now reverberating throughout the country, having been taken up by all and sundry and mouthed loudly by them from many platforms. A crusade has become a phenomenon. The remarkable thing about it is the participation of the culprits themselves in the denunciatory campaign no less energetically than the rest. It is as if in a mob-hunt for the author of a theft, the thief merges himself with the crowd, shouts the loudest and takes on himself the direction of its moves. No less stultifying is the Congress effort for the stamping out of communalism, so spectacularly being conducted today, in honour of the great humanising message of the Mahatma, along with simultaneous ostentatious deference to his ashes. With the power of the very name of the departed leader, it has been easy to bring under disgrace communal organisations like the R.S.S., the Hindu Maha Sabha and the League. They are no longer the seats of danger to the integrity of the body politic. This distinction belongs at present to the Congress itself. Among the factors promoting the disruption of our nationhood in the shift of power comprised in freedom, the most pernicious is the wide spread in the ranks of secondary Congress leaders of communalists in disguise with no faith in the unifying creed of the

Congress and avowing loyalty to it only for tactical reasons and personal ends.

The communalism of the communal organisations is open. But the communalism in the Congress is unacknowledged. It is therefore the more dangerous and the harder to combat. When a Congress Premier or the President of a Provincial Congress Committee, happens to be himself a communalist, the administrative power of the Congress is not available for use against him as in part he wields it himself. This is not a mere theoretical supposition. The worst of the communalists in the country now are not the leaders of the avowed communal organisations, they are those who flaunt the Congress ticket and have come into administrative posts or key positions in the Congress organisation. It is to these that we owe contrivances like the communal G.O. in Madras. They are standing contradictions of the spirit of the Prime Minister's incessant declarations against communalism. So long as they continue to be clothed with all the power, prestige and importance that belong to the Congress as the ruling political party, no headway will be made in any attempt originated from the Centre for the stamping out of communalism from national politics.

Pandit Nehru is placed in a very difficult dilemma. There can be no doubt that he has realised that communalism is the greatest menace facing the country. But in his campaign against communalism he is forced into dependence on agents steeped to the core in the

communal spirit. The duty of the Prime Minister is plain. He should take courage in his hands and seek the expulsion from the Congress of disloyal elements unfaithful to its essential non-communal objectives. The National Executive of the Socialist Party has pleaded in a recent statement that in the constitution there should be no recognition of religious or communal groups, no weightage, and in the administration there should be no recognition given to religious or caste groups and citizens should not be asked to declare their caste or religion. The substance of the Socialist demand is already included in the implied content of the Congress pledge for the establishment of a secular democratic State, but the pitiable tragedy of the position lies in the neglect of top Congress leaders to see to the proper implementation in practice of their excellent intentions proclaimed again and again for public benefit. The communal G.O. and various other administrative standards associated with the Madras Premier amount, for instance, to a flat denial in practice of some of the most valuable principles connected with Congress objectives which Pandit Nehru has repeatedly blessed in theory. No organisation can tolerate the continuance in responsible positions associated with it, of persons of proved unfaithfulness to its aims and pledges, and if the Congress is not to sink into hopeless futility, there is need of prompt measures for the expulsion from it of all disguised communalists that have abused its hospitality and betrayed its real aims.



Said Beatrice Webb a few years before her death:

When you reach old age you either become scatter-brained or you have an obsession. G.B.S. has become scatter-brained. Sidney and I have an obsession, so has H. G. Wells."

# Sotto Voce

## The Hero As Scholar



"THE whirligig of time brings in his revenges". Statues of distinguished Indians have of late become as plentiful in the City as third-rate statues of not so very distinguished Europeans used to be when I first came to Madras 35 years ago. But the august precincts of the Presidency College remained inviolate. An oil painting or bromide



Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer

enlargement might have inconspicuously strayed into the institution itself; but the approaches to it, particularly the magnificent sea-front, were jealously guarded against what would have been regarded by the Anglo-Indians (old style) as an intolerable familiarity.

The taboo has been broken today and Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer in massive bronze looks down with grave regard on youth that he cherished like a flower and chastened with superb aplomb.

In the old days the Tamil Department was located on the ground floor along with the rest of the "vernaculars", (so described with malice prepense). There was a permanent gloom about the cavernous corridor into which the rooms opened. Seen from there the handful of occupants in these recesses looked like fish in an aquarium moving in ghostly twilight and speaking if they spoke at all by a sort of dumb-show. But inside it presented a very different picture. It was part of the convention of the College that you could never take Indian language studies seriously. The pandit was a stock figure of fun whose lineaments have for all time been fixed in Rajam Iyer's immortal caricature. And ragging the pandits was regarded by the bright young things of the day as part of a liberal education.

But 'Ayyarval' was a very different proposition. From the stately Middlemast and Allen the aloof to the "Honours" student of yesterday who had just been admitted to the privileges of the Junior Common Room, every member of the staff showed him a deference reminiscent of the pupil-teacher relationship of an earlier time. To the stuck-up and the pretentious among his colleagues no less than to the noisy and empty-

headed among the students he was a terror. There was nothing pharisaical about him—no false humility or unlovely puritanism. But he had at his command a silken irony that left no open wound, a finished raillery that left you without the power to retort. Ithuriel's spear itself was not more successful in unmasking frauds.

I had not the good fortune of sitting at his feet. Being of the shy and shrinking type, I was content to pay him my devours from afar. But whenever he met me in the street he stopped me with invariable kindness to ask how I was getting on and to chide me for encumbering myself with a shirt outside college instead of allowing the winds of Heaven to play about me. I had neither passion nor talent for dressing up, God knows; I marvelled the more that he should object to my using the minimum that civilization enjoined.

But with the solicitude of a father and the freemasonry that obtains among fellow-Tanjoreans (outside Tanjore!) he impressed it upon me that life in the open air was the only cure for what he persisted in regarding as my delicate health. "Look at me", he would say. "But for this slavery I would never put a shirt on." When I look on the voluminous folds of the doctoral robes in which the sculptor has swathed his torso I console myself with the reflection that Swaminatha Iyer would have vastly relished the irony.

In those days we had all heard of his marvellous scholarship; but

few were aware of its precise scope or significance. Sangam literature was then little more than a name. To us he was "a diver in deep seas". We admired the ease with which he moved from the past which he blazoned to the present which he enriched. Here was a man who seemed curiously untouched by the worldling's craze for useless activity. He saved his energy for one supreme task and subordinated every other interest to it. And well was it that he did so; else it had broken him. For he did single-handed what normally only a synod of scholars supported by the resources of a State could have done. He humoured purse-proud illiterates and pompous fools to rescue his beloved classics from oblivion. But, like Browning's grammarian, he "stepped on with pride over men's pity."

There was about him an integrity, a noble absorption in his work that people instinctively respected. He was, however, no unworldly academic lost in the maze of practical life. From the numerous little essays and sketches that he was persuaded to write towards the close of his long life, enriching the tongue with some of the most delightful informal prose there is in it, there emerges a personality of rare power and charm. Acute observation, mordant wit and superb literary tact invest even the most casual anecdote with authentic life. To vary the poet's phrase, "this man decided both to live and know". He was one of the great humanists of our time.

VIGNESWARA.

The young school teacher had just finished telling a small boy the story of a lamb that had strayed from the flock and been eaten by a wolf.

"You see," she said, "had the lamb been obedient and stayed in the flock, it would not have been eaten by the wolf, would it?"

"No, ma'am," answered the small boy. "It would have been eaten by us."

# SIDELIGHTS: :

Success is full of promise till men get it, and then it is as a last year's nest, from which the bird has flown.—W. H. BEECHER.

**S**PECULATION is rife once again as to who will succeed Sri Omandur as Premier and leader of the Congress Legislature Party. It is of course open to him to stand for re-election. But it is doubtful if he will win. A year ago he had the advantage of a considerable inconsequence which gave him the benefit of the unknown. That is now gone. He has lived in a blaze of publicity for twelve months, notwithstanding efforts on his part to shut himself in a shell, with reserve, days of silence, unapproachability and similar defences of the diffident who dread to be found out. They have not availed. The term disillusionment cannot be applied to him, as disillusionment implies a decrease in an original stock of large expectation, whereas in his case little was expected of him even by those who voted for him and erected him into his present position. It was a joke of C.R. that blew him into the forefront as a candidate for the party leadership. The joke was a whiff from C.R.'s sardonic irony that was perhaps meant to pass off as a bubble. But it took shape and got concretised as the then aspirants to power pondered over it in their search for a convenient non-entity to serve as a peg for their ambitions. They planned for a leader who was simply to retain the title, passing off the substance of power pertaining to the premiership to another. Sri Omandur took advantage of the planning but confounded the planners by turning out to be anything but a non-entity.

The Premier has proved to be an unpleasant companion for his Cabinet colleagues. He has however succeeded in extracting from the most resentful among them a certain measure of unwilling sub-

servience to his authority. Curiously, it is the formidableness of Sri Prakasam as a political force not to be ignored though divested of leadership, that has contributed a cementing factor to the discordant jumble of elements gathered in the Omandur Ministry. Prakasam was magnificent in his hour of defeat—and his demeanour then extorted the admiration of even those that had been very active in the intrigues to supplant him. Of Churchill it is reported by Sir Arthur Salter that the effect upon those that saw him for the first time after he ceased to be Premier was profound. "Don't tell us this is not a great man," they said to themselves and each other. But Churchill, though grand on great occasions, was not above proving irascible on lesser ones. He would not leave "the small change of daily debate" in Parliament to lesser lieutenants, but kept up constant minor interchanges with members of the Treasury Bench which reduced him to a lower plane and diminished his authority as the greatest political figure of his time. In this way he helped those whose interests lay in loyalty to the ruling party to resist his influence. Much the same can be said of Sri Prakasam, but the Churchillian parallel has only a limited application to him and should not be carried too far.

Prakasam is not connected with any party defeated at the polls. If popular suffrage counts, he has more of it at his back than any of the Ministers or all of them put together. Ovations come freely to him and have not to be worked up to with laborious diligence. The uncertainty governing their own fortunes as a result of his mere presence in the political scene sufficed hitherto to weld the Omandurian team together, but latterly disintegration has set in under the impulsion of two main causes. One is the prospect of proximate materialisation of the Andhra province. It has made all but perhaps one of

the Andhra ministers realise the political wisdom of coming to terms with a leader like Prakasam with so unrivalled a hold on the affections of the Andhra masses and so supremely competent in every way to handle the threatening Hyderabad situation with grit and vigour. Also the political stock of Sri Prakasam has been gradually rising with the manifestation of a more friendly attitude to him by leading members of the Congress High Command like Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel. Secondly, goodwill for him is being gained in the course of reactions being caused by the repellent qualities of the present Premier. Sri Omandur has antagonised all with an intolerable consciousness of his own exclusive rectitude in the midst of a corrupt and contemptible world. Lacking fundamental greatness to sustain his position, he has taken to exhausting painstaking inquisitions into matters of trifling detail. This lapse into littleness has become a blight on the administration. It colours the Premier's mind to the detriment of constructive vision. Recently he paid a tribute to C.R. on the score of the small quantity

of water used by him for bathing and washing. This is the smallest of C.R.'s claims to eminence, and it may even be doubted if too sparing a use of so lavish a gift of nature as water is after all sound economy or commendable social service. But the tribute illustrates the narrow compass of a mind unsuited to intelligent comprehension of the big things of life worthy of respect.

Our legislators have mostly been ill-chosen, but even they have been reduced to a conscience-stricken condition by practical experience of the Premier's peculiarities and negations. The majority of them now realise that they have made a mess of affairs and the province is entitled to a better guide. The unseating of Omandur is certain if those adverse to him can agree on the choice of a successor. Sri Prakasam is an obvious candidate for the leadership and Dr. Subbaroyan a likely one. If the two agree, the one lending his support to the other, the election will see the termination of the Omandurian regime.—SAKA.

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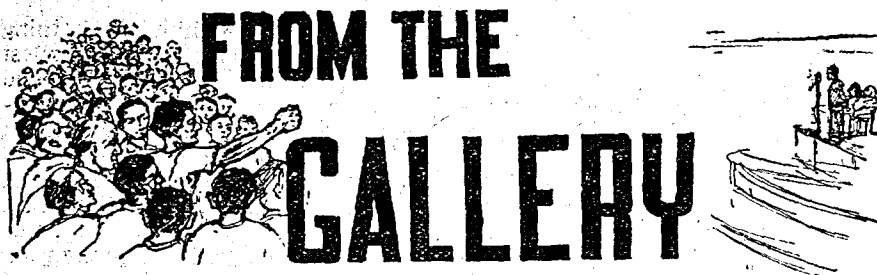
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*"A chield's amang you taking notes  
And, faith, he'll prent it."*

**H**OW much longer is this Hyderabad tomfoolery to go on? The Nizam's spokesmen are apparently very definite that Hyderabad is not going to join the Indian Union. As we cannot visualise any other relationship, except out of a cultivated predilection for suicide, why does not the Sardar tell the 'delegation' to spare themselves the bootless shuttle services they are keeping up between Hyderabad and Delhi. Nor do I like the Governor-General handling the negotiations. The attenuation of his official responsibilities after August 15, renders his intrusion into diplomatic negotiations highly ambiguous from the point of view of the Government. If his tact was needed, it ought to be availed of at unofficial levels. Lord Mountbatten's advice in the conduct of our domestic and foreign diplomacy does not seem to have been uniformly felicitious. The Hyderabad delegation must not be allowed to discover a point of vantage behind his Lordship's coat-tails. They must deal with the States department at Secretariat level.

There is a notion abroad, fostered by the Sardar himself, that the accession of the Nizam to the Indian Union is merely a matter of time, and is inevitable. Both these are dangerous delusions, for the Nizam's men are ready to pounce upon every concession shown to them as proof of their special position. It is odd though that a State which loudly proclaims its independence should be knocking at Delhi doors so frequently; that is the measure of the

reality of the independence which Hyderabad can enjoy. It is however for the States department to wind up the farce, before it is transformed into a tragedy. All that needs to be done is to put up the 'Not at Home' notice to the Hyderabad visitors at Delhi, for all political purposes, but to treat them courteously otherwise. Let Hyderabad stew in the independence she is so much in love with. Kashmir is a standing warning of the fatal recipe: "too little and too late."

As for Mr. Munshi, it is a pity that he too should be talking so often and with such fatuous inconsequence. It might seem heartless to say it; but diplomacy does not exactly seem to be the forte of one who has a miscellaneous reputation for being too many other things besides—from a jurist to a journalist!

Now that the Indian Army has become Indian, there might be a general impression that it has been changed overnight. To debunk such a view, let me quote from a letter recently received from a youngster who ran away to join the R.A.F. in 42, and who has since been kicked about from North to South, East to West. I cut out clues for security reasons, as they say in the army: 'This place sure gets my goat—nothing to do. They don't let me do my technical job, and I am ordained as a clerk, and even then there isn't much to do. We are famous for mis-employing a lot of useful blokes. For example, a motor mechanic is made to work in a cook-house, an aero-engine fitter

is shoved as a librarian, a meteorologist as a courier, while a wireless operator works in a ration stand. I admit that way one learns a varied number of jobs, but the chances are that he forgets his own trade! Funny to think of the days I spent in Eastern Pakistan, and made friends with the Muslims there. They wouldn't believe I was a Hindu. 'No, you are a Madrassi' they would reply as though that settled it for them!'

The ineptitudes of army routine are a fertile field for satire; and *Punch* is keeping it up to date with a good humour and good marksmanship which provides relief. This branch of writing has still to come up in our country. It is to be hoped meanwhile that some at least of the members of our Dominion Parliament would specialise in the study of our defence organisation, and form some idea of the Augean stables it maintains and hides!

Talking of defence reminds me that there are complaints of over-representation of some communities and under-representation of others in the 'Indianisation' that has been going on at high levels. Distant provinces like Madras or Assam are not very much in the picture. Most of the new major-generals and colonels are drawn from the Punjab. The Sikhs especially are said to have done pretty well, though it must also be remembered that they were among the worst sufferers from partition. In a federal set-up, proximity to the Centre is a tactical advantage which cannot be helped and should not be made the sole ground of complaint. In the old era, the Bengalis had a lion's share of the crumbs that fell from the imperial table; latterly it was the Punjab which enjoyed disproportionate prestige, prosperity and power. In the new dispensation, it is inevitable that the Sikhs should claim and enjoy more than even weightage would allow them. But there is a point beyond which generosity must wake up and become tight-fisted. We make these remarks apropos of the

reported demand of the Sikhs in East Punjab for parity with Hindus. It might be discreet kite-flying, but it discloses a potential source of danger to the stability and harmony of the new province. Before the demand passes beyond the incipient stage of exploration, it would be seasonable to knock it on the head with gentle firmness. The Sikhs may get far more than their share, and get it always, if they ground their claim on chivalric considerations. But the chief condition of their getting it is that they should not demand it as a matter of right. The old idea that they are one of the chief 'martial' classes in the country might unconsciously sway them in making such a demand. If so, it must be exploded even more brusquely than the demand itself. For such an ideology would spell chronic illwill and ultimate disaster. Any *quid pro quo* in the mathematical sense would get them precious little: but in a national sense, they can have everything for the asking including the premiership of the Union itself if they give proof of treating the Union as their own to serve in—not to exploit.

It is a pity that Jaya Prakash Narain should have side-tracked his criticism of the Central Cabinet by a seemingly personal attack on some of its members. Actually, he is attacking the principles for which the Ministers stand. His criticisms were anticipated by me in these columns, and there has been no convincing enough reply to them. Slowly and painfully, Pandit Nehru is emulating Saul, and trying to find a place among the prophets. Gone or nearly gone are his vague generalities concerning the uplift of the common man, forgotten are the revolutionary ideas for which he stood, when in prison or in the wilderness. For now he has a capitalist Finance Minister whose tenderness to capitalists is matched by his unawareness of the long-suffering common man. He maintains a significant bit of Ottawa in presenting the British Motor car industry with 7½%

rebate as against American motor cars. He taxes the poor also through their tea and coffee. No wonder the cohorts of our capitalist ranks are rendered speechless with gratitude for him. Serve the bourgeoisie right, because they have not the guts to rebel against reaction because they are afraid of falling into the jaws of the Communist! However who knows but that Pandit Nehru was not speaking prophetically when he exhorted the Socialists to bide their time; his own part would seem to be to hasten its coming by his trying to be all things to all men.

The Madras Council's resolution on Burma Indians is a sample of over-simplification that does the victims no good. The root cause of the betrayal of our commercial magnates in Burma should be traced back to one of the numerous raw deals of the departed British power. Now the Indian interests adversely affected in Burma were camp-followers of British exploiters of Burma. The point of crucial im-

portance is this. Burma was granted her independence, Britain doubtless got the best conditions for her subjects and interests in Burma. What did British statesmen do to salvage Indian interests along with theirs? Our Indian capitalists must address themselves to the British whom they served with a devotion unparalleled in the history of predatory politics, and ask them for relief. An emigre Burma Government functioned in India for two or three years, being dumped on us by our ex-masters. What Burma is planning to do is to expropriate the Indian capitalists who have half the paddy fields of Burma, in mortgage to them. To make this a grievance or transform it into a national issue would be the height of impolicy. Diplomatic methods to save something from the wreck must be adopted from behind the scenes. Unfortunately, India's vulnerable position precludes her from taking a firmer line; and we would need a much better cause than this for heroic action.

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## UNITARY TENDENCIES IN THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION

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

A striking feature of the draft constitution of India which has been submitted to the Constituent Assembly by the Drafting Committee is that, though federal in form, it displays some strong tendencies in favour of unitarianism. Ever since the idea of Federation had been suggested in India, the two major communities have been putting forward divergent opposite views on the nature of the Federation. The discussions in the Round Table Conferences clearly showed how public opinion in India was sharply divided between those who wished to make the centre strong and those who wished to make the units strong. The distribution of powers between the centre and the units under the 1935 Act was a measure of compromise, as Sir Samuel Hoare admitted, to reconcile the views of both the communities. But after the inauguration of provincial autonomy Muslim opinion steadily veered from the concept of a "weak centre" to that of "no centre". Prof. Cope-land's notorious scheme of an "agency centre" and the Cabinet Mission's scheme of a "limited centre" were intended to accommodate the Muslim point of view, and a weak centre was generally accepted by the Indian Nationalists as the inescapable price for unity. But the partition of the country has completely altered the position, and now we find the draft constitution making provisions for a Federation with the features of a unitary state.

The name "Federation" itself is not to be used, and the Drafting Committee has suggested the term "Union" to refer to the Indian State. The Committee says it has preferred to follow the language of the Preamble of the British North America Act of 1867. "Nothing much turns on the name" says the Committee, but at the same time it claims that "there are advant-

ages in describing India as a Union although its constitution may be federal in character".

In an ideal federal state the centre and the units should be completely independent in the spheres allotted to each other by the constitution. The success of a Federation may be measured by the extent of independence enjoyed by the units from the control of the centre. It has been truly said that "the greater the independence of the units from the centre in their defined spheres, the more truly is the political system federal in character". This will primarily depend upon the nature of the distribution of powers between the centre and the units and the manner of allotting the residuary powers. Even a casual examination of the draft constitution will convince us that the balance is tilted in favour of the centre.

The provisions relating to "cases of grave emergencies" in the provinces are specially noteworthy. In such cases the Governor is required to issue a proclamation suspending certain provisions of the constitution for a period of a fortnight only and to report the matter to the President. The President has the right either to revoke the proclamation or to issue a fresh proclamation of his own, making the province concerned a centrally administered area. This is tantamount to a suspension of the federal principle during the period of the emergency. And the centre is to be the virtual judge as to when the emergency arises and when it goes. Some of the important limitations on provincial autonomy under the 1935 Act were that the federal legislature could pass laws in respect of provincial subjects in an emergency, and that the Governor was under the control of the Governor-General when he exercised his

powers in his discretion or in his individual judgment. These limitations continue under the new constitution also. The substitution of Section 93 by the new provisions making the province a centrally administered area in a state of emergency, can hardly be described as a change for the better.

It is obvious that under these circumstances the centre should have substantial control over the provincial Governor. If the Governor is to be directly elected by the people it may be difficult in practice to ensure the responsibility—if not subordination—of the Governor to the President. The new suggestion that the Governor may be chosen by the President from a panel of four elected by the provincial legislature is quite in keeping with the unitary character of the new constitution. In course of time the election of four candidates by the provincial legislature will become farcial and the Governor will become the virtual nominee of the President. The provision that the members of the panel need not be residents of the province concerned is very pertinent. Already a convention is being established that only outsiders should be appointed as Governors of provinces. When the draft constitution comes into effect this convention is bound to be accepted almost as a universal rule. This practically deprives the province of its legitimate right to be governed by one of its own citizens.

The procedure for constitutional amendments suggested in the draft constitution marks another striking departure from the ideal prin-

ciples of federalism. Usually in a federal constitution the most important part in constitutional amendments will be played by the units. In the U.S.A., even though the centre may propose amendments (by a two-thirds majority of the Congress), amendments will be valid only if ratified by the several states (by three-fourths majority). The states in the U.S.A. can also propose amendments by two-thirds majority. In Australia and Switzerland also the units play a very prominent part in constitutional amendments. But in the Indian constitution amendments ordinarily require only a special majority of the Union Parliament. The ratification of the units is required only for amendments making any change in the legislative lists, or the representation of states in Parliament or the powers of the Supreme Court. The healthy principle of giving the units a more important part than the centre in constitutional amendments is not only ignored in the Indian constitution but the centre is given even exclusive powers in this field.

The obvious justification for tilting the scales in favour of unitarianism seems to be that there is a strong public opinion in favour of it. While it may be true that there is an overwhelming public opinion in favour of a strong centre, it is doubtful if some of the provisions of the draft constitution pointed above are in keeping with the principles of provincial autonomy and federalism. It may be true that there is a strong desire for union, but as Dicey points out, desire for union is different from desire for unity.

#### CIRCULAR EXPORT

An English magazine, unable to obtain paper here (England), asked a Dutch firm to print it. The Dutch firm agreed, as it was for export, although this meant using paper from one of their own magazines, which they took to Belgium. A Belgian firm accepted the Dutch offer, as it would help the Belgian export trade, though it meant farming out one of their publications to a printer in Paris, who could only do the Belgian work by getting one of his own productions printed in London, which has just been done, since we will do anything to help the export trade.—DOUGLAS WOODRUFF in *The Tablet*.

## VA. RA.

by MANJERI S. ISVARAN

IT was, I think, in 1932, shortly after I became the assistant editor of the *Triveni*, that I first met Mr. V. Ramaswami Iyengar. Mr. K. Ramakotishwara Rao, founder-editor of the *Journal*, under whom I was learning my craft, brought him along one afternoon to the office in the Y.M.I.A. Buildings in the Armenian Street, and introduced me to him. I had heard of him before I saw him, by his well-known initials Va. Ra. However, to say that I saw him is to express myself inadequately; the seeing had the effect of hearing a very startling explosion at point-blank distance; I heard it first that afternoon in 1932, I have heard it since.

I forget what we talked about. He was at that time helping Mr. K. Srinivasan edit the brilliant (short-lived, alas!) *Manikkodi*, a Tamil weekly, run on the lines of everything best in English literary journalism, plus imagination, conviction, and fervour in the utterance of views concerning our political problems; Mr. Ramakotishwara Rao referred to Bharati and the urgency of rendering a few of the poet's selections from Tamil into English. The details have grown dim in my memory but I can still recall the voice of Va. Ra—warm, rapid, precise as a pistol shot. I took to him at once: a man in his early forties, of medium height, not strongly built but not delicate either, his head already turned snow-white, wearing horn-rimmed glasses which magnified his bold, sharp eyes. There was no attitudinizing, no affectation of any kind about him; no pose, no pretentiousness; he wanted to see everything without the wrapping of the tissue-paper, howsoever luminous. To the discerning it didn't take two minutes to understand his sincerity.

After this first meeting which didn't bring about the publication of anything from his pen in the *Triveni*, nor of mine in the *Manikkodi*—he wanted me to alter a few points and expand a short story I

had written and handed over to him personally, which I promptly refused—I saw Va. Ra off and on and our contact was made closer, with the passing years, by our mutual friend Mr. T. J. Ranganathan, himself a creative artist and a top-ranker in contemporary Tamil journalism, now editing the *Manjari* with distinction.

"Everybody knows him, yet no one knows him," remarked Mr. Ranganathan to me, speaking once of Va. Ra. A paradox. I rolled it in my mind, in the light of my knowledge of the man. My friend was right.

Anyone out of the ordinary is an enigma. Va. Ra, being out of the ordinary, is an enigma. Whatever the field of activity in Tamil Nad—literary, political, social—of all alike he is the storm-petrel. Still, he is a puzzle to many. He is one with the fiery particle. Through storms and stress—and he has had heavy times—it has continued to burn bravely in him, refusing to be snuffed out. Those who have talked to him, those who have read his writings feel kindled by this spark and vitalized with a strange energy.

His reputation is secure; but his social position, as is always encouraged and asserted by artificiality, is not one calculated to dazzle; he is poor in worldly goods. And an unsophisticated people can never understand what kind of reputation it is that has neither a distinctive place in society nor property.

Va. Ra was born in a family of orthodox Vaishnavite brahmins in the village of Tiruppazhanam, not far from the holy Tiruvaiyar in the Tanjore district of the Cauvery deltaic region. The family had property worth about forty thousand rupees. After his early education in the village Va. Ra went up to the University, and appeared for the First Examination in Arts. He failed to take the Certificate, he tried a second time only to repeat the failure, English and Mathematics non-cooperating. However, he passed in Tamil. Why did the youngster

who obtained a first class in the Matriculation Examination, fail in the College test? The reason was not far to seek. He was caught in the rising tides of nationalism, in the freedom movement of the country; he raised his voice with others in the chant of the passionate song of liberty, *Vande Mataram*, and thus paid the penalty twice. It is doubtful whether the father ever knew the real cause of his boy's failure at the University.

The times, then, were the most exciting for India. Ardent patriots like Aurobindo and Bharati and others not less ardent lived dangerously in Pondicherry. Kodyalam Rangaswami Iyengar of blessed memory rendered active monetary help to them; the task of carrying the money to the patriots regularly and with the uttermost secrecy needed capable hands, and Va. Ra was marked for the responsibility. In 1910, for the first time, he went to Pondicherry and met Aurobindo and Bharati. From June, 1911 to January, 1914, he had his residence here, staying with Bharati at the outset, then changing over to Aurobindo.

Came the return to his home in the village; and in 1915 he wrote his first considerable work, *Sundari*, a novel. Revolutions are not made with rose-water; a red-hot revolutionary in politics, in social reform, and in the arts, Va. Ra hungered to knock out the keel of convention and custom and fill the life of the Tamils with the radiance of a nascent awareness, with the harmony of a new-born joy. *Sundari* is a fleckless mirror of the artist's mind. It is his maiden attempt at creation. In the medium of fiction it is, too, the maiden attempt of the resurgent Tamil psyche. There have been novels before and after *Sundari*, but none can compare with it in the nobility, in the courage of its theme-motif—marriage of a brahmin girl widow—and in the breathless rush of its treatment. The Sundaram-Amritam episode is a feat of intense daring—what a shock it would have given to the prudes three decades ago!—the love-passages are realized with the simplicity and spontaneity of lyric vision. Yet, the publication

of *Sundari* saw the end of Va. Ra, the artist. The hodmen celebrated their triumph, they are celebrating it still. Twenty-nine years after it first saw the light of day, *Sundari* was reprinted in 1946, with an introduction by Mr. T. J. Ranganathan, a little masterpiece of genuine literary evaluation and restrained admiration. The hodmen are too busy to notice it, their inspiration lies beyond the estranging seas.

Va. Ra. doesn't call himself a writer. He says he is a propagandist whose sole aim is to improve the status of writers. It is just splendid of him to say that, but the underlying truth is that he regards himself as the leader of the men of letters. Many brows will be raised quizzically at the open claim of such leadership, but confession as a propagandist is sure to be met with approval, even sympathy. It doesn't gall the kibe of anybody. It makes another pleased with himself, to be astonished at his own unsuspected capacity for toleration.

Even if the output of a writer is negligible, even if he is diffident, Va. Ra would prod him, encourage him to write more and more. The regret of editors is proverbial, some don't even send rejection slips. No regret, no rejection should daunt the young author. Produce in large quantities, produce ceaselessly; the quality, one day, is sure to establish itself. But there's no love lost between him and the pandits. To them he is a red rag, to him they are holy terrors. To write simply is the very breath of his life. Write the Tamil that a humble rickshawallah can understand, he would say, and would not be tired of saying it over and over again. He would wax eloquent on the necessity for newer and newer ideas, the currency of newer and newer words, the production of books beautiful. The intention of an author should never be to confuse the mind of the reading public—indeed a large number and ever on the increase—with flamboyant expression. The most abstract of ideas should be dealt with in a language that would appeal to the head and heart of the common man. The

utile of hackneyed words is infinitely preferable to the obtruse expression of ideas, however original and grand. But for all his protestations, so far as Va. Ra himself is concerned, while the rickshawallah is delighted with the charming naïveté of his words, the poor fellow stands bewildered before the profundity and brilliance of our author's thought.

Va. Ra knew Bharati. He was Bharati's friend. There might be others, alive today, who knew the poet. The multitude knew Lord Krishna in his time, but Partha alone was his friend. And those who have seen Bharati, those who have had the good fortune of winning his acquaintance cannot be said, stretching the mind however charitably, to have known Bharati. Va. Ra alone was his friend, tied to him, among the other bonds of affection, admiration, devotion, with the fastest and greatest bond of all—enduring literary friendship. Only such an one could have written the biography, *Mahakavi Bharati*, a classic of its kind in Tamil.

In the days that are gone, the pandits and precisions didn't accept Bharati; and those who joined that group, trimming the sails to the wind, are today the loudest to shout the praises of the poet. Va. Ra was the only one who had the guts to fight these detractors then. Quite a minor matter now.

The life of Va. Ra is the record of a long, unbroken struggle. He doesn't conceal his dislike of, his disgust with the *laudator temporis acti*. His eyes are closed to the skeleton of the past, his ears stopped to its rattle. Everything good and great flows from the heart of man, not from his head; his paradises are built not on what he thinks but on what he feels, on his sensibilities which have grown more exquisite, more refined, with the passage of the centuries. Va. Ra is so charged with the sensibility of modernity that the slightest retrograde sign in the political and societal aspects of

life, in arts and letters, rouses his indignation almost to the extent of paralysing his activity. To hell with the old, with the past, he exclaims. His emotional antennae are bludgeoned, his heart bleeds.

It was a citadel of orthodoxy, the village of his birth. The bier of a dead harijan was not allowed to pass along the Sirkar road in the village. It had to be borne through fields and ditches, through ways difficult for the foot of man to tread. Then, over thirty years ago, Va. Ra fought for them, for the elementary human rights of the outcaste. The Sirkar road was common to all. And in the middle of the *agraharam*, close by the orthodox paternal home, he built a bungalow and sat to meals in a mixed company, flouting all caste distinctions.

Va. Ra hates the superstitions, the hundred stupid religious credulities of the brahmin priesthood and the caste hindu alike. His is a perpetual fight against them to demolish all silly gullibilities. But he never withholds his pity and sympathy for them. In the pity lies his vast humanity, blessed as the rain and the soft shine of the sun.

He talks as he writes and writes as he talks; he doesn't differentiate between the spoken and the written words; and in talking as well as in writing he releases a torrential flow; ideas rush so swiftly that they seem to telescope. The effect is sheer scintillance. Sometimes he does ride his style on the snail; but before the fire of his convictions his style turns stormy.

To the Tamils Va. Ra gave a remarkable novel, *Sundari*. They should have got similar and greater gems from this whale among minnows, through the years, but for this they are not prepared. Instead, he has given them skits, sketches, articles, stories, touching life at all angles, whose overtone is propaganda. But his matchless style, his richness of thought are in them all, without stint, his piquancy to simulate, his brilliance to dazzle, that they are wilily his debtors.

# AFTER MAHATMAJI: THE MOST VITAL ISSUE

by K. S. VENKATARAMANI

THE tragic mode of death of Gandhiji has complicated our main lines of future work. It is difficult to fill his place. None the less it has got to be done. For Indian conditions require a non-official elder statesman with the Gandhian temperament to reconcile our many conflicting groups and communities and guide, if and when necessary, the central and provincial Governments.

There is no more ideally fit for this work than Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He combines the yogi and the statesman, an exalted combination achieved only by the grace of God. He is the simplest and most ego-less of our leaders. And he is one of our best organisers and quiet workers.

The yogi in him will not allow him to seek a place but it must be thrust on him by the united will of the people. Let not his docility and *satvic* qualities mislead us about his real greatness and gift for planned constructive and nation-building work. Dr. Rajendra Prasad should be anointed to the Gandhi *Peetam*.

The most vital issue before us today is neither Pakistan nor Kashmir. It is the framing of a proper constitution for India which would best reflect the national genius and temperament, our cultural heritage, our way of life, and the ideas and ideals for which Gandhiji dedicated his life. Such a constitution would also be the best memorial to him. The collection of a crore of rupees may be pleasant, easy and attractive. A memorial in work and not in money would be the best tribute to him.

Gandhiji's programme of constructive work in the villages remains practically unimplemented on any adequate or tangible shape. A proper constitution for India based on a Gandhian Idealism, the decentralised politics and economy of our villages, would be the best guarantee that the constructive work for which he so passionately pleaded for a

generation when it was a slave nation, would quickly be taken up. The draft constitution is just published. The Government should give the public at least six months' time for full criticism and the Constituent Assembly should not hurry this vital job in modern fashion.

It is implicit in the long travail of Indian Renaissance that India has a special political message to give the world by herself evolving a new pattern of Government that would reconcile the conflicts and failures of modern democracy. Free India has a definite message to give. The world in sorrow and suffering today expects one from us. The message is a new political philosophy and a pattern of government based on new values of life which would eliminate the colossal waste, competition, strife and suffering, the endless array of political faiths, creeds, groups, parties and names that serve only to cover the self-interest of each and perpetuate it in a competitive war of aggression and the mounting flame of power-politics.

A grand work of recovery, reconciliation and renovation is assigned to the ancient culture and civilisation of India. Gandhiji had an intuitive grasp in flashes of this grand new ideal and vision. Hence his gift of friendship with all. Variety is not for war but for assimilation and enrichment.

Means and ends convey no distinction to the Indian genius. They are one and the same capable of interchange in altered conditions. The hastening footsteps of Time to which the West listens so intensely and adoringly has no primary significance for us. For, Time, a creation of the Mind, is Maya. What we begin to do we must do it well in our own way in full measure with ripeness and judgment. Every step is holy and must be authentic, rich, full and integral in the eye of God. Politics today has special need of this message.

Short Story

## The Prodigals

by S. Padmasani

SHANKAR was leaving for his office. At the gate Leila, his wife, nearly collided against him. They both stopped, rather taken aback. "Shankar, we're going to Chun Yin in the evening, aren't we?" After a whole second Shankar answered: "The Fancy Bazaar? I don't think so". Leila's face fell. She, however, recovered her composure almost at once: "Please, Shankar! New Year saris have come in hundreds,—and every one is at Chun Yin. Tomorrow we shall be too late, I warn you!" And Leila assumed a tragic expression which made her look nearly her age.

Shankar was used to such scenes. He knew Leila—he had been married to her these twenty-five years. Still the same old Leila, impulsive, childish, vain, intractable. He had long ago come to the conclusion that to yield was the best policy. Today there were some complications—he had a committee meeting to attend at five, and how could he say how long it would last? "Leila, dear", he said ingratiatingly with just a touch of irony, "if you must go to Chun Yin, you must go. Go then, I don't object, and choose as fine a pair of saris as you like. And anything else you please. Chun Yin knows you quite well, and he will send the bill to me in due course".

Leila's face brightened up, and she looked a whole twelve years younger than before. But—cunning creature!—she wouldn't accept her victory so cheaply. She put on an injured face and archly said: "Oh no! As if I care for the saris so much! How about our evening constitutional? Our daily visit to the Omandur Park?" Shankar was, of course, used to these delicate bandyings and promptly answered: "That's all right, darling! I have a committee to

attend and—I suppose we could meet at the Omandur Park. At six or thereabouts. And we could return together as usual...." And already Shankar was off, with a practised "bye bye".

Leila glided back to her dainty boudoir in her prim cottage. She faced her mirror, not a bit afraid. "I'm not finished yet, not yet", she murmured. Yes, a child still, impulsive, vain, and intractable. It had been one of her youthful attractions that she had the proverbial brains of a rabbit. But she could smile, she could chatter away, and she had quite a good complexion. Shankar had fallen in love with her twenty-five years ago in the twinkling of an eye and carried her off to Bombay. He had made money at a steadily increasing rate, he had prospered in business, he had made valuable contacts, he had even flirted with culture—music, literature, and all that. A happy couple, people would say, looking at them—for they seemed to be as engrossed in one another and in their own persons twenty-five years after their marriage as during the brief intrepid period of their 'courtship'. At the time our story opens, Shankar was fifty, and Leila forty-five. They had no children, and they didn't seem to care very much that they hadn't. When they walked on the Main Road, or sat arm in arm in a corner of the Omandur Park, or went whispering together to the Metropolitan Talkies, bystanders thought that they were indeed a newly married couple—so fastidiously were they dressed, so prim and respectable they looked, so symbolic of romance they seemed. He dyed his hair and she painted her face—but what of that? They were works of art all the same.

The day spent itself out, a little slower than customary it seemed

to Leila, dreaming as she was of seas of colours and oceans of silk. At 3-30 she began her toilette. Gnashing her teeth she went on—with her springs, her powders, her combs, her ribbons, her eau de cologne. At 4-30 she emerged from her boudoir, a glamorous lady in green and gold. She sent for a victoria, and with parasol and handbag she stepped into it in her gold-sandalled feet and asked the gharriwalla to drive to Chun Yin.

Loo Chun Yin was all smiles and deference and exhibited before Lady Leila an endless variety of colours. As when a child is taken for the first time to a well-furnished toy shop, and tigers and lads in buckram and girls in glory and toy guns and mimic battles and six-inch aeroplanes and three-inch globes are exhibited before his eager astonished eyes, the poor child is distracted by this feast of mimic beauty and dwells lovingly, now on this, now on that, now on that other, crying: "Mummy, I want this! How lovely is this gun! What a darling, this cat!", but cannot choose one toy, one only toy, out of all the heavenly riches spread before him, but blinks and smiles and sighs and moves hither and thither in a frenzy of pained happiness, so, even so Lady Leila fingered silk after silk, received the impact of the colours, made comparisons, gave vent to exclamations and shouts of joy and deep agonizing sighs, but stood there, transfixed and wretched, quite unable to make her choice. Chun Yin, sympathetic and understanding Chun Yin, used pretty often to similar predicaments, gently helped Leila out of her perplexities—and, thanks to his advice and discrimination, and also, let us add, to his business good sense, she chose five saris in all, a wonder every one of them, and yet so absurdly cheap, hardly two hundred rupees a piece! She forgot about the ties,—and after all Shankar had two score already. The choice of ten blouses to suit the five saris was a comparatively easier affair, for Chun Yin persuaded her to buy the whole of his "brand new"

stock. The precious burden was wrapped and packed and tied with pale blue ribbon with the legend "CHUN YIN FOR CHOICE SILKS" printed across again and again. And so she got into the victoria, her heart a flutter, her face a trifle livid, her pulses beating quicker than usual.

It was only when she returned to her lavender boudoir and unpacked the burden of gleaming colour and dissolving softness that the grandfather clock, called her back to something like normalcy. Eight—EIGHT? Impossible! And with a sudden shot of pain, her conversation at the gate in the morning came back to her. Shankar, where was he? Had they not agreed to meet at the Omandur Park at six? And it was now eight, and Shankar had not come home, and she was alone. Her head was in a whirl. In a dream as it were she gathered the silks and hurled them into her chest of drawers. She swept out of the boudoir and called, hysterically called: "Ama! Pooley! Digamber! .... Pooley! Digamber! Ama!" The domestics stormed into the hall, and presently Leila continued: "Saheb is lost, lost. Run, search. Go with the torch, see with a hurricane lantern. Go, go, don't stand and grin, go." The astonished servants didn't know what to do. Digamber timidly asked: "Madam, where to go?" Leila snapped with a twang: "Go, you fool, don't stop. To Omandur Park, of course. Omandur, do you hear? Go and search for Saheb. Go with the hurricane, go, go." As they severally left the room, she reached a sofa and collapsed: "God, God, how I suffer! Shankar, where are you? Why do you punish me? You were always like this. Where are you, where a-r-e y-o-u....?"

Every minute that passed tired her patience like a Yuga. She sighed, she groaned, she wept. Her handkerchief automatically went to her eyes and came down at regular intervals—intervals of about one minute or so. How long, how long, O Lord, is this suspense! When will Digamber return?

Digamber returned; Ama and Pooley returned. "Saheb no there", they said in chorus—and the clock tolled the ninth hour. Leila grew visibly alarmed and almost broke down: "Shankar, Shankar, where are you, why are you not back, what has happened to you? Like a dagger the clock has pierced me. Oh Shankar, Shankar, what am I to do?" With a supreme effort she pulled herself up and thought out—remarkable woman!—an exhaustive search campaign. She sent Pooley to the garage to bring a taxi on hire. She took pen and paper and jotted down the places Shankar was likely to visit: "Gurnath, Hellker, Loafer-Leech, Miss Hymen, Pumpkinski, Victory Club, Centrifugal Gymkhana, and—last resort—Managing Director Sir Snakegrass Hill". The taxi arrived and the search began in real, methodical earnest.

Br-r-r-r..... A ring at the door. "Lady Leila?...."

"Yes, Mr. Gurnath, is my husband here?"

"Why should your husband be here, at this time of night?"

"He's not here? God, God, what am I to do?.... I'll try Hellker".

Even so, with minor variations, with an increasingly maddening tempo the search proceeded. He's not here, he's not there,—where is he then? When Leila, now a bundle of nerves, called at the Victory Club—a very masculine club—the last members were leaving. They were all sympathy for the sorrow-stricken spouse, but they had not—they were quite certain that they had not—set eyes on the Old Boy the whole day.

Like Casabianca of blessed memory, Shankar had repaired to the Omandur Park at six. He read the evening paper, but he could not concentrate on the news. He looked in front of him. A boy and a girl were walking together, as good as clinging together. Incipient lovers. Love?—a mighty fine joke, he knew. Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers. Glamour goes, the shrew

lingers. Leila, Leila, pampered doll, pettifogging wife. But his wife, his darling wife, in spite of everything, in spite of.... Why hadn't she come,—it was nearing seven. Women, women, succumbing to the giddy pleasure of the eyes. She could not—Leila could not resist the temptation of silk. There was going to be a good hole in his bank balance—it didn't matter though. Thank heavens, he was well-to-do,—thanks to Hitler and thanks too to wartime business trends. Seven-thirty? Humph! Woman, woman, could you never keep an appointment? Should he start and go home—or go to Chun Yin? Shades of Casabianca! Shankar would abide a little longer still. He let his fancy roam—whole hemispheres of thought were his—and he waited, waited. When the Corporation clock chimed nine, he could bear it no longer. He hailed the last lingering taxi at the Omandur Gate and gave the driver the address of Chun Yin. "Madame left at six", beamed the correct Chun Yin. "Oh, hell", muttered Shankar, and asked the taxi-driver to take him to his house. Ama, retreating and stuttering, managed to say: "Madam no here. She go find Saheb".

Shankar for a moment stood stupefied—but only for a moment. He too made a list—not the identical list—and he too sought his wife, now at Loafer-Leech's, now at Pumpkinski's and at last, at about twelve, he knocked Sir Snakegrass out of his bed and hissed at him: "Is my wife here?" Sir Snakegrass drew himself up to his full height and brought out devastatingly: "What do you mean? Are you mad? How dare you....?" Just at that psychological moment, another car purred in front of the bungalow, and in darted Lady Leila, a spectre rather than a woman, "Oh Sir Snakegrass, where is my husband?" Snakegrass simply made a gesture in the direction of Shankar. "Darling...." Leila, flew to Shankar's arms. Sir Snakegrass closed his eyes.

(Translated from the original Tamil by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar).

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE



**T**HE fall of Tetsu Katayama's Cabinet on February 10 brought to an end the eight months' interlude of Social Democratic ascendancy in Japan. It was towards the



Tetsu Katayama

end of May last year, after the general election held earlier in April, that Katayama formed a coalition Government. His was the first Government in Japan under the new, democratic constitution that was adopted after the defeat of the country in World War II. The constitution was prepared largely by the occupation authorities (known as SCAP, from the designation of General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers). It was proclaimed by Emperor Hirohito on November 3, 1946 and became effective six months later, on May 3, 1947. The new constitution, replacing

the Meiji constitution under which Japan had been ruled ever since 1889, reduces the Emperor from the position of "sacred and inviolable" monarch to that of a symbol of State with limited functions. It makes sovereignty derive from the people, who will elect members to the upper House of Councillors and the lower House of Representatives. The general election of April 1947 which brought Tetsu Katayama into power, was, therefore, an event of considerable significance in Japan's history.

## JAPANESE POLITICAL SCENE

Before this election under the new constitution, the head of the Japanese administration was Shigeru Yoshida whose Liberal Party emerged successfully from the first post-war elections—of a sort—held in April 1946. Despite its name, the Liberal Party is the most conservative party in Japan and represents the extreme Right. Shigeru Yoshida's Government was supported by the Progressives, the second strongest conservative party in Japan. Tetsu Katayama's Social Democrats then led the Opposition. Shortly before the April 1947 elections, however, the Progressives renamed and reorganised themselves as the Democratic Party. Hitoshi Ashida, who has now succeeded Katayama as Premier, is one of the leaders of this newly formed Democratic Party.

The result of last year's general election was that the Social Democrats, somewhat to their own surprise, gained as many as 144 of the 466 seats in the House of Representatives, thus becoming the largest single party in the Diet (Parliament) but without an independent majority. The Democrats emerged as the second largest party with 132 seats:

The Liberals suffered a set-back, securing 129 seats. The remaining seats in the Diet were filled by various small groups and 'independents', most of them conservative. Shigeru Yoshida's Cabinet resigned and, after prolonged backstage political bargaining, the Democrats agreed to join a coalition led by Tetsu Katayama, with Hitoshi Ashida as Foreign Minister.

Though the Premier was a Social Democrat, his party's policy could not be put through with vigour due to the obvious limitation imposed by the fact that the two principal conservative parties together could always command a majority and pull down the Government. The position of the Social Democratic Party was further weakened by the internal dissension between its Right and Left wings. Shortly before forming the coalition, Katayama described his position thus: "I am in the political centre.... We want gradual socialisation of key industries. We propose to start with national control of such industries as fertilizer plants, coal mines and banks, and go on from there, with the Government buying out the private owners." Katayama has a long record of campaigning on behalf of the underdog. He is a veteran lawyer and politician, and served four terms in pre-war Diets. He was among those who organised a Socialist party in 1926 which was dissolved by Government decree in 1940. After the Japanese surrender, he helped organise the Social Democratic Party and rapidly rose to its leadership. But in order to acquire power, his party had to give up or modify many of its basic principles as the price for securing the support of the Democrats in forming a coalition. From advocating the nationalisation of industry along British lines, Katayama began to recommend a sort of State control in which the Social Democrats would act as mediator between employers and employees. The discontent of the rank-and-file at this dilution of the party's programme gave rise to a conflict between the Right and Left wings which resulted in an actual split last month, precluding

the fall of Katayama's coalition Government. Hitoshi Ashida of the Democratic Party, a veteran statesman credited with progressive ideals, has now been elected by the Diet as Premier, but it is not yet clear whether he intends to sustain his position with the support of the Left-wing Social Democrats or with that of the Liberals. Since it would be difficult to maintain a stable alliance between radicals and conservatives, it is quite on the cards that there might be yet another cabinet change in Japan, leading to what would be a more natural alliance between the two conservative parties. Such a development might involve the replacement of Hitoshi Ashida as leader of the Democrats by a firmer conservative more acceptable to the Liberals. The fate of the present Cabinet is therefore still uncertain.

## OLD ORDER SURVIVES

Behind these political shifts in the parliamentary arena lie certain economic and social factors which are in effect more significant in the trend of post-war developments in Japan. The objective of the Allied occupation—which is in practice a purely American affair—is to transform the semi-feudal, militaristic set-up in Japan into a peaceful, modern democracy. Radical reform of both agriculture and industry is essential for effecting this change. A measure of reform has undoubtedly been effected under General MacArthur's supervision. The aura of divinity which surrounded the Emperor has been sought to be extinguished. Hirohito has been 'humanized'. He has been making a series of public appearances among common people, actually rubbing shoulders with the generality—something unprecedented in Japan's history. Thousands of those who had taken active part in the Imperial Rule Assistance Association—Japan's wartime single party system—have been purged from public offices and schools. Occupation officials have also sought to break the hold of the Zaibatsu industrial monopoly over Japanese economy by encouraging the independent growth of small business units. Some modest land

reforms have also been initiated. There has been a great increase in the membership and activity of trade unions.

As against these efforts at democratizing Japanese life must be set the continuance in practice of many of the evils abolished in theory by laws and proclamations. For instance, though the Emperor has been 'humanized', the "New Year holiday season" of 1948 has been marked by a large-scale return on the part of the Japanese people to the traditional custom of paying devout homage at the Shinto shrines and sites dedicated to the imperial family and imperial ancestors. More than 10,000 men and women are estimated to have visited the Ise shrines in south-eastern Honshu to worship the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami, legendary ancestor of the Japanese royal family, upon whose supposed descent to earth rested the Emperor's claim to divinity—which he denied in his New Year's broadcast on January 1, 1946. The Kyodo agency says this is ten times the number of the 1946 visitors and five times more than last year's." (*New York Times*, January 4). Again, though the task of breaking the Zaibatsu monopoly began over two years ago, its success has been no more than nominal. "Zaibatsu still rules Nippon business" is the conclusion reached by Mr. Gordon Walker, chief Far Eastern correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who wrote in December last year after an extended personal investigation: "Small business units and manufacturers are unable to obtain raw material allocations because allocation controls are in the hands of persons who either still are operating within the Zaibatsu business framework or have taken up positions in the Government which enable them to maintain the same type of tight controls. Small businessmen, moreover, are unable to obtain sufficient financing from banks because banking institutions still are dominated by Zaibatsu influences. Their only alternative, therefore, has been to turn to black-market operation as a means of livelihood." As for the political purges,

they are not punitive—deNazification is punitive in Germany. If a Japanese is purged, he is only barred from office; he is not jailed, nor is his property confiscated. So that most of the 'purgees' continue to be just as powerful and influential—from behind the scenes—as they used to be prior to the surrender. A striking instance of the survival of the old order is the 'Oyabun-Kobun' or boss-henchman system, which perpetuates feudal loyalties and fanaticism while making money through graft and extortion. Recent investigations have disclosed that the powerful Oyabuns have strong links with prominent members of the conservative political parties. SCAP chiefs have recently warned against the 'hidden government' of these groups. At a time of acute shortages and inflation, vast quantities of war materials have been hidden by the big industrial combines—part of which is being sold in the black-market and the rest kept by for use when Japan should be handed back to the Japanese. It has therefore been said: "The Army took over from big business when Japan went to war, and when the war ended, they handed Japan back to them for safe keeping."

Any concerted drive against Japan's age-old feudal relationships on the land and against the industrial monopolies will involve a degree of 'radicalism' for which General MacArthur and the U.S. State Department are definitely not ready. Trade union activity was at first encouraged by SCAP. But when it was found that, in January 1947, the workers had imbibed the democratic lessons taught by the occupation officials (and strongly reinforced by Japanese Communists who had spent 15 to 18 years in prison under the old regime) sufficiently to prepare for a general strike, General MacArthur came down upon them with a military order prohibiting the general strike. The strike was intended to secure wage increases (not obtainable by negotiation with the employers) to compensate for the cost of living which had shot up under the familiar conditions of post-war inflation.

"There are many occupation authorities who felt that the unions, without representing the majority of the Japanese people, were unexpectedly in a position to effect economic and political changes which actually should be left to the public polls. Some go so far as to suggest that the occupation has bred something in the nature of a Frankensteinian monster," wrote a correspondent. The monster under question is, of course, Communism—which is the crux of the whole matter.

#### AMERICA'S DILEMMA

Few would be so uncharitable as to doubt the sincerity of America's professed desire to democratise Japan; but American foreign policy ever since President Truman announced his now famous doctrine, is committed to hostility towards Russia and Communism. And it happens that in Japan, as elsewhere, the elements that would have to be suppressed in any process of democratisation are the very elements that are most firmly opposed (like America) to Russia and Communism. General Hideki Tojo, Japan's war-time Premier, declared on December 26, 1947, before the International Military Tribunal which is trying him for war crimes: "Japan has always been deeply concerned over Communism in Asia. She realized that the activities of the Chinese Communist Party were among the important causes preventing the establishment of peace between Japan and China in the China Incident. Thus she made the joint prevention of Communism one of the conditions for settlement of the Incident and also made prevention of Communism an essential policy among the independent States of East Asia. This was all done with a view to saving East Asia from the danger of Bolshevization and at the same time making herself a barrier against world Bolshevization. The present condition of the world, two years after the end of World War II, eloquently tells how important these barriers were for the peace of the world." Exactly a month after this testimony by Tojo, on

January 6, 1948, Mr. Kenneth Royall, Secretary of the Army of U.S.A., discussed occupation policy in Japan and said: "Our decisions will be made with realism and with a firm determination of doing all possible to prevent Japan from again waging unprovoked and aggressive and cruel war against any other nation. We hold to an equally definite purpose of building in Japan a self-sufficient democracy, strong enough and stable enough to support itself and at the same time to serve as a deterrent against any other totalitarian war threats which might hereafter arise in the Far East." The 'totalitarian war threat' referred to being no other than that associated with Communist Russia, can a more suitable instrument of U.S. policy be found than General Tojo himself? Mr. Royall would not, of course, go so far. He told reporters after his address that his use of the word 'deterrent' was not meant to suggest military rearmament of the Japanese. There were different types of aggression, he explained, and any sound democratic Government was a 'deterrent' against totalitarianism even without arms. As early as March 1947, Mr. George Acheson, speaking as delegate from the U.S. to the Allied Control Council for Japan, said that the American people now had "an objective and non-emotional attitude towards Japan." It may be doubted whether the attitude of the Americans will ever become so 'non-emotional' as to permit them to 'forget and forgive' Pearl Harbour. But one cannot say. Power politics are played with such non-human detachment that in the event of the Third World War of our century breaking out, Japan will almost certainly be a valued ally of the U.S. against Russia. Already, certain Japanese spokesmen have made the modest proposal that since "in Japan today the demobilized Japanese army is a burden upon the nation, they could easily be spared, especially in view of Japan's still rapidly expanding population. America must permit these Japanese troops to be rearmed.

They should permit them to go to China, to fight with the Chinese Nationalist armies against the Chinese Communists and to colonize and settle on the Continent. They should be permitted particularly to re-establish themselves in Manchuria where, before the outbreak of the Pacific war, they proved their ability to block Russian Communist infiltration into the central regions of Asia."

## THE MONTESSORI SYSTEM

by RAJAM

THE Montessori system of education which is gaining great popularity in the modern era, has revolutionised the whole field of education.

Born of Italian parents, Madame Montessori was the first woman doctor in her country to get the degree of Medicine. She became an assistant doctor in the Psychiatric Clinic at Rome where she specialised in the study of the diseases of young children. At that time, the conditions in Rome were such that both the insane and the mentally deficient children were treated alike.

Madame Montessori made a new approach to the sphere of pedagogy with absolutely new aims and entirely different equipment from that used in the ordinary educational system. When she took up the post of Director of the State Orthophrenic school she had the opportunity to be in close touch with the children there. All of a sudden a miracle took place. A deficient child had passed the examination with greater ease and higher marks than the normal children. It was this incident that made Madame train normal children in her method.

She tried to find the reason for the difference in progress between the children trained in her method and those in ordinary schools. The answer for this came when she took up the organisation and management of the tenement house of Signor Talamo. Signor Talamo had started these houses for the children who had to be left to themselves while their parents went to work.

It is thus a hard choice with which America is faced. Preserve the old order in Japan out of hostility to Russia and Communism, or destroy it out of love for democracy? The way in which America answers for herself this question with reference to Greece, China and Japan will determine, in part, the immediate course of the world's history.

It was now that she found that the child needs to live and act in an atmosphere of freedom if he is to develop his personality. But this is the last thing that education in the so-called civilized countries allows the child. Man has made a mess of himself by making a mess of education. As a result of this, he has paralysed the activity of the child and arrested his growth. The adult denies the child freedom of thought and of life in addition to the denial of freedom of action. This dogmatism gives false ideas and false standards of the world to the child, and it was against it that Madame Montessori fought. She said that the fundamental nature of the child is 'intelligent and good'. The adult has never thought of giving freedom to the child, but yet the child is worthier of this freedom than the adult. Madame proved by her discoveries that self-education is the best as it fostered most the growth of the personality of the child. Her advice to all is: "Give freedom to the child and cease to be dogmatic. Always be in the background giving aid whenever needed. Then the child's real nature reveals itself automatically."

The chief idea that inspired Madame Montessori was the idea of self-development in an atmosphere of freedom. Her greatness lies in the faith she places on her discoveries. Her revelations almost took her by surprise, but when they did come, she took hold of them and made a scientific study of the subject and this was a great step in the history of child education.

## BISMARCK OF INDIA

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

IT was K. M. Munshi who once aptly called Sardar Patel the Bismarck of India. The similarity between these two statesmen in character and achievements is more than superficial and is well worth studying in detail.

In physical appearance, Patel is very much like Bismarck, of a little more than medium height, stockily built, barrel-chested, square-jawed and thick-necked. The facial resemblance would have been closer and more apparent if the Sardar had retained his once richly grown moustache. The features of both clearly show them as intense realists and men of action.

Bismarck had a boisterous and rebellious youth and took to politics only after he was forty. Patel was also a very troublesome student and came into the political struggle only by about his fortieth year. Both were drawn from among a hard-headed peasantry and had the innate commonsense and shrewdness of peasants.

Bismarck's supreme work was the unification of the petty principalities of Germany into one strong modern State. By force and persuasion, he achieved this in the end, though many petty principalities just retained a shadow of power. So long as the third party, Austria, was the leader of the German concert this was impossible, but on the defeat and removal of Austria from the picture, the process of unification of the small German principalities was hastened and achieved by the astute diplomacy of Bismarck. Similarly, the removal of the British suzerainty had left the way clear for the unification or absorption of the smaller States into the Indian Union. Patel's greatest achievement lies not merely in that he has succeeded where all others had previously failed, but that he had effected the unification of the States with such little use of force, and far more quickly and unostentatiously than Bismarck in

Germany. An astute realist, he called himself neither a friend nor enemy of the princely order in the abstract, but by persuasion and diplomacy he dealt with the individual cases on their merits. Patel knew that just as disintegration led to further disintegration, so also integration makes for greater integration. Once the first step was taken in Orissa, State after State either integrated into the Indian Union or among themselves as in Kathiawar. Excepting for the rebuff at the hands of the Nizam, Patel's measure of success is far greater than Bismarck's.

In politics, like Bismarck, Patel is an out-and-out realist. Bismarck was openly contemptuous of people and things that did not matter to him. But long association with Gandhiji has modified Patel's contempt for mobs and impracticable ideals. Like Bismarck, Patel is above all a full-fledged patriot, with all his limitations. Lofty ideals of internationalism do not appeal to him in the abstract, for he prefers to deal with men and nations on concrete issues of immediate importance. His realism is often mistaken by hasty ill-informed political hot-heads for reactionism with which, like Bismarck, he has often been charged unjustly.

In economic issues, like Bismarck, Patel believes in concrete plans and achievements and shares his contempt for social democracy. Apparently he thinks that social democracy means social demagoguery. Bismarck took the wind out of the sails of social democrats by providing public amenities and social insurance on a large scale. He was fully justified in his claim of having staved off social revolution in Germany by a century. Patel's contempt for Socialists as word-mongers is well known, but in the economic sphere, he will find it no easy task to repeat Bismarck's performance.

In frankness of speech and a grim sense of humour, Patel is almost exactly like Bismarck. A few years

before he declared war on Austria, Bismarck casually told Disraeli that the first item of his programme would be to declare war on Austria as early as possible, after which Disraeli remarked to the company to watch that man keenly, for he meant what he said. After the occupation of Paris in 1870, the great Frenchman Thiers fervently pleaded that the city may be vacated in order that the honour of France might be saved. As the eloquent Frenchman slowly drifted from the precise language of diplomacy into the vague periods of mob oratory, Bismarck suddenly pulled him up by answering him in an obscure German dialect. To the bewildered Frenchman, he explained that the language of Thiers was as unintelligible to him as his was to Thiers. Patel exhibited a similar grim sense of humour, in the Assembly, when in answer to a question by a Muslim Leaguer as to whether Muslims also will not be permitted to wear Kirpans like the Sikhs, he said,

"Yes, provided they embraced Sikhism."

The 'Iron man' of India is much better endowed and more fortunate than the 'Iron Chancellor' of Germany was in his time. Bismarck had only forty million Germans as his raw material, and a country in the same state of industrial development as pre-war India. Patel has, at his disposal, three hundred million men and women, and a land of immense potentialities to fashion into a strong State. Close association with Gandhiji, Nehru, and Rajendra Prasad has not only toned down his ruthlessness, but has made him understand if not assimilate the power of great ideals, even when impracticable. His blind spot however is in the sphere of economic planning. If only he is able to present a workable if not ideal economic programme for the good of the underdog, his realism and statesmanship will bring him far greater triumphs in future than in the past.

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## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

by C. KUNHAN RAJA

WHEN I was a student in Madras more than thirty years ago, there was some agitation against the compulsory teaching of the Bible in the educational institutions managed by Christian missions. I have felt then, and I still feel, that what ought to be done is not to oppose the imparting of instruction in the Bible in the institutions belonging to Christian missions, but to arrange for the imparting of instruction in the fundamentals of the Hindu faith in institutions owned by Hindu Associations. Further, the question of imparting religious instruction in all schools for all is a live issue at present. The problem is very complicated and requires serious study, impartial approach, careful planning and methodical execution.

In the case of Christianity or Islam, there is not the same complication in so far as there are not many denominational divisions among them. In European countries the problem creates little difficulty. The southern countries like France, Spain and Italy are essentially Catholic countries. In Germany the Protestant States and the Catholic States are clearly demarcated, so to speak. Even in England where Catholics and Protestants live together, the problem was not beset with any complication. So religious education could be imparted in those countries without any serious difficulty. Further, the Church played a prominent part in the educational system of those countries and the Church, being denominational, could arrange for the needed instruction in their denominational faith.

In India, there was no difficulty when education was in the hands of the ancient Acharyas, and when temples and mutts had their role to play in the education of the children of the land. Now, education has become a purely secular matter in India, so far as the institutions

maintained by the State are concerned. And institutions maintained by the State or by the Christian missions form a good majority of the educational institutions in the country. This is perhaps specially so in South India. For this reason, imparting instruction in Hinduism has become a very complicated matter in the country. The Christian institutions belong to some definite denominations and such institutions can easily arrange for imparting instruction in their particular denominational faiths. But the Hindus belonging to a variety of denominations join the same school or college, and it would be impracticable to arrange for the imparting of instruction in all the Hindu denominations in all the schools and colleges.

The one solution that has been suggested is that all controversial points in religion may be kept outside the common course in Hinduism, so that all Hindus can receive the needed instruction in their religion in all the schools. Thus, it is argued, there is no practical difficulty in introducing compulsory religious instruction for all, including all the Hindus, in the schools and colleges. But the real difficulty is that religion has only a denomination value and it has no generic value. If we take the common factor and keep aside all the points on which there are strong differences between denominations and denominations, practically everything which the followers of the different denominations consider as the salient feature of their religion has to be kept out. I do not know if we can call it instruction in religion. We cannot even accept certain texts that are recognised by all the denominations of Hindus, like the Gita. After all, a text is a religious text only as it is interpreted and not in itself; that is the case with the Bible. So, it will be an insipid and uninspiring religion that will

be taught under such an arrangement. It will be like taking the common factor in the food of a South Indian, of a Punjabi and of an Englishman, discarding the rice and the wheat *chappaties* and the beef, and giving them only potato with salt as the common food that must be acceptable to all.

If all denominational differences in Hinduism are abolished and only one common religion is recognised, will it be more effective than an attempt to abolish all differences between a cow, a horse, a dog and a fowl? Can we say that the difference between a cow as yielding milk, a dog as used for hunting, a horse that is used for riding and fowl that is used for getting eggs must be abolished and that all must be mere animals? Can a cow be an animal without being a cow? Similarly can an Advaitin or a Visishtadvaitin or a Dvaitin be a Hindu without being a follower of their respective denominations? This requires serious consideration.

And can we say that all Hindu temples are just Hindu temples without any differences in respect of communities and denominations? Temples serve a purpose in the social life of the people as centres of certain religious practices obtaining among the different denominations and different communities. To, so to speak, nationalise them, is to deprive them of the purpose for which they were established. And if this purpose is not served, what is the purpose for which the temples can be kept as "national property"? Suppose the railway carriages are thrown open to all the people without any such distinction like paying higher fares for occupying a higher class compartment, and suppose that at the same time, the carriages are not formed into trains on platforms and do not go from station to station, then why should there be the carriages at all? And why should anybody occupy the compartments? The temples have been established under certain rules of the *Agama Shashtra*. They have no importance as "places of public resort" like a park or the beach. Any attempt at bringing about homogeneity

in Hinduism may kill Hinduism or may deprive it of its purpose.

If like Christian missions maintaining denominational schools and colleges, Hindu temples and mutts can also maintain denominational schools where there will be full scope for the secular education and also for the imparting of instruction in their denominational faiths, that will be the best way of introducing religious instruction in India. Or, there can be denominational hostels or seminars for instruction in religion to students who attend common schools for the secular side of their education. As a first step, there must be arrangements for training a sufficient number of teachers to impart instruction in religion to the students. When there is no adequate staff to impart instruction in religion to those who are eager and willing to have that instruction, the question of compulsory religious instruction does not arise; it has at best only an academic interest. The temples can start with running full-time vacation courses of an intensive nature, or part-time courses during terms of a lighter nature, for teachers who can in due course take up religious instruction in the schools and colleges.

And when there is a strong religious atmosphere thus created in the schools and colleges through the presence of teachers who, besides their knowledge of their respective secular subjects, have a good knowledge of the cardinal points of Hinduism, that will create the Hindu spirit in the education of Hindus. They will serve as what I choose to term "the over-head-tank supply" of religion. And can we not leave it at that, allowing such of the students as may desire to do so, to study the course? Will it not leave a sufficiently wide and deep mark in the national life of the country? Anyway, it is better to have such an "over-head-tank supply" than to offer to the people a piece of rope and a bucket each, in the form of dilettanti and quacks. Either the rope may be too short or, if it is long enough to reach the bottom of the well, the well may not have any water.

## THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION: SOME REFLECTIONS

by Prof. M. VENKATARANGAIYA, M.A.

TWO views have been generally expressed regarding the nature of the constitution to be framed for a Free India. One is that it should be in conformity with Indian traditions and should reflect the genius of the nation. The other is that it should be an up-to-date one suited to the requirements of the modern age and contain within itself the principles to be found in the constitutions of the most advanced countries in the world like the United States, England, etc. On the whole it is the latter view that has influenced the makers of the draft constitution. It is based in the main on the features to be found in the constitutions of the United States, England, the Weimar Republic and Canada. There is very little in it that is indigenous in character. This is not to deprecate it in any way. Perhaps the authors found it impossible to discover what the Indian traditions are in this respect. Mahatma Gandhi used to speak of Panchayat Raj as the traditional Indian system of government and it has been elaborated by Principal Agarwala in his book on Gandhian Constitution. But this has not at all influenced the Committee that has drafted the present constitution.

This does not mean that the draft constitution has no local colouring. It has much of it and it would have been strange if it did not possess it to a considerable degree. This local colouring is given to it by the solution which it offers to some of the complicated problems that have come to affect Indian political life in the last thirty years though almost all of them were the outcome of the policy of 'Divide and Rule' adopted by the British. Of these the communal problem and the problem of minorities are the most acute. And no constitution can be framed for

India without these problems being taken into consideration.

There are two ways of dealing with them. One is to recognise their existence and another to ignore them on the ground that they have no reality and that they are only the artificial creations of the British. The latter is the right course to adopt but it requires an extraordinary amount of courage—a really revolutionary temper. That kind of courage is not found in the authors of the draft constitution with the result that it perpetuates communalism to some extent or other. Every one now recognises that political rights and duties should have the individual as their basis and not the community to which he belongs. But this is lost sight of and seats have been reserved to certain so-called minority communities. More insidious than this is the provision for the appointment of a special officer for minorities for each State. This will result not only in perpetuating communal distinctions but also encouraging the manufacture of all sorts of communal grievances and creating undesirable friction in the State. Under a political system which is based on a new set of guiding principles formulated in Part IV of the draft constitution and which provide for guaranteeing to each individual adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work, right to work, right to education, etc., it is dangerous to keep alive the communal spirit through these special officers. It is therefore necessary to delete from the constitution all clauses which take into consideration the community or the class to which a citizen belongs, whether those clauses confer rights or impose obligations.

One criterion by which we have to judge the draft constitution is the extent to which it is likely to bring into existence a non-com-

munal secular State which is accepted as the right ideal for the country. This requires that every individual should be regarded as having equal rights of all kinds in the State irrespective of his religion, caste or creed. The draft constitution goes to a great extent in providing for this through its chapter on Fundamental Rights. These rights belong to all citizens. And it is a point to be noted that they cannot be in any way interfered with either by the Union Government or the Governments of the units, whether these units are provinces or Indian States. Untouchability is removed. But this provision of equal fundamental rights is subject to certain limitations of a communal character. For instance, Section 10 (3) says that "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens who, in the opinion of the State, are not adequately represented in the services under the State." This perpetuates communalism in the public services. Section 286 (4) also contemplates the allocation of appointments and posts as between the various communities in the Union or a State. It is only when such reservations are removed that we can be said to create a real secular and non-theocratic State.

The draft constitution proposes to create a democratic State. The essence of such a State is that it provides for a Government which is responsible to the governed. Such responsibility is guaranteed through periodical elections of those who are at the head of the State and in these elections all the adults in the State have the right to take part. These features are to be found in the draft constitution. There is adult suffrage. The legislatures of the Union as well as of the provincial units are wholly elective in character except for the small element of nomination to be found in the upper houses. The President of the Union is indirectly elected while the Governors of the States are to be elected by the people of

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the State or nominated by the President of the Union out of a panel of four persons elected by the State legislature. These provisions make the constitution quite democratic.

Two observations however have to be made in connection with these provisions. One is with reference to State Governors. The original idea was to have them elected by the people of the States. The alternative is now suggested that they should be nominated by the President of the Union from a panel of four elected by the State legislature. The alternative is decidedly better. An elected Governor besides a responsible Ministry will create friction. And a Governor should also be above all parties and represent the State as a whole. This advantage can be better secured by having him nominated by the President. There is however no need for a panel. The choice may be left entirely to the President.

The second observation is in regard to the powers of the President of the Union and the Governor of the State and their relation to their Council of Ministers. The draft constitution provides for a responsible form of government under which both at the centre and in the units there will be a ministry led by a Prime Minister collectively responsible to the legislature. This is after the British model. Under this system there is no place whatever for a President or Governor who has any real powers and who can override the advice of his Cabinet. He must be merely a constitutional head like the King in England. But the draft confers certain powers on the President or the Governor as the case might be. The President has a suspensory veto on legislation which is quite unnecessary when there is a bicameral legislature. He can send messages to Parliament in respect of bills pending in it and messages also on other matters. All this is inconsistent with a really responsible form of government. The same is the case with the provincial Governor. This introduces a sort of dualism and it is best that this aspect is reconsidered.

Section 93 of the Government of India Act of 1935 is reproduced though in a different form. Under this the Governor can declare a state of emergency, suspend the responsible form of government and, subject to control and direction from the President of the Union, exercise dictatorial rule. Of course such a provision is felt necessary now that we are passing through very critical times when there might be grave disorders.

There is nothing special about the relative powers of the two houses of legislature in the Union or in the provinces which may choose to adopt bicameralism. The second chamber has no powers in regard to money bills but otherwise it enjoys complete equality with the first. Deadlocks are to be removed through joint sittings of the two houses.

The same has to be said regarding the constitution of the courts. Judges have permanence of tenure and there is a guarantee of their independence. But there are two points which require further elucidation. One is clause 103 (2) which says that every judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President after consultation with such of the judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as may be necessary for the purpose. This is rather vague. It does not say definitely who and how many have to be consulted. Another clause which requires further elucidation is clause 107 which empowers the Chief Justice of India "to request any person who has held the office of a judge of the Supreme Court or of the Federal Court to sit and act as a Judge of the Supreme Court." This section does not specify the circumstances under which this power should be exercised. Unless they are specified they are liable to be abused.

The most unsatisfactory part of the draft constitution is that which relates to the powers of the units. It has all along been the idea that India should be a federal State with the units having real autonomy in

a certain sphere of their own. In a big country with so many differences between one region and another, it is not desirable to have a unitary form of government in which all powers are concentrated at the centre. It is sure to prove risky even from the point of the Central Government. It may find it impossible to exercise the powers with a view to the needs and requirements of particular provinces and regions. The best course, it has been always thought, is to have a federal system. Even the Government of India Act of 1935 brought such a system into existence. But under the draft constitution an Indian Union on the model of the Canadian State is created. It does not of course matter where the residuary powers are located. The autonomy of the units will not be very much affected by its location in the centre, which is what the draft constitution lays down. But the real danger lies in (1) enlarging the powers under the concurrent list; (2) giving to the centre the right to administer these powers while under the Government of India Act 1935 administrative powers were lodged with the provinces; and most of all (3) in the provision contained in section 226 which

says: "Notwithstanding any provisions of this chapter if the Council of States has decided by resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting that it is necessary or expedient in the national interest that Parliament should make laws with respect to any matters enumerated in the State list specified in the resolution, it shall be lawful for Parliament to make laws for the whole or part of the territory with respect to the matter." This means that a State which is a unit in the Union has no guarantee that it will be sovereign even in respect of matters enumerated in the State list. The centre can always encroach upon it through a resolution of the upper house. No amendment of the constitution is required for the purpose. This strikes at the root of provincial autonomy. It is this section that has to be revised and even completely removed from the constitution.

It may be concluded that the draft constitution is on the whole a highly satisfactory document but that it requires revision in certain essential respects if we are to have a truly non-communal, secular, democratic State federal in its character.

Where do people get the idea that Gandhi is ugly? It is true that his limbs and body are emaciated—his ascetic life produces no surplus flesh. But his frame is large, and his stature erect and of medium height; I have seen many Indians who are much more insignificant in appearance than Mahatma Gandhi. It is true also that his individual features are not lovely. He has a shaven head, protruding ears, thick lips and a mouth that is minus many of its teeth. But his dark complexion is richly beautiful against the white background of his shawl, his eyes shine like candles in the night, and over all is the radiance of a smile like sunshine on a morning landscape. What impresses you is not the physical appearance but the spiritual presence of this man. You think at once of his simplicity, his sincerity, his innocence. He approaches you with all the naturalness and spontaneity of a little child. There is not an atom of self-consciousness in Gandhi—in spite of all his greatness in the world and all the adulation which has been heaped upon him, he has no pose, no pretentiousness, no pride. You realize at once that his peculiar aspects of appearance and his peculiar ways of life have nothing fraudulent about them, but are the honest and fearless expression of a transcendent personality. Therefore, you do not think of how he looks, but only of what he is. You see truth, in other words, shining through the imperfect garment of the flesh. It is this which makes Gandhi beautiful. For truth is beauty!—John Haynes Holmes.

## CULTURE BE D—D

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

THE late Field-Marshal Goering the Nazi leader, is reported to have said on one occasion, "When I hear talk of culture, I feel like taking out my revolver." Though I detest Nazism and Fascism, I must confess that I feel as the Field-Marshal did when I hear or read of Indian leaders and Indians holding high positions speaking of the magnificence of India's culture and the glories of India's past. I feel much more like it when I hear talk of the glories of Tamil culture, Andhra culture, Kerala culture, Maharashtra culture, Karnataka culture and so on ad nauseam.

Perpetual talk of the glories of a nation's past is a sign of old age, senility and lack of vitality. When we were a slave nation, the present was so humiliating and shameful that we were forced to boost our past so that we might preserve our self-respect and hold our heads high. We suffered then from a severe "inferiority complex" and a glorious past served as our defence mechanism. It also served as a powerful stimulus in our struggle against foreign domination. But our leaders, our ministers, our judges, our high officials (retired or otherwise) still go on talking about our glorious past, our magnificent heritage, our splendid culture, etc. Not a day passes without speeches and statements boosting our pasts. Why is this? Other great nations do not make themselves ridiculous in this way. The Abbe Dubois, a French missionary, who lived for many years in intimate contact with the people of India more than a century ago, wrote of them as "a vain and self-sufficient people, filled with the idea of their own moral ascendancy." This seems to be as true today though we have won our independence and gigantic problems of great complexity are facing us. There is also another reason. Our educated classes, our intelligentsia, are intellectually "half-baked."

They have neither the true historic sense nor a grasp of modern thought and of the forces that are shaping the world of today and tomorrow. An unbiassed and discriminating lover of our past ought to be able to realise that, in the context of Indian conditions today, we have much greater justification to be indignant with and ashamed of our past than to be proud of it. The terrible things that have happened in our country, the abduction and rape of women and the mutilation and murder of children should make us hang down our heads in shame and cause deep searching of our hearts. Is India civilised? Are we a cultured people? Has not our magnificent culture proved to be skin-deep, a thin top layer covering a seething and boiling mass of savagery and barbarism? The truth is that Hinduism, the caste and social tyrannies which it imposed, the seclusion and subjection of women, untouchability, etc., have for centuries deprived the mass of our population of adequate opportunity for development and arrested them in a condition of barbarism. Mahatma Gandhi realised this more than any other Indian. He never gushed about our past and his whole life was devoted to the work, which involved both destruction and construction—of building up a great future for India. People who are always talking and boasting of India's culture and spirituality are, in the eyes of a true patriot, the enemies of India. They are diverting our energies from the task of grappling with the problems of the present and the future. They are giving the wrong lead to our young men and women and administering 'dope' to the mass of the population. Fortunately perhaps such men do not matter. They are nearly always old and tired men awaiting death and afraid of the present and the future and,

ostrich-like, hiding their heads in the past.

The world is too polite to laugh at us when we shout and boast from the house-tops, "We are a great spiritual people and we have a great message to deliver which the world is waiting to hear and follow". The fact is that the greatness of our civilisation and culture has been absurdly exaggerated, mainly by ourselves, but partly also by European indologists and theosophists. The fact remains that among the great nations today we are in every respect the most backward, except perhaps in area and population. India has been well compared to a man who got up at five in the morning, worked very hard until seven and then went to sleep and he is still sleeping and dreaming of the great things he had done. Other nations may have got up much later but they did not go to sleep again, they have been working steadily. Our civilisation and culture petrified more than a thousand years ago, the springs of vitality went dry, the creative energy disappeared. The result was backwardness, stagnation, decadence and deterioration. Orthodox Hinduism, our sacerdotal traditions, our Sastras and our Smritis and the rigid social structure which they imposed are responsible for this national decline and fall. Today, we are backward not only materially but morally and, yes, spiritually. How can Mr. Munshi and other champions of "Aryan Culture" deny our moral and spiritual degradation when the Prime Minister announces that the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi was not the isolated act of a lunatic, that groups and parties are involved in it and that sweets were distributed to celebrate the event!

Worshippers of India's past seem to think that they can get away with it by quoting the Upanishads and the Bhagawat Gita and by conjuring with the names of Buddha, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and by trying to exploit and cash in on Mahatma Gandhi. But the Bhagawat Gita regards the

caste system as the natural order of society and its conception of "Dharma", that every man should faithfully perform the duties and carry out the obligations of the caste in which he is born is static and not dynamic. As for the great names mentioned above, they stand on close examination not for championship but for denunciation and condemnation of the prevailing religion, culture and traditions of the country. What guidance or help can our cultural heritage afford us in tackling our grave and urgent problems—poverty, low standard of life, ignorance and illiteracy, disease and overpopulation? None at all, so far as I can see. We cannot successfully deal with them unless we study what advanced countries have done and adopt the modern and scientific methods and techniques which they have followed. The Constituent Assembly has declared that the ideals and objectives of India shall be (1) national unity, (2) a secular democratic State, (3) social and economic justice and (4) equality of opportunity. Now, can it be denied that certain institutions and traditions which have come to us from the past and are still governing our lives today will prove to be a menace to the attainment of these ideals and objectives? From the cradle to the grave, the lives of millions of our people are governed and regulated by pseudo-religious rules and injunctions. They waste their energy and substance and time in the performance of numerous rites and ceremonies and in pilgrimages. Certain religious beliefs like the doctrine of Karma, which can neither be proved nor disproved have made them uncomplaining victims of their fate and weakened their will to live and strive. The mind and outlook of the common man has to be completely transformed and revolutionised. He has to lessen his religiosity and turn to science. This is going to be a herculean task but it has to be undertaken and accomplished if our schemes and plans for social and economic reconstruction are

to have any chance of success. Along with this psychological revolution, we have to proceed with effective measures for the overthrow of caste and untouchability and communalism, of feudalism and unrestrained capitalism and for the emancipation of women.

Our ancient civilisation, like that of mediaeval Europe, was dominated by theocratic, monarchic, feudal and aristocratic elements; our present and future are bound up with Nationalism, Democracy and Socialism. The English have a homely saying, "You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs." Its application here is that

we cannot build up a great future for India unless we break away from the past, resolutely turn our backs to it and make a bold realistic and scientific approach to the problems of life and society, ruthlessly destroying everything in our ancient civilisation, our traditions and our culture that stands in the way. Let us go ahead, then, with courage and determination and faith in our destiny. We belong to the same stock as our ancestors; they created a great civilisation in the past suited to their age and conditions; we can also create a new civilisation suited to our age and conditions and the modern world.

## FAIRPLAY FOR THE BURMESE

by K. G. SIVASWAMY

LAND legislation in Burma which has been recently the target of attack by the Madras Legislative Assembly is so sound that no student of economics can take exception to it. The Burma Land Alienation Act restricting transfers with a view to prevent sale of lands to non-agriculturists, was passed as early as May, 1939. This act was based on the report of the Land and Agricultural Committee which has gone into the question of the appropriation of the land of the cultivating Burmans by rentier investors like the Chettis of South India. This committee said about the land holding by Chettis:

"The ownership of considerable land by the foreigner is followed sooner or later by political trouble arising from the natural demand of the nationals of the country for the ownership of the land. We think that conditions in Lower Burma are nearing the danger point and that the continued transfer of land from the agriculturists to the non-agriculturists is likely to result in violent agitation for the ousting of the foreign ownership."

Nothing is gained by our legislators quoting the provisions of the Land Alienation Act which controlled transfer of lands by non-agricul-

turists. It was an essential legislation in the interest of peace and harmony in Burma's agricultural economy.

The Standard Rent Act says nothing more than that the landowner should get a sum equal to the land revenue as rent due to him. Land revenue in Burma as in India has been fixed as 50% of the net income from land. It is rather strange that members of the Madras Legislative Assembly who cry hoarse for a reduction in land revenue and whose views have been fully supported by the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister who has promised to bring shortly a Bill on this question, should speak in the same breath that this sum of land revenue when granted as rent to a Chetti landowner in Burma is an extremely meagre sum. Land revenue being 50% of the net income, there is only another 50% left that could be given to a rentier Chettiar as rent, unless you want to deprive the cultivator of the return due to him in lieu of cultivation expenses and his own labour. The only increase that might be legitimately asked by a rentier landholder is the price benefit. But then Government should increase the land revenue due to itself and might also provide for a similar sum

as rent. But this rent should also be subject to reduction when there is a fall in price. The Disposal of Tenancies Act, Burma, empowers the Government to make leases of agricultural lands and regulate and control them. But this power shall not apply to any agricultural lands "(a) not exceeding 50 acres in area and in the possession of a person who is engaged in the cultivation of land with his own lands as his principal means of subsistence; or (b) belonging to any institution created, controlled or guaranteed by Government or to any religious or charitable institution." This legislation does nothing more than follow the provisions of the U.P. Tenancy Act passed in 1939, in the shaping of which the present Prime Minister of the Indian Union played no small part. It is common knowledge that it was through his effort that the Viceroy assented to the U.P. Tenancy Act which restricted the area of proprietary land of a landholder to 50 acres in the U.P.

As regards fair rents, it has been laid down in U.P. that fair rent cannot exceed 1/5 of gross produce. The Tenancy Act provides for 1/3 in Bengal. Mahatma Gandhi blessed the Thiribagh movement and considered 1/3 of gross produce as fair rent. In Madras rents have been reduced by the Rent Reduction Act to a sum of land revenue in ryotwari areas which is not more than 50% of the net income. It is a sad fact that we are being governed today in Madras by a legislature which can sing to the tune set by Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar. It is a sadder fact that Dr. Subbarayan should argue that Indians should concern themselves with protecting the assets of rapacious Indian moneylenders in foreign countries because these landholders belong to India. It means that what we care for is profits for Indians, no matter how they are earned, and what grave economic consequences they might produce in Burma. It means, too, that the common man in India should feel delighted at the aggrandizement of a few Chettis, while benefiting himself in no way by it, but on the other hand

creating for himself a gratuitous bitterness of relationship with a neighbouring nation. Against all the special pleading by the Madras Assembly, Mr. Kaleswara Rao, Mr. P. Venkateswaralu and Mr. Abdul Salam, are to be congratulated for raising their voices in defence of fairplay towards the Burmese.

Some members of the Assembly have said that the proposal of requesting that all land legislation in Burma be kept in abeyance, has not been supported by the Central Assembly. If this is true, all honour to the latter for keeping Indian reputation unsullied and helping towards better relations between India and Burma. May I request the Prime Minister of the Indian Union to take note of these facts and to pause before giving any further support to this unjust and artificial agitation set up by a few Chettis?



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## SRIMATHI RUKMINI DEVI

by HIRO P. SHROFF

**R**UKMINI Devi was born of Brahmana parents on 29th February 1904, at Madura, South India. Her father was Sri. A. Nilakanta Sastri of Thiruvananthapuram, a well-known and much respected Sanskrit scholar and engineer. Her mother, Srimati Seshammal is from a learned family of Thiruvayar, a village rich with associations of Sri. Thyagaraja. Thus Rukmini Devi's inherited background is one of culture, art and learning.

As a child, Rukmini Devi displayed great interest in many of the arts, and for a long time dreamed of becoming a musician. Through her father she came into contact with the Theosophical Society and its leaders at an early age, and at seven years she first met Mr. (later Bishop) C. W. Leadbeater. A great friendship arose. From him she feels she has largely obtained her principles in education and understanding of the young.

In 1918 she met Dr. Arundale at a tea party given at Adyar by Miss Arundale, Dr. Arundale's aunt. Rukmini Devi and her family were on terms of very close friendship with him and in April 1920, she married him. There was a great storm of protest over this marriage, but Dr. Besant had sponsored it from the very beginning and wrote very strongly in her "New India" against those who attacked it.

Rukmini Devi first met Dr. Besant personally in 1920, though she had often seen and heard her before, and became one of her most ardent and devoted followers and helpers. It is to Dr. Besant that Rukmini Devi feels she owes her love of the Motherland and very much else which has shaped her ideals and pattern of life.

In 1923 Rukmini Devi became the first President of the All-India Federation of Young Theosophists, to become later, in 1925 at its inception, the President of the World Federation of Young Theosophists.

She relinquished the Presidentship of the All-India Federation of Young Theosophists this year, but she still continues to be the President of the World Federation of Young Theosophists. In 1924 she and Dr. Arundale travelled to Europe; for her the first journey out of India. She showed a remarkable adaptability to the West, but never lost her true Indian identity. In 1926, she travelled to Australia. In Australia she met Madame Anna Pavlova, the greatest classical dancer of Russian ballet of modern times, and a great friendship sprang up between these two artists, which influenced Rukmini Devi's future work in no small degree.

Between this period and 1935 there was a time of much travel and lecturing both for Dr. Arundale and Rukmini Devi. She visited many countries including the United States of America, where she has since given many lectures on India and Indian culture to appreciative audiences. Besides this lecturing, which has become an important part of her work everywhere, she has taken much time and infinite pains to study and in many cases to learn the arts and culture of other countries. She is a very proficient exponent of classical Russian ballet, having had lessons in Australia and other places under expert teachers.

The years 1935-36 constitute an important period in her life. In 1935 she had already started learning dancing, but one day she saw Sri. Meenakshisundaram Pillai of Pandanallur at a Bharata Natya recital in Madras, and she was determined to learn all she could from him, for she saw in him a great genius. This was arranged, and from that time onwards we can perceive the combination of her genius and creative inspiration with his deep knowledge of the science and its age-old traditions. She had also met Brahmasri Papanasam Sivan and had done all she

could to bring this musical genius to the fore and to make his inspired works known to the general public. Here also a splendid co-operation sprang up, the result of which we see in her art. On January 1936 during the Diamond Jubilee Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, the International Academy of the Arts, later known as Kalakshetra, was inaugurated. She is the President-Founder of the institution.

March 1936 saw the first really important public dance recital given by Rukmini Devi. From this date her public career as a dancer may be said to have begun. From 1936 onwards she gave several Bharata Natya recitals and in 1939 she undertook her first extended tour in Southern India with remarkable success.

As part of the work of Kalakshetra she has started a weaving department which was opened in

September, 1937 by Mr. V. V. Giri, the then Minister of Industries and Labour in the Madras Government. She has organized exhibitions of pictures and of the Ideal Indian Home. She also organized a splendid arts appreciation course during the first Indian Montessori training course at Adyar, 1938-39, with the co-operation of Madame Montessori, a patron of Kalakshetra.

In 1946 she undertook an extensive tour of Europe in connection with the Besant Centenary Celebrations. Besides her other activities, she now runs the Besant International Cultural Centre, which was inaugurated by Dr. Montessori on 1st October 1947 as part of the Besant Centenary Celebrations. This Centre includes the Arundale-Montessori Training Centre for teachers, the Kalakshetra which is an art centre and the Besant Theosophical School.

## FOR THE BIRTHDAY OF AN ARTIST\*

I

### THE GIFT

For the great gift of Beauty that you gave—  
Not, the pure loveliness of form and face,  
Not this alone, nor the heroic grace  
That told our timid spirits to be brave;  
But for the ecstasy serene and grave  
That with the Lord of Dance\*\* dared equal pace,  
Calling the timeless into time and place,  
Breaking the bonds that would the soul enslave—  
What shall we give? Such beauty as is ours  
Can add no tittle to your perfect praise.  
Take as our offering our unlovely powers,  
And in the transformation of your gaze  
Change them to beautiful unfading flowers  
To light with love the world's unlovely ways.

II

### FOR THE PRESERVATION OF MEMORY

How shall we in our memory hold you fast,  
After life's vessel, deep with treasure, steers  
Beyond the coastline of familiar years,  
With unfamiliar stars above its mast?  
How, in the depths unruffled by a blast,  
Deeper than our profoundest hopes and fears,  
Shall we, gone speechless, speak with old compeers,  
Or sing new songs when singing time is past?  
Friend, in the wavering shadows round us cast  
Come, let us seek the light that never veers;  
Find the heart's homeliness within the vast;  
Share the unbreakable friendship of the spheres;  
And reach the loyalty that shall outlast  
The verdicts of outmoded eyes and ears.

JAMES H. COUSINS.

\* Rukmini Devi, February 29, 1948.

\*\* Nataraja, the patron deity of Hindu dancers.

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# BOOKS & AUTHORS

**"Asamardhuni Jeevayatra".** Novel in Telugu by T. Gopichand. (Published by Navayuga Prachuranalayam. Pedasanaganallu, Kistna Dt.)

As a pioneer in the field of effective modern prose in Telugu the author of this book has already made a name. Through his many short stories and sketches he has set a new fashion in writing: one word suffices where previously a whole sentence was thought necessary and one short sentence functions for a whole paragraph of the earlier mode. Pictures of men and women are drawn not from fancy but from real life—interrupted as it were in their daily routine, to step on to the pages of the New Writing. There is no apparent moral in the tale; but it sets us violently thinking.

This book is Mr. Gopichand's second effort in novel writing. Like his earlier work "Parivartana" it has also to do with an idealist. But there, the idealist ultimately gets married (for a second time) at the behest of his dead wife and the barren rose-garden flowers afresh. "Asamardhuni Jeevayatra" is just the opposite, although, in both the works, the idealist is represented to be in great travail to adjust himself to his environment. In this second book our man starts with a happy family, a few good friends and with riches and attendant honour; but he ruins it all by thinking too much and doing too little—too little of real worth. Subjecting himself to a severe form of self-examination, he sees one by one of his favourite 'values' slipping away, and ultimately he is forced to behave in a manner which would have utterly shocked his previous self. In the ensuing conflict, he loses his normality; he who started to end the world's wrongs, ends with ending himself.

There is much in this work that arrests attention—particularly the manner of telling the tale, the eminently suitable vocabulary and the many word-pictures that make up the entire novel. Some scenes may be too vivid and even bizarre to be pleasant reading; occasionally, the author himself is seen having a hearty fling at a person or an institution that has merited his special dis-

dain. In a few instances, a little restraint would have lent great effect. But the writing is good and a second reading brings out its real worth.

One cannot help comparing passages from this book with some of that very realistic writer Gerald Kerch. Kerch has this paragraph in his latest book "A Prelude to a Certain Midnight": ".....His eyes were like two stars reflected in the rippling surface of a puddle. 'I really don't know, My dear Sir, How can I know? God doesn't tell me his business, does He? Who the deuce are you that you must know everything? Do your toe-nails insist on knowing what your head is doing? Does the body of the martyr understand the soul that tells it to burn at the stake?....'"

Parallels to this paragraph abound in Mr. Gopichand's "Asamardhuni Jeevayatra" ("The Life Journey of the Incapable")—a work of great merit, not really a novel in the strict sense of the word, but a treatise, a biography, and to the reader who knows Mr. Gopichand only through his books, a frank confession.

This is a book, worth reading and, in spite of its gruesome ending, worth keeping.

**Kashmir Fights for Freedom.** By K. Ahmad Abbas. (Kutub Publishers Ltd., Bombay. As. 8.)

This is a timely brochure on the Kashmir problem. The way Kashmir was acquired from the British, the autocracy that has been prevailing there for the past century, the genesis of the present crisis are described in dramatic detail. The attitude that India should take to the problem, the author frankly says, is vitiated by communalism and the lingering persistent hopes of the Dogras and the Maharaja to regain their supremacy. Abbas believes that the only thing to do is to give Shaikh Abdulla a free hand.

**Economic Planning for India.** By Mrityunjoy Bannerjee, M.A. (Padmaja Publications. Baroda. Price Rs. 2.)

This is yet another book on national planning. It does not offer any clear cut solution, if at all there is one, of

the national muddle. First, a brief history of the circumstances that led from laissez-faire to planned economy is given. Next an analysis of the Soviet experiment with the usual remark that though it produced results, it was but at the expense of the kulaks as a whole. Then facts are quoted about India's present economic position, and the minimum requisites for decent national life. The various plans succeeding the tentative Imperialist attempts, viz., the Bombay Plan, the People's Plan and the Gandhian Plan are discussed and the defects in each are pointed out. The author seems to think that a broad-based Socialist planning would meet the case. Though published in 1947, it does not contain any information on the economic repercussions of the Partition.

**Ceylon Souvenir.** (Govt. Of India Publication. Price As. 12.)

Interesting articles on the history and culture of Ceylon, and on the links between India and Ceylon through the ages, are to be found in this souvenir pamphlet issued by the Ministry of Information, Government of India, on the occasion of Ceylon's attainment of freedom. It is attractively got up and is illustrated with a number of excellent photographs.

**The Story Of Jawaharlal.** By Shakuntala Masani. (Published by the Oxford University Press. Price, Rs. 3-8.)

Kum Kum, to whom this story of Jawaharlal is told by Shakuntala Masani, must be a lucky little girl, for it is not the good fortune of all little girls (and much less of little boys) to be told history in such an entertaining manner. The story of course is very incomplete—a work of this kind could not be otherwise—but it does serve its apparent purpose, namely, to create in the minds of its readers a desire for more information about its subject. The illustrations, which are also by the author (there is no need to be fussy and take pains to point out that it is an authoress in this case) add great interest to this little work.

**Oxford Publishing 1478-1947.** Oxford University Press.

Among those who care for the English language in any way, who has not heard of the Oxford University Press? But not so many know—what is explained in OXFORD PUBLISHING—that the Press is not a company but a department of the University which uses all profits in the publication of books of

intrinsic value which have not a sufficiently wide sale to support themselves. Oxford publications range from the great Oxford dictionaries which few users of the English language can do without, to Bibles and Prayer Books, reprints in the "World's Classics," the "Oxford Standard Authors" the Oxford Medical and Musical publications, books for children, and books for the general reader. One of the best things that the Oxford University Press has given to the Indian reader is the series of pamphlets on Indian affairs—well-written, informative, authoritative. There is no doubt that the reading public would welcome the collection of these pamphlets into a single volume if the Oxford University Press thought it worth while to re-present them in that form.

**Fellowship of Faiths and Unity of All Religions.** By Mahatma Gandhi. Edited by Prof. Abdul Majid Khan. (G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras., Price Re. 1.)

The object of this collection of Mahatma Gandhi's writings on religion is to focus attention—at a time when this seems to be urgently necessary—on the essential oneness of all religions. Religions (not Religion) have played havoc with the lives of nations; they have served as the genuine or pretended cause of illwill, persecution, violence and untold misery. The fact of oneness of all religions is so obvious that it is astonishing why it is not more widely recognised. If all religions are good as their protagonists claim them to be (and as no doubt they actually are), it stands to reason that their underlying aims and principles must be essentially the same. Goodness, like peace, is indivisible, and cannot mean different things in different places. If the present book stimulates thought on these lines, it will have done one of the greatest services ever not only to India but to the world.

**A Brochure on Indian Independence.** By R. Srinivasa Iyengar. (B. G. Paul & Co. Madras, As. 8.)

This is a heterogeneous pamphlet containing the author's views on particular points of contemporary political interest. They do not form connected reading and one wonders what some of the articles have to do with Indian Independence either explicitly or implicitly. Barring all that, it is written in good lucid English and is eminently readable.

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## 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.

### Coom Stench

Two of the Ministers, not able to bear the stench of the Coom, left their residences in despair. How can the City public avoid it?

I. S. RAO.

Madras.

### Communalism Rampant

Communal organisations and conferences are springing up with feverish rapidity and they get a helping hand from some of the men in the political limelight. Is this the way to perpetuate the memory of the Father of the Nation?

S. BALASUBRAMANIAN.

Negapatam.

### Separatist Tendencies

I feel that in your issue of the 21st February, you have not condemned with sufficient force the Tamil Kazhagam resolution asking for a separate Tamil Province. It is disturbing to note that the resolution was not opposed even by the top Congress leaders. It is highly unfortunate that at a time like this when the great Sardar is making every effort to create a United India, when the smaller Indian States are being merged with the Union, a resolution of such a reactionary nature should have been passed. What right had we to condemn the attempts made previously by Travancore to keep independent if we wink at the separation of Tamil Nad from the Indian Union? How can we oppose the claim of Hyderabad to remain independent if we see such a resolution being passed? I myself am a Tamilian and I love my land as much as any one else. The bogey of North Indian domination raised by the self-appointed leaders at the Conference will never stand any examination. Tamil Nad has gained much by its association with the North. It is high time that such separatist tendencies are firmly checked. Will the Congress Working Committee take note of these things?

V. V.

### Casteless Society

Gandhiji, the apostle of peace and unity is no more. Entire responsibility for maintaining communal and class harmony rests on us. It is high time revolutionary reforms are adopted and

a casteless society built in the interest of human welfare. Scrap the communal G.Os. Put a stop to class hatred. Introduce legislation to put an end to the usage of suffixes like Iyer, Iyengar, Pantulu, Sastry, Nair, Nambiyar, Mudaliar, Pillai, Reddi, Nadar, Gownder, etc., after the names of persons. Do not recognise the castes. Educate the people. Facilitate inter-caste marriages. Will the Government look to these important and urgent reforms?

Sulurpeta. M. VENKATARAMAN.

### How To End Communalism

Since Mahatma Gandhi gave his life for ending communal strife, his task must be completed by his followers. Prime Minister Pandit Nehru has declared the Government's determination to put an end to communalism. The Government have banned the militant communal organisations. Others of the kind will probably go into voluntary liquidation.

Government should organise an extensive propaganda for clearing communal misunderstandings and establishing national unity as Gandhiji desired. They must prevent the provocation of communal ill-feelings by speakers and publishers.

Government must immediately abandon all rules and policies which preserve a sectarian outlook and promote jealousies in the administration, such as the distribution of jobs on a communal basis, prescription of lower qualifications and higher age-limit for certain communities in recruiting public servants, etc. Personal merit, tested in any rational way, must be the sole basis of appointments and promotions. The present policy undermines the loyalty and efficiency of the services.

Even more disastrous is the policy of regulating admissions to educational institutions in certain proportions of castes and creeds. It is an open injustice to many promising students and a suicidal waste of national talents. Grant of scholarships and other concessions on the basis of caste and creed is similarly unjust and provocative.

The maintenance of separate communal schools and colleges is a deliberate mischief and waste of revenues. Schools must not be nurseries of communalism. Backward classes will remain backward

if they are cut off from the forward ones.

Ameliorative measures adopted for the uplift of the depressed classes or Harijans exclusively, accentuate communal feelings. The "untouchables" have suffered from social and religious ostracism under the caste system. Their civil rights are now recognised. The new Indian constitution will remove their socio-religious disabilities entirely. The unofficial reform movement is going strong. Hereafter these people should be treated just like others in schemes for education, water supply, housing and other administrative activities of Government. Poverty, ignorance, oppression, etc., are suffered by members of all communities (in the religious sense) and all these sufferers must be helped equally by the State irrespective of their caste or creed.

Communities must be no longer recognised as units of the population for the purposes of Government in a secular State. It is sufficient protection for all castes and creeds that the State shall not discriminate against any of them and shall treat their members as equal citizens. Ambitious individuals create "minorities" and arouse animosities in order to assume leadership and claim concessions for selfish ends. Communal representatives in councils and services really exploit their communities and vitiate the services.

The draft constitution must be so amended as not to recognise religious communities for political purposes.

Hereafter the caste and religion of no citizen of India must be mentioned in any public record, except in cases involving questions of caste or religion. A person can be adequately described and identified by many other means.

Other modern nations despise the Indian nation for its caste system which is undemocratic. Though this system is rapidly breaking down, special efforts must be made to eradicate its evil aspects. Gandhiji in later years envisaged a casteless and classless India.

The offensive treatment of any person as an inferior on account of his birth, caste or religion must be punishable. Inter-marriage must be legalised and encouraged, but nobody should be compelled to change his faith and habits which do not harm others.

Muslim Leaguers in the past urged Muslim merchants to organise themselves separately and to dismiss their Hindu employees. A relic of that propaganda is the Muslim Chamber of

Commerce which is absurd and must be abolished. Muslim Bank, Vaisya Bank, Nayar Bank and such other sectarian names ought not to be recognised and registered by Government. All symbols of communalism that are inconsistent with national unity must go.

P. A. SANKARA SASTRI.

Calicut.

#### "Harijan"

The decision to discontinue "Harijan" will be welcomed; for as H. E. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar remarked, "the Harijan was Bapu's voice; and when his body has been consigned to the elements, it cannot go on." Moreover, the cause of the Harijans has been placed on a satisfactory condition; and to advance it, a medium is not necessary hereafter.

R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR.

Peelamedu.

#### Harijans Are Made

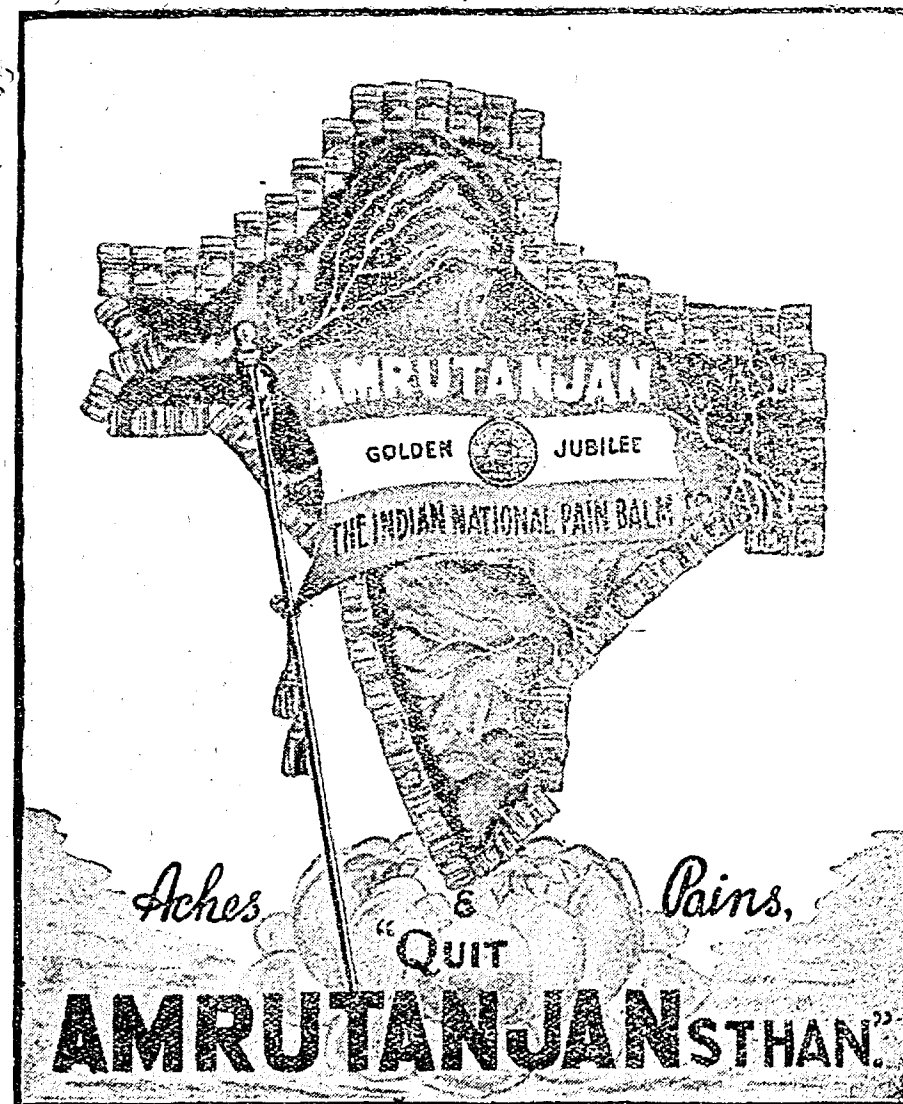
The term Harijans is generally applied to a class of people who are known as outcasts. But there are Harijans in every community in this caste-ridden country of ours. Really the poor of all communities are Harijans. Each community has its Harijans. I saw in a marriage at a Brahmin's house, a poor relation of the Brahmin was asked to get up from a seat at the time of dinner and sit in a verandah. He was treated as a Harijan. It is usual with the rich and powerful people to treat poor relatives with scant respect. Thus Harijans are not born but made by others.

Even Swamigals of Mutts treat rich and poor differently. There are Harijans everywhere and it is not correct to say that Harijans are a special class of people. Followers of Gandhiji should first try to eliminate this vital defect from each and every community and the so-called Harijans will be automatically uplifted.

SHASTRI.

#### SWATANTRA

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## SWATANTRA

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SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 1948

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FEBRUARY 12TH

Ye mighty rivers of this ancient land,  
Who, age to age, your sacred task have done,  
Decking with radiant hues, the pallid earth,  
Jaded beneath the kisses of the sun,  
Here, where in bud and leaflet, breaks the spring,  
And the glad land in every pore transpires,  
Back to Eternal Mind, from which it came,  
Some world-free soul transcends the blazing pyres.  
Now, in your rushing depths, a richer loam,  
By grieving millions, reverently is cast;  
Take on a higher work, ye happy streams,  
Than ever ye accomplished in the past,  
And in the hearts of men, plant ye your trust,  
Till all the land is gilt with that pale dust.

Miss K. M. MYERS.

# SWATANTRA

VOL. III  
No. 5

SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 1948

ISSUED  
WEEKLY

## COMMUNIST STATEMENT OF POLICY

THE Communist Statement of Policy simplifies matters too much and on that account fails to carry conviction, though certain parts of it are worthy of the attention of the Congress leaders now running the administration. Its anger with Lord Mountbatten over the partition of India is both cheap and misplaced. No party worked so ferociously for the partition as the Communists did under the slogan of self-determination. Their love of unity began after fulfilment of their earlier cry for separation. It therefore suffers by lack of persuasive appeal. Very few people will be found responsive these days when called upon by any party to blame others for the results of any policy of its own advocacy. The Communist attack on Pandit Nehru for his policy of "neutrality" in foreign affairs is likewise based on assumptions that are too readily taken for granted. The most important of these is the assumption that good and bad in the world today are sharply divided into regional camps, the imperialist and the democratic, so that not to back the one is to strengthen the other. Actually, the human beings that populate the world are not so simple. They are not just automatons in a world-wide class struggle. Present Communist insistence on the regionalisation of imperialism and capitalism casts a strain on those who were persuaded to accept their lead during the war, and affords one more instance of their practice of desertion and somersault in the mid-career of an argument, shaking by the roots the faiths which they themselves had just previously laboured so hard to build. Capitalism and imperialism are worldwide forces that have managed to creep even within the protected precincts of Communism under the sway of the Soviet Union, just as the challenge of democratic forces to regimes supposed to be capitalist and imperialist is by no means negligible in their own territory. As against the Communist theory that the Soviet Union is the sole repository of worthwhile human good, there are large bodies of no less progressive elements who believe in the advancement of society through agreement, negotiations and elections and through development of the social conscience within nations. Socialists belong to this class. The economic philosophies of Socialists and Communists coalesce up to a point. Both advocate common ownership of the means of production and are pledged to the displacement of the system of industrial organisation by private enterprise for profit. But whereas the Socialists believe that ethical considerations and cultural development can play an effective part through parliamentary means for the evolution of political patterns suited to their economic ends,

the Communists place their reliance only on seizure of power. This difference in ideology colours the respective attitudes of the Socialists and the Communists to the Marshall Plan. It accounts for the fact that Socialist parties all over Europe have been keenly interested in making a success of the Marshall Plan while the Communists have been straining every nerve to sabotage it. The Communists have no use for any form of human benefit which they do not themselves guide and control as they apparently feel that it is apt to spoil the ardour of the masses for the sort of revolution they dream of. Socialists therefore have become as obnoxious to the Communists as their traditional foes of the imperialist and capitalist systems.

In this background, Communist opposition to the Marshall Plan and to Pandit Nehru's neutrality policy stands out as a specious pleading of high power politics. The assumption that the one will lead us to subservience to Anglo-American imperialism and the other to economic ruin and colonial slavery is a fevered reflex of pan-Slavism that has little to do with the realities of our national situation. This sort of intellectual enslavement to the requirements and necessities of Russian foreign policy is the unfortunate feature of Communist politics which makes it suspect. The leaders of the party should make an earnest attempt to overcome it in order to win the credence of the nation.

In its criticism of domestic policy, the Communist Statement must be regarded as reflecting the general sentiment of the mass mind, though couched in needlessly violent language. Pandit Nehru must realise that popularity is no refuge against discontent provoked by inadequate administrative measures for improvement of intolerable economic conditions. Communalism, the sway

of vested interests, lack of constructive purpose, repressive ordinances, these are the besetting banes of the administration which have to be remedied in time if the hard-won prestige of the Congress during the days of its struggle is not to be converted into distrust and opprobrium in the wake of the fulfilment of its political objective.

### Action Needed, Not Evasion

**I**N a disease-ridden condition, life becomes a burden and a misery and is defrauded of the energy needed for work and happiness. When health is gone, nothing else avails, as the very spring of cheerful existence and useful activity is destroyed. For this reason, civilised administrations all the world over have allowed the highest priority in their plans and schemes to the promotion of people's health. Their main method of promoting the people's health has been to improve the sanitation of their surroundings. They carried on a crusade for cleanliness and waged a relentless war against dirt. The provision of clean drinking water, the scientific disposal of filth by means of an efficient drainage system and the construction of neat comfortable homes in tidy surroundings, these became the first charge on their revenues. It was soon found that they reduced the scale of mortality from various diseases and epidemics and brought about a most gratifying improvement in the health and the stamina of the people. Agriculture and industry received their share of benefit from the general toning up of the people effected by State concentration on public health, and the economies of the countries concerned became richer, more vital and more fruitful of wealth-producing energy for the levelling up of social welfare.

After a prolonged career of quixotic bungling the Madras Gov-

ernment at last did the right thing when they appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Sri A. Kaleswara Rao "to consider the question of expediting the investigation, design and execution of all water-supply and drainage schemes, comprehensively taking into consideration all aspects of the problem." The committee have now submitted their report. The report bears the stamp of the vigour and passion of one of its members Sri A. V. Raman who resigned the post of Sanitary Engineer to Government some seven years ago to devote himself more freely to pioneering work connected with people's health and who since then has been pleading with apostolic fervour for a proper recognition of environmental sanitation as the most important and direct of the means open to administrative authorities for promoting people's health. Under the impetus evidently of Sri Raman's enthusiasm, the committee have formulated proposals of a singularly progressive and practical character which are bound, if efficiently implemented, to revolutionise the standards of public health administration in the province and substantially increase its output of benefit to the people. The committee have urged in their report that water supply and drainage should be given preference over every other responsibility of the Government. They should not be left to minor institutions like municipalities and district boards, but should be taken over entirely by the provincial Government. There should be planned execution of projects, prepared not for show on paper by way of propaganda, but with reference to the needs of the people, with a time-limit definitely set for coverage of the whole province in a first round of province-wide programme. A fund should be started to which contributions should be so devised as always to leave enough for the work to be

done, with no lapses of unutilised surpluses at year-ends. Suitable personnel should be forthwith trained in the most expeditious manner so that at no stage the programme may be held up for lack of competent technical direction or execution. Production of requisite materials should be speeded up and encouraged locally within the province to the utmost extent possible, while imports from abroad of whatever else is necessary should be organised intelligently according to plan with a system of suitable priorities to eliminate delay. These and similar recommendations of the committee provide a basis for immediate action. They are conceived in a spirit of urgency. The keynote of the whole report is emphasis on promptitude to save further valuable time being lost—to the continuing deterioration of people's health—while Government deliberated ponderously and exhausted their energies in barren cerebration. Such being the case, the proposal of the Government to refer the report once again to public opinion betrays a deplorable fall into the wasteful mires of evasion and inaction. Do they fear that the public would find fault with them if (without squandering more time) they set about at once with practical measures to give them an adequate water supply and an efficient drainage system? To pass on to public opinion eventual supervision over the conclusions of an expert body charged with a technical mission is to abdicate a primary function of government itself. It is for the Government and not the public to take decisions on reports of committees of this kind. Refuge in public opinion in a case like this reduces the labour of the committee to purposeless futility, and if such an attitude persists, few men of knowledge will care to place their services at Government's disposal

to be ignored at the end of their labours.

**Echo From The Classics**  
THE request which recently reached the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce for means to cure baldness will raise an echo in the minds of students of classics. The death of Euripides is attributed to an eagle swooping down on a piece of rock, which turned out to be the bald head of the unfortunate tragedian. Aristophanes was probably pleased, but there is much evidence of the unfortunate effects which frailty of one description or another has had directly or indirectly on the lives of men of letters. The misanthropy of Lord Byron has been ascribed by the more material-minded critics to his club-foot. The poet was inordinate-

ly sensitive to ridicule of this infirmity, and it is possible that a notable career at cricket was cut short owing to his unwillingness to expose his deformed limb to public gaze. The readers of his earlier letters will recollect the glee with which he records his having on one occasion secured a large number of "notches" in a match; and, of course, he played against Eton. It is fascinating to speculate that he conceivably might have founded the Marylebone Cricket Club, like Lord Frederick Beauclerk. If this had been so, the game might have gained additional renown, while poetry would not have been the poorer. But, to have "borne the pageant of his bleeding heart across Europe" was to strike a more arresting figure, an aspect dearer to the noble lord's heart.

## Sotto Voce

"I See a Stranger"



MR. BERNARD SHAW, having left Ireland fifty years ago, could hardly be expected to enthuse over the proposal to form an Irish Club in London. The Irish are a logical people and G.B.S. is the most logical of them all. Being at the mercy of a somewhat arid temperament he is denied the easy emotional relief that every emigrant Irishman in his cups feels for "my distressful countree." But when he goes on to remark that Irish people "do not admire nor even like one another" he shows a lamentable ignorance of the *raison d'être* of that characteristically English institution, the club. He should read a little Kipling now and then.

His countrymen in England should "avoid each other like the plague", counsels Mr. Shaw. Easier said than done, seeing that there are too many of them there. Besides, though they may not love each other, they cannot do without each other. To the Englishman his home may be his castle; to the compatriots of Synge and Joyce it is the pub that is their spiritual home. The preacher in Shaw is easily roused. He urges the Irish to invade English clubs, because being so different they must do each other good. Here again Shawian psychology is woefully at fault. If John Bull likes to stand Paddy a drink once in a while on neutral ground it is because he is so serene-

ly conscious of his own unique worth and impregnable insularity.

"If they flock together like geese they might as well have never left Ireland", says this truant Irishman. But most of his countrymen who go to England go there no more out of love for the English than the Englishmen who flocked to India did so out of love for us. There were more material considerations involved in both cases. But the burra sahib in India sought not only relief from the strenuous white man's burden in the grateful coolness of the khus-khus-shaded club verandah. He made it the citadel of Empire.

"Against the Kauravas we are five; against the rest of the world we are a hundred and five", said Yudhishtira the good. There you see the seed as well as the justification of the right sort of parochial patriotism. Dislikes are more dynamic than likes; and one of the ways of overcoming irrational dislikes is to harness them in the service of your positive sympathies. We dislike the foreigner just because he is something unfamiliar to us. We diddle ourselves into thinking that he can harm us and, what is worse, harm those who are nearer to us. Error though it is, it stimulates gregariousness in which the protective instinct finds free play.

Where the external danger is real the overmastering sense of unity within the threatened group rouses all that is best in it to intense action. And you witness puny man rise to heights of heroism and self-denial of which he had not himself suspected the possibilities. Unfortunately, there is always a reaction when the danger is past; the heroism of war is too often built on the quicksand of self-interest.

And total war dethrones not only despotisms but all values. And so you find in the interval between two world wars an all-round increase of internal stresses in every country.

Parochialism in the bad sense of the word is the natural refuge of a society which has lost sight of creative purpose. When the Tamils in Calcutta or the Bengalis in Madras (these are mentioned purely by way of illustration) come together in the intimacy of social intercourse, they find their thoughts of home quickened and their affections warmed. To sing the songs of their people, to hear their poets read, to stage their favourite plays, to celebrate their famous men—all this will do them good and make it easier for them to join with unfeigned sympathy in the social occasions of the larger community amidst which they find themselves.

But it is not so good to take refuge in their clubs from the boredom of home life and to kill time with card-play, small talk and unseemly jests or ill-natured abuse of the people amidst whom they live like little islands hugging their loneliness. In the old days when all travel had to be done by foot or by bullock cart the adventurous few who penetrated to distant parts established far more cordial relations with their new neighbours than their successors who now come in shoals and settle in self-sufficient colonies. Maybe the stranger of those days too often allowed himself to be submerged; today he irritates like a cancerous outgrowth. There is no special virtue in loving your own; all the higher mammals do that. To love your neighbour without making any claims upon him is to prove yourself a man.

VIGHNESWARA.

That any speech of Mr. Attlee's would be arid and uninspiring is, unfortunately, to be taken for granted; he touches nothing that he does not dehydrate.—THE ECONOMIST.

# SIDELIGHTS :

Too often those who entertain ambition, expel remorse and nature.—  
SHAKESPEARE.

THE tempo of excitement is rising as the day is drawing near for election of next year's leader of the Congress Legislature Party. Sri Omandur's position is rather peculiar. Though enjoying the title of leader, he has no followers as such in the legislature. A follower in this context is one whose vote is at the disposal of his leader, and a leader is one who has a follower's vote at his disposal. In the present set-up of the legislature, leaders in command of votes are just half a dozen. Sri Kamaraj Nadar has some thirty votes; Dr. Subbaroyan, ten; Gopala Reddi, four or five; Chandramowli, six or seven; Pallam Raju, about ten. Sri Prakasam is credited at the moment with having at least 80 votes. All votes are not however of equal value for determining the result of an election. Sometimes, by virtue of strategical position, one vote gets elevated to a power which is the equivalent of a hundred votes. This is not a mere hypothetical possibility. It actually happened in Sind immediately after the last general elections to the provincial legislature.

There were then two parties in Sind, the ministerialist party led by Hidayatullah and the oppositionists led by G. M. Syed. The ministerialists required just one vote to retain the status of a majority party entitling them to continue to run the administration. The followers of Syed were a solid phalanx not to be deflected from the path of unity in their effort to supplant the ministry. There remained only one unattached legislator of uncertain loyalty, Talpur, whose vote was open to attack and annexation. Whichever side Talpur joined would be the winning side and would be invested with the right to form the Government. Because he held in his hand the balancing

power between success and defeat, the votes of all others were reduced to nullity. But Talpur had disappeared. Perhaps he wanted to test his value by forcing a quest of his whereabouts on the anxious seekers of his vote. Even the Governor joined in the quest but Talpur was nowhere to be found. Baffled, they at last made the Speaker resign, so that his vote might be used for tilting the balance in favour of the ministerial side. On the resignation of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker followed suit. Controversy arose as to whether with a vacant Chair the House could meet at all. Instructions were wired for from the Centre frantically. It would appear that just at this crisis the Constitutional Adviser fell into indisposition and the Central Government were at their wits' end what to advise. While they took time to make up their mind, the elusive Talpur was sighted, and as luck would have it, the oppositionists fell upon him and captured him. Then began a prodigious bid to secure his defection to the ministerialist side, in the course of which, short of immortality, whatever could be humanly offered as a bait to excite a legislator's cupidity was placed before the all-important Talpur to secure his all-powerful vote. "Take a ministership, take, if you insist, even the premiership, take anything, but join us," so ran the strain of the emergent entreaties of Hidayatulla's emissaries. Flesh and blood could not withstand this concentrated application of the whole pressure of a ruling party in momentary control of the power of the State for the blackmarketing of a vote, and it was not long before Talpur succumbed to his pesterers, exchanging his support for a ministership. By this time the Constitutional Adviser of the Central Government had recovered his health and was ready to grapple with the problem awaiting his consideration. But the Governor of Sind saved him the trouble by coolly returning to the Speaker, un-

accepted, the resignation letter that had been resting in his pocket during the period of the crisis.

In the Madras confabulations now going on, preliminary to the leader's election, the question as to who is the right and proper leader would appear to have been relegated entirely to a position of irrelevance. The whole legislature has been converted into a cover for the blackmarketing propensities of the vote-holders, with a hundred aspiring Talpurs let loose on it for the one historic figure of that name adorning Sind's annals. Everyone wants to convert his and his followers' votes into a balancing lever for turning the fortunes of the election in accordance with his own interests and wishes. In a party of 199 members, leadership would go to the successful gatherer of, at the least, a hundred votes. Kamaraj wants to raise his thirty votes to the power of hundred. So also, Dr. Subbaroyan his ten. In the com-

petition for leadership there seems to be nothing like comparative assessment on level ground of the competitors' respective positions, for reaching an agreement in conformity with decency and the public interest, in a conscientious spirit. In any measure of values on the level, it is but simple arithmetic that Prakasam with his 80 votes is indisputably fit to be adjudged the mightiest figure in the party with a towering position above all others. But holders of smaller fractions of votes hope to get even with him by avoiding a level contest, lodging themselves in a Talporean position for making up with manoeuvre what they lack in weight. If they succeed, the present disequilibrium in Congress affairs would get a renewed lease of life. For the Talpurs of politics, though adepts in making the small look bigger and driving good bargains for themselves, do not advance the public interest with such feats.—SAKA.

①

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# FANATICS AS MINISTERS

by S. PARTHASARATHY

I was asked by one who had read a previous contribution of mine in these pages: "If a minister need have no administrative experience, then, what on earth should he have?" I replied that he must be a fanatic. The word 'fanatic' though a term of opprobrium or ridicule today, is derived from the Latin 'fanum' meaning 'temple', and describes a person of intense faith. These are not times of piping peace. We are engaged in making history, particularly, in our province. We are anxious to shed our backwardness, root out poverty, and drive away the spectre of famine. Also, we may have very soon to tackle in a broadminded way, the problems connected with the linguistic division of our province. At this juncture, we do not want the type of man who covers his ignorance by over-simplification and indulges in self-righteousness as an excuse for poor leadership. We do not want the type of man who will only count the pennies in the hope that thereby he is taking care of the pound: we do not want the calculating type who knowing the insecurity of sunshine busies himself in making hay. We do not want the type of man who acknowledges the members of his party in the legislature as his sole masters and carries out their bidding even if it transgresses law and morality: and lastly, we do not want the ornamental type who is merely soft-spoken, sedate and snug.

We can condone the little foibles of our great men: we can admire the great deeds of our little men. But we are not interested in the little lives of the little men of our province. Today, our province is a rudderless ship tossed about on the waves of party intrigues. What we want is a team of men in our ministry with settled ideals, plans and policies. The men may or may not be there: but the public knows nothing about what they intend to do. We want as ministers men, who can shake the lethargy out of

other people; who can command the services of the best brains in the province; who can infuse confidence in the administrative staff; and who can mobilise popular enthusiasm and active co-operation. They should come forward with plans of development for each department of responsibility entrusted to their charge as are capable of being executed within the next three to five years. They should have been evolved after consultations with experts, and there is no need to fight shy of them even if they sound too ambitious and impracticable. When Gandhiji started his Satyagraha movement, there were many in the country who called him mad. But he was a fanatic, and he won in the end. So long, therefore, as these plans are conceived in the best interests of our province and not from any narrow party interests, they are bound to succeed if we work with unwavering faith.

Let us, therefore, sink our party differences and let us keep aside our individual ambitions. With every year ringing changes in our ministry, the reputation of Madras for efficient administration has been already lowered. When there is paucity of leadership, it is all the more necessary that we should unite on our common aims and objectives. Nothing more is required of the formal leader except that he should be able to cement together the members of his team. Tact, social graces and infinite patience, should be enough to constitute successful party leadership. It used to be said of one of our ablest lawyers, the late Mr. Nugent Grant, that his success was greatly due to his ability to exploit the brains of his juniors in preparing his cases. Very often, he used to present the arguments of his juniors in such a manner that they sounded as something new and remarkable even to the author. True leadership would, in that sense, constitute an ability to spot out the ablest men and

make use of them for the purposes of Government. But there is no hope for the leader who not only realises his limitations but also strives to bolster up his leadership by concessions to the influential members of his party. We can, again, go back to the judiciary for another object-lesson. Not long ago, a member of the Bar was appointed to the Bench, about whom the public entertained no great

opinion. But, once on the Bench the man shed all his former weaknesses of character and became one of the most independent and incorruptible of judges. The leader whoever he be, should seek his strength only in the office that has been bestowed on him, and not in those who have chosen him, or in those whose support may be necessary in the future.

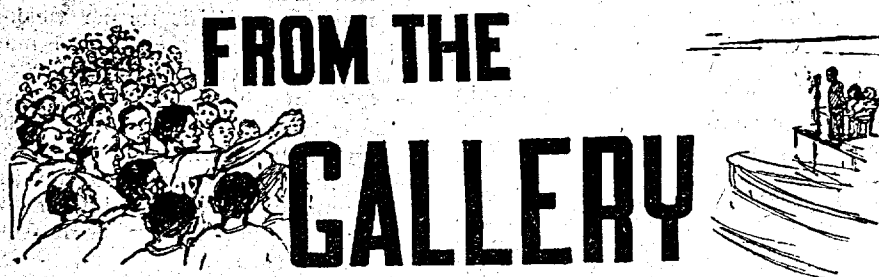
## ANDREI ANDREYEVICH GROMYKO

THE youngest of the world's major diplomats of today is Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko. To him also belongs the distinction of nullifying the proposals of his fellow-diplomats merely by raising his hand. For he sits at the table of the Security Council, U.N.O., as the representative of the U.S.S.R., one of the Council's permanent members. In that capacity he enjoys a power which he has not hesitated to employ—the veto. The delegates of the other four permanent members also possess the power. But they have rarely had occasion to use it since they, together with their friends among the non-permanent members of the Security Council, command what Andrei Gromyko lacks—a perpetual and smashing majority. If the veto has become almost synonymous with his name, it is because he is the leader of an immovable minority faced with an otherwise irresistible majority.

Occupying this peculiar position, Gromyko has built up quite an impressive record of work in the United Nations. He has won the admiration of even those whom he frequently exasperates and sometimes infuriates. American observers are agreed that he is the hardest working delegate at U.N.O. He never touches a drink when he is at work, prepares excellent notes and delivers speeches that display incisive logic. He irritates his opponents often enough, but himself keeps a perfectly cool temper. On one occasion after having provoked the U.S. Senator Tom Con-

nally to the point of vigorous table-pounding, it is said Gromyko turned to the chairman and whispered his hope that the table had been reinforced. A handsome and politically exotic figure, Gromyko is a star-attraction of the United Nations, if a rather austere star.

Though Gromyko represents a State that was brought into being through a revolution, he is no 'revolutionary' like Stalin or Molotov. Gromyko has never been jailed or otherwise persecuted. Born of peasant stock in 1908 in the village of Old Gromyki (hence his name), Gromyko was a lad of nine years at the time of the revolution. He left the family farm early to be trained as an engineer. Later he went to the Institute of Economics and advanced well enough in his studies to be made lecturer at an Academy. At the age of thirty he took the first step on the road to his present fame by entering the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs in Moscow. When he was appointed counsellor to the Soviet Embassy at Washington, Gromyko made his first trip abroad. He knew no English then; he has since learnt to speak it well. After acting as Charge d'Affairs for a time, Gromyko became Soviet Ambassador to U.S.A. in August 1943—at the age of 35. His subsequent work as Russia's permanent delegate to the Security Council of U.N.O. is part of current history. Gromyko's career has thus been an exceptionally successful one. But some Soviet officials have made unexpected and enigmatic exits.



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

WHEN Chaudhury Khaliquzzaman, the U. P. League stalwart 'levanted' to Pakistan after August 15, '47, many including myself commented adversely on such an inglorious exhibition of the 'safety first' principle. Now comes news of Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, a native of Eastern Pakistan, crossing the rubicon, and becoming a native of the Union of India in West Bengal. As if that were not enough, he has been sworn in as Minister in the West Bengal Cabinet. In between these two extremes, we have Mr. Suhrawardy at once a citizen of India and an elected member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. It is all very curious, and very confusing to the common man for whose sake we are all supposed to work. It looks as if the division of the country has not affected top-ranking leaders; they seem to have exclusive rights of a two-way passage between the Dominions. The biggest minority of Hindus is left in East Pakistan to fend for itself. Nothing is more calculated to demoralise the masses than this sort of fade-out of so-called leaders. Of all provincial Cabinets, those of Madras and West Bengal alone have vied with each other in attempting daring and original variations on Tammany Hall methods.

Of all these displaced leaders, none is better worth watching than Mr. Suhrawardy. To do him justice, he does nothing by halves. He not only out-heroded Herod when he was Premier of Bengal, but joined in a duet without one single false note with the Mahatma himself.

Now he speaks for the minorities in Pakistan with a conviction which was conspicuous by its absence from his political make-up as Premier. Punjab is overdoing its supremacy in Pakistan councils, and when the natural revulsion begins, no one can cash in the gains so well as Mr. Suhrawardy.

In the continuing drift towards the right, we are witnessing helplessly a holocaust of civil liberties which bodes ill. The Mahatma's death instead of rousing political conscience is being used as a cloak for repression which is as miscellaneous as diffused. There is no towering personality, no compelling voice anywhere in the country to speak to us with certitude, and with humanity. Morale is therefore cracking quietly. There is vague dread in many parts of the country; the capital still continues to be unsafe, thanks to the continued influx of refugees, in spite of checks and hindrances. Parallel Governments are said to be functioning in some areas of East Punjab; there is parallel chaos elsewhere nearer our own borders. The Congress which grew strong in the hearts of the people has now become afraid of them, and is trying to find immunity from an inexorable Nemesis in an armoury of repressive laws.

One feature of the Central Budget has been the subject of some private gossip. The provision for excluding 5 or 10% of personal and business profits from taxation is said to have been inserted with more than half an eye to the prospects of the National Fund in

honour of the Mahatma. Preparations are going on to make collections for the fund on an all-India basis, and there is no doubt that another big figure will be collected. But the bigger the fund, the more exiguous will be the scope for the dissemination of Gandhism in its pristine elements. Some economist computed that if all wage-earners contributed ten days' salary to the Gandhi Memorial Fund, the total would stand somewhere at 50 to 60 crores. Which would be the strongest reason for not proceeding with the proposal at all. For no private organisation can be morally equal to the administration of a fund of such colossal dimensions!

All pronouncements on Kashmir continue to be day-dreams while the events happening there continue to be a prolonged nightmare. Sheik Abdullah is changing his labels without getting any forarder! The release of the leader of the Muslim League organisation serves to strengthen the opposition. If it was the correct thing to do, it ought to have been done synchronously with the release of the Sheik. But more distressing than all this is the fact that neither our military nor our conciliatory measures seem to be making any impression on those whom we wish to impress. Mr. Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman and Nation* who recently gave it as his view that there was no doubt of Pakistan's complicity in the tribal incursion into Kashmir has now propounded a piece of delightful inconsequence as a means of liquidating the Kashmir mess. He thinks that the primary need in Kashmir is a plebiscite; he would bracket the leader of the tribesmen along with the spokesmen of the people, and make them supervise that farce. If such a disinterested observer should get his views so clouded, no wonder that the Pakistan Government takes a much more irreconcilable attitude. Mr. Martin was also in Hyderabad for a time, and yet he thinks there is no urgency in regard to the Hyderabad question. If a plebiscite is the only

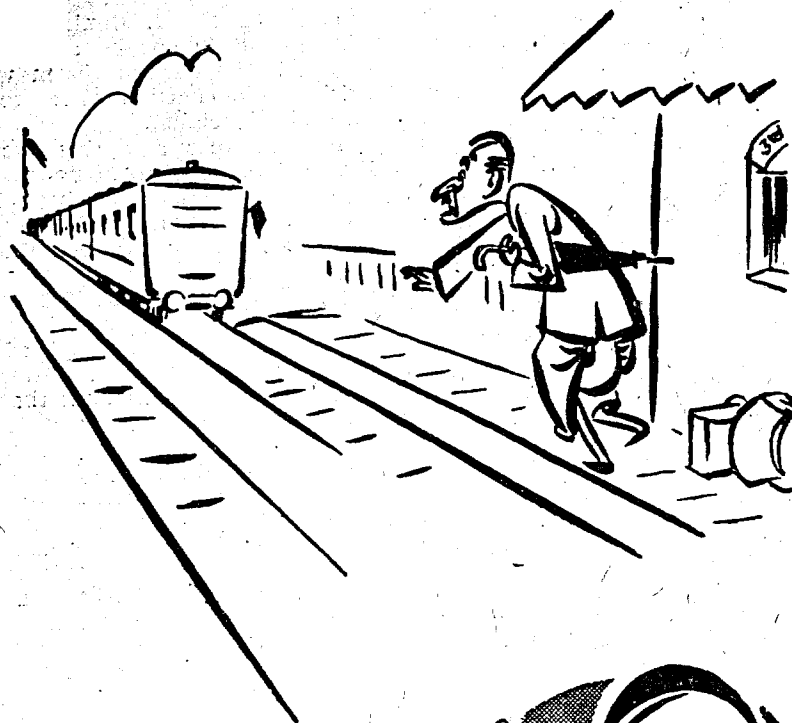
solution of the Kashmir problem, why should it not be commended to the notice of the Nizam whom British diplomacy exalted to an unspecified height?

As if in answer to these doubts, the Hyderabad fire-eater has declared that there would be neither a plebiscite, nor any kind of responsible government, nor even reforms in the only Islamic state in the world during the last 700 years. There is something forthright and healthy in the contempt of the Ittehad for the Hindus. After all, it is not text-book maxims that are going to shape a state; it is the character of the people who belong to it. The Muslims of Kashmir were primarily responsible for raising Kashmir to international importance; the non-Muslims of Hyderabad have to thank themselves for their inability to act in concert and force the pace.

In the course of his reply to the budget debate, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar made a feeble attempt to defend the application of communal ratios to admissions to colleges. But he did not say how many of the applicants were turned away without seats, and what is their proportion according to the different communities. If 3 per cent. of the population monopolised 33 per cent. of available seats, it only shows that they got their admissions after other communities had presumably been served. It is also important to remember that the rules of admission as followed in Government institutions are not in force in private colleges. The test of a good rule is that it should not penalise any class of people. On this point, the Minister threw no light.

We must welcome the formation of a non-communal opposition in the Council under the leadership of Mr. John. It is a consummation devoutly to be hastened in the Assembly itself. It is the first step to purge parliamentary proceedings of the hoary old dichotomy in Indian politics—namely Hindu vs. Muslim.

GROUNDLING



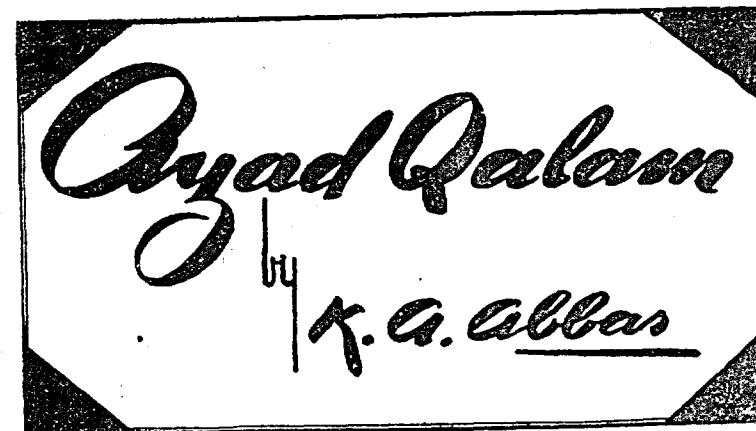
FOR LIFE'S LITTLE TROUBLES

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THE title of this column is derived from one of the slogans heard for the first time in Bombay on August 15 last year: *Azad Hindustan men Azad Qalam Azad Kala* (In free India—a free pen and a free art).

As the several miles long Independence Day procession slowly marched through the streets, writers and artists, playwrights and poets, sang and danced on the streets, in an ecstasy of new-found freedom.

When they were not singing or dancing, they shouted themselves hoarse: *Inqilab Zindabad!* (Long live revolution). *Aai azadi, gai ghulami!* (Freedom has come, Slavery is gone). *Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai! Jawaharlal Nehru ki Jai!* And then from the welter of the old slogans, rose this inspiring new slogan: *Azad Hindustan men Azad Qalam Azad Kala!*

*Azad Qalam!* In these two words is a threat and a challenge, as well as a promise and a pledge.

**BREAD, BEAUTY, REVOLUTION—AND PEN!**

The battle of languages in the national Parliament at New Delhi notwithstanding, no one can deny that a basic vocabulary common to all the language areas in India has evolved along with the national movement. The Honourable Members from the South may find Maulana Azad's chaste Urdu difficult to follow, but even a child in Madras, Calcutta, Gauhati or Chidambaram

is familiar with words like *Inqilab* and *Azadi*, which are now common currency in practically all languages of India. This common vocabulary is the heritage of the freedom struggle in which Tamilian and Bengali, Delhiwallah and Gujarati, Maharashtra and Punjabi have fought, shoulder to shoulder, for the common goal.

Of the few other words which are common to most of the Indian languages, two are particularly significant: *Ann* (Rice or food) and *Sundar* (Beautiful). The unity of India is based on these three fundamentals of life—Bread, Beauty and Revolution!

And now, from a cursory research among my friends from various provinces, it is gratifying to learn that *Qalam* (Pen) is another of those words which is common to most of our languages. (The members of the Gujarati *Qalam Mandal* perhaps do not know that "*Qalam*", originally, is an Arabic word—or the lingual purists might have insisted on the expulsion of the "alien" word!)

And so it shall be "*Azad Qalam*" wherever this column appears in English, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil or Malayalam!

**THE PEN AND THE SWORD**

*Azad Qalam!* The freedom of the press! It is easier to coin a slogan but much more difficult to realise it in a world dominated by press laws, censors, newspaper magnates, and

the all-powerful C.I.D. who must endorse your character if you want to file a declaration as publisher of a journal!

The pen is mightier than the sword! Another slogan, almost a trite *cliche*, and yet like most *cliches*, there is a core of truth in it. The very elaborate precautions that Reaction takes to buy, bribe, blackmail or bludgeon the "free pens" into meek subjection is an acknowledgment of the power of the written word.

In a North Indian city there is the black stone statue of a British General, holding a pen in one hand and a sword in the other (an atom bomb would be more appropriate in the present context). Underneath was a plaque bearing an inscription, "*Shall you be ruled by the pen or the sword?*" which, I seem to remember, was changed to, "I shall serve you both with the pen and the sword"—after the "free pens" of the nationalist press had asserted their power to demand the removal of this monument of imperialist arrogance.

And yet, I think, it is easy to overrate and sentimentalize about the virtues and powers of the pen—the symbol of literary expression. The pen, like anything else—like an aeroplane, for instance, which can be used to save life as well as to destroy life—is neither good nor bad. It is the use to which man puts it that determines whether it is an instrument of good or evil. And who can deny that just as sometimes the sword has been taken up in a righteous cause, the pen has often been degraded by its use for base and evil purposes—to propagate vulgarity and obscenity. Freedom of the press, like every other freedom, is attainable only subject to certain limitations. And a "free pen", like a "free man" himself, is a relative term. "*Azad Qalam*" can be an empty boast. But let it remain as an ideal and a weekly reminder to one's conscience!

#### SPIRITUALISM OR SOCIALISM?

India is and has been a land of strange political phenomena. We

have Buddhist monks in the Communist Party, fasting-expert ascetic "Gurus" in the Socialist Party, reactionaries allied to the "Forward" Bloc, Krishna-bhagats (like Hasrat Mohani) in the Muslim League, one multi-millionaire playing host to Gandhiji and his brother financing the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S., revolutionaries like Sher Jang who compose only *ghazals*, and essentially lyrical poets like Josh and Harin Chattopadhyaya whose poetry is charged with the spark and thunder of the proletarian revolution.

But we were not prepared to find that otherwise sane Socialists like Jaiprakash Narain would suddenly go spiritual and issue an S.O.S. (literally an appeal "To Save Our Souls") to Aurobindo Ghosh, Shri Ramana Maharshi and Doctor Bhagwandas to undertake "the mighty task of cultural regeneration" in view of "the complete eclipse of social conscience and an utter lack of values of life and conduct", as evidenced by the recent inter-communal massacres.

Every sensitive person must feel appalled by the degradation of human values and the blood-lust that vast masses of our people have displayed—and which reached the peak of infamy in the dastardly assassination of Gandhiji. It is certainly imperative that we examine—ruthlessly, scientifically analyse—the cause of this moral crisis, so that proper steps can be taken to check the repetition of similar outrages in the future. But a Socialist—specially such a seasoned Socialist as J.P.—must probe the economic and psychological causes. A low standard of living. Ignorance and superstition. The hate propaganda of the communal fanatics. The corroding influence of the "Divide and Rule" policy of imperialism. The loosening of moral values and encouragement of violence provided by the war and its after-effects. Out of this soil have we reaped the dragon harvest of hate and violence. Here is a wide field for study by the psychologist and the social scientist. But how and where do the spiritual and

psychic factors come in? Or is it a spiritual brand of Socialism that Comrade J.P. offers us?

Give us a dose of healthy materialism, Doctor J.P.!

#### MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Could you really find no fitter person, no one (for instance, from among the talented young men trained by you in the Foreign Department of the A.I.C.C. Secretariat) to take the place of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai who has a notorious anti-national record as Government of India's Agent-General in Washington during the War years when he did everything possible to malign the Congress leaders and defend the oppressive imperialist rule? Must the I.C.S. be still allowed to play such an important part in the national administration? I hope I am not being impertinent if I reproduce what was said in this connection a dozen years ago:

"Whenever India becomes free, and in a position to build her new life as she wants to....of one thing I am quite sure, that no new order can be built up in India so long as the spirit of the I.C.S. pervades our administration and our public services. That spirit of authoritarianism is the ally of imperialism, and it cannot co-exist with freedom. It will either succeed in crushing freedom or will be swept away itself. Only with one type of state it is likely to fit in, and that is the fascist type. Therefore, it seems to me quite essential that the I.C.S. and similar services must disappear completely, as such, before we can start real work on a new order."

No, Panditji, it was not a humble scribe like me who delivered that devastating final judgment on the I.C.S. It happens to be an extract from—your "Autobiography"!

#### BOOK OF THE WEEK

A young lady, very well socially connected but obviously ignorant about literary trends in India, broadcasting a book review from Delhi, complained that the Indian

authors seldom touched upon political reality in their stories and novels. I could commend to her (and to others who share her ignorance) dozens of fine politically inspired works of fiction in each of the major languages of the country, but as perhaps she is conversant only with English, let her at least read Bhabani Bhattacharya's "SO MANY HUNGERS" (Hind Kitabs Ltd., Bombay, Rs. 7-8) which, in my opinion is one of the most significant works of fiction published in India during the last decade.

If Krishenchander's memorable "I CANNOT DIE" was a poetically conceived vignette of the Bengal famine, Bhattacharya's "SO MANY HUNGERS" is an epic record, in human terms, of that vast, elemental tragedy. And yet it is no propaganda pamphlet masquerading as novel. It creates a number of intensely human, intensely real characters, and his peasant girl, Kajoli—so feminine, so simple, so much a part of the Indian soil—will remain one of the classic heroines of Indian literature. She assumes a stature equal to Hardy's Tess and Pearl Buck's O-Lan.

An example of inspired art, reaching the core of political reality and illuminating it with a gem-like prose, is provided by the scene in which Kajoli's younger brother, Onu, goes to pray at the temple of Kali:

"Mother," the prayer flowed fervent out of his depths, "I ask naught else from thee, Mother, I only ask this much: let a Japaneese bomb hurt me, Mother. Then the motor wagon with one red stripe down and another across will come and pick me up and take me to sick-hospital. They will give me an iron bed to lie on, Mother, and a clean piece of cloth to put on, and, maybe, a blanket to wrap myself in against cold, and food, all the rice I can eat, Mother. And I can sleep my fill, Mother, and even if it rains hard I'll not get wet because of the roof over my head, and there will be no need to walk and walk and pick from much heaps and fight the angry dogs, but I can lie down, being hurt by a Japaneese bomb with a doctor to care for me, a doctor to wash my blood with medicine and put a fever-

stick in my armpit to know the heat. And let the wounds take long to heal, Mother, for then I can stay long in sick-hospital, a bed under me and a blanket over me and rice for my mouth, all as if I were a king. Mother, I ask naught else of thee, Mother, only let a Japanese bomb drop from the sky and hurt me, Mother'.

There could be no greater indictment of imperialism.

#### STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"MADRAS: The Madras Government today banned five Communist organisations under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. They are: Santi Senas, Communist Volunteer Corps, Red Army Volunteer Organisation or Red Guards, Communist Red Cross Volunteers and Madras Labour Union Volunteers.

HUBLI: Twenty-two out of forty-nine R.S.S. workers who were detained since February 5 when the Government banned

the organisation, have now been released."

—Two consecutive news-items in a daily newspaper.

#### HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"The section of Anglo-Indians desiring to emigrate from 'Puritan' Free India has recently taken to the air in its quest for fresh woods and pastures new, it is reliably learnt.

Large numbers of Anglo-Indians, whose comforts depended upon the presence of British troops in the country are known to be leaving by ship for Australia, Argentina and some other South American countries willing to admit them.

The competition for advantages to be had by going early to their new homes is so keen at present that those who have the money are competing for plane seats for Australia." —Bombay paper.

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## THE WAKING SICKNESS

by BAROO

THAT summer in Agra, I suffered terribly from insomnia. My eyes gave me a lot of trouble. They were red and painful. I lost all my eye lashes. They grew again, though. But that was later, much later. My eye brows went, too, but these I plucked myself during fits of moodiness, and I cannot blame anybody else for them. My face took on a strange and frightening look which has been reserved in a snap I have somewhere or other. Altogether it was a bad summer for me.

In the daytime, horses died in their traces. They just doubled up on the burning tarmac, throwing the tongas forward. Men died, too. But no women died. The women did not die because they just did not go out of doors. It was rare to see a woman on the streets at any time, as a matter of fact. Sometimes in the neighbourhood of St. John's College one saw a posse of dark lassies, dressed in white saris with blue or green borders. You know the type, the sort that reminds you of Jesus Christ and the Gospel according to St. Luke. But no other women.

We always came to know every evening how many men had died during the day. But we wouldn't believe the figure till we got the papers next morning, just to give ourselves something to talk about. The papers always arrived late in the forenoon, from New Delhi or Allahabad or Lucknow. Agra did not have a paper of its own then. I wonder if it does even now. I wouldn't think it did. But don't take me at my word. Maybe I don't love the bloody place.

I lived in a dirty old hotel off Raja-ki-Mandi. The room was ten by six. There was no fan. There were fans only in the "double" rooms. Mine was a single. In the nights we slept either on the flat roof above, or in the narrow balcony that ran in front of our rooms and overlooked a busy street. We slept

without nets. There were no mosquitoes. The scalding wind that blew in from across the brown plains of the Rajputana Desert killed them all, and also all the flies. I have yet to see a better insecticide than the mid-day breeze of an Agra May. The mosquitoes just shrivelled up in the hot blast and died where they were. There were no exceptions.

Down at Hotel Excelsior or Cecil or whatever else it was—I am no good at these names—there was a swimming pool where American airmen and nurses bathed in the cool of the evenings, and long into the nights. At my place, you had to turn on the faucet and stand away for quite sometime before the water came down to a temperature you could bear. They said you could boil an egg in the water as it came off from the exposed pipes. Maybe you could. I never tried. I might have if the Yanks had not been there and eggs had been slightly cheaper. But I really don't suppose you could boil an egg in that water unless you preferred it half-boiled. I do, whenever I can get it.

But that is not the point at all. The point is that I could not sleep throughout that summer. I remember the dates well—mid-April to mid-July it was. I just could not get proper sleep. After the first few nights I stopped trying to go to bed at the usual time. I would come back to the bloody place long after midnight, but the hotel sounds would be still there. There were strange goings-on in the double rooms. A guy would hire a room in the evening and be gone in the morning. Shufflings, creakings and various other sorts of noises came from these double rooms all through the night. I could never find out which way the women came or which way they went away. Maybe they used the servants' staircase near the kitchen at the back. Maybe there was some other entrance. I never cared to find out.

Maybe I was a fool. I had not been there many days when the servant came to me one evening, and said there had been somebody to see me. "A mem-sahib" he said, with a knowing sort of a look and half a smile that I could have wiped off with my own right fist. I am not unusually quick on the uptake but I didn't know a single soul in Agra then, and in any case the man's manner gave him away. But he never tried this stunt again. I should have left the hotel but there was nowhere to go. You see how it was.

If you have ever been to Agra you will agree that it possesses nothing equivalent to the Marina at Madras, say, or the Chowpatty at Bombay. No place where a lonely man can sit down and watch others and kill time. In a cheap and harmless sort of way, I mean, as one can even in a hole like New Delhi, thanks to that little park in the centre of Connaught Place. All that Agra has is the Taj, but it is way out into the wilderness and a place where you always find ten outsiders to one local visitor. At the time I am talking about, the Taj was absolutely monopolised by the Yanks, their nurses and their indigenous girl friends. I know because I went there very often myself. In fact, I went there most days. There was just nowhere else to go.

Hundreds of jeeps raced down to the Taj every evening. Provost rules forbade military vehicles from carrying civilians, but you know what the American Army is. They just didn't worry. And they got away with it too—obviously. British Tommies stood and watched and cursed most expressively under their breaths, but they couldn't do a thing about it. For one thing, they did not have all that transport. Also, they did not have the money and the shining mercerised uniforms that the Yanks had. You couldn't see a single British soldier, or officer for that matter, with a girl that summer. There weren't enough to go round in any case, but whatever there were, clung to

the Americans. The Yanks were men of cosmopolitan tastes. Anything in a skirt was welcome to them. All was grist to the mill. The way they went about the business!

And a nice little hell they made for us, too, with all their damned money. They just seemed to buy up everything anybody had to sell, that's all. Fruit, milk, butter. Their 5-tonner Studebakers would bring the stuff in before the town had a chance of waking up. I know because I have spent some nights walking up and down Drummond Road trying to tire myself to sleep. But it was worse with laundering. The Yanks changed their uniforms twice a day, and were willing to pay for the washing. We could hardly get a shirt washed inside of a week. It was that bad.

In the evenings, when the sun had gone down and it was comparatively cooler, the Americans would gather at the mushroom restaurants that had sprung up along Saddar Bazaar on their custom. That is, if they were not at the Taj with dames in their arms. These restaurants were supposed to have names reminiscent of the "Styies." You had a Broadway Grill, a Fifth Avenue Ice Cream Parlour, and also a thing called Palm Grove. A set of damned robbers, if you ask me. Especially the two Chinese eating places, Chungching and Kinming or something of that sort, which flaunted the Big Five Flags (China had just then been included into the charmed circle by virtue of participation in one of F.D.R.'s conferences, and the thing seemed to have gone to the Chins' heads) and charged you about five hundred per cent more than other people. Iced coffee was one of the rackets they specialised in. They served the thing in a half-quart jug if I am not wrong, and it contained no milk and hardly any sugar. They charged you a rupee for it. I know because I tried it once. I never tried it again. You bet.

Down in the old city, there was Kannari Bazaar. Women sat in the

upper stories, fanning themselves at the windows. From the main bazaar there branched off a side-lane all their own. You saw funny sights if you ever visited the place during the day. Some of the women had obviously had no luck the night before, or maybe they sat at the open windows for the sake of fresh air. Sweat cozed out from under their thick coatings of rouge and powder. During the heat of the day, there was hardly any traffic in the Bazaar; the shops did not lie exactly shuttered up, but at least with all their chicks down. The gawdily-dressed ones sporting vulgar primary colours were liable to ask you to come straight up if you tarried too long under a window, or maybe even if you didn't.

In the evenings, it was different. The women looked quite attractive then, passable under the artificial light provided by 500-candle power bulbs. Also in the evenings it was cooler, there was less sweat all round, and it was so much better generally. The shops were open too, and one could always start bargaining with some fat old bania if one wanted to keep an eye on a female across the street. It was all in the game. Or you just climbed up some narrow ill-lit stair-case. It was entirely up to you.

The better type had no need to display themselves like this. They had plenty of rich admirers to play around with. The U.P. is notorious for its zemindars, or talukdars as they call them, social parasites if ever there were any. These guys have made a fine art of killing time in the company of singing and dancing girls. They are quite unapologetic about it, too, and describe their activities as the encouragement of the fine arts. But you know as well as I do what fine art is involved in the whole affair. The most primitive fine art on

God's earth, that's what I would call it. Don't you agree?

Sometimes, wonder of wonders, the hotel sounds would cease. This was mostly just before it started getting light, and the first Yankee Studebakers got going. But the snoring of fellow boarders never ceased. It seemed to grow only more intense and more rhythmical towards the morning. Maybe they slept better at that time of the night. Maybe they didn't. How am I to know?

Another thing that kept alive throughout the night was the railway station nearby. That, and the blessed steel over-bridge which I would have got carpeted at my own expense if I had the money. And one other thing. The American Flying Fortresses that flew ceaselessly between Agra and Chungking, taking war supplies to Chiang. They worked round the clock, they did.

A laden aircraft left once every so many minutes—I forget how many, I think it was five—to deliver Lend Lease stuff over the Hump. A giant beacon revolved endlessly at the airport, guiding the returning planes home, and winking at my sleepless eyes into the bargain. Sometimes the planes would also use their own searchlights, shafts of light which rent the darkness apart without much ado.

Sometimes sleep came to me at cock's crow, an unhealthy sort of torpor which ended when the whole world woke up. And then I would go and bathe in the tepid water and gulp some scalding tea before I hurried to work.

Yes, I suffered terribly that summer. Perhaps I ought to have gone to a doctor. But I didn't. Maybe I couldn't afford to. But I wish I had gone. Then I would have known what was wrong with me. As it is, I can only wonder.

A well-known London Editor who received an American magazine, and was told that, because of the postage, the advertisements would be torn out, promptly cabled 'Tear out the articles.'—J. W. Robertson Scott.

# MEET THE FUN DOCTOR

He alone can go through life with placidity (it has been said) who can see himself in a distorting glass and laugh at himself. In the absence of a distorting glass it is a good idea to have ourselves interpreted by one who can interpret us. Mr. Chandrasekharam is one such.

Chandrasekharam has a genuine and striking gift for character interpretation. He is a quick and close observer of human nature, which he presents with pleasant and subtle humour in which there is no malice. Incidentally, it is wrong to run away with the idea that impersonation of this kind is a simple affair. It is a somewhat rare art which calls for keen intelligence, understanding and a flair for the delineation of characters.

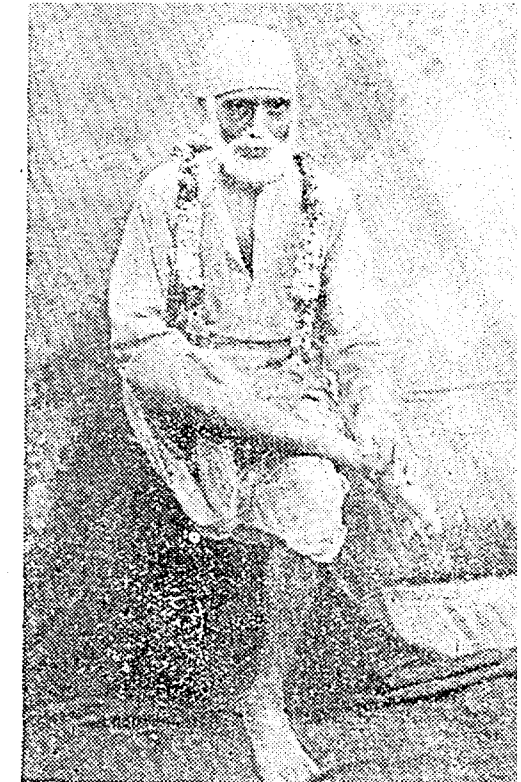
Chandrasekharam's programme consists of recitations from comedies and the presentation of the comical and odd aspects of life in an agreeable and pleasing manner with suitable make-up, modulation of voice and variation of facial expression. Chandrasekharam appears in each item of the programme in the main role and portrays the subordinate characters in turns, changing quickly, as a flash, the voice, the tone, the characteristics and gestures to suit them.

He has entertained different types of audience in the various cities and towns of India. His features are either in English or in Telugu and his shows need no elaborate equipment.

As Director of the Academy of Dramatic Art, Nellore, Chandrasekharam has started a library of books on drama and has established a make-up studio for studying and practising the technique of make-up. He has produced short plays in simple, elegant and understandable language which can be staged in villages very easily. He is also training recruits with an aim to produce a new order of professional actors and actresses, to provide amateurs with opportunities for exhibiting their talents, and to obtain recognition for the profession of acting as respectable a status as that of any other.



As a rickshawallah.

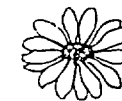


As Sai Baba.

As an old woman.



As he is.



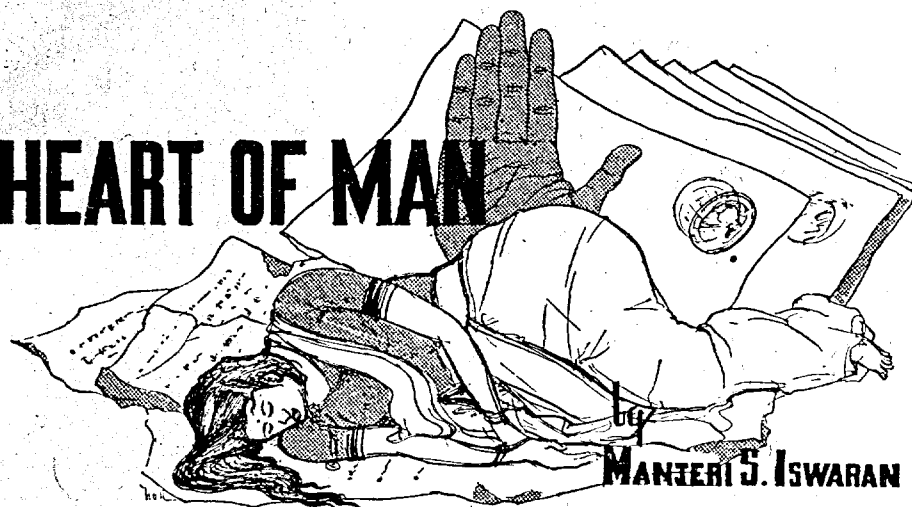
As Pandit Malaviya.



As a Village Schoolmaster.



# HEART OF MAN



**L**IKE a delicate satchel the little bundle of letters has lain far too long in a corner of my clothesbox. Tender is its fragrance for memory is its mother; yet how poignant is its tenderness, how touching is its intimacy! Being mercurial by nature I cannot attach myself to any person enduringly; contiguity, mental or physical, which tended to intensify into possessiveness, has always frightened me and filled me with disgust. But the author of these letters was able to convert me by a magic beyond the ken of ordinary humankind; his intellectual honesty, the ebullience of adolescence even at the highest point of his maturity, his poet-soul that challenged and defied convention, his romantic temperament glamourised with flashes of cynicism drew me to him, as nothing had drawn me before, and the bond between us strengthened as the years rolled by. But hush! I who lack the gift of adequate expression am growing vociferous; listen to him, listen to the voice that has spoken to me through a decade and a half, and then perhaps you will realize,

*As in water face answereth face,  
so the heart of man to man.*

**FIRST LETTER—April 12, 19—**

(From the postal stamp on the envelope)

... I don't believe in an identity called god, but I do believe, though vaguely, in a general beneficence. And I thought you were a streak of that beneficence strayed accidentally into my rather lonely life. I was wrong.

Even after a thousand years, I am afraid the problem of human nature

manifesting through human actions will remain insoluble. If at the time of your leaving me someone had taken with me a bet against your replying to my letter, I would have given him the odds of the whole universe against a proton in favour of your writing and I would have lost the bet. I could have confidently asserted before anyone that I knew you fairly well, my egotism would have made me positive about your reactions to particular tones, and I now find that I know nothing about the impulses behind your actions. You are as much a part of astronomy as an undiscovered planet whose orbit and influence cannot be predicted. From an established fact working by known laws you have suddenly developed into a chimera, a mystery, an enigma. The poor Egyptian much-maligned Sphinx is an oracle compared to you. In fact abruptly and without warning you have ceased to be.

A comet in its journey through the heavens suddenly appears, stays for a short while, and passes away none knows where and why. So I will have to develop a dual outlook with regard to yourself, to believe that you exist so long as I am able to meet you and talk to you, and once you are gone to keep an open mind and not even to anticipate hearing from you or talking to you.

In my experiences of life you have been unique. I like to keep up this illusion of uniqueness because I will be disappointed if I find that you have been silent owing to some such commonplace as sickness. I am like Einstein on the verge of his discovering Relativity. Please do not deprive me of my scienti-

fic research satisfaction by suddenly becoming normal. But I am sure you won't. By now you have become the most highly intriguing factor. It is like being invited to a feast with an R.S.V.P. in capitals and an I-shall-be-pleased-to-attend from me by a registered A/D and dressing up for the feast and finding that not only the host is not there, but no cooks, no feast, not even the place mentioned in the invitation.

I have not dated this letter, nor have I mentioned the place, because corresponding with you is acting in regions beyond time and space, a sort of four-dimensional region in which a square is not a square and no known concept can be applied. I would have written in invisible ink on paper made out of the skin of Macbeth's witches, if I could only have secured them. The temporary feeling that I am addressing all this to an Unknown and that all that I am doing is in the nature of something unreal and unsubstantial is hugely tickling. It is similar to automatic writing, the only difference being that in automatic writing the invisible dictates and the visible writes, while in the present case the visible dictates to the invisible who does not write.

Now, coming to the realms of reality, and assuming that you do exist, that you are somewhere in India, that you are even likely to read this and to have read all my previous letters, is it a reasonable inference that you may write just once?

It is immaterial whether I write a ream or a word and whether the letter is posted today or a century hence. And since it is written I have to post it in order to help the Government square up its budget.

In my experiences of life you have been unique...

**SECOND LETTER—June 15, 19—**

... I trusted my father. I trusted my mother. In the innocence of my virginity (blast it!) I trusted everything and everybody. I married the girl of their choice while I was still in my teens. And as though they had ended their business in the world with the ending of my single blessedness, my parents died within a year of each other after my marriage, leaving me alone to work out the nuptial plan of my life as best I could...

... I am more and more convinced, dear friend, of not being able to achieve even ordinary comforts in life. But I dream of wild schemes which fill my

heart and sometimes bring the tears to my eyes, not of grief but of its overflowing, because the dreams are always of giving ecstatic happiness to people like myself, the people of the world who are not rich, nor happy, nor have hopes of being rich or happy. I must die an agnostic because I demand of god instantaneous acts of alleviation of misery, and that is impossible to find in this world. If I find god is not able to do it, why then I must believe in him?

I would live in hell if I find my living there is directly connected with someone's living in heaven. I would even forget the word happiness if by so doing I can give to others what I would have cherished most. My quarrel with the scheme of things is not so much that I am not happy as that I can't make others happy, and that the mean, the selfish, and the cruel commandeer the means of happiness. The wonder to me is that there is no permanent anarchy and that the sufferers keep on suffering meekly. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Surely. But how the earth stinks!

Out of curiosity I read *A Message from Arunachala* by Paul Brunton. I thought it would contain some new revelation which I had missed. The only thing he has achieved is perhaps a sale of a hundred thousand copies at five shillings a copy.

Only if I could do something! Even commit a glorious suicide! This stupid life in this stupid earth hurts my feelings and gives a shock to my reason. This impotence, this damned human weakness, this mockery of love and power! I could sweep the sky clean of every silly blinking star and kick the sun away into its original limbo and stop this nonsense of creation—I feel so full of wrath at the blithering idiocy of what is obviously idiotic and simple enough to remedy!

**THIRD LETTER—September 9, 19—**

... Yes, you are right, my friend. The modern Messiah must be clad in the whitest Dacca muslin, or for variety's sake the coarsest khaddar, but it will always be what he wears that will be most important to him, not what you and I feel and suffer. If a man renders unto Caesar what the world believes belongs to Caesar, he can sail on the shoulders and even the heads of men and women, and they will not let him set his foot on the ground, because poor we are happiest when illusioned, and there will always be a Caesar, omni-

potent and omniscient mixed with our mother's milk for there will always be Messiahs, sons and plenipotentiaries of this Caesar who will ignite men's hearts to make a bonfire to spotlight their muslin or khaddar.

#### FOURTH LETTER—October 20, 19—

Kindest of friends, having had a close knowledge of my character, why should you not know that part of my life, the domestic? I referred to it once as my 'nuptial plan', do you remember? Oh, it's a grand sampler made by my wife—to be correct, guided in the work by her mother, a wonderful, doting mother. It's a gem. Such coloured wools! Age cannot fade their glory.

After the death of my parents, my house became desolate. I was alone, except for a couple of old servants who had served my family for well-nigh thirty years—a woman and her husband. My younger brother was doing his fourth year at the University. My mother-in-law moved in with my wife. She was a widow with money, my wife was her only child, inseparable as her own shadow. And can anyone part from one's shadow?

My wife was no raving beauty. She was pretty, with a perpetually helpless look in her eyes, slender as a reed, shy as a doe. The darling mother was always in the offing . . .

#### FIFTH LETTER—February 7, 19—

. . . I feel so harassed, my friend, that I want to talk about what I am feeling to someone who realizes what I am feeling. More often I think that speaking about anything is sheer stupidity. When I am out of sorts, I try to go over mentally books which would kind of balance me, and I feel that everyone who has spoken since speaking began, Plato, Gautama, Jesus, Sankara—has been made a complete fool of, each believing he was on the track of truth in a wilderness where there are no tracks, no paths, not even a direction.

What shall a man speak about? That he is unhappy? Many have felt it and spoken it and yet we continue to be unhappy. Can one take life humorously? For a time one can, but how long can one laugh and at what? Grievances and miseries? The best is to be dumb in a world in which the best is a little worse than the worst. If astrology is to be believed in, a man is delivered to life bound hand and foot at his very birth, and he can go on cursing, swearing, laughing, joking, crying, praying, cajoling, wriggling,—he remains bound all

along. If he believes he is free and tries to walk he stubs his toe against the smallest stone and stumbles and has to acknowledge he is not free!

I am sorry I never have anything new to say to you, but when I sit down to write to you I go on saying things which have been said much better by so many you might have already read. My letters to you ought only to be: Dearest friend, I am alive and I hope you also are.

I am alternately afraid of life and defiant of it. The defiance is temporary. Fear is permanent. The present state of the world fosters this fear, and unless one has got the power to see into the future the good that might follow the present evil, one has to despair of things as they are and ask oneself whether it is not better to leave this place and cease to be forever?

Every saint and philosopher has foundered against this evil. None can justify it. The only hope of our outgrowing it about billions and billions of years hence can be based on evolution which has brought us to what we are, from raw meat-eating, growling, snarling savages. But it does not solve the individual's problem and he is right in asking: Why such a slow and stupid way of growth? What purpose does it serve? And whatever happens billions of years after, what about me? How is it going to benefit me, even if I am sure that after a billion, billion years there'll be no evil? How am I to be interested in such far-away posterity? They are complete strangers to me with whom I have nothing to do . . .

#### SIXTH LETTER—March 22, 19—

I must no longer keep you in suspense, my friend. Sooner than later I should let you have a complete glimpse of the second ashrama of my life, that of a grihastha.

My mother-in-law took over me and my house in a manner so forthright that I felt my bones go weak like water. I was aghast at what she did, but I was astounded at my own powerlessness to fight her. She kept my wife away from me! Months passed. That there was a day when every marriage had to be consummated seemed never to cross her mind. She didn't leave her daughter's side for a moment, she didn't allow her to talk to me much, and the little we talked she eavesdropped. My poor wife was afraid to step over the line her imperious mother had drawn between us, her helpless eyes sought me for protection and glanced aside more help-

lessly. Was the woman an ogress? What was her purpose, her motive in erecting this strange barrier between a man and his wife? All sorts of doubts assailed my mind. What a life she would have led her husband, the unfortunate man! He must have been only too glad to find his redemption in death . . .

And I feel I too belong to Death and that he has lent my services to life, to be an accountant in a firm of stock-brokers—not principally. I can assure you—and is regretting it every moment. Nobody of course understands the meaning of life, so there's no point in worrying over it, and whatever one does is wrong because in doing one thing, one fails to do so many other things. To hope is silly, but to despair is sentimental, and it is a fashion now-a-days to hold anything emotional in contempt.

I have left everything to fate, because I don't understand why things happen to me or don't happen. So you also leave it at that and let anybody hold forth his fist and tell us that our destinies are in our own hands and that we must have the will-to-get on. Get on where? . . .

I try to read different types of books, Renan's *Life of Jesus*, Hardy's *Tess*, Rolland's *Jean Christophe*, Aurobindo's *Divine Life*, the *Bhagavadgita*, the *Upanishads*, the plays of Shakespeare, selections from the best Indian and English poets, but everything seems futile, especially the life of Jesus, a good man, one of the best men betrayed by his beliefs, his Father not showing even a glimpse of His love on the Cross. The riddle of life will ever remain a riddle. Should one bother about it? May not nature or god ask: Why this impertinence? Were you consulted when you were born? Will you be asked even a By-your-leave when you are kicked out? Come out of the womb, suck your mother, weep, howl, kick your heels, run after women, marry one of them, or don't—you'll always want a woman all the same—beget children, drudge to feed them, worry, contract cancer or typhoid or flu, but get out. We want room for the fresh arrivals, so keep out. In this state one shouldn't fret. One can return the consciousness with the grace of Socrates returning the cup of hemlock and quit.

Are we really learning things in life? I am writing this with the symptoms of an on-coming fever—a beautiful ache of the body, heat in the head, the stomach feeling as if it belonged elsewhere—and why? Because after days of un-

bearable heat it started raining yesterday. Naturally one has got to pay for this mighty gift. Suppose the rain was withheld? Suppose it continued unbearably hot for ever and ever? But my dear sir, suppose you are not there, and we are not there, and nothing is there? We wouldn't lose! You have started the game like a rubber planter of the East Indies, enticing us with women and good pay and then signing on a contract for from twenty to eighty years, to live and work for you and die when we are useless. Fools will always rush in, tearing open their mothers' wombs, into this wilderness of inanity and suffering, and so long as they are there, your whip will keep on functioning. The tool you use is a mother's tenderness, which you turn into possessiveness as soon as we are out. Only if one could bid you farewell! How fond it would be! . . .

. . . No! Having a life out of the ordinary is no satisfaction to me. I want to smash up every possible evil. While grieving over my own condition, I have been thinking of others who are far, far more miserable than me. It has been an argument always advanced that there are others more unhappy than ourselves. Is this a matter of self-satisfaction, that stupidly snug feeling that you are better off than others? I am not accepting any nirvana, the courage never to submit or yield even if the whole universe is against you. You can't live or even die as you like. But you can definitely refuse to accept the world as it has been made, from the time a piece of sun was torn out and kicked out, and it started dancing round and round the kicker, without shame or self-respect, and not being satisfied with this hoola-hoola, began to take shape and gave birth to vermin—to the time of Einstein, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi. Not a step is acceptable to me, nor its remotest future when every sinner will be a saint . . .

#### SEVENTH LETTER—May 28, 19—

. . . I couldn't stand the woman's tyranny, my friend. I bore it with the patience of an angel. She crossed the limits of decency. My insulted manliness blazed into sudden revolt. I almost hated my wife for her abject dependence on her mother. That only emphasized my impotence. But I was not to be cowed down any more.

I turned on my mother-in-law and rapped out, my lips quivering in ungovernable anger:—

"Am I married to you or to your daughter?"

She looked scornfully at me.

I flew into a frenzy of rage.

"Get out of my house," I cried. "Get out this instant."

It was not my voice. It was borrowed.

The woman smiled imperturbably.

"Coming between me and my wife, you fiend!" I screamed. "Have you no sense of shame? You sneaked into my home like a tortoise, but you can't ruin me altogether."

Followed a minute of thunderous silence. I turned my glance on my wife. Her little breasts were pointed like two accusing fingers at me, trembling ever so imperceptibly. I hungered to take her in my arms and caress away their acridity, astringency, caused by the isolation so unnaturally imposed on her by her mother, and feel them melting like butter under the tremulous warmth of my fingers. Dear friend, don't think I am being prurient, my young blood cried aloud, cried bitterly for fulfilment. I thought of the general beneficence. And hardly had I moved a step forward

when the helpless hunted look twisted her face and she swayed on her feet and fell full length on the floor, her legs and hands twitching and stiffening, foaming at the mouth, and the pupils of her eyes screwing up.

"You brute!" shrieked my mother-in-law, taking the head of her unconscious daughter onto her lap, and looking at me to burn me.

The light burst upon me in all its hideous nakedness . . .

My wife was an epileptic . . .

Like murder it was out . . .

How long could my mother-in-law have concealed the fact from me? Till eternity?

Did she expect a providential cure of the poor girl's affliction and then to celebrate our nuptials? . . .

Ah, who will change this world, dear, kind friend? What new god is yet to be born who will do it? For the old god is dead, and so much the better, for he didn't fulfil a single promise of his.

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General Manager.

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE



THE developments in Czechoslovakia were commented on a fortnight ago in these columns. The reports then available suggested that the crisis was perhaps a sequel to the latest in the series of uprisings attempted by the Slovakian underground. Though Slovak leaders do figure largely among those arrested or dismissed from administrative posts since the crisis, it is now clear that the Communist-led Government of Czechoslovakia has not confined its clean-up campaign to the members of the Right-wing Slovak Democratic Party. Prominent members of the other two Right-wing parties—National Socialists and the People's (Catholic) Party—have also been victims of the putsch. And one may take it that if any among the Social Democratic leaders had seriously protested, they would also have been rounded up. Indeed, a few months ago when the Social Democratic Party of Czechoslovakia elected Dr. Lausman (representing the Right-of-Centre) to chairmanship of the party in place of Dr. Fierlinger (a staunch advocate of unity with the Communists), the change was thought by many to be a defeat of the Left-wing. It was also thought that the Social Democrats, led by the pro-Western group, might break with the Communists and form the kind of 'Third Force' alliance with the Right-wing parties that is familiar in Western Europe. The recent crisis has disclosed no such intent, at any rate for the present, on the part of the Social Democrats. One reason for their acquiescence in what is manifestly a Communist coup is that their organisation would be split from top to bottom if the issue of non-cooperation with the Communists should be

forced. Even Jan Masaryk, a staunch individualist, has not protested. President Benes, for his part, seems to have accepted the bloodless revolution as something preferable to the confusion and perhaps civil strife that would follow if he should disown and withhold co-operation from the new regime.

### EAST EUROPEAN PATTERN

Until this Communist drive, Czechoslovakia was a unique instance in post-war Europe of co-operation between political parties holding to differing ideologies, and of a combination of individual political and civil liberties with an economy Socialist in character and planned over a large sector. The country has now ceased to be unique. It has been shaped to the typical East European pattern—a State in which any opposition to the Communist-led Government is forcibly stifled and where economic reforms are vigorously pushed through without the formalities of strictly parliamentary procedure. Klement Gottwald, the Communist Premier, has announced that all estates beyond the size of 50 hectares (125 acres) will be broken up and distributed to the tenants. He has also effected an increase in the bread ration. All these moves are not unconnected with the desire of the Communists, who do not at present command an independent majority in Parliament, to acquire it during the elections that are to be held in the coming May.

What has led the Communists to force the pace in a country that was moving towards genuine Socialism within the constitutional framework of a democracy? The answer can only be found in the increasing

tension between the Anglo-American and Russian camps. The kind of rude interference with constitutional procedure that the Communists have made in Czechoslovakia is deplorable. But then, Communist behaviour is conditioned by, and can be understood if not excused in the light of, the behaviour of others elsewhere. It is to Greece and Germany that one must turn in order to find the explanation of the recent developments in Czechoslovakia. American intervention in Greece has not only prolonged the civil war involving the death of thousands, it has made of Greece an outpost of American military strength. If the needs of American security, as it is claimed, extend across the Atlantic to distant Greece, the Soviet bloc might understandably wish to make sure of its security. Czechoslovakia borders on Germany. And it has been made clear that Western Germany is to be rebuilt under Anglo-American supervision and without Russian participation. If the tragedy of Big Power conflict should reach its climax, and the Ruhr should again become an arsenal, this time of the Western powers as it once was of the Wehrmacht, Czechoslovakia would be in grave danger as the first victim in a war between the two blocs. The Communist coup was inevitable in the present atmosphere of increasing war talk.

#### PARTITION OF KOREA

The same reasons would serve adequately to explain the formation of a 'People's Republic' in North Korea. The Korean peninsula is the strategic bridgehead between the two blocs in the Far East. Just as American armaments are being used in Greece and kept in reserve

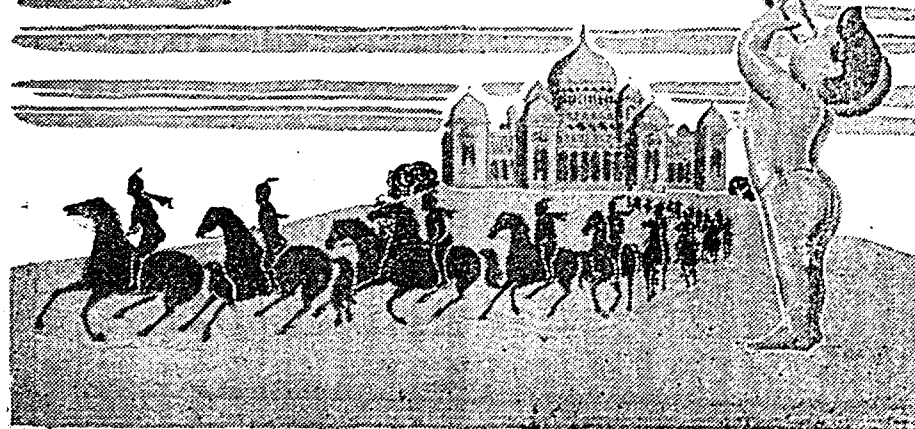
in Turkey in the European theatre, American armaments are being used in China and can at any time be moved into Japan in the Far Eastern theatre. The consolidation of Soviet-occupied North Korea and the successful militancy of the Communist forces in Manchuria are both in the nature of countermoves designed to offset American control over China and Japan.

The setting up of a republic in North Korea is undoubtedly a violation of the letter of the Four Power Agreement (between U.S.A., Britain, Russia and China) which promised independence to a united Korea, there being not the least notion at the time of the agreement that the artificial but convenient division of Korea along the 38th parallel for purposes of the transitional occupation would soon grow into an Iron Curtain. But since the spirit of the Big Power agreement has been dead for a long time now, the violation of its terms will not excite much interest. Partition of Korea became quite as inevitable, though unfortunate, as partition of Germany when "division of soul" overtook the wartime Allies.

The United States, as always, was able to muster enough votes at the last General Assembly of the United Nations Organisation to secure the despatch of a Commission to Korea, in spite of Russian opposition. It was a futile gesture made with the avowed purpose of holding elections on a national scale and then forming a Government for free Korea. The Russians refused to permit the Commission to enter their zone. In an area of direct conflict between the Big Two, U.N.O. cannot obviously enter without stultifying itself. For U.N.O. is not yet bigger than the Big Two.

Two parliamentary utterances among many may appropriately find a place here. Mr. Oliver Stanley, when Minister of Transport, was asked whether any and if so what persons were still provided with reserved carriages on the railways. The answer to the best of my recollection, was: "Cabinet Ministers and lunatics; His Majesty's Judges of Assize and verminous persons; and corpses." In the other instance an aged peer, in the course of an interminable harangue, droned: "And now, my Lords, I ask myself this question." A voice: "And a damned dull answer you'll get."—Lord Justice Asquith.

# RELEASING ON 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL *Chandradaleka* GEMINI'S GLORIOUS PRESENTATION TO THE SCREEN



**IN ALL CLIMES AT ALL TIMES**

**FOR COUGHS  
And COLDS**

*Rely on*

**SIROLIN**

**"ROCHE"**

**USED ALL OVER THE WORLD**



## WAY TO WORLD PEACE

by **BINOD**

**D**ESPITE the pompous utterances that we hear on every side about the need for a broader, larger, nobler outlook, it is a tragic fact that our vision is becoming narrower, smaller, meaner every day. We are no nearer peace and ordered progress than at the worst periods in history.

Why is this so? Why, despite our wonderful inventions, despite our carefully regulated society, despite our scholarship and research, despite, in short, so many developments that have come about or been brought about with the avowed object of promoting world peace and progress, are we still picking up quarrels, sniping at one another across the conference table, and finally killing one another with the greatest gusto, awarding prizes to those who murder the largest numbers?

One may indeed well ask, why, why is this so? Listen to Rudyard Kipling:

*The cities are full of pride,  
Challenging each to each  
This from her mountainside,  
That from her burthened beach.*

Substitute "nations" for "cities" in the above verse and you have the key to the problem. National consciousness has degenerated into national conceit and blind self-righteousness. Nationalism has come to mean merely the indoctrination of collective selfishness without reference to duty or justice or the rights of others—a sort of banditry worked into a political creed which requires an enemy to harass and attack. Patriotism of a people has come to mean the belief that God has created them superior to the natives of other countries. The discussions at the United Nations conferences—the very organisation which is supposed to bring the countries of the world together—reveal an increasing tendency on the part of each nation to

regard itself as the centre of the universe and to view all things solely in their relationship to this fixed point. This is manifestly a fatal thing to do, yet it is the only method admitted and used by the seventy or eighty "sovereign" governments of our world, by our legislators and diplomats, by our press and radio. All the principles, policies and conclusions of the peoples are necessarily drawn from the warped picture of the world obtained by so primitive a method of observation. It is this overemphasised consciousness of national "sovereignty" that causes misunderstandings which eventually lead to conflict. We shall understand the point better with the help of an example.

Nobody in the United States is afraid of atomic bombs or rockets produced within the sovereign nation-state of the United States of America. Nor is any Soviet citizen afraid of atomic bombs or other devastating weapons produced within the sovereign nation-state of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. But the people of the United States feel that atomic bombs produced in the Soviet Union represent a potential danger to them, and the Soviet people feel the same way about atomic bombs produced in the United States.

What does this show? It shows that no atomic bomb, no weapon that the genius of man can conceive, is dangerous in itself. Weapons only become "dangerous" when they are in the hands of sovereign states other than one's own. It follows that the ultimate source of danger is not atomic energy but the sovereign nation-state.

How is the problem of a "too sovereign" nation-state—if we may use the term—to be overcome? A very sensible and practical solution is commended by Emery Reves in his book *The Anatomy of Peace*. There is only one method, according to Mr.

\*Penguin Books: First published by Harper and Brothers, New York.

Reves, that can create security against destruction by the atomic bomb (or any other weapon, or, in one word, by war). This is the same method that gives the States of New York and California (non-producers of the atomic bomb) security against being erased from the surface of the earth by the States of Tennessee and New Mexico (producers of the atomic bomb). It is the security given by a common sovereign order of law.

For this purpose Mr. Reves advocates the formation of a world federal government—not another League of Nations or United Nations Organisation—but a full international government able to enforce the law just as a national government is able to enforce its law in the particular country it governs. In this world federal government the question of individual nations “surrendering” their powers does not arise, because, just as individual freedom cannot be unlimited if all individuals are to be free, the independence of a nation does not mean untrammelled and unrestricted freedom to do whatever it wants; real independence can be created only if no nation is free to attack another, to drag it into war, and to cause such devastating loss of life and wealth as has been wrought on a world scale twice in our lifetime. The security of a nation, like the security of an individual, means the co-operation of all

to secure the rights of each. The only way to prevent future world conflagrations is through regulation of the inter-relationships of nations, not by unenforceable treaty obligations which sovereign nations will always disregard (remember Hitler's scraps of paper!), but by an enforceable legal order, binding all nations, giving all nationals equal rights under the established law, and imposing equal obligations upon each. For peace is order based on law. World peace is order based on a world law.

Meanwhile the need was never greater than it is today for all men of goodwill to exert their powers towards the realisation of world amity. All petty hatreds and jealousies—for, in the context of world affairs, even national considerations are petty if they militate against the general welfare of mankind—must give place to that broadening of the mind which alone can ensure universal peace. For technical developments have made the world unbelievably small, unbelievably interdependent, and no single nation, however seemingly powerful, is really self-sufficient. The second World War has amply proved that. Happiness will flow into the world when, in Sarojini Naidu's beautiful words—

*The terror and tumult of hate  
shall cease*

*And life be refashioned on the  
anvils of peace.*



“The individual who practises democracy must have both tolerance and conviction. Tolerance and conviction are opposing principles in a democratic society. How far and how long do we tolerate beliefs which are opposed to ours? Tolerance can mean emptiness. If we do not have conviction in a democratic society, the structure itself becomes inert. How far the individual goes with tolerance or conviction will depend on his judgment.

“Wisdom for its own sake is not enough. Wisdom must be given to power and power to wisdom.

“Men and women must be willing to defend their judgments. We can't have rugged individualism in a democracy if we are not going to have chaos. We must share common feelings, and give loyalty to common ideals. This makes democracy difficult. Democratic society requires alert individuals and at the same time demands that the individual be willing to subordinate himself to the common good.”—Dr. SARAH GIBSON BLANDING.

## KASHMIR AT THE CROSS ROADS

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

EVER since the tribal raids, and the accession of Kashmir to the Indian Union, much has been said and written on it and much blood has flown. The brief and pointed statement of C. R. Reddy has put the situation in proper focus. It is time that we sit down to assess the whole situation anew, before we rush on with the current of events.

As regards the military position there, we have been told by no less a person than Sher-i-Kashmir that our military victory is certain and the fight is really for a political and moral victory. In fact the position is not so simple. The best that we can say of it is that we hold and will continue to hold the military initiative. To be more plain, we have troops and guns enough to shoot all tribesmen who obligingly offer themselves as targets. We have not been able to strike the marauders in their Pakistan strongholds for obvious reasons. They can still with impunity make any number of hit and run raids with little loss to themselves, but we may be forced to keep engaged a good part of our valuable troops under unenviable conditions. The daily expenditure on Kashmir operations is said to be four lakhs of rupees, a stupendous sum indeed, in our present economic position. Money apart, the suicidal strategy of pinning down air troops in mountainous Kashmir under gruelling conditions, and exposing our other vulnerable borders with scant military protection, may have serious repercussions. Even if direct military interference by Islamic or other countries is remote still, a free supply of the sinews of war to Pakistan, and a comparative embargo on India, is not impossible. Bound as we are at present to fight within Kashmir, while the raiders can freely move back and forth from Pakistan, our military position is anything but satisfactory, in spite of our success in operations

at present. Some volunteer armies at least from India, trained in guerilla tactics, would be necessary to supplement our regular forces, to make the fighting less expensive militarily and materially.

As regards a referendum in Kashmir, Sheik Sahib is fully confident of success, and he would be right under normal conditions. But the N.W.F.P. referendum is a lesson for us not to be weak-willed. If we had fought out the referendum, a little more boldly, we might have succeeded and strengthened our position. In the case of Kashmir, the tribesmen by their misdeeds have made Pakistan stink in Kashmir nostrils, but the Kashmiris by now must be heartily disgusted of the ravaging warfare. In disgust, they would prefer a strong and stable Government however evil, to a state of perpetual warfare. Unless we show that we can see the business through and assure them an effective peace and a stable Government, we may not be able to retain their sympathies.

The reference to U.N.O., far from solving the problem, has complicated it beyond repair. In spite of bland assurances by Panditji and Sheik Sahib, we are not simply where we were before the reference, but really much worse off. Even people who never expected material results from it but only hoped that it would have some propaganda value as a result, are aghast at the outcome. It has had certainly plenty of propaganda value, not for India but for Pakistan. We have to thank ourselves alone for it. That even America should take a thinly veiled anti-Indian attitude surprises many, but we alone are responsible for that as well. To have opposed a possibly friendly America, over an issue not concerning us in any way, to buttress a bellicose Arab League, which at best is a needy friend and at worst may ungratefully help Pakistan,—is anything but sound foreign policy.

In fact our inconsistent unrealistic attitude has earned us the title of the most consistently ridiculous nation on earth, in spite of all world forces being in our favour and against Pakistan. No amount of persistent propaganda can convince an ordinary Christian, American or Englishman that Pakistan, a product of atavistic anachronistic Islamic chauvinism, can be just and tolerant, and the country of Buddha and Mahatma, and the mild Hindu, can even think of genocide. We have to thank ourselves alone, that we are cornered into the unenviable position of choosing between withdrawal from U.N.O., or from Kashmir.

Can we withdraw from Kashmir, as many well-meaning people have suggested of late? The consequences are clear to anybody with some political imagination. We would simply be making a present of whatever military advantages we have to our enemies. We would be betraying the Kashmiris, Hindus and Muslims alike, who have nothing but massacre and rape to look forward to on our withdrawal. We would be breeding such immense frustration and frenzy in this land as to lead to holocausts, by the side of which the Punjab tragedy would seem child's play. We would be tempting power-mad foreigners, to bully and possibly enslave us, by

an open confession of defeat. Can we walk open-eyed into an abyss?

The choice then is clear between absolute firmness and downright defeatism. More is at stake in Kashmir than a small piece of territory or an abstract principle,—it is our very national existence. Soviet Russia, after the humiliating treaty of Brest Litovsk, after crippling loss of territory, after a devastating revolution, and outlawry by the comity of nations, defied the whole world, and emerged as a first class power, by her own efforts. Little decadent Turkey, after a crushing defeat in the great war of 1914-18, with set teeth defied the mighty allies, and secured her rightful place among the nations. Before our very eyes, the backward tribes, divided hopelessly into small countries, between warring dynasties, with no resources, have by sheer determination, made the big powers at least pause and think over the Palestine partition. The Kashmir raid, in spite of all losses, in men and material, awoke us to the dire perils of our situation. The reference to U.N.O. has had many evil consequences, but if it succeeds in knocking out our complacency, making us more realistic and determined, it would not have been in vain. If we fail to succeed, it will be a clear case of suicide and nothing else.



The phrase, "stabbing in the back", was widely used during the war. It first occurred in a speech delivered by President Roosevelt at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, the night Italy declared war upon Britain and France. It had been included in the draft of the speech prepared in the U.S. State Department. Mr. Sumner Welles, the Assistant Secretary of State, had objected to it on the ground that it would anger Mussolini whom the U.S. Government were then attempting to persuade not to enter the war. Thereupon, the President removed the offending phrase. But, on his way to Charlottesville, he changed his mind and employed it in his speech.

Though the idea is not new, the President's phrase correctly hit off the feelings of ordinary men about Italy's conduct. The idea had previously been employed by M. Paul Reynaud, the French Premier. It had also been found many times in the cables sent to the United States by Mr. W. C. Bullitt, then the U.S. Ambassador to France. But, neither the Premier nor the Ambassador had used it so pithily as the President.

## RECONSTITUTE THE DOMINION CABINET

by K. S. VENKATARAMANI

**A**FTER Gandhiji, the greatest need is a clear aim and disciplined activity, a well-laid and comprehensive plan and a close integration of work crystallising our vague ecstasies, national and international, into a Five Year Plan with the following major objectives:

(1) Security, first and foremost. Few realise that in the chaos of international life to-day India has after the partition the most vulnerable land and sea frontiers; India is to-day the most unsafe land to live in after August 15, 1947. Kashmir and Hyderabad have further complicated the issues. Therefore security is the first charge on Indian statesmanship and the first duty of our Nehru Cabinet.

(2) Complete destruction of communalism in any form in politics or governance.

(3) Vastly increased production—agricultural and industrial—on a decentralised basis with autonomous zonal planning, ensuring at the same time that the increased production is justly and wisely distributed for the welfare of the masses.

The working out of these three major objectives involves a correct appraisal and formulation of a Home and Foreign policy and relentless drive and skill in its execution.

Is the present Dominion Cabinet adequate for the job? The candid answer is 'No'; But I would certainly retain Pandit Nehru's leadership of the nation though he has not so far shown enough realism, prevision in judgment and organisational drive. But a reconstituted Cabinet more congenial to his temperament and ideals would notably give him the background inspiration, knowledge and strength for better team work. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is an invaluable asset in many ways and his mastery of the Indian States problem shows his states-

manship and he has already done us a great service though Hyderabad is the crucial test. These two, Nehru and Sardar, are essential to our safety in any new Cabinet.

The reconstitution of the Cabinet, it should not be thought, is unnecessary in view of the new constitution to come into force shortly. Even to take a correct and far-sighted view of the draft constitution, the present Cabinet is not adequately representative to reflect the sovereign will of the people. It is as unrepresentative and imperfect as the present Constituent Assembly. So all the more is the need to reorganise at least the Cabinet on the fullest and most representative level in order to invest it with sanctity to deal with the draft constitution and guide the proceedings so that the constitution that finally emerges might reflect the national genius and the urges of the Gandhian era, in some measure.

Indian politics requires and greatly benefits from an elder statesman like Gandhiji, not directly in the eddies of power-politics or a small council of elder statesmen exercising a beneficial and uplifting influence on the political trends of the day and on the federal and provincial governments. Dr. Rajendra Prasad is now our true successor to the Gandhian Pectam. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in constant and cordial co-operation with Dr. Rajendra Prasad should direct his attention to the following urgent problems and avert the clash that impends:

(1) Reorganisation of the Central Executive on a broad basis, taking in all parties.

(2) Reconciliation of the growing antagonism between the Congress and the Socialists, securing for Socialists a relevant share of seats in the Executive.

(3) Free the Congress as a political and party organisation and make it a pure social body of workers devoted to the colossal constructive work that was the dream and agony of Gandhiji. This would also amount to a fulfilment of Gandhiji's last testament and wish about the reconstitution of the Congress. Gandhiji's intuitions were always sound and progressive.

Further, Big Business and vested interests which are now sailing under the Congress flag enjoying many privileges and perquisites will come out in the open and organise themselves in their true colours and with clear objectives. This would vastly help the evolution of political parties in India on healthy and rational lines.

(4) Above all, we should try to bridge the gulf between the Congress and the Communists on a new philosophy of Indian Socialism based on Justice and Dharma.

The basic conception is that the individual and his unfettered growth is as sacred as economic democracy. The longings of the soul, the higher nature of man, is as sacred as the urges of the stomach and there is no inconsistency between the two. Indian Socialism based on Dharma could solve the problem on a higher basis and give a political and economic pattern of life both to U.S.A. and Russia solving the tangled contradictions of the day which results in global wars. India's supreme message is this and is implicit in all the travails of her renaissance.

It is my profound conviction that good government requires only one party—for it has only one ideal and only one authentic mode of imple-

menting that ideal. Good government which implies the welfare of all in the highest advaitic sense without any distinction whatsoever must necessarily have its ideals based impersonally on Dharma, a sum-total of permanent fundamental duties, rights and principles governing human conduct.

Our Nehru Cabinet inspired by the gracious and inspiring personality of Dr. Rajendra Prasad should courageously declare for this, the ideal of one party which comprehends all parties and reconstitute immediately the Dominion Cabinet as the first step on the broadest basis excluding none, taking in all parties in one comprehensive sweep. This move would free democracy from its greatest curse, the party system, the malarious swamp which breeds the mosquitoes that produce the global wars.

The sovereign test for ministerial responsibility shall be character, ability and record of selfless constructive work. And above all, non-ownership of property in fact and a true sanyasin outlook on life as vouchsafed by public opinion. A capitalist as Finance Minister is utterly unthinkable to my mind whatever may be his other qualifications. Gandhiji has given us a rare inheritance: a matchless trio in Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. There is nothing which a willing and renascent India cannot achieve with wise co-operation among these three resulting in the highest statesmanship. One false step is enough to ruin a generation. Wisdom in action beneficently nourishes our growing society even as timely showers of rain the growing crops.

Put two of the best friends together when they are hungry, and they will invariably end up in a quarrel. The effect of a good meal lasts not only a few hours, but for weeks and months. It is for this reason that, with the Chinese all quarrels and disputes are settled at dinner tables instead of at the court of justice. In China, we bribe our way into the goodwill of everybody by frequent dinners. It is, in fact, the only safe guide to success in politics. Should someone take the trouble of compiling statistical figures, he would be able to find an absolute correlation between the number of dinners a man gives to his friends and the rate or speed of his official promotion.—  
LIN YUTANG.

## A SQUARE DEAL FOR LABOUR

by K. S. N.

OF late our top-ranking leaders have been telling us a great deal about the steady and alarming fall in our industrial production, exhorting us to forget petty differences, to ensure industrial truce for a time at least and to make an all-out effort to stop the rot. While the capitalists, whom we are asked to regard as trustees of the people, are not entirely absolved from all blame for the sorry state of affairs, labour has received the strongest condemnation. Even leaders of pronounced socialistic persuasion have been hard on labour. A dispassionate study of the pronouncements of our leaders cannot but make an impartial student question if they have not been reluctant, if not really afraid, to take effective and decisive measures to solve the problem facing the country, without caring for the frowns or smiles of powerful vested interests.

So long as the cost of living continues to rise, labour is bound to demand increased wages. No genuine truce is possible with starvation staring people in the face. The first duty of the Government, therefore is to take all possible steps to prevent further rise in the cost of living and to save the poor people from utter destitution. This is an extremely difficult task no doubt, but it has got to be done. It can certainly be done if the Government has the will and the courage to face the opposition of the vested interests. Effective measures should be adopted to peg all prices down. With production far short of demand, this step would probably lead to black marketing, but if vigorous steps are taken to increase production simultaneously, to punish black marketeers mercilessly and to control the hoarded cash, etc., in the hands of the anti-social elements, within a short time the evil would disappear and production would mount up. Remuneration to labour should be fixed on the basis of, and in relation to,

the price level fixed and in consideration of this, labour should be asked to ensure a minimum production in each industry or industrial unit. Labour should be given a proportionate increase in its remuneration if and when it gives an increase in production over the agreed minimum. Profit-sharing by employees is a very healthy practice and every employer should be compelled to introduce this system and to give his employees a fixed percentage of his profits, after making the usual provisions intended to strengthen the financial position and productive capacity of the industry and a reasonable return on the investment in the business. These would induce labour to put forth its best efforts, would increase production, benefit the capitalist too, and in due course cause a fall in the cost of production and pave the way to lower prices and lower cost of living. To ensure complete success, the capitalist should eliminate inefficiency in his equipments and wastes in production and management. The existing practice as regards production and management technique in most of our institutions, to put it mildly, is antediluvian. Without overhauling them and bringing them into line with modern ways, labour efforts would be almost useless. The capitalist should be satisfied with a reasonable return on his investments at least during this national emergency. He should desist from the practice of distributing high dividends and free bonus shares, while the labour which helped him to earn such huge profits is left to face starvation and destitution and is compelled to carry on production with obsolete mechanical and scientific equipments.

If our Government takes effective steps to peg down prices, to introduce reforms as detailed above and decides to allow no nonsense to interfere with the programme, ere long we shall see our industrial

production shooting up. I am not expounding a bookish theory. I am speaking from experience. In all probability, most of the capitalists would oppose these proposals. At the recent Industries Conference, some of our prominent capitalists expressed their readiness to cooperate wholeheartedly to improve the present position. Let them give a practical demonstration of their patriotism and help the Government and the country. If the Government is really for the people and not for the few rich, it can and must take effective action promptly. Doubtless, labour and the capitalists must pull together as a team, but a starving workman cannot run and keep pace with a powerful sprinter.

In the sacred name of the nation, leaders may go on appealing to the patriotic sentiment of labour and may succeed in enlisting the support of the so-called labour leaders to persuade their followers not to go on a strike or to disturb the even

tenor of the existing scheme of things, but sooner or later a starving labourer would either revolt or drop down. The only sure remedy for labour unrest is to assure the worker, first and foremost, freedom from starvation. The Government must do this, if possible with the cooperation of the capitalist employer. Attempts to divide labour and lead it under opposing flags—sometimes under capitalist inspiration and sometimes under the urge of power politics—may succeed for a time, but they are bound to end ultimately in chaos and disaster. World events of the day are definite signals which we may ignore at our peril. Give a square deal to the labour NOW. Let our capitalists—great and small—who are never tired of proclaiming their love of the country, show that they are as good at giving up and giving away a little as they have been at gathering all unto them. We shall then have laid the most enduring foundation for our Indian Union.

## THE TARNISHED LAUREATE

by N. S. R.

THE anecdote is often narrated of how, when the father of Benjamin Disraeli was told that judging from his novels his son must be in intimate friendship with the peerage, the old man gravely replied that he doubted whether his offspring had so much as seen a duke. The present writer is free to confess that he has set eyes on only three scions of the British nobility. When Lord Erskine sat robed in the full academic dignity which appertains to a Chancellor of a renowned university, it was not difficult to reconcile oneself to the fact that here was a descendent of that Earl of Mar and Kellie who had raised the standard of Jacobite revolt against George II. The entire Debrett seemed to burst into a flower when recently His Excellency Earl Mountbatten drove through the cheering streets of Madras. But faith in the peerage and baronetage grew dim as one witnessed Lord Tennyson take the field at 'Chepauk. Fat and probably scant of breath, the rotund figure consorted ill with one's notions of aristocracy, and not at all with one's further conceptions of the majesty and grandeur of poetry. The grandson of the laureate exuded joviality and comradeship, but neither the divine passion of poesy nor the stateliness of the peerage.

But such objections are petty and foreign to a consideration of the laureate's eminence as what may be called a painter in poetry. This description will undoubtedly raise the ire of two sharply distinguished classes of critics; the Wordsworthians and those who attempt to read literature in terms of a political theory. To neither will it be conceivable or even seemly that a poet should so far misuse his powers as to produce such gewgaws as harmonious collections of fine phrases. But lovers of poetry are in general emancipated from the prejudices of both these sections, and are content to value

luminous passages for their own sake.

It will be sharply objected by the more severe critics that Tennyson, writing as he did between two main generations of romanticism, the age of Keats and that of Rossetti, merely fell between two stools. An irreverent writer has indeed described him as a compound of "water and Keats". But all this is to do injustice to an ability, little short of genius, to evocate actual pictures in terms of words, pulsating and coloured in the extreme.

The poet had deliberately set himself this task. He had indeed carved the words, "Byron is dead" on the trees in his father's rectory, when the tragedy at Missolonghi became known in the country. But it was rather to Keats that he paid his homage. It was his confirmed purpose "to take the hiss out of the language", by outlawing s's, and filling his lines with liquid l's and m's. He had before him as a warning the strange aberration of William Collins who, in his marvellous *tour de force* of the ode, "To Evening," had permitted himself a "box of hissing serpents" in the lines:

*"Now air is hush'd, save where  
the weak-ey'd bat  
With short shrill shriek flits by  
on leathern wing".*

Tennyson had no apprehension that he had failed in his task. It was rather his fear whether he had not carried it to excess; whether he had not come

*"To add and alter many times  
Till all is ripe and rotten".*

This defect was alleged by Ruskin who declared, "I am not sure I do not feel the art and finish in these poems a little more than I should like to feel them".

But the sensible reader will take the good things of poetry as they come, and not cavil that they are not something else. He will receive no richer reward than in the early

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works of Tennyson. The figure of Mariana in the moated grange, the evocation of life under Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, the marvellous sorrow of the Lady of Shalott, the solemn agony of Arthur, the repentance of Sir Bedivere—these are sketches worthy of being admitted to the company of the Faerie Queene, the "dark lady" of the sonnets, Keats' nightingale, and the Blessed Damozel. There is a richer riot of colour and sound only in the perfection of his master, Keats.

Many readers will prefer this sybarite in words to the inane speculator in theology and morals that Tennyson, unfortunately for his reputation, allowed himself to become. It was an evil day for poetry when he attempted to reconcile the ways of Darwin to man; when he preened himself on an imperfect knowledge of science;

*"The nebulous star we call the sun,*

*If that hypothesis of theirs be sound".*

"Hypotheses" are emphatically no apt subject for enduring poetry, and the student recalls with anguish the rants of the two "Locksley Hall" poems. This unpoetical passion led him so far astray that in the "Idylls of the King," he merely produced, in Meredith's complaint, "a crowned

curate". Grievous in result were his concessions to the spirit of Victorianism.

Nevertheless, it is heartening to remember that these inanities were merely a passing phase. They led to the stately nobility and grandeur of utterance of the concluding phase; the indomitableness of Ulysses, or his own determination to "cross the bar". It is, in fact, to be doubted whether he ever wrote a better poem than the address to Virgil, "landscape lover, lord of language". Here indeed did "the chosen coin of fancy flash out from many a golden phrase".

That such a poet should be held in contempt, as one finds is the fact in contemporary organs of literary criticism, makes one despair of the critical capacity of mankind. The modern Zoiluses appear to have taken inordinate umbrage at the laureate's unfortunate scientific and philosophical speculations, and, true to their spirit of captiousness, to have neglected the master of symphony. To follow them is to deny oneself some of the finer glories of English poetry. To prefer to sacrifice pleasure to prejudice argues obtuseness. The laureate had inherited the bays "from the laurelled brows of him who uttered nothing base"; when Alfred Austin succeeded to the tun of canary, the inheritance had gained a more spacious renown.

Lord Palmerston was without a peer in calligraphy. His handwriting was one of the two perfect things that Mr. Gladstone, a politician notoriously hard to please, had ever known. Even the unsympathetic Queen Victoria had to concede, "Did you ever see such a handwriting? So very clever and strong." Perhaps the clever Mr. Disraeli was not impressed, but then everybody else was.

Consequently, it was not the least of the trials of office for Lord Palmerston that the clerks in the departments over whose destinies he presided for so long wrote bad hands. He once lamented that reading a bad hand was "like running pen-knives into one's eyes." His exhortations and protestations were numerous, but the clerks would not or could not improve. He had advised one of them that he should "form his letters by connecting his slanting down-strokes by visible lines at top or bottom according to the letters which he intends his parallel lines to represent." His ideal was plain handwriting and proper interval between the lines, and his anathemas ill-formed letters and pale ink. He felt so strongly on the last point that he once returned a despatch to a distant consul for transcription in a blacker ink.

## 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.

### Fresh Elections Essential

The independence that we have achieved should not be denied to the man in the street. Having got thoroughly dissatisfied with the maladministration of the Omandur Ministry in our province, we require a radical change in the Congress Party of the Madras Legislature. Fresh elections should be ordered so as to enable the masses to taste real Swaraj. The Congress High Command should not indulge in power politics and thus promote unrest in the province. Unfair selection of Congress candidates and calling upon the electorate to vote for them, will inevitably bring in an atmosphere of disloyalty to the Congress and its administrative machinery.

Y. RAJYALAKSHMI.

Amalapuram.

### Scrap The Communal G.O.

The debate on the communal G.O. that took place in the Madras Legislative Assembly was unfortunate. Communal distinctions in India are but a legacy bequeathed by the British and we will be unworthy of our freedom if we should fancy to continue them instead of sinking our differences and calling ourselves as Indians first and Indians last. The other day Mr. N. V. Gadgil, the Dominion Minister wisely asserted on the floor of the Central Assembly that Government recognised only one community, i.e., Indian, and one religion, i.e., the religion of humanity. It showed a change of heart in the administration, and unless the Government give such a lead, how can the communal venom be eradicated from the hearts of people?

I hope wiser counsels will prevail and Madras will soon realise its blunder of perpetuating the communal distinctions in the services and scrap the communal G.O. in toto recruiting men purely on the basis of efficiency and integrity.

R. JAVANTHINATHAN.

### Caste In Education

It is deplorable that Congress Governments shall be spreading the communal virus by apportioning admissions to schools and appointments to public services according to the religion and the caste of the persons. It is true that certain sections of the people have

remained at the bottom for ages together. But the remedy is to have free education for all up to the age of 15 or at least up to 14 as was promised by the Wardha Scheme and then to create avenues for various aptitudes through more general schools, technical schools and recruitment to the army, navy, etc. If free education in the higher stages is not feasible, liberal scholarships may be given to the poorest. At present middle class children of certain communities get free or half-free education, while others in the same income group get no help at all. It need not be feared that Harijans will suffer if their caste is ignored; they being the poorest in the land at present, they will get a big slice of the aid so long as their poverty continues.

S. MUKUNDA RAO.

Mangalore.

### Breeze In The Gallery

I feel immensely flattered by the admission secured to the charmed circle by the conferment on me of the title "Fellow-Groundling". It was far from my intention to make you repent. I only wanted to protest somewhat vehemently against what I considered to be jarring notes creeping into your otherwise high level journalistic symphony. Of course, I would not have cared to protest against anything appearing in journals of "scissors and paste" variety of which there seems to be an unenviable glut in our land at present. I thought your 'plea in favour of traditional methods of our honouring the mortal remains of our revered leader' was only academic and hypothetical and was recommended only as a concession to 'Gandhi Bhaktas' if their 'intention was to gratify immemorial tradition and still throbbing sentiment', and therefore did not allow it to catch my 'lynx' eye. Further, the charge of raising propagandist dust (according to you) could not have been avoided by selecting Sivasamudram instead of Srirangam.

I do not certainly claim that Gandhiji should have been above criticism, nor that such criticism is always incompatible with deep veneration felt for him. I was only distressed that this-side idolators and the redoubtable "Dawn"

should have come to the same conclusion about the 'untimeliness' of Gandhiji's fast though for completely contradictory reasons. "Dawn" was afraid that the fast was made deliberately to synchronise with the U.N. Security Council meeting so as to influence the decision in favour of India, whereas you held our Government had been 'back-fired' at a critical time. The truth was, as usual, somewhere between these two extremes. India's moral stature was regained to a certain extent by righting some glaring wrongs which had already been tom-tomed outside by obliging foreign journalists.

One thing more. Though I had no doubt that your intellectual faculties admitted of more pseudonymic canalization than those offered by "Vighneswara" and "Saka" I somehow had a slight suspicion that "Groundling" was one of your distant cousins trying to nose you out by adopting a sort of 'laceratingly destructive unconventional' attitude towards a Gandhi or an Omandur with equal disdain. It would appear you found "Groundling" offering more scope for 'freedom of expression sometimes in a 'flippant' vein, as a kind of relaxation. This is really the best part of the joke. Lastly, allow me to say that I am led

to doubt if the bejewelled pattern of picturesque words that seem to flow from your gifted pen with effortless ease, does not carry you away sometimes and make you revel more in the intellectual acrobatics involved than care for the correlation of the exact thought-feeling to the word picture painted. Your deep veneration for the Mahatma in its positive aspect has been evident here and there in your writings like flashes of lightning, but I have liked it more in its negative aspect, if I may be permitted to call it so, in your devastatingly destructive attitude towards confirmed dissemblers who mouth the Mahatmic philosophy profusely but belie it in every one of their actions, and towards the transmigration of the "Justice" party's soul into the body of the Congress in South India.

Calcutta.

K. LAL.

(Mr. Lal is evidently under the impression that GROUNDLING, VIGHNESWARA, SAKA and the editor of this journal are all one. He is wrong. GROUNDLING and VIGHNESWARA are quite different persons.—Ed. S.)

#### Grants For Harijan Hostels.

With reference to the recent orders of the Madras Government sanctioning

annual grants to the hostels run for the benefit of Harijan boys and girls in the province, it is encouraging to note that the total grant this year has exceeded a lakh. The basis of awarding the grants, however, is, to say the least, astonishing. For instance, while generous grants have been sanctioned to the defunct hostels at Rajahmundry, Mummidivaram and Gannavaram, grants have been altogether refused to deserving hostels like the Gowthama Hostel at Cocanada and the Orphanage at Ramachandrapuram whose cases had been strongly recommended by the District Collectors and the Labour Commissioner. It will be interesting to the public to note that the District Collectors concerned have now refused to disburse the grants sanctioned by the Government to the former hostels on the ground that they are not in existence. It is clear from the manner in which the grants have been distributed that the Minister for Harijan uplift has indiscriminately distributed public funds. Are not the people who do not owe allegiance to the party or men in power entitled to the benefit of public funds? Is it any wonder that patriots like Desabhakta Konda Venkatappiah are hemoaning the utter incompetence of the present regime?

K. S. P. RAO.

Bezwada.

#### Not A Poor Man's Budget

Free India's first budget was presented by Mr. R. K. S. Chetty, the Finance Minister. According to the figures there will be a deficit of 27 crores of rupees nearly. He says that the business profits tax and super tax were reduced in order to give relief to the businessman, and to stimulate saving and investment in industry. Under the guise of encouraging business and industry he has proved himself a champion of the capitalists.

The common man asks why the Finance Minister should weep for the deficit, instead of resuming Excess profits tax which covers one third of the present revenue. The excess profits tax was levied on the enormous profits of the industrialists and businessmen. On account of the war, life in the country became costly and the index number rose to 327. Though the war came to an end the high prices did not come down. There was practically no relief for the people suffering from the repercussions of the war. Businessmen are getting enormous profits as usual. There is no justification on the part of the

Finance Minister to leave these untouched.

This is not a budget worthy to be presented by a popular Government. The Congress Government's economic policy is no better than that of the Imperialist Government. Moreover commodities like tea, coffee and tobacco which are commonly consumed by every man are taxed heavily. These commodities have practically become necessities of life. The deficit in the budget is to be made good by the common people. The principle that the broadest shoulders should bear the heaviest burden is given the go-bye.

KALA VENKATARAO  
(Junior)

#### Our Warring Leaders

We notice for sometime past a warring tendency on the part of both Andhras and Tamilians with regard to the future of the city of Madras. Our eminent leaders who, all these days, preached and practised calmness, forbearance and restraint in all our struggles with the British Government for a free united India, are unfortunately, now carried away by linguistic-provincial patriotism. They have been talking in terms of petty regional prestige. I have just come across, the speech of an eminent man of our city in the newspaper, at the end of which he says ".....cannot get Madras city so long as a single.....is alive". Speeches and statements of this kind are likely to do more harm than good to the people of our province as a whole and will also incite bitter linguistic feelings particularly among the people of Madras city which is most undesirable at the present juncture when our Government have not even completely put down the shameful consequences of bitter "communal feelings".

Will our leaders, both Andhra and Tamil, just for a moment give a thought to the serious consequences of their present course of conduct with regard to the separation of our province and act in a manner worthy of their past glorious sacrifices?

S. VENKATARAMAN.

Madras.

#### Future Of Rayalaseema

Opening the conference of the Dravidian Students' Federation at Trichy on Feb. 21 last, Dr. A. Krishnaswamy is reported to have said that the "Dravidian Federation should not support the formation of an Andhra Province on a linguistic basis unless Rayalaseema was given an autonomous position

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Within the framework of the Andhra province. Since Rayalaseemites are but Telugus, how could the learned doctor advocate autonomy or an independent status for Rayalaseema in the future set-up of Andhradesa?

The doctor is not true to the basic principle governing linguistic provinces when he said that "Tamils should not hesitate to link up Rayalaseema with the Tamil province if Rayalaseema so requires." Such inclusion of one linguistic area within a different linguistic province is a flagrant violation of basic principle of linguistic provinces.

R. DHANASINGH.

Cuddapah.

#### Black Market in Rice

Ever since the decontrol of food stuffs and rice in the adjoining Chingleput district, Madras City is having a thriving blackmarket in rice and it is sold between annas fifteen to Rs. 1-4-0 per measure, delivery at the buyer's home! It is understood that getting into the city a measure of rice or less is not in contravention of the existing City's Rationing Rules. We have at the helm of affairs a Government that is illuminating its inefficiency and incompetency—that talks about the high ideals of Mahatma Gandhi but ignores the starving man in the street.

R. N. RAO.

#### Gandhi National Memorial Fund

According to the Congress President's circular a big non-official machinery is to be set up for the collections in connection with the Gandhi National Memorial Fund. Already people are vying with each other to swell the coffers of this fund and trying to make headline news by their six figure contributions. At this rate it is going to end by being a rich man's show. The sponsors must take adequate steps to allow poor people, for whom our beloved leader lived and died, a chance to contribute their mite. All those who were till the other day despising the Mahatma are in the front line of contributors. It is a good thing that the Congress Working Committee has asked every one to give at least ten days' income to this fund. Many poor people, though willing to give, may find it difficult to pay it in a lump sum.

Let not the collections be entrusted to any non-official agency. Let these collections be entrusted to official agencies like the post office, Government treasuries and banks. The poor may be allowed to pay at the rate of a day's income per month for ten months. Let

the contributions be in the form of purchase of memorial stamps or certificates issued under the seal of the Prime Minister or Congress President. Let the collecting agencies be such as to infuse complete confidence in the public to dispel any lurking fear from past experiences of such funds.

Bangalore. SRIKANTESWARA.

#### Gandhi Commemoration Stamps

A few days ago we heard the welcome news that the Postal Department is shortly issuing postage stamps in memory of our dear departed leader, Mahatma Gandhi. The commemoration stamps, it is said, would be of the denominations of 2½ and 12 annas. But these stamps are rarely used in postage; they are not in common use. Hence I request the postal authorities to change the denominations to 1½ annas and 3½ annas respectively.

It would be most proper, in future, to have the Mahatma's head featured in a corner of all our postage stamps. A parallel for this may be found in the new Burmese postage stamps which all have at the top right-hand corner the head of the martyr and national hero, Aung San.

R. LAKSHMINARASIMHAN  
Aduthurai.

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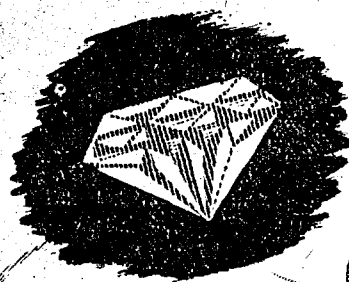
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## SWATANTRA

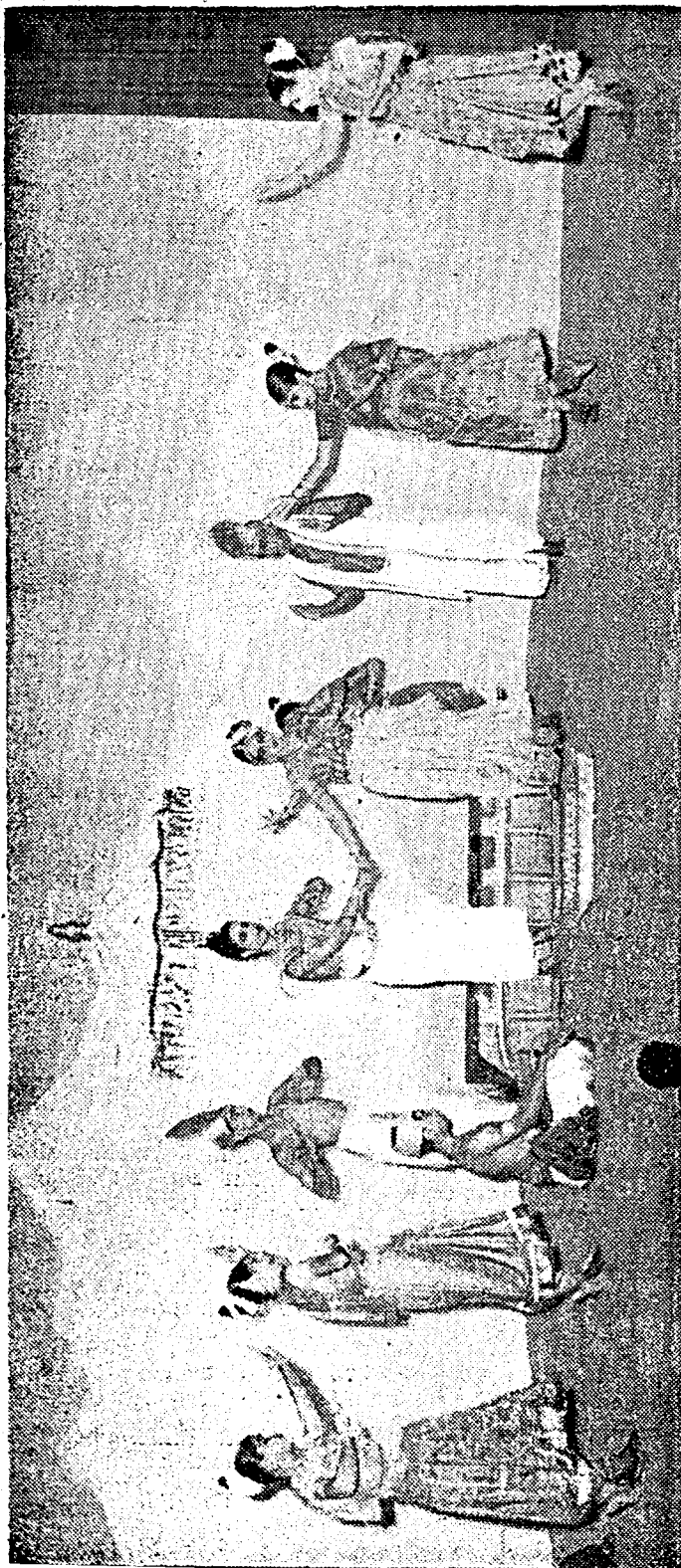
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SIVA GETS MARRIED TO PARVATI  
A scene from Kalidasa's fourth century poem, 'Kumara Sambhava', which was recently enacted on the stage by Rukmini Devi and her Kalakshetra artists.

# SWATANTRA

VOL. III  
No. 6

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1948

ISSUED  
WEEKLY

## TROJAN HORSE TACTICS

THE death of Jan Masaryk has in view of all the reported attendant circumstances provoked from *The Statesman* the caustic remark that windows in Prague have historical connection with politics. A month ago, Dr. Drtina, an ex-Minister of Justice, was found with a fractured skull beneath a window. Masaryk and Drtina were stout-hearted veterans in the risky game of East European politics, not likely, in the judgment of lifelong friends that knew them well, to seek refuge from troubles and difficulties in self-destruction. With their exit, only Dr. Benes remains as the sole important survivor of the tradition of liberalism and parliamentary democracy associated with the two dead leaders. But how long he will survive has now become a matter of the gravest misgiving to the very large circle of his admirers and well-wishers all over the world. Not for very long, apparently, to judge from present activities of the Communist-controlled Ministry of Information. This instrument of propaganda has put forward a report that Dr. Benes has been ill. The report has turned out to be false.

Well or ill, time is against Dr. Benes. Some weeks ago it was reported that, realising that he would go to the country only once, he was saving up all his strength for a vital issue. The vital issue in which the revered and aged President is known

to be most keenly interested is that of civil liberties. When civil liberties should come to be restrained, Dr. Benes was credited with the resolve to act by appealing to the country against the executive. The test of civil liberties is the existence of an independent judiciary beyond the control of the executive for the protection of citizens against unscrupulous abuses of authority by wielders of executive power. Civil liberties in this sense have ceased to exist in Czechoslovakia in the wake of the recent Communist accession to power. The action committees have taken the law into their own hands. Nobody is allowed to have any rights except to the extent permitted by the action committees. Their judgments have supplanted the process of trial and decision by the judiciary associated with democratic systems of government. All this means that the vital issue for which Dr. Benes was supposed to be waiting was allowed to pass without any action on his part.

Czechoslovakia has changed over from a democratic to a Communist State, but in the manner of the transformation a national crisis has been converted into an international issue. Post-war foreign visitors to Prague bespeak of few visible evidences of Soviet interference in Czech affairs. There have been few Russians in the streets of the capital. American officers in military uniform have been, on the other hand, numerous and conspi-

acious. All the work of Russia was done through the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Communist Party has proved to be "the Trojan Horse of Czech politics". There are similar Trojan Horses in every country and not merely in the regions contiguous to Russian territory. Communism as such has given to the world conceptions of collective planning for social welfare that are being accepted in increasing measure and have become part and parcel of the standards and programmes of government in practically every progressive country. But round itself it has created a priesthood seeking to utilise its attractive assets for building a structure of power for itself through a farflung organisation partaking of the ruthlessness, secretiveness, subtlety and unscrupulousness of some of the notorious underground institutions of the middle ages that gambled cruelly with human lives for promoting ends of their own. A considerable part of the modern world is frightened over the menace involved in this phenomenon to its own existence in freedom and peace.

Communism started in Russia as a way of life but the Russian leaders converted it into a cult for power in the manner of some Matadhipathis having no compunction to utilise God for purposes essentially pertaining to trade and commerce. The divorce between the benevolent message at the core of Communism (as a movement for the elimination of poverty and exploitation) and the activities of its priestcraft exploiting its name predatorily for the attainment of power is responsible for most of the confusions that have crept into the minds of people in our time in the spheres both of their national economies and of international politics. There are excellent Communists as there are excellent priests, but economic salvation, like spiritual, cannot be chain-bound

to the ukases of any coterie. The paths that lead to happiness and social welfare are of infinite variety, and the right to regiment them into a set groove can be claimed by none without inflicting fundamental hurt on the primary impulse of human freedom itself, in the absence of which the very means for the enjoyment of all other benefits is lost.

The prospect of worldwide collaboration of Communist Parties under Russian guidance for a progressive seizure of power has thrown the non-Communist Governments of the world into a turmoil, and Anglo-American leadership is bestirring itself feverishly to take them on hand and organise them for effectively meeting the Russian menace. International organisations like the U.N.O. and the Press all over the world have become the arena for the battle between these two competitors for primacy. In the midst of the missiles flung from the one camp at the other, it is worth noting that the imperialists are no longer so imperialist as they have been, while their opponents seem tempted to arm themselves with the cast-off weapons of imperialism evidently to reach a level ground for the purposes of warfare. The imperialists have shed their imperialism as no longer worthwhile in the modern world; but assessing power with the imperialist pattern hitherto in vogue, the Communists would seem to have got inveigled into methods and policies made with imperialist moulds in their quest of power to seize. Each of the two camps is imitating its opponent while fighting it, each is acquiring for the future attributes associated with the other in the past. In the old days the Soviet pleaded futilely for American loans, but now the Russian menace has whipped up American generosity to the colossal proportions of the Marshal Plan, and it has become the turn of the

Soviet to prevent others from accepting what it so laboriously and vainly strove to secure for its own benefit from the U.S.A. in the past. The present international situation is thus a complicated medley of mixed motives revealing strange contradictions. It includes reputed reactionaries taking immense pains over schemes of vast scope for relief of human suffering, side by side with progressives charged with revolutionary ardour seeking to avert relief to large masses of war sufferers lest thereby the impetus to revolution be lost. If humanity has other ideas of what is due to it beyond serving merely as raw material for manufacturers of political theories, it has to keep its head cool in the babel of conflicting slogans hurled at it with deafening loudness, and pick and choose warily and wisely whatever will meet its needs and satisfy its soul, learning to discriminate between the healing touch of the genuine benefactor and the sound and fury of the propagandist and the quack.

### Wrong Angles

ANDHRAS gave a great reception to Pandit Nehru when he visited Vizag this week, but the Prime Minister failed to convert their devotion to his person into intelligent and constructive support for his work as head of the Government. This has become the usual failing of Congress leaders. They justly enjoy immense popularity for their services during the hard struggle against foreign rule. It is a good asset to start with in the changed position of Congress leaders as Ministers. But unless its content is added to, there will be a depletion of Government's stock of credit, since the ways of people towards their rulers are exacting and are determined only by the measure of benefits derived. No

popularity will long survive a regime that fails to satisfy popular expectations of benefit. Already the Congress leaders have created disappointment in quarters where not very long ago they used to be regarded with enthusiasm and devoted admiration. For a few weeks, novices in administration can take shelter in the plea of inexperience, of time needed to familiarise themselves with new duties and the requirements of new situations. But such a plea, especially for one like Pandit Nehru, cannot serve for too prolonged a period. It must be given up, and enough time has passed since the advent of Congress to office to make further reliance on it an impropriety. The excuse that Congress Ministers had other more important work to do (when pressed to come to brass tacks over questions keenly agitating the public mind) is also one that has been of late sorely overdone. Pandit Nehru overdid it when he was urged at Vizag to say something definite about Government's intentions in the matter of the Andhra Province demand. The lecture he read then on the desirability of an international outlook was very much wide of the mark, since it took no note of the urgent realities of the present complicated South Indian political situation. Of the principle of linguistic provinces, it can at least be said that the Congress blessed it long ago. There is no misdemeanour involved in seeking to convert approved theory into its corresponding practical form. No violation, either of the intrinsic spirit of nationalism or the required degree of international outlook, is implied in it. If, despite the sure ground on which the demand for the Andhra Province ever rested, those that hungered for it waited patiently all along for the top leaders to move, but would not now wait any longer, the change in mood so glaringly registered calls for at least

some study and attention from one in the position of Pandit Nehru. The plain truth of the matter is that the affairs of the composite area of the Madras Presidency have been brought into a mess of acrimonious factiousness as a result of the numerical dominance in its legislature of one linguistic section heavily weighted with rank communalism. This section has shown itself incapable of faithful loyalty to the essential spirit of the Congress creed. Its outlook is indistinguishable from that of the Justices whom the Congress routed at every election since its change-over from non-cooperation to Council-entry. It is the oppressive communalism of the Justice complex of prominent Congress leaders of this section that has intensified the demand for Andhra Province, and if Pandit Nehru had to rebuke somebody, it was fitting that his censure should have fallen on the communal violators of Congress principles and not on those struggling to save the remnants of Congress prestige from their onslaughts.

Pandit Nehru's warning to Communists is another example of wrong emphasis. Violence of course is condemnable, whether it emanates from Communists or anyone else. But the head of a Government that calls for peace is bound to see to it that peace is maintained with the aid of all the forces at his disposal throughout the territory subject to his jurisdiction. This essential condition for the observance of peace does not obtain now in the Madras districts bordering on Hyderabad. It is

common knowledge that in these districts that the Government have proved in many cases unable to protect the lives and properties of people against attacks by violent elements from the Hyderabad State. Private standing armies are the inevitable result of failure on the part of the ruling authority to protect people adequately, and they will continue to flourish while such failure lasts. There is in fact no efficient leadership at the seat of the Government of Madras capable of dealing with the Hyderabad situation firmly and boldly. While the legislators are concerned in the capitalising of their positions for permits and the like, and the Ministers are engrossed in squabbles and petty details in a never-ending desperate effort to save a crisis, the unarmed people of the border districts continue to be exposed to attacks by murderous gangs of goondas from the State, and Pandit Nehru's vaunts about the strength of the Union Government and all the reports of top level confabulations incessantly published in the papers only mock the misery of the sufferers and subject to a very heavy strain their faith in Government as a dependable guardian of public safety. Pandit Nehru and his fellow administrators should come down from the clouds and face realities. They should replace their pleasant illusions of idealistic complacency with practical measures to stamp out corruption and communalism. They should save the country for common people from the stranglehold of profiteering vested interests.

In politics we have so firm a faith in the manifestly unknowable future that we are prepared to sacrifice millions of lives to an opium smoker's dream of Utopia or world domination or perpetual security. But where natural resources are concerned, we sacrifice a pretty accurately predictable future to present greed.....We immolate the present to the future in those complex human affairs where foresight is impossible.—Aldous Huxley.

# Sotto Voce

## Hugging The Dynamo



I WAS much gratified to hear that Sir Archibald Nye laid the foundation stone of a Ramalayam (which, I take it, is a bhajana mandir) in a Harijan colony near Vizagapatam. The act shows his broad humanity just as the handsome donation with which it was accompanied was a refreshing example of practical sympathy. Among Anglo-Indian administrators of Company days there were some who had so completely identified themselves with the life of the people that it was the most natural thing for them to take the lead in such matters. There have also been instances of men who built temples or made endowments for charitable purposes after the fashion of a faith which was not theirs because they had been recipients, as they believed, of divine favours through these unfamiliar channels.

In a society which is scoffed at by modern sociologists as having been static for centuries because forsooth most men were concerned only with the saving of their own souls, there was to be found little of that intolerance and propagandising animus which makes life today a bear garden of contending isms. Churches may divide but the saints almost always unite. The shrines of Sheikh Salim Chishti in the North and the famous Nagore Dargah in the South, the historic rock temple in Trichinopoly and scores of other places are holy ground for both Hindus and Muslims. The Brahmagnanis and the Sufis recognised each other at sight. And their humble devotees were content to follow their example of fraternity in fealty.

But the saints, alas, are getting fewer. And they are so busy saving others that they have little time to save themselves. The virtue oozes out of them and is not replenished. Instead of lighting candles which shall reveal to the humble the Radiant Darkness which is the veiled face of Deity they light conflagrations. Let it not be forgotten that the saints of old time were spiritual antennae that stable society put out to draw the sustenance for self-renewal. It is usual for historians infected with the modern virus to depict them as revolutionaries. A revolution is a leap in the dark; the saints leap into Light.

An influence so personal and intimate can hardly be transmitted without loss to posterity through a system of human relays. Man is at best a leaky vessel; he is often made of such inferior metal that the milk of saintliness curdles in his heart. The Alvars and the Nayanmars are succeeded by the system-building Acharyas and the uninspired commentators. The rainbow turns lead in their hands. But that is not to say that inspiration is dead. In these dry ages of the spirit it merely goes underground like the Saraswati, waiting for the wand of the master diviner.

Anthropologists who couple mysticism with magic as the distinguishing marks of primitive societies rarely realise that in the company of the angels the laugh is very much against them. Esoteric religion is long anterior to exoteric religion because it satisfies the imperious cravings of the sub-conscious. The ancient Greeks who were supposed

to be easy-going formalists in matters of faith jealously guarded the Eleusinian mysteries. The Middle Ages saw the rise of the Rosicrucians and other secret sects. And you have only to look into William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* to discover what an amazing proliferation of freak cults there flourished in America under the very nose of orthodox Christianity which alternately persecuted and ignored them.

The genius of India found a happier solution by allotting a recognised place to esotericism in its many-roomed mansion of faith. The mystic was looked upon as the fine flower of the rare plant of holiness that the institutions of religion tended with vestal zeal. In this Hinduism has offered a striking contrast to the practice of the Church of Rome which looked with suspicion on those who claimed to have received special grace, put them to the most rigorous tests while they lived and waited for time to purge their gold of dross in its crucible before

it would offer them the honours of canonisation. We have preferred to risk the imposition of a hundred frauds rather than lose the chance of basking in the aura of a true saint.

Likewise we have, side by side with the Vedic worship, the more common Tantric worship in our Southern temples. Here the spiritual efficacy is believed to inhere in the mystic chakras installed by great *siddhas*. Being tremendous reservoirs of psychic energy, these supermen could by this means transmit the kindling spark to those who submitted willingly and humbly to that subtle influence. Devoutness is not enough—a simple truth which the apostles of Harijan uplift have never been able to understand. The man who, strong in his faith in electricity, hugs the dynamo in his eagerness for light, not only consumes himself in the fire of his own ignorance. He blows up the power house too.

VIGNESWARA.

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## SIDELIGHTS: :

To be ignorant of one's ignorance is the malady of ignorance.—  
A. B. ALCOTT.

IT would appear that Sri Omandur has expressed his determination to stand once again for election as leader of the Congress Legislature Party, contrary to reports that have been in circulation advertising an alleged intention of his to retire so as to devote himself with greater zeal to the practice of religion. In all but name Sri Omandur is a perfect equivalent of a Brahmin of the ostentatious variety, given to great flaunting of the externals of religiosity. Pose is a very important ingredient of the pretended saintliness of this species. When the spirituality of the Brahmin became a matter of posing, the heart went out of his eminence, and he became a thing of shreds and patches, a mountebank, a clown, a figure to rouse derision, illwill, dislike and hatred. Real religion is not comprised in any formality of abstinence or observance such as a fast, a spell of silence or the smearing of ashes on the forehead. These are its counterfeit presentments. The genuine part of it is revealed in results by spreading joy and beneficence all around through the milk of human kindness.

Sri Omandur has revealed himself on coming into power as a religious man without kindness. His sense of honesty has taken the form of a firm conviction about the complete lack of it in others. Such a gift does not make for a cheerful outlook on life. It kills companionship with an oppressive atmosphere as of having a policeman always at your elbow. It was supposed, when Sri Omandur became Premier, that he would sink into the position of a puppet in the masterful hands of one or other of the Ministers. This expectation he has belied by pitching on a very efficient substitute for ability. He

used the opportunities of office to arm himself with dossiers of the hidden misdeeds of his colleagues; and on the slightest hint of any of them giving trouble, the frightful dossier would come out to compel obedience. Power he has used as a whip to make everyone smart. No application of it has been too low. It is common knowledge among local reporters that when one of them gave out a perfectly correct piece of news which he wished to keep unpublished, he was not above using his premiership to get the offender punished.

The austere externals of the Premier gave him at the outset a sort of advantage. What was primitive was at first mistaken for rectitude. The impression wore out with greater experience of the true character of the man as revealed in exercises of power of an amazing sort that set up his own whims as the all-sufficing equivalent for every consideration of honour and fairplay. The essence of nepotism is the denial of recognition to merit, and of all forms of nepotism, that masquerading under the cloak of abstemious other-worldliness is the worst. This has been the Premier's outstanding gift to the provincial administration. There is a universal feeling that we have had enough of it; and if allowed scope, the impetus of the feeling is more than sufficient to throw Sri Omandur out.

But there is Sri Kamaraj Nadar to reckon with. His whole position in public life depends now on the sustenance of his reputation as the Ministry-maker. If he loses this, he loses all. The free play of the reactions of legislators to the past year's revelations of Sri Omandur's real self has made the pendulum swing decisively in favour of Sri Prakasam. I have heard some of Omandur's own Ministers say that the present regime has turned out to be worse than its predecessor. Some among

those who took a most active part in the intrigues of last year to get Sri Prakasam ousted from office, are now no less busy seeking to get him restored. If the secret voice of one's conscience could be turned straightway into a vote and conveyed to the ballot-box without being tampered with by any meddler on the way, there can be little doubt that an overwhelming number of the votes in the party would be for Sri Prakasam. But that would mean the end of Sri Kamaraj Nadar's occupation. The conflict now is between the conscience of the electors of the leader and the effort to save his career and survive, of Sri Kamaraj Nadar.

Sri Kamaraj Nadar's influence has declined lately. Not a few who once swore by him have fallen away. The anti-Nadar section and the anti-Omandur section together command a majority of votes in the party. If they reach agreement as to whom to back, the fate of Omandur would be sealed that minute. All the craftsmanship of Sri Nadar is now employed to prevent such an agreement. In a party with Tamil legislators in a majority, he seems to expect that an anti-Andhra card would come out an ace. By placing the slogan "Tamils for Tamils" into the boiling cauldron of Omandurian hatred-fed anti-Brahmin communalism, Sri Nadar seems to hope that he could cloud the atmosphere well enough to eliminate every chance of the leadership being decided on grounds of merit and competence. If his hope is realised it would mean the defeat of the higher principles of non-communal fair dealing to which the Congress stands pledged in the utterances of its

foremost top leaders. It would mean sabotage of the essential spirit of the Congress in this part of the country. It would mean the delivery of the administration, *via* Omandur, to the traditional political opponents of the Congress, the Justicites, with black shirt separatists ominously close in the rear, waiting for the first opportunity to strike revolt at the Centre.

A possible alternative for Sri Kamaraj is to back Dr. Subbarayan for the leadership. In that case, the Tamil anti-Omandur section might join the Nadarites, but it calls for surrender of candidature by the present Premier, which is not likely. In the midst of the din of the pressure groups, it would be good if saner minds in the party should rise to some comprehension of the actual purpose of leadership and make themselves felt on the rest. A mechanical arrangement of votes on a basis precluding regard for worth may confer on one the formal title of leadership, but it is not enough to carry the ship of State safely through all troubles, especially in these difficult times. What brings power to the elbow of leadership is supporting public goodwill. The dignity of democratic government is violated when persons of no account in the estimate of public opinion are elevated to the rank of Ministers. Of all the competitors for leadership, Sri Prakasam is the one who enjoys an unassailable position in the esteem of large masses of the public. His exclusion from power has brought and will continue to bring disequilibrium to the administration. This cannot be said of any of the others figuring in the present leadership fight.—SAKA.

Life's time's fool. By merely elapsing time makes nonsense of all life's conscious planning and scheming. No considerable action has ever had all or nothing but the results expected of it. Except under controlled conditions, or in circumstances where it is possible to ignore individuals and consider only large numbers and the law of averages, any kind of accurate foresight is impossible. In all actual human situations more variables are involved than the human mind can take account of; and with the passage of time the variables tend to increase in number and change their character.—(From *Time Must Have A Stop* by Aldous Huxley.)

## SECULAR STATE

by S. PARTHASARATHY

IT is very surprising to read the statements of prominent politicians about the establishment of a secular State in India. A secular State has been defined in the concise Oxford as "concerned with the affairs of this world, worldly, not sacred, not monastic, not ecclesiastical, temporal, profane, lay". From the earliest times India has been a secular State. Neither Asoka nor Harsha nor Akbar nor Tippu, ever thought of making India a theocratic State. The personal religion of the rulers did not prevent them from adopting an attitude of tolerance to other religions. Are we merely reaffirming what we have always believed in?

If the talk about the secular State is an expression of disapproval of organisations like the R.S.S., the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, it is a case of applying the wrong principle? For, none of these organisations are in any sense religious organisations. They owe their births to political claims and have grown into political bodies which are desirous of capturing secular power. A member of the R.S.S. or a member of the Muslim League or a member of the Hindu Mahasabha is not necessarily a fervent follower of his respective religion. Unfortunately, religion is being exploited by them for political purposes. They deserve to be put down when they indulge in subversive activities.

Compared to the modern wars between the secular States of Europe, the religious wars of the middle ages look like big scuffles. Religions, if correctly understood, can never act as an incitement to people to resort to violence. We have less to do with religion in the modern world, and there is little danger of nations falling out merely on account of difference in religious matters. Nobody will seriously argue that the hostility between the Arabs and the Jews has arisen on account of differing religious idealogies.

Man as the unit of society is better for his religious faith. The Hindu Sadhu and the Muslim Fakir have more in common than there is between the materialistic Hindu and Muslim politicians. In our province, religious toleration has prevailed in a remarkable manner. One would even say there has been an intermingling of the religions. It is no uncommon thing for the Hindus to worship at a Muslim mosque or for the Muslims to worship a Hindu deity. Some of the best literature in Tamil about our sacred places has been written by Muslims who exhibit a degree of devotion and reverence to Hinduism normally unthinkable in the follower of another religion.

If by the idea of a secular State we intend that the State should not be concerned with religions and religious instruction, we would be selling ourselves to the devil. For, if the people of India are advised to be materialistic and profane, the nation would be abjuring the path of virtue. We can picture the Indian Union going to war against weaker nations for material gains using atom bombs, flame throwers, poison gas and germs against the people. So soon after the death of Mahatma Gandhi, we have forgotten his great mission in life, which was to teach the people of India the true principles of the great religions. By a strange irony, the death of the Mahatma whom we mourn so much has given rise to atheistic ideas. Neither of the two great religions, Hinduism or Islam, preached anything except love for the fellow-being irrespective of his religion. In our opinion, what the Government of India should do is not to ignore or decry religious faiths: but to make it more of a living force than what it is today. In every school and college, the doctrines of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity should be taught, not to segregated groups of Hindu, Muslim and Christian students, but to all the students in congregation. Every

student should be made to learn not only the truths of his own religion but also the truths of other religions. Not only will the Government of India be assisting its people to learn the great religious truths: but by such instruction they will

prevent the propagation of the mischievous interpretations which are now being placed upon the religions. India's great future can be firmly built not upon her material wealth but upon the spiritual greatness of her people.

## ALL IN FUN

by M. V. RAMACHANDRAN

"YOU can be engaged in no better vocation than making people laugh. Humour is like the buffer between two heavy railroad cars. It relieves the jolts of life, it is a shock-absorber. It makes the journey through the years easier, and brightens the pathway all along the route."—HOWARD TAFT.

Even in olden days people possessed a sense of humour. Every king in olden days maintained a court jester. No one expects a lawyer to try a case or a doctor to perform an operation when he attends a public function. Yet the humorist is always expected to regale his friends with samples of humour on any occasion and at any time.

Some people have no sense of humour at all. Such a one was the doctor who had been treating a patient for liver trouble. The patient died. The next day the doctor met a friend who said "I hear that Brown has died of stomach trouble." "Don't you believe all you hear" replied the good doctor. "When I treat a man for liver trouble he dies of liver trouble."

A lawyer being unused to the practices of the High Court addressed the justices as "gentlemen" instead of calling them "Your Lordships." He immediately apologized but the Chief Justice remarked, "Do not apologize for calling us gentlemen. That is what we try to be."

Shortly after their marriage a young wife found her husband burning the letters he had written her during their courtship. She called him a heartless wretch and

asked him if he didn't have any sentiment at all. "I am doing this for your sake, my dear" he replied. "I am trying to fix things so that if I die nobody can dispute my will on the ground of insanity."

A pretty girl inquired of her sweetheart "Darling, will you love me when I am old and ugly?" "Dearest," he replied, "you may grow older, but you will never grow uglier."

A desperate character had escaped from one of the city jails and was traced to the vicinity of a neighbouring village. The sheriff sent the local officer five different pictures of the man, with the offer of a reward for his capture. Within twenty-four hours he received the reply from the constable. "Have four of the fugitives in custody, and the fifth entirely surrounded in a swamp."

By way of thanking his constituency for having elected him an M.P., Burke as usual made a brilliant speech. One of his friends who was to address the meeting next, stood up but words would not come. So he sat down saying, "I say ditto to Mr. Burke."

When Abraham Lincoln was polishing his boots one of his friends asked "Do you polish your own boots?" Lincoln smartly retorted "Whose boots do you polish?"

Few people can laugh at a joke when it is directed against them. To do so requires imagination as well as a sense of humour. People who do not possess it take life and themselves too seriously. It is the ability to see the humorous side of a situation that makes life worth living.

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**CHANDRALEKA**

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# MEMORIAL TO THE MAHATMA

by Dr. R. GOPALAKRISHNAN

**A** MEMORIAL to the Mahatma must be one very dear to him. It must be a source of help to the millions he loved and for whom he toiled and died. It must enable millions to participate in it easily and actively. It must be one which will have a far reaching and permanent effect in the political and social conditions of the country. It must enlist the support and willing approbation of people of different religious and political persuasions. The memorial must enable us to carry out his ideals and aspirations. It must be simple in idea, easy of execution and revolutionary in its effects. There are various items in the Gandhian constructive programme. Probably the most important of them is the liquidation of illiteracy. What can be a more fitting and enduring memorial to the Mahatma than the liquidation of illiteracy? Nothing else can give more permanent results.

It is estimated that about 85 to 90 per cent of our people are illiterates. With the introduction of adult suffrage, the majority of our voters will be illiterates. This state of affairs is a disgrace and constitutes a menace. We have not got enough schools or enough teachers and to have them we have no funds. The growth of population is ever on the increase at a more rapid rate than literacy. Unless and until we think of radical and drastic measures, we will never be able to get out of this vicious circle.

The most fitting memorial for Gandhiji will be the wiping out of this blot of illiteracy.

Can this be accomplished? The answer is an emphatic, "Yes". The Government should expeditiously make an enactment known as the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Illiteracy Liquidation and Conscription Act. The aim of this enactment should be to liquidate illiteracy by conscripting the literates.

Conscription is needed and necessary. In times of war, Governments all over the world, conscript people for war service when the people so conscripted are even obliged to lay down their lives leaving behind all they hold dear and near. Conscription to fight against illiteracy is a far easier thing involving no sacrifice of life or property. It will mean nothing more than a more useful way of spending one's leisure. Where schools are insufficient, teachers are few and the Government ever involved in a constant struggle for funds, conscription is a matter of national necessity, and there is no other way of meeting the situation.

No political party dare oppose this move. It will result in tremendous gain socially.

This is the first pre-requisite for the success of any scheme of adult education, and a plan to liquidate illiteracy can be easily correlated to any scheme of adult education.

Let us concentrate our attention on a single item in the Mahatma's name. The association of his name with the movement will generate so much goodwill and enthusiasm that its success will be assured and all opposition will melt like mist before the sun. A simple and single task well done, will create self-confidence, self-esteem and discipline in the country.

This movement will need a series of text-books, and great care and attention will have to be bestowed on editing these text-books. Anything controversial must be carefully avoided. Why not 'conscript' His Excellency C. Rajagopalachariar and Moulana Azad to do this task for the nation as being the best fitted for the purpose? A text-book committee under their leadership can be formed to expedite the work.

# DISCOVERER OF PENICILLIN: SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING

by RAYMOND FOXALL

**T**HE British professor who discovered the miracle drug called penicillin began life in the simplest surroundings. Sir Alexander Fleming, to whom mankind owes a debt of gratitude, was born in a lonely, stone-built farmhouse 800 feet up a hillside in Scotland. He knew little life until he was 12, and he did not see a great city until he went to live in London when he was 14.

There were only a dozen pupils at the tiny country school near Darvel, in Ayrshire, to which, as a boy of five, he had to walk a mile. All his life knowledge has had a fascination for him; and from the age of 8 to 12 he never missed a day at the larger village school, four miles away. The man who was to become a brilliant bacteriologist spent his youth very near to nature. He learned patience and perseverance during the hours he used to pit his skill against the trout in the stream near the farmhouse.

Today, a white-haired, soft-spoken, modest man of 66, only five feet six inches tall, he is still learning.

## OFFICE BOY

Alexander Fleming was the youngest but one of a family of eight, and after two years at Kilmarnock Academy, a higher-grade school, 15 miles from his home, he was sent to London to live with an elder brother, an ophthalmic surgeon. Up till that time all his education had been free of cost.

After another two years at a secondary school in London he became an office boy in the City, but when he was 20 he inherited a small legacy. This changed the course of his career, for he decided to invest it in a medical education. He studied in the medical school of St. Mary's Hospital, London, and five years later he took his medical degree.

During those years his brilliance was revealed. He took honours in

physiology, pharmacology, medicine, pathology, forensic medicine and hygiene. In 1906 he won the Gold Medal for Clinical Medicine and in 1908 the Gold Medal of London University, when he took his degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Science. The next year—at 28—he crowned a distinguished academic career by becoming a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

## SPARE-TIME SOLDIER

But academic honours left his quiet personality unchanged. Still modest, still loving the open air and the companionship of ordinary folk, he became a soldier in his spare time, joining, as a private, one of the auxiliary regiments formed in Britain for that purpose—the London Scottish. For 13 years he attended evening drills and annual training camps.

When World War I broke out in 1914, he went to France with the Royal Army Medical Corps to work in the laboratory which Sir Almroth Wright set up in the Casino at Boulogne. An extensive study of war wounds increased his interest in the search for new antiseptics. As a pastime he played with coloured bacteria and moulds, making miniature rock gardens and coloured drawings with them. He dabbled also with oil colours on canvas and one picture found its way into an exhibition.

Sir Almroth, who had helped to direct Fleming's studies, recognised his student's unusual ability. For 40 years they worked together at St. Mary's Hospital. Fleming succeeded Wright as director of a Microbiological Institute there, which has been named the Wright-Fleming Institute.

With his colleagues, he toiled frequently during the night; in his early days his routine duties comprised the treatment of individual patients, culturing germs, making

vaccines, experimenting generally and lecturing in the medical school. **MIRACLE OF HEALING**

It was after 22 years of this work that he discovered penicillin. In September, 1928, he found a patch of mould growing on one of the glass plates of his bacteriological "garden", ruining it as a culture. Normally, it would have been thrown away, but his acute observation noted that the germs around the mould were being dissolved. Although at first he received little encouragement, he showed that the mould produced a substance he christened "penicillin", which was poisonous to microbes, but not poisonous to the human body.

But for practical purposes it had to be concentrated and that needed work by a biochemist. Ten years later, in 1938, Howard Florey, an Oxford professor, with a small team of experts, began a series of experiments which transformed this green mould into a miracle of healing.

When an old friend was seriously ill with meningitis the discoverer of penicillin telephoned Dr. Florey at Oxford and asked for some of this

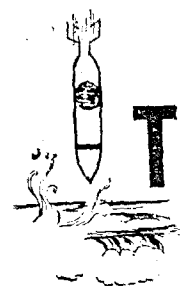
healing substance. Dr. Florey came to London with all the stores of it that existed, and Dr. Fleming's friend recovered after he had been treated with penicillin. Immediately Sir Alexander brought this cure to the notice of the Minister of Supply, who at once instituted a large-scale production of penicillin in Britain.

Penicillin was not Fleming's only discovery. He found an antiseptic substance which he called lysozyme widely distributed in the human body, especially in the tears. He was an authority on vaccine treatment and antiseptics and contributed to the research which established the value of M and B 693.

#### NOBEL PRIZE-WINNER

He was knighted in 1944 for his services to science and humanity. In 1945 he received (jointly with Florey and Chain) the Nobel Prize for Medicine, awarded each year to those who make the world's outstanding contribution to human welfare.

The world looks upon Sir Alexander Fleming as a brilliant scientist. He regards himself merely as "a good workman."



## THE ATOMIC AGE

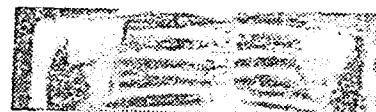
by M.S. KALYANASUNDARAM



**P**ROFESSOR Bhadrappa requested me to wait for a few minutes, as he was engaged with some students who had come from the Northern districts to consult him about some radio-active research. I was resigning myself to the boredom of the previous day's paper lying sadly on a table, when Bhadrappa's grand-daughter, little Sumati, entered the room and assumed the role of hostess.

"Have you seen our photo-album?" she asked eagerly, her dimpled cheeks and vivacious eyes promising first-rate entertainment. Family albums draw the most melancholy groans out of me; but I hope that I put my—"I don't think; may I have a look, please?"—across with success.

I was rewarded for my pretended interest. The first one in the album was the X-ray picture of



Somayya's fractured shoulder blade! (Somayya is Sumati's eldest brother, and an All-India athlete). The next one put me wise as to what pleurisy-scars look like. My thanks were due to Kanakamma, a cousin of Sumati. The aunt with osteomyelitis did not add to my

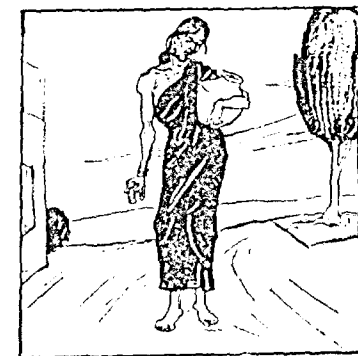


knowledge, but promised to add a theme to my nightmare repertoire. There were a few lungs with

Milky Ways and spiral nebulae sprawled over them. They were obligingly multi-patterned so that each doctor could formulate his own theory and show off his latest bit of American learning.

Sumati looked at each picture and, with a jerky questioning eye, at my face, to analyse my reaction. I believe that I secured pass marks.

Then we came to the prosaic picture of a whole and healthy human being. Her grandmother,



returning from the river with a brass pot full of water, had posed for it. Sumati clapped her hands and cried, "Look! She is carrying it exactly like ..... in .....!" She mentioned a well-known film-star in a popular picture. The inverted comparison struck me as odd till I remembered that children born and bred up in crowded parts of fashionable cities, where there is a water-tap in every kitchen and bath-room and yard, rarely see ladies carrying water-pots on the hip.

Having reached the orthodox and ancient part of the album, I tried

to take Sumati's mind off it, and asked her what films she liked best. At once she started a merry rattle, minutely narrating the plots with the correct gesture, intonation and artistic restraint till I wondered how so small a head could contain all she knew. I thought, in passing, that if, as sometimes happens, she was not so good at her school-work, the fault was certainly not in her mental mechanism. Suddenly, she brought me to with—"Do you know, Mama, *star* means two things: Cinema stars and the stars in the sky—"Twinkle, twinkle, little star....."

That was a good one, I thought. Just then, the Professor entered, apologising—"I am so sorry. I have not only made you wait, but left you to the tender mercies of our chatter-box!"

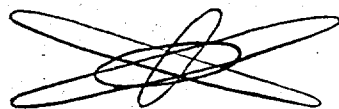
"Oh, no," I said, defending Sumati, who, however, had butterflied off from the room. "Her observations were very interesting. See how times have changed. It is in the films that she has seen water-pots being carried on the hip. .... And the primary meaning of the word 'star', for her, is a renowned film actress."

"Yes, these children are funny. Last summer, she went to our ancestral village for the first time, and witnessed the Car Festival. So she found out that 'car' means not only a motor-car, but a temple *rath* as well!"

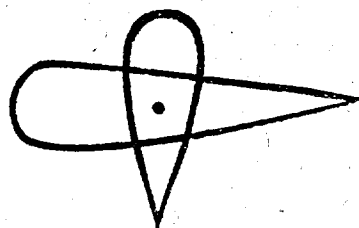
"That's interesting. I shouldn't be surprised at all if children remark that eagles fly like aeroplanes."

And then I got on to the subject which I had to discuss with the Professor. As I was taking leave, I wished to thank Sumati for the entertainment, and called for her. She appeared with a bit of paper

and pencil in her hand. She had drawn a few coloured sketches like



I asked her what they were. She replied (with a look which wondered at my ignorance) that they were a new kind of *moggu* (*kolam*). I asked her if it was not more like this—



She replied, "Grandmother draws as you have done, for her *puja*. But mine is a new way."

"Who taught you this new *moggu*," I asked, coaxingly.

"Nobody. I copied it from Grandfather's magazines."

That was a surprise for the savant. He asked, "Which magazine, Sumati? My books don't teach *moggu*!"

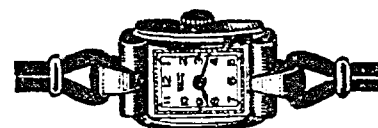
She replied, "The big one in the yellow wrapper. The lines in it are in beautiful colours."

Bhadrappa understood and burst forth laughing. "That's a good one," he cried. "It is from an illustrated article on atomic fission. The elliptic orbits of the electrons around the nucleus are shown like this. .... So, without any doubt, we are in the Atomic Age!"

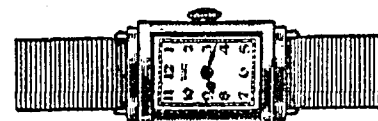
I agreed. Sumati, with her big eyes, wondered what we two were so vociferously un-understandable about.

The total daily newspaper circulation in the United States (1947), both morning and evening papers, was 51,410,089, an increase of 658,596 over the previous year. The total circulation of Sunday newspapers was put at 44,296,572, a rise of more than 1,000,000 copies per issue over the previous 12 months. The total for both daily and Sunday newspapers has increased by a large percentage in each of the last six years.—(U.S.I.S.)

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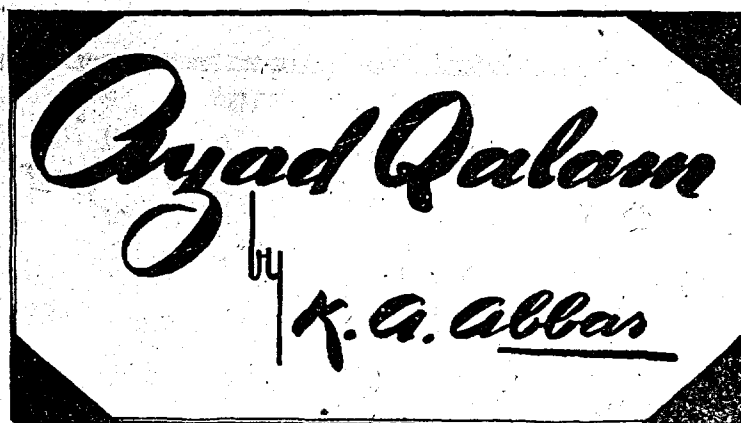
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## WEST END WATCH CO

BOMBAY CALCUTTA



THE "History of the Indian National Congress" by Doctor Pattabhi Sitaramayya does not mention this important fact, but it was over thirteen years ago, in Bombay, that the Congress Socialist Party, which is holding an all-India convention at Nasik this week, came into being.

#### BORN IN "BHOOT GHAR"

That first session which I happened to attend, was held at the same time as the Congress annual session in the last week of October 1934. The Congress pandal on Worli seaface was an impressive affair and every day several hundred thousands daily came there from the city. Few, however, were even aware of the Socialist Party which was being born in a haunted house (it was untenanted then and known in the locality as "Bhoot Ghar"), a stone's throw from the Congress pandal. I think the Marxist phrases of the youthful Socialists frightened the ghosts out of that building, for since then it is being lived in, without any supernatural apparitions disturbing the residents.

Though the formal inauguration of the Party took place in the "Bhoot Ghar" in Worli, a nucleus of the new party had been formed two years earlier in the Nasik Central Prison where a number of younger Congressmen, imprisoned in connection with the Civil Disobedience movement had reached Socialist conclusions after discussions on the need for a leftist re-orientation of the national move-

ment. These included, among others, Jayaprakash Narain, Achyut Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta and M. R. Masani. Elsewhere, in different jails, others like Acharya Narendra Deo, Yusuf Meherally and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya were also thinking along similar lines.

On emerging from jail, Jayaprakash who was the moving spirit of the group, organised a meeting of Congressmen with Socialist views at Patna at the time of the A.I.C.C. meeting held there in April 1934. An Organising Committee was appointed, with Jayaprakash as General Secretary, and it was due to his efforts that within six months Socialist groups within the Congress had been formed in all provinces and sent delegates to the conference in Bombay where the Party was duly formed.

#### VELVET CUSHION SOCIALISTS

One of the somewhat irrelevant details of that first session of the C.S.P. that I still remember was the presence of a number of richly dressed and coiffured "smart young things" who used to come to attend the conference in their sleek limousines. As the delegates had all to squat on coarse matting, these delicate creatures were always preceded by liveried chauffeurs bearing velvet and silken cushions which would be arranged on the floor to make the gentle ladies comfortable in that otherwise plebeian and rugged atmosphere.

I mention this because the gold-border-sari and khadi-silk-kurta

brigade still patronizes the parties of the Left, even as it has sought to dominate the Congress since its inception. In the most elegant Society circles it is regarded as rather *chic* and tantalizingly daring to be seen at Communist or Socialist gatherings, even as it is the thing to appear at Art exhibitions, and to talk knowingly and familiarly about Picasso, Jamini Roy and George Keyt.

I have no doubt, however, that as they get to grips with the basic economic conflicts, the parties of the Left will automatically be relieved of these unwanted painted parasites.

#### TO LEAVE OR NOT TO....

By now it seems certain that at the Nasik convention the Socialists will finally decide to part company with the Congress—though most of them have been active Congressmen all their lives.

The parting of the ways has been forced on the Socialists who must now organise on their own, independent of the Congress. The hope of "radicalising" the Congress has long since been frustrated, and the Right Wing leadership (specially in Bombay) has made it clear that it will give no quarter to the Socialists. This eventuality was forecast twelve years ago by no less a person than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who wrote in his *Autobiography*:—

"A clamorous and critical Left Wing was felt to be a handicap in this process of conciliation and 'conversion', and the Working Committee's resolution, as well as many other individual utterances, made it clear that the Congress Executive were not going to be moved from their new path by this nibbling from the Left. IF THE LEFT DID NOT BEHAVE IT WOULD BE SAT UPON AND ELIMINATED."

#### THE SIKH LEADER

Among the more enigmatic and mercurial personalities in Indian politics is Master Tara Singh, the most prominent leader of the Sikhs

—a unique combination of sincerity, single-mindedness and communal fanaticism. In view of the strategic position that Sikhs hold in the East Panjab—which, being now our new North-West Frontier Province, threatens to remain a storm centre—, Master Tara Singh's generally sectarian lead to the Sikhs and his recent statements forecasting war with Pakistan, and demanding communal electorates and weightage for his community assume all-India significance.

The most important fact about the Sikhs is that they were recognised as a separate community only as late as 1911. Till then they were mentioned in the Census as "Religion: Hindu; Caste: Sikh". It was a shrewd British officer who, acting on the ages-old imperialist stratagem of "Divide and Rule", suggested the idea to a group of loyalist Sikhs. Accordingly, a deputation waited upon the Viceroy and the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab and the Sikhs became a separate community. Six years earlier a similar deputation on behalf of Muslims (aptly described by the late Maulana Mohamed Ali as a "command performance") had waited on Lord Minto to demand and receive the gift of "separate electorates"—the constitutional grandfather of Pakistan!

The most important fact about Master Tara Singh is that he was not born a Sikh. He was born in a Hindu family in a village of Rawalpindi district, son of a *patwari* (small revenue officer), and was named Nanakchand at birth. It was at the age of seventeen that he got converted to Sikhism. Since then, with a new convert's fanatical zeal, he has served the faith of his adoption—as a school-teacher (hence the appellation "Master"), social worker, reformer, fighter and crusader. In this respect it is interesting to compare his case with that of Mr. Jinnah, who also belongs to a converted Muslim family.

#### SOLIDARITY WITH PATHANS!

In politics, Master Tara Singh has undergone many changes but his devotion to what he regards

(not always with logic) to be the interests of his community has remained undimmed. During the Akali movement and the Nabha agitation, he defied the Government, was tried for sedition and sentenced to a long prison term. But when the Nehru Report was published he quarrelled with the Congress for not giving adequate weightage to the Sikhs in the Punjab. In 1930, however, he was back in the Congress fold and plunged into the Civil Disobedience movement.

In view of the recent bitterly anti-Muslim stand taken by Master Tara Singh, it is interesting to recall that in 1930 when he heard the news of the police firing on Frontier Muslims at Qissakhani Bazar in Peshawar, he resolved to proceed to the Frontier, with a *jatha* of one hundred Sikhs to demonstrate the Sikhs' solidarity with the Pathans. Carrying *Kafans* (shrouds) on their heads to proclaim their willingness to die, they actually started from Amritsar but Tara Singh was arrested at Lahore and the *jatha* beaten up and dispersed. By fateful coincidence, the Sikh leader found himself in the same jail as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the 'Frontier Gandhi'.

Since then, Master Tara Singh has been the acknowledged leader of the Sikhs—but unfortunately, largely provoked by the jingoism of the Muslim Leaguers, he has been drifting towards separatism and fanaticism. He tried to counter Pakistan with his plan of Sikhistan or Azad Panjab and at one time even negotiated with Mr. Jinnah on that basis. During the war, he kept away from the Quit India struggle and advised the Sikhs to join the British army in larger numbers—because, he feared, otherwise their place would be taken up by the Muslims!

#### IF ONLY....

I was in Lahore in the last week of February, 1947, when the Muslim League agitation against Khizr Hayat's Coalition Ministry was at its height, and I saw Master Tara Singh dramatically unsheathing his

kirpan in front of the Assembly Chamber and proclaiming that the Sikhs would fight Partition and Pakistan to the bitter end. The gesture was theatrical but it had a menacing ring and in the political atmosphere then prevailing, which was already charged with dynamite by the fanatical Pakistani propaganda of the League, it served as the fatal spark. Within a week the first massacre of Sikhs occurred in the Rawalpindi district. Since then the Panjab has been in the grip of an unceasing vicious circle of revenge and retribution which only now shows some signs of abating.

Sometime after his speech, Master Tara Singh was criticised by prominent Congressmen for his provocative and jingoistic speech. He defended himself by saying that he had only talked to the Leaguers in their own language—which was true, in a way, for no less provocative threats were being issued by the crusaders of Pakistan. And yet, I often wonder if it would not have been better if on that fateful day Master Tara Singh had not sought to dramatise his demagoguery by drawing his kirpan.....

#### GUATEMALA

Much has appeared in the press recently about the anti-British demonstrations in Guatemala. A diplomatic rupture is expected any moment and British troops are being landed in Belize (capital and port of British Honduras) to take up key "defensive" positions in anticipation of air attack from Guatemala. Very little, however, is known in India about this small and obscure South American republic which is threatening one of the last outposts of British imperialism in the Western Hemisphere.

One of the smallest of the 28 independent states in Central and South America, Guatemala is situated south-east of Mexico and west of Honduras, not far from the Panama canal zone. It has an area of only 45,452 square miles, a population of 3,044,490 (overwhelmingly Red Indian), and an annual budget of £3,286,000. Its chief exports are coffee and chicle and its best customer is U.S.A.

Revolts, rebellions, armed plots and conspiracies are, of course, normal routine in Guatemala as in other South American dictator-ridden republics. In his "Inside Latin America", John Gunther relates a typical story. A former Guatemalan President was informed by one of his ministers that twelve men were planning to kill him. The informant admitted freely that he was one of them, pleading for pardon as an approver. The President ordered him to be shot at once—because he was the twelfth and last man of the twelve who had come to reveal the story and, therefore, should be punished first!

#### TWISTING THE LION'S TAIL

Belize is an old sore spot for the proud Guatemalans, and the controversy about its frontier ranges far back to the earliest days of British colonial power in the Americas. When Guatemala became independent in 1821, the British retained 'usufruct rights' (right of use—but not sovereignty) in Belize; then they expanded (according to Guatemalans) into Guatemala proper. In 1859 the British promised to build a road from Guatemala City to the Caribbean and in return were to keep Belize. The British never built the road, but continued to hold Belize. In 1938, the British Colonial Office called the matter closed, and warned Guatemala against any encroachments. The Guatemalans retaliated by abrogating the 1859 treaty. No final frontier was drawn, and an attempt at mediation by the late President Roosevelt failed.

Now, the Guatemalans feel, is the opportune moment to twist the lion's tail. And it is doubtful if British imperialism, on the run everywhere else, will be able to hold on to Belize, the solitary imperial outpost in the Americas.

#### MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Re: Sir Shanmukham Chetty's Budget: "The part that many capitalist elements have played in India during the past few years has been scandalous, even from the Congress and nationalist viewpoint. Ottawa may have benefited temporarily

some small groups, but it was bad in the interest of Indian industry. It was harmful to the masses, and it was negotiated while our struggle was being carried on, and many thousands were in prison. . . . During the last few years also financial adventurers have trafficked in gold and silver at India's expense". (Your *Autobiography*, page 367). That Ottawa adventurer, I need not add, is now your Finance Minister!

Re: Your defence of your colleagues in the Cabinet with a communal or capitalist background: " . . . aiming at gaining the support of men of property. . . . the Congress was looking more and more to the Right and trying to win over the moderate and conservative elements in the country. Soothing words were being addressed even to those who had been hostile to the Congress movements in the past and had sided with the Government during the continuance of civil disobedience. . . . The new orientation of policy brought into the second ranks, and even the front rank, of Congress many individuals who could hardly be described as idealists. . . . The door for careerists and opportunists was now more open than it had ever been before." (Your *Autobiography*, page 558).

#### BOOKS OF THE WEEK

Here are two little books, one in Hindi and the other in Urdu both on the same theme. Even their titles bear a close resemblance—Amritlal Nagar's "AADMI, NAHI! NAHI!" (Human being—No! No!) and Krishenchander's "HUM WAHSHI HAIN" (We Are Barbarians). Both are concerned with the eclipse of humanity as revealed in the recent inter-communal massacres.

Amritlal Nagar (who has written "Mahakal", an epic novel in Hindi on the Bengal famine) has chosen the form of satirical fantasy this time to deliver his message. So crates returns to the earth and the author records what the great humanist sees in India—the burning crops, the slaughter of innocents, homes ablaze, desecrated

temples and mosques, and here and there a lone fighter for Peace and Unity and Humanity struggling against the storm of hate and violence. Written in the simplest Hindi, this little book deserves to be translated in every Indian language and to be widely circulated and read. Realizing its value as a weapon against Inhumanity the author has expressly waived his copyright.

Krishenchander, who still remains the most popular Urdu short story-writer (yes, even in Pakistan!) and has been invited to preside over a conference of writers to be held in Lahore, has characteristically reacted to the communal frenzy. "*Hum Wahshi Hain*", a collection of his short stories, is a humanist's protest against the beastly behaviour of his fellow-men. With his unerring instinct for vivid characterisation, Krishenchander has laid bare the deformed, dehumanised minds in all communities that engineered the horrors during the riots. His "*Lal Bagh*" is the study of a Bombay goonda, while "*Andhay*" (The Blind) is an exposure of the vicious circle of bloody retribution in the Panjab. Stories that have come red-hot from the anguished mind of a sensitive writer, cannot be expected to have the enduring, artistic qualities of Krishenchander's other, more carefully written works, there are one or two of them that will and should be incorporated in any anthology of the best contemporary literature. "A Letter From A Prostitute To Qaid-e-Azam Mohamed Ali Jinnah and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru" (its sensational-sounding title notwithstanding) is a beautifully compact, human story—in the best tradition of Krishen's sensitive prose. Its very understatement makes it more poignant and effective than some of the more lurid exposures of sadism and beastliness.

I tried the experiment of sending presentation copies of "*Hum Wahshi Hain*" to a number of friends and acquaintances in Pakistan. They have written to say how greatly they were moved by the stories. Indeed, though the West Panjab Gov-

ernment took legal action against a paper that had published one of these stories, the book has sold very well in Pakistan—and may be said to have been one of the major influences for the restoration of sanity and goodwill in Eastern as well as Western Panjab.

#### STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"The Congress regards communalism as a danger which must be ended anyhow. But there are many other dangers in the world and may be one of them is bigger even than communalism.... Before our eyes is a new conflict. The world is divided in two parts one of which you may call the Russian zone and the other the Anglo-American bloc.... As soon as the Communists have finished with China they will invade India.... The Communist invasion is inevitable whether it comes to-day or tomorrow. To fight it all the nationalist forces of India must unite. By "Nationalists" we mean those forces which worship India as their God. For such forces to fight among themselves and to make each other weak is to close our eyes to the great new danger. The Congress is the biggest political organisation of our country. It will have to fight Communism. Therefore all Indians must unite under the Congress banner to prepare it for the fight against Communism".

—From editorial in PRATAP, Urdu daily edited by K. Narendra, formerly published from Lahore and now from New Delhi, commenting on the ban on R.S.S.

#### HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"MADRAS: A ruling on "flunkies"—term used in the Madras Assembly by a member to describe his colleagues generally—was given by the Speaker who referred to Thomas Carlyle's description of the British Parliament as "six hundred talking asses set to make laws and administer the concerns of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen" and declared there was nothing wrong in the member's reference".

—News Agency Report.

## WHERE IS INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS?

by K. S. VENKATRAMANI

TWO major problems face relentlessly today the Indian statesmen. A reconstituted Cabinet fully representative of the variety and strength of India is necessary to solve them. One is our foreign policy: Where is India in world-affairs? In the next war, if and when it comes, what is her position? The other relates to our home policy regarding militant Hyderabad. It has almost become equal to foreign policy.

To get at a correct appraisal of our foreign policy we must look up the map of Europe and Asia and derive some inspiration from geopolitics which is often the tap root of history. Europe is but a peninsula of Asia, the most active and militant peninsula of the vast land-mass of Asia. The predatory urge of the turbulent Atlantic is reflected in the vast inroads, chaotic, stormy and irregular, creek and lagoon ridden, called the Mediterranean and the Baltic seas. The Atlantic has inflicted on Europe something of its restlessness and energy, its predatory courage, alas, also its pathos and suffering and final sterility.

Nevertheless Europe is leading 'civilised' life on earth for the last 300 years. But ever since the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe knows no unity or peace and lives in unrest and fear in 30 separate sovereign States. But the inner urge has been for the political and economic unity of Europe in one bloc under one dominant power. France under Napoleon, Germany under Bismark, Kaiser and Hitler tried and failed. Now Russia is attempting it. She is also bound to fail, for all the organised might of Communism. For, the union of Europe could succeed only on a voluntary basis, each State willingly surrendering its sovereignty even as our Indian States are now doing so magnificently. But it requires for militant

Europe a third global war to receive this simple political education for peaceful living, and for Russia to realise her essential nature as an Asiatic nation and as such the true and scientific boundary for her western frontiers which could be neither Amsterdam nor even Berlin. Great Britain, an island and a sea-power, found this conflict and confusion in Europe beneficial to her world-supremacy and in maintaining her population in a high degree of comfort and luxury. Britain knew also that united Europe would reduce her to her proper place.

But the vagaries of victory in World War II brought Moscow to Berlin! Moscow has already begun to feel that the peninsula of Europe is a necessary annexe, a front garden, to her safety and security—the dominant owner of the vast land mass of Asia. Russia really believes that united Europe will drive her beyond the Urals and Russia proper will become a 'colony' to West Europe with the rich Ukraine coveted by the hungry Central Europe.

But a Berlin dominated by Russia with its long Communist shadow across Europe up to the seashore of the Atlantic is most unnatural and all West Europe is bound to unite to oppose it, even England giving up reluctantly her traditional selfish policy.

The fundamental basis for clash between Russia and West Europe, to my mind, is not so much economic ideology or system as a basic clash of cultures, a way of life and the outlook on the integrity, function and destiny of man. Western Europe likes to be ruled by Moscow from Berlin no more than we Indians should like to be ruled at Delhi by say the Sultan of Johore. So to my mind World War III is inevitable before 1950 and India must be prepared for this.

If today an *Avatar* could on one side persuade Russia on some genuine guarantee of peace to withdraw to her natural frontiers, if necessary to be determined by a just plebiscite, and also on the other side to persuade the Big Business and vested interests of U.S.A. and Britain that all their production could be sold for a fair margin of profit even without a war, World War III could be avoided. An undivided, free and strong India saturated in Gandhism is ideally fit to produce this *Avatar* in international politics. A weak and subject India has been one of the most potent primary causes for the two world wars. I agree with Mr. H. N. Brailsford that we should send Pandit Nehru to try this great job of reconciliation.

India has to shape her foreign policy on this basis of realistic foresight. The first requisite is to make herself united and strong and respected. Her inner strength, her political, economic and military potential should be quietly developed in three years so that she might command at least the respect of her immediate neighbours when the crisis comes. For the acquisition of this economic and military strength we obviously require the help of other nations. This help only two nations can give us, U.S.A. and Great Britain (with Australia and Canada) and this help is never given free. We can get it only by offering our help and friendship in times of their peril. It is lofty idealism to say we shall not align ourselves to any power groups. But it might become criminal folly not to do so in the light of events in the present fluid condition of world-politics. No nation, however strong, can stand alone, much less India in the making. Our economic advance and our military equipment on modern lines require the assistance of a leading nation for the manufacture of capital goods in India with the requisite high grade technical personnel. We are at present no higher than the *lathi* and rifle range in modern warfare. We must learn and produce all that modern warfare means in our own

land in three years. Our foreign policy must somehow secure the requisite friendship on fair terms for this major work of reconstruction and security. U.S.A., Australia and Great Britain will help us if we play the game adroitly and honestly.

Let us drop all our vague ecstasies and sentimental love of Soviet Russia. We respect and admire her for a great economic experiment she has carried out with a high decree of success at great cost in one sphere of life. We wish to be friends with her. But we must face facts. Russia is not in a position to help us in peace, much more so she will not be in war time. We are only technically neighbours and many things, not only the Himalayas, effectively separate us. Further, Russian economy does not permit much outside help, especially in the direction in which we require it, and her philosophy will preclude it till we become members of U.S.S.R. This is clear as crystal.

Our doctrinaire and sentimental friendship for Russia has already cost us the partition of India with all the attendant disasters we have experienced. Let us import realism into our policies, especially foreign policy, now at least.

The next major problem is Hyderabad. It has become a really major problem now though ordinarily it has been no problem at all these 600 years. The partition of India has made Hyderabad a major problem to India. Coupled with the decision of the Attlee Cabinet to divide, there was also a declaration that Paramountcy had lapsed and each State became independent. In truth, this strange theory of the lapse of Paramountcy, a doctrine based on existing political facts and relationship, is not so innocent as it looks. The British Cabinet devised it mainly to help H.E.H. the Nizam out of gratitude for his war services and with a view to making Pakistan an effective reality and friend of Britain in the event of a new world war.

There is a real and inspiring faith among the ruling Muslim

classes, especially in Hyderabad (who honestly think that Hindus are decadent) that they know better than the British the technique of conquering and ruling them. A section of British imperialists also share in this view and hope to profit thereby. Much of Mr. Kasim Razvi's "Ittehad-ul-Muslimin" activities and ideas are due to this faith and propaganda. British politicians believe in their heart of hearts that Muslims are better and more sincere friends of Great Britain than the Hindus. And the life-line of the British and Muslim lie close together from Cairo to Karachi.

Hyderabad is a tough and delicate problem even for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who has achieved so much in such a short time by pacific means for the integration of Indian States exactly on the lines on which I anticipated that it would take place years ago in my book *Renascent India* (1928) as soon as the British rule comes to an end. Prompt and decisive action on clear and just lines is the only remedy for Hyderabad. The Asafjah dynasty is good in its own way and it has survived to-day because of its many discreet political compromises in the past. It may do so again if the Dominion Cabinet acts quickly and justly before the Majlis Ittehad plunges Hyderabad into a conflagration and invites Muslim world sympathy, and plunges Pakistan and Pan-Islam into a tense mood with a throbbing heart and excited mind. The security of India after partition is the biggest problem in history that could ever face a band of statesmen charged with the task of government. Our real strategic frontiers are in foreign and unsympathetic hands. And beyond them in the West lie scattered all over five million hungry and war-like men coveting both the Indus and Ganges-Jumna valleys. And to complete the picture in the very heart of India, an independent State with a militant Muslim organisation in power is created as a parting gift to us of British rule. If Hyderabad does not accede to the Indian Union fully as other

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major States have so willingly done already, serious complications would arise in our home and foreign policy arresting the progress of India. The Nehru Cabinet is on its trial on this vital issue. For a proper solution of these momentous issues I plead for a thorough reconstitution of the Central Cabinet fully representative and on scientific and catholic lines.

The complexities of modern government require an inner division of work in the Cabinet itself, one section for policy-making and the other for the administration of the departments. A group of elder statesmen working for high contacts and policy-making, without portfolios, will make for a powerful body, Brains Trust of the Nation, and assure the public that maximum research and thought are given to our problems away from the routine and drudgery of departmental files. But the Cabinet should function as a whole with joint responsibility for every decision. The Central Cabinet should consist of 30 members of whom one-third shall be without portfolios. The reconstitution is urgent before party politics and division heighten the tension, the fight and the internal break-up. We find that this urgency is not fully realised by our leaders in Delhi. Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel seem already getting quietly contented and even proud with the present Cabinet. That way disaster lies. Vigilance is the price of freedom and security.

Such a reconstitution of the Cabinet should be immediate. For, the draft constitution of India is ready and must first be considered by such a fully representative reconstituted Cabinet before it is placed before the Constituent Assembly which is so only in name and derives no validity from the sovereign will of the people. It is a tragedy of Indian politics that an assembly convened by the Cabinet Mission with the ultimate object of delaying transfer of power, should eventually become the sovereign body entrusted with the primary

task of framing a new constitution for India. The Assembly is practically hand-picked, mainly from one party by a few dictators in each province and at the centre. The mode of election was proportionate representation—a satanic device in politics to perpetuate feuds, groups, coteries, in the name of justice. The electoral college was the Provincial Assembly which was itself elected long before transfer of power or a Constituent Assembly was thought of or was in issue. I realise that it is not now possible or practical politics to have a Constituent Assembly properly constituted on a correct basis representing directly the will of the people. Therefore I ardently wish that at least a fully representative reconstituted Cabinet should consider in all its aspects the draft constitution as a fit instrument reflecting the genius of India and for making a New India.



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## SCALES WEIGHTED AGAINST COMMON MAN

by Prof. T. K. DORAISWAMI IYER

AS the purposive direction of economic affairs by Governments is receiving increasing emphasis under modern conditions the budgets of Governments bid fair to become potent instruments for influencing the economic life of the people. Further the recent budget of the Central Government of India for 1948-49 is invested with additional interest since it is the first budget for a full year of the Government of Free India. One can understand the average Indian eagerly looking forward to a balance sheet of the finances of his country which while emphasising the departure from the past will point decisively to a fresh orientation in which the budget will be used as an instrument of progressive economic policies. In view of the very heavy expenditure involved in the evacuation of millions of persons from their home regions and their settlement in India and the hostilities being carried on in Kashmir, there was an apprehension in many minds that the national accounts would disclose a heavy deficit. The Finance Minister deserves congratulation on the ability and persuasiveness with which he presented the budget. That on the existing basis of taxation the deficit was only 27 crores was itself a matter for comfort. That the Finance Minister made up his mind to balance the budget and not have any portion of it uncovered was a very welcome feature. Since one of the maladies afflicting the economy is inflation the first need is to have a balanced budget if not a surplus one.

We shall now proceed to examine critically the means by which the Finance Minister has attempted to balance the budget. Indeed he was faced with a very difficult situation. Production, agricultural as well as industrial, has been falling steadily; labour was more conscious of its rights than its duties and

the population has registered a considerable increase. The change-over from foreign rule to indigenous rule was well under way and the country itself had been split up into two. In these conditions any Finance Minister will have an arduous task before him. The Finance Minister claimed to be a conservative in financial matters and the budget is an expression of conservatism. When he was found fault with by a member of the Assembly to the effect that the budget did not disclose any strong bias for promoting the welfare of the common man, straight came the reply that that was the concern of the Provincial Governments, which reminds one of the regime of the sun-dried bureaucrat of the past. On the whole the budget may be considered to have been favourably received. A critical examination however reveals defects which cannot be associated with progressive finance. Though the Finance Minister protested that in Indian conditions a fetish should not be made of any balance between direct and indirect taxation it is quite obvious that the scales have been weighed unduly against indirect taxation. It is quite true that the crying need of the country is increased production and the incentives to increased production ought to be deliberately fostered. From the speech of the Finance Member it would appear that the attack on the profit-motive by the budget for 1947-48 was not a little responsible for the tempo of production in the country having been reduced. It does not redound to the credit of our financial magnates if, in the distressing conditions of Indian economy, the spur to activity is to be substantially undermined by the profits being made to bear a heavy tax burden. For a moment let us compare conditions in England and India in this context. It is agreed on all hands that

inflation during the war did not assume such proportion in England as it did in India, that profits of business enterprise did not rise as high in England as in India, that the real wages in England were higher than in India and the prices of ordinary shares in England did not register anything like as heavy an increase as in India. Thus it may be said that the distribution of income in England as a result of war conditions was more in favour of the common man than in India. While such has been the case, what was recently done is noteworthy. A few months back the tax on business profits was increased from 12½ to 25 per cent in England. Here in India where the bulk of the population is undergoing great distress on account of high prices brought about by inflation and where the cost of living has shown an increase higher than wages, special consideration is shown to the investing classes and business profits tax of 16-2/3 per cent is reduced to 10 per cent. Such a reduction may be welcome if it is not accompanied by heavy indirect taxation affecting the common man. Mahatma Gandhi used to call himself a Socialist and the Prime Minister Pandit Nehru is an avowed Socialist. That a Government presided over by a Socialist should have presented a budget in which even for the laudable object of balancing it, the scales are weighted against the

common man in the form of a number of indirect taxes affecting production as well as consumption is not something of which anybody can be quite proud.

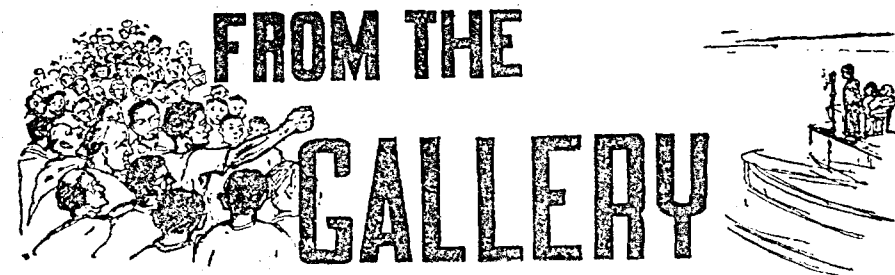
The plea may however be advanced that, given the need for balancing the budget, there was no alternative to the measures adopted by the Finance Member for balancing the budget. The Finance Member may be an inveterate optimist but yet he was not precluded from presenting a picture of financial and economic conditions true to facts. One cannot help feeling that he presented a rather roseate picture. The times call for a decisive direction. From the exalted position he is occupying it was up to him to lay bare the defects in the economic situation and to call upon the more fortunate sections of the population to rise to the occasion by making willing sacrifice of their interests if by such means labour will be made conscious of its duties with the result that the economic machine is geared to intensive production effort. He should have laid greater emphasis on the need for retrenchment for which the atmosphere was favourable and an appropriate occasion was provided by the necessity to which he was driven of imposing a number of indirect taxes affecting the middle and poorer classes as well as productive enterprise.



#### THERE IS A WORLD

There is a world to which I can escape  
 When I am heart-sick, and the struggle hard,  
 And human life looks strangely out of shape.  
 There is a world from which the ghastly ape  
 Of passion and of evil war are barred,  
 And it is sweeter than the sweetest grape.  
 Then come with me and leave behind the din  
 To wander among blessed isles of pray'r  
 Where waters of eternal peace begin.  
 Come, leave afar the haunting voice of sin,  
 And see that life is happier, happier there  
 Where God is calling to your heart within.  
 And you will find refreshment and repose  
 As if you stumbled on some desert rose.

IAN HOYLE, S.J.



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

THE Madras meeting of the Muslim Leaguers has taken a realistic decision which I, for one, am not prepared to denounce. In a sense, it was the decision of Muslims in the Deccan, as such of the Leaguers as cared to attend from other provinces almost unanimously voted against the continuance of the League. Why, then, in the face of such opposition from within did a confessedly hopeless minority take what seems to us a perverse decision? My reading of the situation is that because of the very small numbers attending the meeting, it was felt that a decision in favour of the *status quo* was the most reasonable to take. It is also in consonance with constitutional proprieties.

But there is a second reason which is even more decisive. The Muslims are a microscopic minority in the Deccan; as things are, they have no chance of exerting any influence on the councils of the Government. Their *hara-kiri* would elicit the approval of the majority community which will thereafter proceed to forget it *in toto*. This would in the long run worsen the position of Muslims *vis a vis* the other communities. But by maintaining it as a political organisation, the political issue is kept alive, so that it may be usefully exploited when occasion should serve. The more rabid exponents of Muslim politics in Madras have found discreet but powerful patrons from non-Muslim sections. With the Ittehad in Hyderabad eating fire and belching it with such gusto, a

fraternal organisation, at least in name, has its uses not to be despised in any eventual trial of strength between Hyderabad and the Indian Union. Mr. Razvi almost seems impatient of the delay in joining issue, for he is queering the pitch in most outrageous ways. For much less uttered in the old order, the Nizam was made to feel the sting of the imperial whip administered smartly by that most astute of Indian pro-consuls, Lord Reading. But times have changed—or such at least is the wishful thinking of the leaders of Hyderabad.

The Sardar's recent ukase recommending the cessation of agitation in the States for responsible government was quickly followed by a *dementi* that the appeal was not intended to cover the case of Hyderabad. The crudity of the proceeding is deplorable. Was there no Secretary or other official to notice the ambiguity in time and rectify it on the spot instead of trying to lock the stable door after the horse was stolen? It was the policy of Lord Palmerston as Foreign Secretary to embroil European sovereigns in quarrels with their subjects as the easiest means of debilitating powerful foes. But he camouflaged his aim in high-sounding generalities about freedom, democracy *et hoc* which neither deceived his friends nor reassured his enemies. That Hyderabad is getting to be much more than a nuisance—a menace with chances of inundating huge areas—is a fact now being realised at many levels. But that all of us are not pulling our full weight in calling the Nizam to order is pretty

obvious. The worst of it is that while official sources are usually dumb, the provocation comes almost exclusively from a pretorian guard. There is nothing else to do, except to erect a cordon sanitaire round Hyderabad, and stiffen it up with a line of steel. All this is after all League politics, are they not?

Moulana Azad's disapproval of the Madras Ministry's methods of penalising one community, though not unexpected is not likely to be of immediate benefit to the injured community. It is even possible that any directive from above may be resented as an invasion of provincial autonomy. But as there are other strings through which the Centre can pull up errant parts, and as both the Centre and the provinces are still mutually dependent upon one another, there might be some improvement in course of time. The effect of the squeeze now being applied will become apparent in the next decade, when one community will be almost non-existent so far as Government service is concerned.

But as against provincial obscurantism, the mitigating factor is that recruitment to all India services is by open competition, and young men rejected by their own provinces are now being absorbed into the Centre. This scattering of the members of one community is perhaps the aim of those who cannot abide them. If so, it cannot be considered a calamity!

When coffee was decontrolled, the controller promised that he would maintain prices at the old level, but that if the prices were put up, he would arrange to supply

consumers direct at the old rates. After decontrol the price has gone up from Rs. 1-1 to Rs. 2-8 a lb. May I ask the controller to let us know what he proposes to do about this unconscionable rise in prices? And will he arrange to supply consumers direct at old rates?

I was not present to assist at the time when the Empire went through its birth-pangs. But seeing and hearing its death-rattle, I have been moved to pity. It is now going on to the accompaniment of agonising alliteratives crystallised by Churchill, as when he mourned in Parliament how Britain is 'cheeked by Chile, abused by Argentine, and goaded by Guatemala.' May I continue in the same strain so as to indicate the things still to be done, namely, to be jilted by Gibraltar, manoeuvred out of Malta, squeezed out of Suez and last but by no means least, hounded out of Hong-kong!

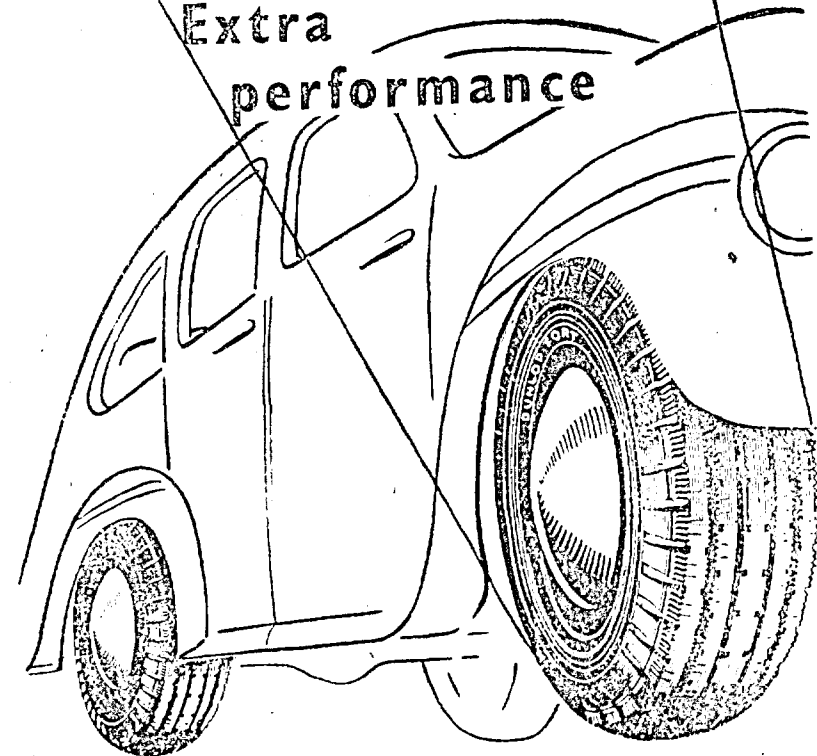
Lord Mountbatten's trip to Burma was a triumphal progress; but the main task he performed was to restore stolen property to its rightful owners. The restitution of the throne of the Thebaws was a fine gesture, but the grace of it will not be complete until he undertakes another trip to England and comes back with certain diamonds and other precious stones now imbedded in the royal crown and other jewels. It was odd that in his speech, he should have returned the throne in the name of the King of England and the people of India. Why this association of two immiscibles in a penitential act? Was it to divide responsibility or enhance prestige?

Women fill about 95 per cent of the 1,500,000 stenographer, typist and secretary jobs in the United States, according to a recent survey made by the U.S. Employment Service. Among experienced stenographers, the largest single group in private industry averaged 35 dollars (Rs. 114) weekly, but half of the 1,500,000 employed earned more than 40 dollars (Rs. 130). A work week of 40 hours in five days was found to be standard for stenographers. More than half were less than 30 years old, and one in four was married.—(U.S.I.S.)

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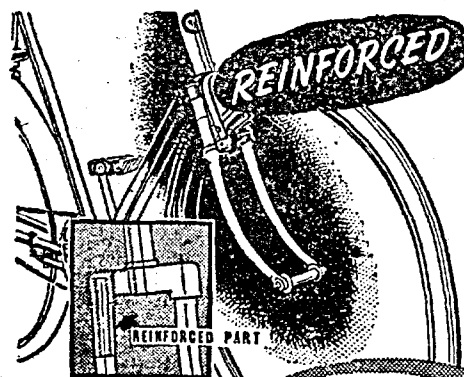
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## PEEP INTO PAKISTAN

(From A Special Correspondent)

**Karachi:** For the first time after the advent of Pakistan, Karachi has become the centre of political activity. This is in a large measure due to the fact that both the Pakistan Dominion legislature as well as Pakistan Constituent Assembly, membership for which is common, are meeting here.

On February 23rd, the curtain rose on the first meeting of the Pakistan Dominion legislature. As was expected, Quaid-i-Azam presided over the meeting. There were rumours to the effect that he may give up the Presidentship and have someone else take his place. But this has not happened so far. East Bengal scored a victory in having its nominee elected as the Deputy President. He is none other than Mr. Tazimuddin Khan.

Delegates from all over Pakistan are here, but so far, there has been no sign of an active opposition party. The proceedings are as a rule drab and listless but there have been occasional purple patches.

Mr. Ghulam Mahomed's maiden budget attracted a big crowd to the gallery. By juggling with figures and imposing taxation, particularly on the poor people, the Finance Minister of Pakistan converted a 24-crore deficit budget into a surplus one. While the industrialists have been given a sop, taxes have been imposed on the articles consumed by the poor such as tobacco, betel nuts, postage, kerosene, motor spirit, etc. The industrialists have been given help by the proposal that new industrial undertakings using power-driven machinery and employing more than fifty men would during the

first five years be exempted from all direct taxation on so much of their profits as do not exceed five per cent of the capital employed. Mr. Ghulam Mahomed also provided to extend to five years the period at present prescribed for the grant of the special initial depreciation of fifteen per cent on new buildings and to allow a special initial depreciation of twenty per cent on machinery and plant which is brought into use for the first time in Pakistan, even if it had been previously used elsewhere. Sales tax has been taken over from the provinces and earmarked for the Centre though the former would receive some consideration.

Though one leading member said that Mr. Ghulam Mahomed's was a bureaucratic budget, it has received a very good press. It has been praised by all parties.

Overshadowing even the budget was a momentous meeting of the Pakistan Moslem League which after a three-day session embarked on a revolutionary innovation by discarding the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah and electing Chaudhri Khaliq-uz-Zaman as the organiser of the new League. At the fag end of the session, the Pir of Mankhi Shariff brought forward an amendment to the effect that no Ministers or members of the Pakistan or provincial Governments should be elected to the executive of the League Council. Quaid-i-Azam pleaded that they should not shut the door against League Ministers but the House was not in a mood to oblige him though some of the speakers said that they would make an exception in his own case. Although he made



Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Khan Abdus Samad Khan (Baluchistan) photographed at Karachi.

it clear that he had too much work and would not like to continue as President of the League, he was anxious that his grip over the League would continue through his Ministers. When the amendment was put to vote, it was carried by a narrow majority. Mr. Noon and Chaudhri Khaliq-uz-Zaman were the two contestants for the capture of the League and in the race, the latter was elected as the organiser by a comfortable majority. The Pir of Mankhi Shariff suggested the name of Quaid-i-Azam as the best choice as the organiser of the new League but Mr. Jinnah turned down the proposal. Immediately thereafter, the name of Miss Fatima Jinnah was proposed but Mr. Jinnah according to reports went pale with rage and left the meeting in a hurry. Those in the know of things say that Mr. Jinnah was opposed to the election of Chaudhri Khaliq-uz-Zaman as the organiser.

Another sky sign in the march of events has been the formation of

what has come to be known as the Central People's Party in Pakistan. Like its Indian counterpart, this dominion too is getting alive to the need for an active opposition party. The realisation of the need for such a group was simmering in many quarters. But this time, the presence of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan at Karachi was taken advantage of to give an impetus to the move of building up the party. The chief sponsors of this move are Mian Iftiakkharuddin of the Punjab, Mr. G. M. Syed of Sind and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. This group will form the nucleus of an organisation wedded to a dynamic programme envisaging Pakistan as a democratic Socialistic Republic, with the Indian constitution as its model. Among other planks in its progressive policy is the establishment of lasting goodwill with the Indian Union. This party will support its own candidates at the first elections under the constitution.

The otherwise drab proceedings of the Pakistan Dominion Parlia-

ment were highlighted by two speeches made from the opposition benches. The first one was that of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan who voiced the sentiments of millions of Pathans who wanted an autonomous province. It was a mistake to assume that he was against Pakistan. It had come to stay but the leaders of Pakistan must follow the precepts of Islam. Islam enjoined upon them the virtues of toleration and good neighbourliness. Unfortunately, these virtues were absent in the present top flight leadership of Pakistan. He also stressed the fact that despite freedom, there were more Englishmen in Pakistan today than ever before. While, in the Indian Union, they had got rid of white men, he could not see any reason why Pakistan should be saddled with these people. Corruption was rampant in Pakistan and the regime of Ordinances had become the normal state of affairs, whereas they were resorted to formerly only to meet emergencies. The Frontier lea-

der exposed the slogans with which Pakistan leaders were feeding the people in order to maintain their hold on them. He asked the pointed question whether the State was run on Islamic lines. If so, they should follow the ways of Hazrat Ali who made sacrifices and treaded the path of toleration. He made a passionate plea for non-communal organisation and for opening the door of the Moslem League to all nationals of Pakistan. The speech which was delivered in frank and forthright Urdu lasted half an hour.

A more forceful aggressive speech was the one delivered by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, who, speaking as a national of the Indian Union, made a grand indictment of the present clique which rules Pakistan. Starting on an apologetic note, expressing diffidence at raising certain points, he gave wholesome advice to the present Pakistan Government. Pakistan had two duties to perform; first to



Sardar Ibrahim Khan, leader of the Kashmir raiders caught by the camera at Karachi. He is signing autographs for his admirers.

those within the State and secondly to those who were outside. He said that he had not the least doubt that unless Pakistan broadened its politics it would ultimately destroy itself. Just as Gandhiji had told



Begum Ikramullah conversing with a friend

the Indian Union that if it drove out Muslims, it would destroy itself, so Pakistan, if it failed to win the confidence of the minorities would destroy Islam within its own borders. It was up to the majority community here to create conditions which would enable the members of the minority community to carry on trade and business here. Today, they were being treated like serfs. Mr. Suhrawardy wanted those who had opted out of Pakistan to be brought back. The minorities should be given a share in the administration. He advocated the creation of a Ministry for the minorities. Concluding, he warned the Pakistan Government that any trade war with India would destroy Pakistan. "You are raising a Frankenstein monster which would

Air parcel post will be inaugurated on March 15 between the United States and 21 foreign countries, the Post Office Department announced. The countries to receive this new service are: Austria, Belgian Congo, Bermuda, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Elre, Finland, Gold Coast colony, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Greece, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Newfoundland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey and the Union of South Africa.—(U.S.I.S.)

destroy you", he said, pointing his finger at the Treasury benches.

This speech created anger in the minds of some but it has produced a terrific effect and even those who were worshippers at the altar of the present Ministers were led to think whether the time has not come for a radical change in outlook.

It is sad to think that whereas in India there is a real change of heart in the relationship between the communities, here, the old bitterness still rankles. That is why the minorities are still running away.

Out of nearly fifteen lakhs of Hindus originally inhabiting Sind, only six and a half lakhs are left and Karachi City which had a cos-



Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan entering the Assembly Hall.

mopolitan appearance on August 15th is now looking like a slice of Cairo. Its Hindu population is hardly thirty thousand. The political climate here is still charged with bitterness and the causes that lead to friction between man and man are still not eliminated.

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## PUBLIC DEBT MENACE

by V. T. ARASU

*"The total interest bearing obligations at the end of the Budget year are estimated at Rs. 2,231 crores—The proportion of the Country's debt to its national income compares favourably with more advanced countries like the U.S.A. and the U.K. This country's debt is only half of its probable national income, while in the U.S.A. it is more than 1-1/2 times and in the U.K. nearly three times the national income."*

**H**OW many of you have noticed these significant sentences in the Budget speech of the Finance Minister of the Indian Dominion? If you have noticed at all, have you stopped to think what they mean to you and me, and what their implications are on the future political and constitutional set-up of this country? I am pretty certain, not many would have stopped to think what a far-reaching problem this "public debt" is, and how it is intimately connected with the destinies of nations.

On the 31st March 1913, the total of the Indian Public Debt was only 411 crores. On the corresponding day in 1923, it was Rs. 781 crores. In 1933, it was Rs. 1,102 crores. Today it stands at the colossal figure of Rs. 2,231 crores. The bulk of this total, admittedly, represents borrowings to cover Budget deficits, war expenditures, for building New Delhi, for building and running strategic railways, etc. Until a year or two ago, the British bear was made the scapegoat for all these sins. Our politicians and economists—including the present Finance Minister—seldom let the Budget sessions of the old Legislative Assemblies pass without stigmatising the British administrators for the "unsound debt position of the country", for "wasteful borrowings". We have come to a stage when we have no bear to bait, and when we have to take stock of the position dispassionately and plan for the future with realism and caution.

Our Finance Minister is complacent over what, according to him, is a "sound debt position". He states that our National Debt is

only about one half of the national income. But he seems to forget the all-important fact that national income is something which is difficult of assessment in any precise manner, particularly in a country like India where reliable statistics are rare and practically unavailable. Besides, whereas national income is partially in things and partially in money, the National Debt is entirely in money. Consequently, there can be no meaning or comfort in any comparison between the two, as some of the debtor nations of Europe have long since discovered. Secondly, it is grossly misleading to compare the size of our National Debt with those of either U.S.A. or U.K. The level of taxation in those countries is as high as 25 to 30 per cent of the national income. In India it is just about 6 or 7 per cent. It must, therefore, be admitted that in relation to the incidence of taxation, our National Debt is much higher than that of U.S.A.

In the past 35 years our National Debt has multiplied nearly six times. Are we six times better off? I do not think any one—including our Finance Minister—would venture to make such a claim. We are not even twice as well off, either in our cities or our villages. We are probably better served, but not six times better served. Yet we are six times more deeply in debt—and about ten times more deeply in debt per capita for provincial and local administration—than we were 35 years ago. Where is a process like this going to end?

The over-optimism given expression to by the Finance Minister lends colour to the belief that a scheme of large scale borrowing is

on the anvil. In the coming Budget year a tidy sum of Rs. 163-1/2 crores has been set apart for what is called "Capital expenditure"—the bulk of which actually consists of current demands that should legitimately have been met from current revenues and are proposed to be met largely from borrowings. This process is bound to go on year after year if a note of warning is not sounded in time. For, the easier thing for any political party in power is to borrow money than to raise taxes. No party dare impose a serious increase in general taxes and yet hope to remain in office. In this natural tendency lies the greatest danger to democratic institutions, and this fact also constitutes the greatest flaw in the armour of democracy.

If our new-won freedom, and the democratic form of Government to which we all seem so devoutly attached, are to stay, we must have the courage to cry: "Halt!" to this mad mania for "spending for speedy progress". Debt, after all, is a speculation on time and growth. It should never become a substitute for progress or natural and ordered

growth. In a democracy the problem of debt is not only economic, but also political.

What is it that gave Italy into the hands of Mussolini? It was her heavy debt structure, which her Government could not handle as a democracy. What made Hitler the absolute ruler of Germany? What but national despair under the immense load of debt which a Republic could not carry? A master had to appear in Russia, too, because of mounting debt. That is the lesson of the past 30 years of European history.

Therefore, if we sincerely wish democracy to stay in this country, if we do not want the administration of this country to get into the hands of an oligarchy or an autocracy, we will have to punish ourselves to pay our obligations. We should not recoil from self-punishment through taxation. We should not let our leaders lead us with further debt. The incidence of our present debt is sufficiently smarting. It takes away nearly one-fourth of our revenues. Let us therefore not seek solace in the theory that our debt position is sound.

## SHREWS AND PHILOSOPHERS

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

IT has been always fashionable to make fun of a shrewish wife and a henpecked husband in speech and literature. Actually, a shrew is no more than a well meaning and dominant wife, trying to correct or coerce a bungling and weak-willed husband and in most cases it is the husband that is tamed by the shrew. Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew" is more a pandering to the vanity of husbands than a true representation of facts in the majority of cases. Socrates struck a truer note when, in reply to the question of a young man, whether to marry or not, he advised him to marry, for if he got a good wife he would be happy and if he got a bad one, that would make him a philosopher which was

good for every man. Socrates of course could speak with authority on the subject, for he was made a practical philosopher no less by his shrewish wife Xanthippe, than by his own efforts.

It is however strange that among our ancient rishis and seers, as also later bhakthas and philosophers, there are few instances of shrewish wives. Most of our philosophers were either life-long bachelors like Sankara, or had especially good and obedient wives who shared all their joys and sorrows, like Arundhathi, wife of Vasishta. Kuchela's wife had to hesitate a hundred times, in spite of grinding poverty, to beg her husband to pay a visit to Lord Krishna and ask his help, and Tukaram's wife by all modern

standards was no shrew. The only instance of a shrew in our old history is the wife of Bharthruhari, who became a philosopher not so much through his wife's shrewishness as through her faithlessness.

Socrates provides the most notable instance of a philosopher tamed by a shrew. The story is that, when after a heated argument, during all of which Socrates kept silent, Xanthippe poured a pot of water over his head from above, Socrates calmly told a friend that it was just a case of rain following thunder. The immortal biographer Plato does not however give any further information on this remarkable woman. It is apparent that she was as much a practical humorist as Socrates was a practical philosopher. She knew one short-cut to fame, namely, that of pestering the famous. Socrates too would have been a much less interesting character without Xanthippe.

An instance in Indian history of a shrew making her husband a philosopher is that of Ramanuja's wife Vijayambal. She seems to have had an itch to fight out on all matters, small or big. She quarrelled with the wife of her husband's Guru for allowing a drop of water from her (guru's wife's) pot to fall into hers. She also does not seem to have been particularly pleased with her husband's guests of lower castes, and treated them with ill-concealed discourtesy. Finally, Ramanuja had to part company with her and become a sanyasi. To this illustrious lady we owe the full energies of Ramanuja being directed towards Vaishnavite philosophy and such immortal works on philosophy as Sri Bhashyam.

Among European philosophers, Schopenhauer must have had ample experience of shrews, as is clear from his writings. It is also well known that in the case of Count Tolstoy, his wife gave him hell on earth, though Tolstoy tried his best to hide the facts about her from contemporaries as well as posterity.

Even after he had willed off all his property to her and her sons, he was not free from her pesterings. The shrewish wife of Milton seems to have made him more a poet than a philosopher, but in the case of Ruskin it is evident that his marriage was unhappy though how much he owed his philosophy to it is not clear.

In India, however, even in recent times, the tradition of Vasishta and Arundhathi seems to have been continued by the famous saints of our times. Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Saradamani Devi, as also the Mahatma and Kasturba, are illustrious couples who walked arm in arm in pursuit of their great ideals. In the case of Sri Aurobindo disagreement with his wife seems to have been among the causes of his turning from politics to philosophy.

Shrews have been a much maligned class in this world of man's tyranny. If the coy, lovely maiden has always sent her lover to cross the seven seas, and span the skies, the shrew has made her husband do something far greater, she made him a philosopher. At least for having given us saints and philosophers like Socrates and Ramanuja, they deserve much better at the hands of an ungrateful world which would have been all the poorer without them.



### SWATANTRA

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# 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.*

## Obiter Dicta of Madras Chief Justice

The Chief Justice of the Madras High Court is reported to have said that the caste system as organised by our ancestors, is an ideal form of social organisation: Not the caste system as it exists today, with its numerous sects and sub-sects but the simple four-fold division of society into priests, warriors, farmers and labourers. In any society such a four-fold division is necessary and inevitable owing to differences in ability and temperament. So runs his argument. Apparently he desires Indian society to be reorganised in this simple way! But the whole point against caste is its rigidity and the principle that a man's status and occupation are determined by his birth. There is no equality of opportunity, no equal facilities for education under the system. The castes are kept apart by prohibition of inter-marriage. In extolling caste the Chief Justice must be presumed to be supporting these essential aspects of the system. In another speech, he expressed unbounded admiration and enthusiasm for ancient Indian culture, national and regional. If he has been reported correctly, all that is necessary for India's future is to broadcast ancient Sanskrit and Tamil Literature among the people. Apparently, this will solve all our major problems, poverty, ignorance, disease, a low standard of life, economic backwardness, etc. What does anyone of India know who only India knows? To impart more of our ancient culture to the common man would be like giving an inebriate more doses of whisky. Our ancient culture is saturated with certain outworn religious beliefs and superstitions and dominated by theocratic and Brahminic elements. The caste system and untouchability were the foundations on which the edifice of that culture was erected. In the context of Indian and world conditions today, what the common man needs and should acquire is a scientific outlook, freedom from religious obsessions, and a readiness to deal with the problems of life and society in a scientific and modern way. In the words of Nehru "he should lessen his religiosity and turn to science".

In another speech the Chief Justice pronounced that Sanskrit literature is

the greatest literature in the world! To use a colloquial expression, this is a bit too thick! Even if it were true, the world should say it, not we. And what has the world got to say? It laughs at us for making such a claim. Our ancient literature was indeed rich and varied and takes a high rank but it was by no means the greatest in the world. How many people in the world read and enjoy the Indian epics compared with the number of those who read and enjoy the ancient Greek epics? How many read Kalidasa's plays and how many Shakespeare's? If a gallop poll were taken, the world's verdict will most probably be the same as that of the late William Archer, a well-known critic who said "that if all the great masterpieces of European sculpture painting, epic and dramatic literature were destroyed, Europe would still, in virtue of its works of the second and third order, be incomparably richer than India in products of artistic genius." The Chief Justice had better put this in his pipe and smoke it. For the sake of India's future, let us Indians practise rational humility, see ourselves as others see us and appreciate and assimilate all that is good and true from the outside world.

C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN.

## Government Servants And Benefit Performances

Replying to a question in the Legislative Assembly the other day, Mr. T. S. Avinasilingam Chettiar said that Government servants will not be allowed to collect funds for benefit performances and that they should refrain from doing so. This point has been stressed many times by the Ministers after receiving several complaints that the officials are using their influence in collecting funds for various purposes. There is a definite G.O. stating that Government servants should not associate themselves with the collection of funds for any purpose whether private or public. Recently, after the revelations in a bribery case in which Mylai Sangeeta Sabha figured prominently, the Government and the Ministers have been tireless in saying that Government servants must keep aloof from all such activities.

In spite of all this, things are going

on as in the same old days of alien domination. No amount of preaching by the Ministers has had any effect on the official mind. Recently in Trichy there was a benefit performance in aid of a local girls' high school. The school was founded and is run by a gentleman who has enormous influence with the local district officials. So he requested the present Collector of Trichinopoly to preside over the benefit performance to which he readily agreed. Using this fact that the Collector of the district is presiding, he sent ticket books to all the Taluk officials requesting them to see that all of them were sold out. The Taluk officials in their turn began to oppress the poor villagers. In Lalgudi Taluk agriculturists were compelled to take tickets of ten-rupee denomination, and the cost of the tickets was deducted out of their cash bonus. Thus a villager whose bonus amount is Rs. 20 got one ticket of Rs. 10 and the balance of Rs. 10 in cash and he is supposed to have contributed "voluntarily" to a good cause.

In many cases, these tickets were handed over on the same evening on which the performance took place and in some cases even long after. Landowners residing in distant towns had the pleasure of receiving a ticket by post along with their bonus amount for a performance impossible for them to attend and to which they had even without their knowledge voluntarily contributed. Such is the detached way in which officials behave.

The bonus amount is given by Government as a solatium to landholders on their representation that the prices paid in procuring paddy are wholly inadequate in view of the high cost of cultivation. But even this small extra payment by Government is sought to be reduced by the officials who are asked to distribute the bonus. Money intended to be an incentive to greater cultivation is reduced as a result of unauthorised collections made for other purposes by powerful local officials in flagrant violation of G.O's and instructions by Ministers. What is the use of blaming landholders and cultivators for their apathy in the matter of increased production if such things happen often in the regime of our popular Ministers? Officials should be warned that they should not preside over or in any manner partake in any benefit performances in aid of any institution. Otherwise using official influence for private purposes will continue, whatever the G.O's and the Ministers may say.

"ONE AGGRIEVED".

## Separation Of Executive And Judiciary

The separation of powers is now a *fait accompli*. The public are anxious that the reform should be a genuine one and not a counterfeit. The bane of the present system is the control of the subordinate magistracy by the higher magistracy through remarks passed on the calendars submitted by the former at the conclusion of each case which does not obtain in the case of civil courts. The passing of calendar remarks even in cases of ultimate acquittal like—"The sub-magistrate has no business to release the accused on bail"; "He should have awarded a substantive sentence and not let off the accused with a mere fine"; "If you continue like this your magisterial powers will be withdrawn"—is a normal feature now. I have come across numerous sub-magistrates who have acted boldly and fearlessly in police cases, but I have not seen a sub-magistrate who does not quail before the prospect of getting a calendar stab from the superior magistrate. For aught we know, no sub-magistrate or lawyer practising in the courts of sub-magistrates was examined by the committee to find out the crux of the problem or where the shoe actually pinched. The whole thing was decided at top level without regard to actualities. The subordinate magistrates should be encouraged to decide cases to the best of their lights, without fear or favour. Their judgments should not come in for adverse remarks except in judicial proceedings by way of revision or appeal and they should not be victimised in any manner for official acts done by them. Herein lies the key to the solution of the problem of magisterial independence.

M. G. GURUSWAMI AYYAR.

Sivaganga.

## Whom To Follow?

Communism is better demonstrated in the streets than in the industries, more for power than for uplift of the oppressed.

Government says "Produce or Perish".  
Labour says "Do or Die".  
Capitalist says "Take it or leave it".  
Communist says "Blood or Bread".  
Whom to follow?

I. S. RAO.

## Hyderabad Menace

Mr. Kasim Razvi's latest challenge to the Indian Union beats all his past records.

A month ago, Mr. Razvi belittled the power and ability of the Indian troops, when he said that the reverses in Kashmir well proved the weakness of the Union forces. At the same time he warned the Union that he and his Majlis were not only the protectors of the independence of Hyderabad but also of all the Muslims in the Indian Union.

In his latest attack on the Union, he has reaffirmed his intention not to allow Hyderabad to join the Union and also not to permit the setting up of responsible government. If the Union Government forced the issue, Mr. Razvi says, the Hyderabad Muslims would foil all such attempts and they would have not only the active support of all Muslims in the Indian Union and in Pakistan but also of the Muslims of the Middle East countries.

This is not all. The most significant part of Mr. Razvi's recent statement is that the Majlis would destroy all that is non-Muslim in the State if there were to be any rupture with the Union on the issues of either accession or responsible government. What the Muslims of Hyderabad seem to want, according to Mr. Razvi, is the maintenance of the status quo, which would force a majority of the people to perpetual slavery.

People who have carefully followed the activities of the Majlis and the speeches of Mr. Razvi on several occasions, would have by this time understood the nature of the menace growing in Hyderabad and the danger threatening the people of India. By all accounts it is evident that the Nizam and his Cabinet have little control over the Majlis and its leader who have practically usurped the powers of the Government and the control of the administration and the police and the military.

In spite of so much provocation and in spite of accumulating evidence in regard to the future designs of the Majlis, the seemingly indifferent attitude of the Government of India cannot but cause surprise to the common man. The strong man of India appears for once to have met his match in Hyderabad. Sardar Patel has solved greater problems, and there is no reason why he should not bring Hyderabad into the Union without firing a shot if possible and with force if necessary, so that non-Muslims are liberated and their future assured.

Yet what is it that stays the hands of the Government of India and of the provincial Governments? Is it the

increasing strength and power of the Communists in Hyderabad? Does the Indian Government believe they would be strengthening the hands of the communists in Hyderabad if they interfere at this stage? Or do they believe that the right moment to take notice of affairs in the State is when the forces of the Majlis and the Communists have fought each other to exhaustion.

G. V. RANGA RAO.

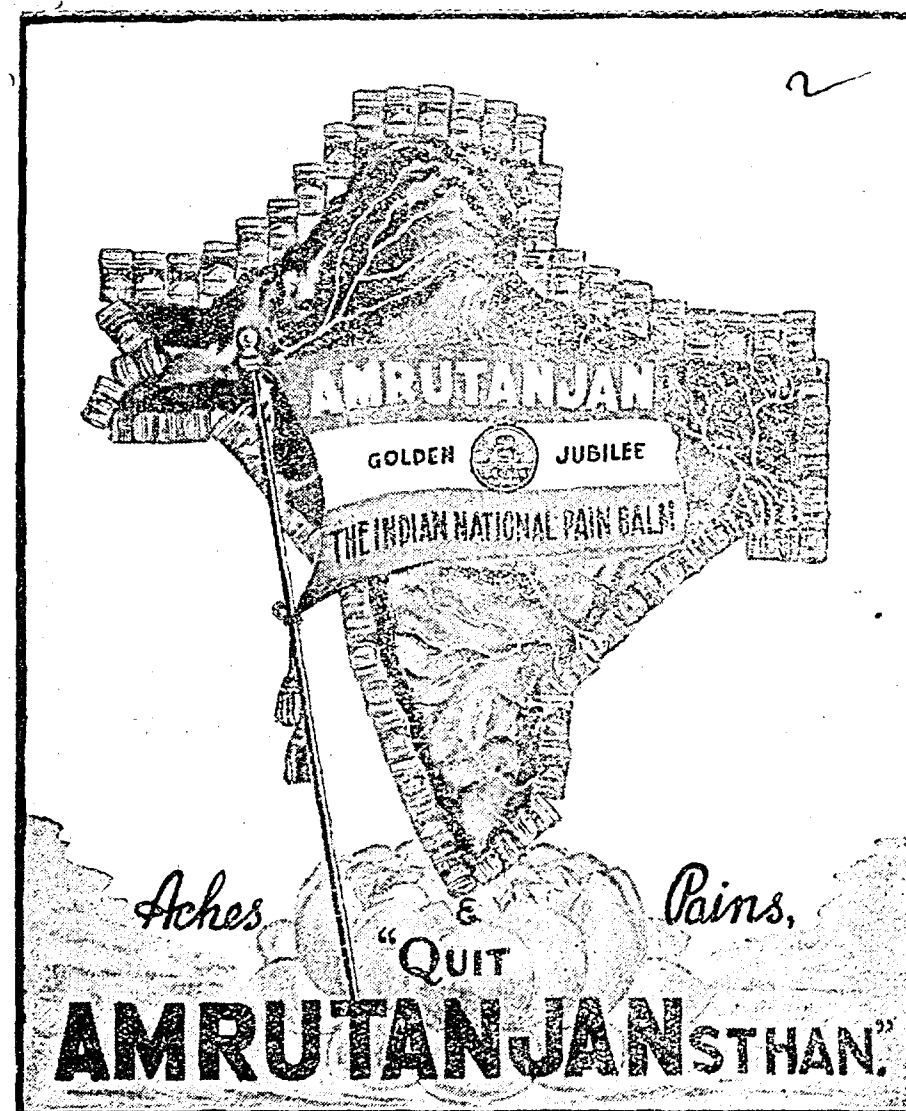
#### Raise The Standard Of Living

Lord Mountbatten observed in his recent speech at the Convocation of the Delhi University that it was the avowed policy of the Government of India to raise the standard of living in the country. Standard of living should be measured by the ease with which the common man procures, and the frequency with which he enjoys, all the amenities of civilised life. "Produce or Perish" is only one side of the issue. A well ordered distribution of all amenities is the 'sine qua non' of a high standard of living. Therefore to secure a proper distribution of amenities, the first requisite is to fix the ceiling prices of essential and non-essential commodities.

The fixing of ceiling prices of commodities will, as a matter of course, necessitate the fixing of the maximum percentage of profit for capital and the minimum wages for skilled and unskilled labour. As conditions obtain at present there is a vicious circle. The labourer asks for more because the prices are high; when wages are increased, the capitalist who insists on the same amount of profit raises his prices; and again the labourer being unable to make both ends meet asks for a further increase.

The personal views of the individual members of the Cabinet should not be a bar to the attainment of the avowed object of the Government. One member may pat the capitalist at the back, and another may think of levelling all differences between capital and labour, but the Cabinet as a whole should think in the interest of the common man and take immediate steps to fix (1) the ceiling prices of commodities, (2) the maximum percentage of profit for capital, and (3) the minimum wage for skilled and unskilled labour. Otherwise all the amenities of civilised life will not become easily and readily available to the common man and all hopes of raising the standard of living may be frustrated. We may have to perish in spite of increased production.

M. K. RAMADASS IYER.



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### **KASHMIR IN DISTRESS**

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# SWATANTRA

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No. 7

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1948

ISSUED  
WEEKLY

## SOCIALIST SECESSION

**S**Ocialists have to be congratulated on their decision to leave the Congress. By declining to leave in time, the Communists, as all know, were expelled. Expulsion is the eventual fate of every group in a party that finds itself unable to conform to the disciplinary needs of its major section. If not today, some days hence, the Socialists would have to leave the Congress. Their exit only ante-dates an inevitable development, and confers grace and pleasantness on what anyhow could not but come about later on in a harsher way. The attitude of regret of certain Congress leaders over the Socialist defection need not be taken for more than what it is worth. Regret over a partner's parting is better than relief. It is a common political phenomenon that cordiality is reinforced, or at least assumes the external trappings of affection and regard, on the eve of a separation. Sometimes separation works a miracle. It sets in motion affinities of which no sign had been visible previously. A remarkable example of this is furnished by recent Congress history in South India. So long as Sri C. Rajagopalachari continued to be a competitor for leadership, the dominant figures of the Congress organisation in Tamil Nadu combined against him. But his transfer to a distance brought on a replacement of animosity with enthusiastic plaudits. The worst of the opponents of C. R. while he remained on the South Indian

political scene are now the most fervent of his devotees, and not a day passes without some public manifestation of their intense desire to do him honour. When there is common desire for the same prize, distance enchants. Company irritates. Separation relieves strain. Omission to depart exhausts welcome and generates illwill. The Socialist decision to depart from the Congress in time has saved them from the fate of expulsion which befell the Communists for failing to be as wise.

While the Socialists were in the Congress they were looked upon as a progressive section within the parent organisation. All the glamour pertaining to the great name of Mahatma Gandhi and other leading figures of the Congress like Nehru was shared by them along with all others that belonged to the Congress. In addition they had the prestige that was derived from their supposed progressiveness. Jai Prakash Narain the Socialist leader was carried on the shoulders of Pandit Nehru and from certain angles appeared to be even taller. From that elevation he is forced down to level ground now as a result of the Socialist decision to leave the Congress. The Socialists will no longer have any share in the vast reservoir of credit built for the Congress during the Gandhian apostolate. No doubt it is true that while leaving the Congress the Socialists have been at pains to avoid isolation

from the current of national sentiment rendered vital and powerful by the immersion in it of all that remains of Mahatma Gandhi. But post-mortem clinging to the name of the Mahatma has become an all-party political practice. Not only the Communists, but every element in India's public life not excluding those that were most prominent in opposing him and strengthening his opponents while he lived, have been excelling in it. These claimants to political intimacy with the Mahatma will cancel each other out. They will only contribute to the firm establishment of Pandit Nehru as the natural heir to the Gandhian political influence on Indian soil. So far as the Socialists are concerned, Congress and Gandhi have both been transferred to the opposite scale in the new measure of their importance created by their exit from the Congress. With what weight will they make up for what they have lost?

They may gain value as exponents of Socialism for practical implementation in Indian economy. The vitality of Socialism and all it promises by way of benefit to people may suffice to make a party more powerful than all others banking on personal popularity of particular leaders acquired through patriotic exertion in the days of struggle against foreign rule. With the advent of freedom the whole technique of approach for winning popular favour has changed. The emphasis has shifted from the elimination of foreign authority to the improvement of living conditions. Constructive schemes for the widest distribution of prosperity will alone win the electorate's support and confer political power in the coming days, and the popular heroes that have come to the helm on the waves of opportunity furnished by the struggle for freedom, will not be able to maintain themselves there if they fail in capacity to conceive and

give effect to such schemes. We have reached a stage when sound ideas evolving an economy of plenty for the betterment of the standard of life of common people, can play a more important part as a means for the acquisition of political power than the old Congress prescriptions of sacrifice, renunciation, spinning, jailgoing and the like. It is as if the fates have conspired to create opportunities for power and primacy to fall like a ripe fruit into the lap of the Socialists. Unfortunately, the deviation of Indian Socialists from the central concepts of Socialism would seem to have already stamped them with ineffectiveness. The approbation given by prominent Indian Socialists to decontrol takes them a great distance away from the main foundations of Socialism. It is only a rich country like U.S.A. that can indulge in free enterprise without disastrous economic results. In countries like India where there is not much of a margin to play with, controls are indispensable for peaceful economic progress. India's greatest economist, D. R. Gadgil, holds the view that we not only need a full apparatus of intelligently administered controls, but also a further elaboration of all the apparatus of wartime controls. To those apt to complain that controls involve regimentation, his answer is that the modern State has to be much more than a police State, that it has to work for certain social and economic objectives and therefore "we must be prepared for much regimentation before the standard of living of the bulk of our people could even be slightly increased." Socialist endorsement of decontrol is a negation of the basic economic teaching of Socialism, and cripples the Socialists at the very outset of their separate existence as an independent party, for any effective work on progressive lines of a sort superior to that of the Congress.

The economic ideas of the Socialist Party have not yet been evolved with clarity and consistency. They show a tendency to wobble unreliably with the changing gusts of mob sentiment. Deep and growing dissatisfaction with the ruling class of Congressmen on the one hand, and disquiet over the chronic tendency to puzzling somersaults on the part of the Communist Party on the other,

have cleared the ground for the independent operations of a Socialist Party free from the capitalist entanglements of the one and the waywardness of the other. But as yet the Socialist leadership has not risen above the defects of those against whom its shafts of criticism are directed with great severity. The knots in the ideology of the party have to be straightened out.

## Sotto Voce

### Blanketing The Mind



THE Madras Government, ever on the look out for new worlds to conquer, has decided to socialise text-books. Educational publishing will be a State monopoly hereafter. We are assured that this will help "the best material to be given at the cheapest cost". Note the seductiveness of the appeal, conjuring up visions of endless yards of muslin and Benares brocade being measured out to you for your meagre rupee! The State also hopes to make a modest profit. I see the tame authors gloating over the imminent discomfiture of the hereditary enemy. The publishers will, however, be almost reconciled, knowing that whoever profits by the change it will not be the literary proletarians.

Time was when the monopoly vested in the British trade. Ambitious parents, who regarded education as an investment in a lottery in which nobody drew blanks, cheerfully sacrificed a year's revenue to buy for the budding undergraduate the sleek and glossy books which, so far as the price ratio went, nobly upheld

Macaulay's contention. And the young collegians took quite a childish delight in the fragrance that emanated from between the pages of these treasures that had voyaged seven thousand miles. There was a brisk trade in second-hand books; but long after the contents had become faded and dirty with age, the binding safeguarded by pious dust covers preserved a sallow purity.

Parents groused at the frequency with which text-books were changed. And politicians added this to the "hardy annuals" at the head of which stood such perennial grievances as the Salt Tax and the reservation of railway compartments for Anglo-Indians. But the Department of Public Instruction let it be known that if text-books were not frequently changed educational stagnation would set in. If you mildly objected that Messrs. Blueberry's "Selections" from the minor poets of the eighteenth century bore an unmistakable family resemblance to Messrs. Redwood's Anthology which it replaced, you were assured that the former fol-

lowed a poetically effective order whereas the latter was severely chronological. In any case, where English literature or for that matter Western learning was concerned, Englishmen knew best.

The Salt Tax has gone, but salt is not appreciably cheaper or better. English publishers are no longer counting on a monopoly, but their gradual withdrawal has not brought much change in the attitude of prescribing authorities towards their job. It is still too often regarded as valuable patronage. But the taking over of the business of educational publishing by a Government Department will not instal the reign of virtue overnight. All that the starveling hacks, who will take their orders from officials with four figure salaries, may reasonably look forward to is frequent and magisterial exhortation to sacrifice in this patriotic cause.

Text-books are not written, as reports are drawn up, by committees with set terms of reference after taking evidence. There have been instances of classics produced or at least perfected by collective wisdom, the most famous being the English Bible. But even in such rare cases the moving spirit was a Cranmer or a Tyndale. The great University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge are the nearest approximations to official publishing in England. But the Syndics do not interfere with the planning or actual production of authoritative text-books. The text-book writer may not be a poet

or a savant, but he must be both accurate and comprehensible—a feat quite beyond the power of Government committees.

The fatal objection, however, has reference to the basic virtue that a text-book must possess—objectivity. No Government, much less a party Government, is fit to be trusted with the task of determining what history, economics or philosophy a boy shall learn or how he shall learn it. Those who are caught up in the meshes of the official system of instruction suffer already from the handicap of having courses and syllabuses laid down for them by people with compartmental minds. When the test of successful education is supposed to be indoctrination in a particular ideology—even if it be the innocuous rural ideology of the Wardha Basic Education scheme—official text-books will effectively extinguish independent thinking. You might as well gag a man who has nasal catarrh in the hope of curing him.

Nationalisation may have many virtues, but standardisation of text-books could only produce a robot civilisation. The essence of education is the friction of mind against mind. Socrates and Plato used no text-books. Our average pedagogue is assuredly no Socrates; he must perforce have crutches to lean on. But is that any reason why we should put him in blinkers and make him the blind leader of the blind?

VIGNESWARA.

## CONVERSATIONAL CLIMAX

A small boy was taken out to tea with neighbors. In the middle of the meal he turned to his hostess and asked her in his best conversational manner: "Did you enjoy your holiday, Mrs. Brown?"

"My holiday?" said Mrs. Brown, "I'm afraid I don't understand. I haven't been away."

"Oh!" said the boy, "I thought you had. I heard mummy say that you and Mr. Brown had been at Loggerheads for the past fortnight."

# SIDELIGHTS :

There's none but fears a future state; and when the most obdurate swear they do not, their trembling hearts belie their boasting tongues.  
—DRYDEN.

IT is not unlikely that Jai Prakash Narain will one day occupy the position that Pandit Nehru now occupies in India and the world. Other possible successors to Pandit Nehru there of course are, but their handicaps are no less than their qualifications. Sardar Patel is ruled out by his age. In the natural order of things, the Pandit is more likely to survive him than he the Pandit. The same can be said of the other leading lights of the Congress like C.R., Rajendra Prasad and Azad. After the passing away of the Mahatma, C.R. is undoubtedly the acutest intelligence in the Congress organisation. Honours and dignities will be showered on him lavishly. He will most probably succeed Lord Mountbatten as Governor-General. But succession to the national leadership in the Gandhian lineage now devolved on Pandit Nehru, seems to have by-passed him for ever. The Mahatma's power rested more on his winsomeness than on his subtlety. Pandit Nehru, though less gifted than the Mahatma in winning the hearts of people, possesses social attractiveness to a degree far above his competitors. It carries him through, softening the acerbity of a tempestuous temperament and makes him irresistible. Two great qualities of Pandit Nehru are his guilelessness and integrity. His sense of justice is quick to assert itself even against himself. If sometimes his manner offends, his conscience acts with lightning rapidity to repair the hurt with apologetic offerings that take no note of prestige or self. The even distribution of Pandit Nehru's impulsiveness over both himself and others makes for a fine balancing of the inroads of age with the charm of boyishness. He owes to it an eternal quality of

youth clinging to him through all the ravaging effects of years and overwork. C.R., too, like Pandit Nehru, has a fundamental aptitude for integrity. But it is all covered up with reserves. His inherent good nature is crushed under a heavy weight of inhibitions largely mixed up with a sense of dignity. He appears less warm-hearted than he is, and only to a few is it given to know him as he really is, with his sparkling wit, his gaiety, his need of others' love and his incessant unflagging pre-occupation with others' welfare. The external chilling appearance of C.R.'s reserved manner covers the agony of a non-mixer ill at home with strangers at low intellectual levels. The transparency of Mahatma Gandhi is lacking in C.R. His proneness to expediency is greater than his forthrightness. In his tenacious pursuit of means to establish himself right, he is the very opposite of Pandit Nehru. Not all the zest of C.R.'s pursuit of detachment as a philosophy of life has cured him of susceptibility to calls of prestige, and the price he paid for them on occasions has cost both himself and the country dear. He needs the refreshment of a public confession of error to relieve the tension that the constant playing up to a role of infallibility imposes on the brainiest of actors in our life's drama.

Jai Prakash Narain shot into glamour with his escapes from jail and evasion of police hunts for prolonged periods in the 1942 atrocity-ridden chapter of British rule. Anything could have happened to him then. His survival established him in the affections of a vast body of people as a hero. He has the advantage over Pandit Nehru of having known struggle and poverty and worked in humble occupations for a living. Also, he has turned his back on high office which he could have had if he had wished. He has not cared for membership of the Con-

gress Working Committee. What he has rejected in power, influence and affluence amounts to far more than what most leaders of the highest rank in the Congress or any other party usually aspire for and sleeplessly plan and intrigue to secure. His record of renunciation and indifference to the material lures of politics establishes him as a leader of the tallest stature in the country. He is widely read. His experience has been rich and varied. He can keep his head cool in the midst of storms and temptations. He is assiduous in industry. He has succeeded in captivating the popular imagination. Hitherto his intellect and energies have not been properly harnessed to mass organisation on a nationwide scale. Only the Communists did that. With the entry of Socialists in the field of labour to dispute the supremacy of the Communists, Jai Prakash would acquire ballast to impart weight to his leadership. As between the Communists and the Socialists, the future belongs to the party which serves the enfranchised workers better.

At this moment of writing, the future leadership of the Congress Legislature Party in Madras hangs in the balance. Few legislators seem

troubled about their duty of selecting the best man. Some are plainly concerned about getting as high a price for their support as they can manage to extract. Marketing of votes apart, there is no doubt that a majority of legislators are sick of the present regime and wish to see Sri Omandur out. The Omandurians have taken to terrorising Tamil legislators about the consequences to themselves of helping Sri Prakasam, an Andhra, to the leadership with their votes. Anything like a free election seems out of the question in the prevailing atmosphere. The large doses of sectionalism being injected into the minds of members by the most powerful persons in the party makes one despair of any possibility of a return to goodwill and decent standards, whoever may be elected. The truth is that a large number of absolutely undesirable people have been given the Congress ticket and enabled to enter the legislature at the last elections. The earlier the present legislature is dissolved, the better. The Provincial Congress Committees having proved unfit, the High Command should exercise greater care and control in the choice of candidates at the next election.—SAKA.

### LITTLE KNOWN TALE

A wealthy family in England (many years ago) took their children for a holiday in the country. Their host turned over his estate for a week-end. The children went swimming in a pool. One of the boys began to drown, and the other boys screamed for help. The son of the gardener jumped in and rescued the helpless one. Later, the grateful parents asked the gardener what they could do for the youthful hero. The gardener said his son wanted to go to college.

"He wants to be a doctor," he said. The visitors shook hands on that. "We'll be glad to pay his way through," they told him.

When Winston Churchill was stricken with pneumonia (after the Teheran conference) the King of England instructed that the best doctor be found to save the Prime Minister. That doctor turned out to be Dr. Fleming, the developer of penicillin. "Rarely" said Churchill to Fleming, "has one man owed his life twice to the same rescuer." It was Fleming who saved Churchill in that pool!—Walter Winchell.

## DISEASES OF POLITICIANS

by S. PARTHASARATHY

MANY of the manual workers are subject to the onslaught of certain diseases which are peculiar to the nature of the work they engage themselves in. Medical men have made a study of such diseases called 'occupational diseases' and have also devised measures to afford varying degrees of immunity to the workers. No such study has been made in the professions. We have, of course, the 'parson's or the speaker's throat' and the 'writer's cramp': but they are diseases of the physical body. The professional politician is susceptible to certain diseases of the mind and of the nervous system which are peculiar to his role. I shall endeavour to enumerate a few of them here. Not being a medical man, I may be pardoned for taking liberties with the use of medical terms.

*Paranoia* is a disease which attacks the successful politician at a late stage in his life. Its victims suffer from delusions of their own grandeur. They aim to cut a figure in the history of nations. Their obsession is so overwhelming that considerations of humanity are brushed aside. The origins of great wars and the creation of new nations may be traced to the presence of this disease in a few men.

*Power complex* in its incipient stages acts as the springboard which plunges the ordinary citizen into the whirlpool of politics. It is difficult of diagnosis, and one may mistakenly assume its presence in every politician. The disease takes the form of an insane desire to hold some office of power from the chairmanship of the local food committee to a ministership. It is exploited by clever politicians to build up support for themselves by pandering to the desires of the victims. The clinical test to determine the existence of the disease is to examine the actions of the patient to see whether he seeks *to rule* or *to serve* others. The disease is now on the increase and prophylactic measures

must be taken if we wish to check its spread. But the Government of India are proposing by means of the linguistic division of the country to provide more asylums for these people.

*Persecution mania* in politicians is allied to inferiority complex in other human beings. It is either the result of frustration or of experiencing the discomfort of being a square peg in a round hole. Politicians affected by the disease generally trace their failures to the inimical actions of others. Often, the disease develops into a crisis, and the victim after denouncing his 'persecutors' becomes exhausted, and shuts himself up for long intervals. The alleged persecutors of those affected by this mania are to be found among the members and officials of the Central Government, the Brahmins, the Muslims, their political opponents and last but not least the Communists. The presence of the disease is, however, easily detected. Whenever a ruling politician, while seeking to explain his failure in any particular matter, uses prefatory words like "what can we do if . . .", you may be almost sure that that man is suffering from the disease.

*Delusions* is not a very serious disease among politicians except that it unfits them for any post of responsibility. Those affected by this disease claim to have discovered a universal panacea for all the ills of this country. Such is the faith of these men in their discovery that they want the whole nation to adopt it and to popularise it to the exclusion of all normal activity. The delusions generally seize upon any one of the following subjects as universal panaceas:—sweet potatoes, ground-nut cake, khadi, prohibition, wooden combs, well-digging, cow protection, palmyrah-jaggery, and korai mats. Another variation of this disease is where the politician assumes the externalities of a great man, and begins to behave as though

he were the original. Persons afflicted by this disease do not see the ridiculous side of it—the gaping gap between the genuine and the mimic. The externalities which they seize upon may be any one of the following:—semi-nudity in dress, fasting, silence, religiosity, sporting a type of vest-coat or a broadly folded shawl on the shoulders, wearing dark glasses or a jubba with long tapering sleeves. They sometimes succeed in imposing themselves on a few weak men, who worship them as the local editions of the great men whom they copy. These poor deluded men and their admirers forget that the size and the quality of the heart and head go to make the great man and not these superficial trivialities.

*Puerility* is another disease which prevails among politicians, who suddenly find themselves placed in positions of power when by birth, training or temperament they are unfitted to shoulder the responsibilities of the office. They either become sulky, taciturn and distrustful or succeed in sublimating their activities by delighting in mummeries. In the latter case, we find them presiding over small functions, opening coffee shops and cinema shows, cutting the tape or laying the stone and talking about airy nothingness. The disease is harmless and is fortunately on the decrease after the departure of the British rulers.

*Senility* in politicians presents a serious problem. Having outlived their useful span of life, the afflicted still believe in their indispensability in spite of their feeble age. Unfortunately, according to the laws of

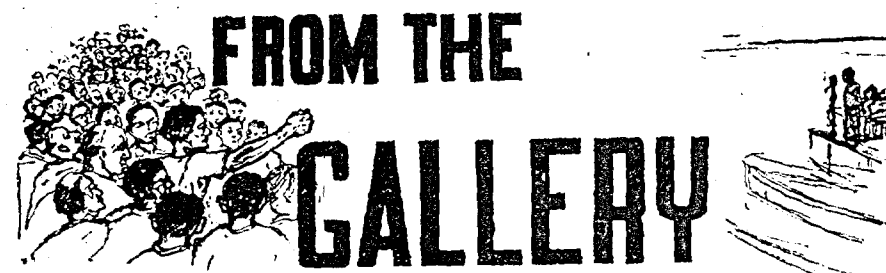
the country, a Government servant even if he were a brilliant research chemist or an outstanding civil engineer, has to retire at the age of 55: but no such limit is placed on the politician to whom the highest offices in the country are open even at the doddering age. The politician suffering from senility may have surrendered his judgment completely to a few devoted companions on account of his fading intellect. He may not be capable of understanding a simple problem or even of remembering the previous sentence in your talk with him. But he never forgets his desire to live his past over again. The virus of politics is a hardy germ. It can be rendered innocuous or dormant for a time but it is capable of a sudden spurt of activity even at the last stage in one's life. When that happens, the old and feeble politician is capable of creating a turmoil in the political world.

The incidence of diseases among politicians is greater in India compared to other countries. The reason is not far to seek. It is due to the habit of the Indian people who indulge in hero worship of their political leaders. We repose blind faith and unwavering love in our politicians. If we can only replace these sentiments by a just estimation of their worth and offer them co-operation where it is deserving and translate that faith to faith in God and that unwavering love to love of our fellow-being and of the country, we would be effectively checking the spread of diseases among the politicians and paving the way for the emergence of a class of healthy politicians.



A woman returned a smart pair of shoes to the exclusive shop where she had purchased them. "They won't do," she announced. "I simply can't walk in them."

"Madam," the clerk replied, looking down his nose, "people who have to walk don't shop here."—The Woman.



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

THE Leaguers' attack on the Education Minister's policy of closing down 'uneconomic' schools was both timely and vigorous. The application of the very term 'uneconomic' to educational institutions was a piece of initial infelicity which even the best friends of the Education Minister must deplore. To treat the portfolio of Education on the basis of a profit-yielding concern is to do violence both to education and to the profit motive. We know that the Education Minister is keen on speeding up women's education. Instead of closing even one single institution for want of strength, it would be a good idea to convert them to training centres for basic and other systems which have been accepted by the Government. But the mercenary motive is wholly out of place.

Next to closing schools, the Education Minister's plan seems to be to take over the publication of textbooks as a State monopoly. It is surprising that this move has not been condemned in any quarter, although its consequences are bound to be far more catastrophic. The chief reason given for taking over the job is that there is a handsome margin of profit. No Government worth its salt can afford to give such a reason publicly and yet keep its prestige. If all activities which bring profit should be taken over by Government, then the State would have to provide an unemployment dole for millions of people; for when most of the avenues of profitable occupation are denied to the people, they must fall as a major liability on the Government. Would this be an im-

provement on the status quo? Secondly, if the State should have a monopoly, it is certain eventually to promote the manufacture of shoddy stuff. Thirdly, to control the publication of books is to dry up the fountains of knowledge at source. It would encourage totalitarianism at the top, and a brutalised, indoctrinated mass at the base. Lastly, the recipe will simply not work, because when publishers and authors are driven out by an executive order, they will come by the back-door, and the chances are that there would be notes on these textbooks multiplied ten-fold, and importing into the contents much more than was included in the original. If free enterprise is justified anywhere, it is in the things of the mind. A stipendiary syndicate of scribes, specially selected by some underling in the Secretariat, will soon grow into a monstrous inquisition on the one hand and a hateful incubus on the other.

Such are the results of following the profit motive; may we suggest to the Cabinet to exploit it to better purpose by taking over (for instance) all the textile mills and the banks in our province! The Ministry dare not do any thing of the kind, for it is helpless against such formidable groups. Ignoring principles and policies of a purely academic or educational nature which call for urgent restatement or clarification, it is deplorable that the Minister should be frittering his energies on a multiplicity of irrelevancies.

Last week, I referred to the rocketing of coffee prices. This week,

let me pay my homage to the Bombay philanthropists who are manufacturing textiles for the use of a thoughtless and ungrateful public. Mill-stuff is now coming in plenty, but the price charged is exactly double the tex-mark tariff. A South Indian mill virtuously advertised its ceiling rates and exhorted the public not to pay more; when I mentioned it to the dealer who charged more, he replied that that very mill would not sell except at a higher price. I certainly admire the cuteness of the trick. It is like the thief getting into the crowd which is after him, and shouting the loudest of all. As against this type may I offset the Buckingham Mills whose products are sold without the variation of a single pie. Not only are their products among the best available in the country—some of their lines are the best—but their business morality has a quiet elevation about it.

This profiteering racket which is now spreading like an infection into many spheres of life, unless checked in time, might well contribute to the ultimate proletarian holiday to which we are all moving—many with hope and a few with dread.

Sometime ago, *Swatantra* questioned the wisdom of establishing a great technological centre at Karalkudi. It led to some correspondence with the donor of the scheme, Dr. Alagappa Chettiar who protested somewhat too much. Now from the papers, I gather that Sir S. Bhatnagar who had been deputed to inspect the spot has expressed himself against a mofussil venue. That opinion being, as it were, straight from the horse's mouth, it is to be hoped that Dr. Alagappa will submit gracefully to more sensible alternatives. It is a peculiar feature of bequests or benefactions by Indians that they are generally saddled with childish or sentimental or vexatious conditions which tend to deprive the grace of their good intentions. That we should have a technological institute is infinitely more important than that we should have it at Karalkudi.

The Travancore Tamil party is in danger of forfeiting all public sympathy by its indiscreet adoption of Sudeten psychology to secure a special position of vantage in the new constitution. This is the more amazing as the Dravidian movement claims the whole of Travancore as the homeland of Tamils, and the Travancoreans as Tamils in fact if not in name. An auspicious beginning has been marred by the abstention of the Tamil members from the inauguration of the Constituent Assembly. The Tamil minority in the extreme South must retrace its steps if it is not to be equated in the popular mind with being a new edition of the Muslim Leaguers in relation to their present surroundings. Dravidian romancers are fond of painting a picture of idyllic amity between the three kings of Dravida Kazhagam—Chera, Chola and Pandya. But in truth they must have lived more like cats and dogs, to judge from the gratuitous bellicosity of the Tamil enclave in Travancore.

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## The STRANGE Encounter

by K.N.P. RAO



AS our college was closed for the

Divali holidays, I thought of going to my sister's place—Bangalore. As it was my first trip to that place, I was eager to see my sister and also to see the beautiful city which is noted for its attractive places. So, I went to Bangalore the very next day our college was closed. I was received at the station by my nephew Suresh who was a very witty fellow. I liked him very much. When I expressed my desire to see the city he readily consented and just after our meal he took me out to show me the interesting places of the city. The question was where we should go first. As Suresh was born and bred up there, he knew the nooks and corners of the city. He suggested that we must first see "Lal Baug" which is supposed to be the resort of all new visitors. When I actually saw it I had to admit that it is really a place where you will forget yourself and spend your time unknowingly. Variegated flowers could be seen on all sides and butterflies were vying with one another to extract the fullest juice from the flowers. The water from the fountain could be seen jutting out incessantly to a great height and people sitting around it enjoyed the sight very much. Wherever we went people were seen occupying the seats. There was practically no seat vacant. At last we found one seat partly vacant. So we wasted no time in occupying it. For some time my mind was engrossed in looking at the beautiful sights all around. In front of us in a big cage a peacock was dancing with all its beautiful feathers stretched into an arc. How wonderful! I had never seen such a sight before. The rays of the setting sun had thrown their golden hue on its feathers and the peacock looked like a queen!

Then slowly I turned my attention to the opposite side. There I saw two persons—a fashionable lady and an old-fashioned, middle-aged man, with a "pagdi" on his head. They were sitting side by side and whispering something. It was a strange sight to me. I was

really curious to know why that up-to-date lady had chosen such an out-dated person as her partner. Just then they got up. I was curious to see their faces—because from her profile I thought I had seen her before somewhere. Fortunately she casually cast a glance at our side and our eyes met. At once there was a surprise in her expression and I could hear a soft cry, "Oh! Ramesh!" I too was a bit puzzled as to who this exquisite beauty might be. Just then, she spoke something to her companion and advanced towards me and standing before me she looked intently for some time and then asked me whether I was not Ramrao's son, Ramesh. "Don't you recognize me? Have you forgotten me so completely that you cannot remember your own Shanta? Oh! How could you? But.. no, no. You are not at fault", and after putting so many questions in one breath she seemed to be quite exhausted. My nephew Suresh was really surprised to see all this sudden outburst and he got up and asked that strange woman to take her seat and be comforted. So she sat near me. I said to her politely: "Are you my sweet Shanta of good old boyhood days? How is it that I find you here with that man with a pagdi?"

"There is a long history behind all this. Let it be. If you are interested and if you are staying here, you must definitely come to my house tomorrow and I will tell you my whole story and thereby at least disburden my heart which is weighed down with so much of sorrow. Now, who is this man with you?"

I told her that he was my nephew and I had come here from Belgaum to my sister's home as I had not seen her for years. Then I asked her where she was staying. She took out a visiting card from her purse and gave it to me saying "You must come to my place without fail. I shall be waiting for you", she got up and joined the person who was waiting for her.

When I was looking at her figure slowly receding further and further, the whole picture of my young days

rolled before my mind and if Suresh had not touched me, I would have stayed in that trance for hours together. Then I put that card into my pocket and we both got up and started homeward. As I thought Suresh might have been puzzled about all this strange encounter, I decided to tell him about my young days and how my life was connected with that of Shanta.

My whole boyhood was spent at a small, but beautiful village not far from Belgaum. Adjacent to our house was that of Shamrao who was the headmaster of our only primary school. I too had received some light strokes of the cane from him, as I had studied under him. But with all that, he was a lovable teacher. Shanta was his only daughter. As her mother had departed from this world when Shanta was a small baby, she was brought up under the loving and devoted care of her father. That was why she was his only hope and joy in life.

Shanta was my favourite. We used to play together, work together and study together. We went to school together, returned together. My parents began to say that ours was a good match. They liked Shanta very much, because she was a very lovely girl and was very smart. Shamrao also liked to see both of us play together and study together. In short, our young school days were spent in joy and mirth.

After I finished my primary education, my father thought of sending me to Belgaum for my high-school education. When Shanta came to know of this, she came to our house and wept so much that my parents had to console her by saying that she too might go there when she finished her primary education. But she was not prepared to part with me even for a moment—not to speak of years. Then my mother came to my help and taking her to her bosom (as if she were her own child) kissed her and convinced her by her own methods. And I gave a sigh of relief.

But when I actually started to go, she came to me and hugged me so tightly that my father had to prevail upon her and to promise her that he would bring some very interesting things for her. I too had to promise her that I would be coming often in the vacations and that I would be sending her small sweet letters! Her father Shamrao also felt that by my going away his daughter would feel

very lonely, because he knew that we both were fast friends. Moreover she was his only daughter whom he tried to keep happy always.

So, time passed. I began to remain the major part of the year at Belgaum. And in Diwali and other vacations only I used to go to my village. But Shanta was expecting my arrival all the while. In fact I was told she spent her time in the longing that soon I would be coming and that she would be having a good and jolly time. And when I returned home, she used to take the fullest advantage of my vacation. She never used to leave me alone! I thought she wanted to store in her heart all these happy memories so that when I was away she might use them and console her heart.

By the time I finished my school career and joined the college, Shanta had grown into a full-blown girl. Really she had been the attraction of the village. Every boy of the village wanted to talk to her and make friends with her. Shamrao, her father, was a bit puzzled about her future; she had no longer remained his sweet tiny kid, but a beautiful marriageable girl! All the people of the village had begun to talk this to him and had advised him to get her married soon, lest something disastrous should overtake him. So Shamrao was on the look out for a suitable match for his dear daughter. Actually he had a great mind to ask my father about me but he feared a bit, because he was only a school master, whereas my father was a rich man and the Patel of the village. Secondly he knew that my father wanted that I should learn much and that he would not consent to get me married so early and thus spoil my career. So he had temporarily given up the idea of approaching my father.

But in the meanwhile he had tried to find out other young men. But nobody was prepared to marry his daughter unless he was prepared to give a handsome dowry, which he could not do. He was really much worried over his daughter's marriage. The very girl who was his only hope and joy in life, had become a source of constant worry. Lately he could not even get sound sleep.

So, one day, thinking he should once go and see my father and try his luck, he slowly went to our house. My father was sitting outside on the veranda. After talking other matters, Shamrao slowly opened this topic. He plainly asked my

father what he would think of this alliance. My father, who had not at all thought over this question, was a bit upset and also enraged. He had thought out an altogether different career for me and he had great hopes that after my passing B.A. etc. many good offers from big persons, that too from persons living in the city would come for me and that he would have to select from amongst them. So, when Shamrao asked this question, my father was totally unprepared to talk anything. So he plainly told Shamrao that he had not yet thought of my marriage so early and that even though they were friends, he would not give any assurance about this. And that he should try elsewhere for his daughter's marriage!

Shanta, who had gone to fetch water from the river nearby, was passing by and seeing my father and her father talking together, she had some curiosity to hear what they were talking. And she had heard all this conversation. When I returned from Belgaum in the Christmas vacation, she came to me and telling the whole thing, began to weep bitterly. I tried my best to console her, but to no effect. She gave up all her hopes and began to pine. At last when I assured her that she should wait for two years more and as soon as I had passed my B.A., I would take her away, even if my parents did not give their consent, she was much relieved of her fears. And in order to ratify my words, I pressed, for the first time, my lips to her warm, curved, red ones! Never in my life did I experience such exquisite sensations course through my whole body!

Christmas vacation was over and I had to return to Belgaum to resume my studies. After a month or two, when there was hardly a week for my examination, I received a letter—no—it was a book-post. I wondered from whom it must have come and what it contained! When I opened it, I found that it was a marriage invitation. But lo! I could not believe my eyes! The name of the bride was "Shanta!" Could it be "my" Shanta? "Yes, it is she—because it is stated that she is the daughter of Shamrao Kulkarni" I guessed. Then I looked at the date. There were only 4 days left. My God! My examination was to begin next week. I was at a loss to know whether I should go there and bring her here—not caring for anybody—or should I not go there at all? I was in a dilemma. Both the alternatives were painful to me. I began to imagine the

condition of Shanta at that time. How had she consented for this marriage? But, poor Shanta—what could she do? Her father had at last got hold of some fellow who knows, an old man?—and had relieved himself of all his worries. It would be a miserable thing if I should go there. So I thought for, what a sight it would have been to see my own Shanta being given over to some old fellow! I abhorred the very idea. At last I decided to leave things to take their own course. There was no other course. My father had not yet written to me anything. I could not go against his will. Moreover my examination was staring me in the face. My whole future career was also before me—but I could not guess what it would be!

My examination was over. And as usual I went to my place. The neighbouring house, where Shanta lived, seemed to be vacant. I asked my mother where Shanta had gone, as if not knowing anything about her. My mother, with tears in her eyes, said:—

"My son, what shall I say? Poor girl! Giving away such a jewel among girls of our village, to an old merchant of Bombay, Shamrao once for all freed himself from all criticism and worries. He was looking forward to relieve himself of the responsibility of Shanta's marriage long ago. This merchant came to our village by chance. He was a rich man. He had come here on some business. He had gone to the school to sleep and go away the next day. Shamrao who had gone there casually, saw this man and brought him home as he seemed to be a respectable person. During his stay for the night, they had a talk and Shamrao came to know that his guest was a rich man, and had four children by his first wife who had died recently, and that he was in search of a wife who would take care of his children. Shamrao took this opportunity and asked the fellow if he was prepared to marry his young daughter. The old man's joy knew no bounds, as he had not imagined that such a beautiful damsel would be his wife. And so, within a week everything was settled and the merchant who had come on some other business got a beautiful wife in the bargain and took her away soon after the marriage. But before that, Shanta had come to me and had shed tears. I tried to console her. I even told her that she would have been a suitable match for you; and but for your father's disapproval, I was prepared to accept her as my daughter-in-law." So saying she stopped. Her throat was choked with grief.

I did not press her to tell me more. I could not but blame my own fate and console myself by thinking that she was not destined to be my life's partner at all! After the vacation was over, I went to resume my studies and tried to forget about Shanta. I tried to engross myself in reading all the while or do something. Days and months passed and in due course she slowly receded back from my mental horizon.

And now, after two years, I have seen her today. I don't know what has transpired during these two years. So, I shall go to her to-morrow and after learning her mysterious life, I shall tell you all... Thus did I finish my story. Suresh was surprised to learn all this about me, because my sister had not disclosed all these things to anybody.

By this time we had reached my sister's house. It was almost dark. My sister was waiting for us. After dinner, I went to my room and lying on my bed, I began to dream about Shanta. I got up early in the morning. After coffee, telling my sister that I would just go for a morning walk, I went in search of Shanta's house. As I was new to the place, I had some difficulty in finding out her house. But at last I found the building. Her flat was on the 2nd floor. She was standing at the window when I entered. It seemed she was waiting for me only. As soon as she saw me she took me inside to a room and asked me to take my seat. Then saying she would come in a minute, she went out. Her flat seemed to be well furnished. I was just looking at the paintings on the walls, when she entered, with a tray in her delicate hands. She had changed her saree also—she looked more beautiful in her plain white saree!

We did not talk much while taking coffee. Perhaps she was thinking how to begin the conversation. I too was curious to hear her interesting (but who knows perhaps also woeful) story. When we finished our coffee, she slowly leaned forward in her chair and began:

"Ramesh! how should I commence the wretched story of my life? At times I feel that I should not unnecessarily make you miserable by telling my story. At other times, I think I may feel much relieved by disburdening my heart. So I shall briefly tell you what has transpired during these two years—that is, since I was married to that old merchant. I think you might have received the invitation card sent by me. It was I who sent it purposely, because I thought that by reading it at

least, you would come and do something—either stop the marriage or take me away as assured by you. But you did not come. Of course it is not your fault. I was destined to suffer all those humiliations. My star was not good. Perhaps you might have wondered how I gave my consent to marry that old man. But it was all my father's plan. He wanted somehow to get rid of me. I wanted to write to you. But that too was not possible. I knew that your examination was approaching. I did not want to disturb you. So I thought that it was not good on my part to ruin your future career. As for myself I had given up all my hopes and ideals of living with you as your wife. I thought I was not fortunate enough to be your partner. Even then, as a last resort I went to your mother and revealed to her my condition. She too sympathised with me. She told me that she would have gladly taken me as her daughter-in-law. But she could not go against your father. Then I sent that invitation card to you, to see what you would do. But nothing happened. My so-called marriage was over at last! A forty-year old man came to my lot! I kept quiet. No use of complaining. You did a good thing in not coming. If you had come, you could not have endured such a sight!

"Then within a few days he took me away to Bombay. I followed him not as his wife but as a dog follows its master! I did not feel anything while parting from my father, because I could not pardon him for dragging me to such a condition after bringing me up so lovingly for 17 years. I did not wish to see him again. But then, I thought, he too was not to be blamed. The so-called social morality had compelled him to do such an act. But how could I take my revenge on society?

"So, ungrudgingly I spent my time in Bombay. I wonder how I spent those days! I was never allowed to go out. Moreover, all the household work did not leave any time for me either to go out or to enjoy some time at least as a change. Of course there were servants in our house. But I had to supervise everything done by them. I had to take care of the children—though they were not mine! Moreover as I was brought up in a village, I did not want others to do my work. So I engrossed myself in some work or other. In a way this helped me to forget myself—forget you and the outside world, with which I had no connection at all.

"So, a year was over. My husband had no time either to speak with me

or to take me out anywhere. Being a businessman, he was busy the whole day. Even at night, he used to go on writing some accounts and even if he saw me dozing, he never stopped his work! I used to curse him and his work and then go to bed alone! In this way, I was really tired of this monotony and drudgery. I wanted some change. I began to feel that somehow I should try to get out of this prison. I thought that even a beggar's life was far better than this wretched life.

"One day, just before Divali, a young man of about 25 came to our house, when my husband was away. He had come to sell lavender, scent and such other cosmetics. I told him that as my husband was not at home, he should come some other time. But he said that he would not be able to come again as he would be going out. Moreover seeing my faded and pale face, he said that I should excuse him if he asked a question. He just asked me the reason for this. Though at first I hesitated, when I saw his young, handsome face, which induced me to believe in him, I told him my story in short. Then, seeing that no body was near, he slowly suggested to me a plan. He assured me that if I was tired of this life, he would willingly take me away and make me happy. He told me that he could earn as much money as I wanted and that he would keep me like a queen!

"So I decided to go with him. He told me that he would come near our house at 8 o'clock and asked me to be ready. As my husband had gone out for some important work, there was no fear that he would return so early. So, I waited for him. He came a bit late at about 8-30 p.m. I was wondering whether he had cheated me. But at last I heard a noise and opened the door. He had come in some new dress. I could not recognize him at first. He was happy to see me ready. We both slipped out from the house and went to the station. He took tickets for Ahmedabad. He had a room there in one of the big buildings. So I started my new life, as it were, since then. He was a very lovable man and he loved me very much. When he came home after selling lavender etc. he used to talk to me of many pleasant things. He also appreciated my skill in keeping the house—really a room—so tidy and attractive. He used to take me to the pictures and sometimes for a walk. In short, we spent our time very happily.

"But as time passed, he began to come late. Sometimes he used to be-

have rudely towards me. I even sensed that he had lately taken to drinking. I dared not ask him, lest he should beat me. I thought he had been dragged into bad company. But I could not make out where he used to go. And once he came early from his rounds and said that he wanted to go to Bombay and buy some fresh stock. He said that he would return within a couple of days and that I should take proper care of the house. He did not take my advice. I wanted to stop him, as his looks told me that he had something secret in his mind.

"But he did not wait, and taking all the money he had kept in the safe, he went away. I feared that something was amiss. I thought that he had some other plan—who knows he might desert me. I waited for two days. But he did not turn up. A week passed by. Still no sign of his returning. So I gave up all hopes. I had no money at all with me. The only thing I had were the ornaments. I decided to sell them and did so. But how long could I pull on? Besides I was pregnant. I could not make out what I should do next. I even thought of suicide. But in that condition of mine I did not do so. I did not want to add one more crime. So one day I thought of going to a place where such uncared for persons are given shelter. I knew that there was one such "Anathashram" (Home for the orphans) at—. There did I turn my steps to. After five months I delivered a child—a girl. I forgot all my grief when I looked at that innocent face! At times, I thought I had brought into this world one more woman like myself to be treated like myself—uncared for—an outcast. I was wondering what would be my future life, what was in store for me. During this short period of about two years I had experienced all kinds of difficulties—both mental and physical. There was no charm in life left for me. The authorities assured me that I need not worry about the child, as they would see to it that it was brought up properly. So, one anxiety was over. But what about myself? Where should I go and how should I pull on further? I had no money with me. The only thing I had now—was my beauty. But how long could it last? And my moral nature—whatever was left—did not like even the idea of selling my beauty. The very thought was revolting to me. But if that person you saw yesterday at Lal Baugh had not seen me I would have been forced to lead that wretched life. I hope you understand what I mean! This person, who is a landlord of this place, had come to that Ashram to see

a friend of his who is the secretary of the Ashram. In fact this landlord had financed the institution. He is a philanthropic sort of man and when he saw me and learnt about my life, he pitied me and asked me if I was prepared to come with him and be his companion. Though he seemed to be of middle age, when I found his kind nature I liked him for his ideals and congratulated myself for the opportunity offered to me by fate itself. So I came with him and am living with him for the last few months. Though he seems to be old-fashioned enough to put on a pagdi, he is not old-fashioned in his views. It is according to his own wishes that I dress like this. He is moreover a good lover of art and beauty. You might have noticed his artistic nature from the selection of the paintings and other furniture you see here. So, here I am—almost at the end of my story.

"You might be a bit curious about my child. I could have brought it with me. But my new companion—i.e. my present husband, who is more a companion than a husband—said that the child would be taken better care of there in the Ashram and hence we have kept it there for the present. We can bring it whenever we want."

Thus she finished her interesting story. It seemed to me as if I was looking at a picture while I was listening to her story. I told her that at last she was enjoying a peaceful life and wished her a happy future. As for myself I told her that I had not started my life as yet and I did not know in what channel it would flow. And after telling her that I would be glad to meet and be introduced to that 'companion' of hers, and that I would be coming to her house often, I took leave of her and turned my steps homeward.



## WEALTH OF THE NIZAM

by T. L. DEVI

THE Nizam of Hyderabad is the richest man in the world today. His riches are not in paper currency. They are all hoarded in a heap of gold and silver coins. He has got jewellery of immense value.

When the late Nizam died the treasury was found empty. He was known for his charity, generosity and nobility. His son, Mir Usman Ali (the present Nizam) succeeded to the throne in August 1911.

Since his accession to the throne he has been receiving nazaranas (gifts). In his earlier days he toured all his Dominions and forced his subjects to give him large amounts as nazaranas. The ryots and the jagirdars had to give 25 per cent of their annual income. The merchants and other aristocrats were forced to part with lump sums. If anybody dared to refuse, he was imprisoned, ill-treated and finally exiled without any trial. The jagirs were confiscated or taken under court-of-wards if their owners did not give him huge sums as nazaranas. All the jagirs are considered to be the gifts of the Nizam. Be-

cause of these nazaranas many a lawful heir was deprived of his estate. Some of the rich relatives paid large sums of nazaranas and got the estates transferred to their names.

He used to visit the houses of the rich and take away anything that attracted his attention. His visits were a terror. Besides this, he sent presents to the rich. The presents consisted of a mango or a banana, a plate of sweetmeat or cooked rice (pilav) or a bunch of green leaves or vegetables. A bill usually followed these presents, each present costing 10 to 100 rupees. Thus in a year each recipient of these gifts had to pay large sums.

The Nizam now possesses at least 200 crores of rupees. With the help of this hoard of wealth he is determined to be independent and make Hyderabad perhaps a southern Pakistan. He is helping the Pakistan Government and the raiders against Kashmir. Let the Indian Government be aware of his wealth and in time check his growing power.

ARRANGEMENTS  
ARE BEING MADE AT  
MORE THAN ONE THEATRE  
IN VERY MANY CENTRES FOR THE  
SIMULTANEOUS SHOWING OF  
**GEMINI'S**  
**CHANDRALEKA**  
TO ENDLE MILLIONS OF ANXIOUS PATRONS TO SEE EARLY...  
THE PICTURE OF PICTURES... ON SHOW FROM 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL

THE dispute between the mill-owners and their employees in Coimbatore is a matter of some consequence to all who wear cloth. This single district accounts for as many as 34 of the total number of 84 textile mills in Madras Province. All but one of these 34 mills have been lying idle for two months now.



What are the implications of the paralysis which has gripped the textile industry in Coimbatore? The above picture helps illustrate the answer. It shows a few of the 29,940 spindles in one idle textile factory which I visited. 1,930 workers were employed by this mill which used to produce every day an average of 9,000 lbs. of medium quality yarn, enough to yield 40,000 yards of cloth.

The magnitude of the loss in production has invested the textile crisis in Coimbatore with more than local interest. A fundamental need of the citizens is involved in the dispute between the millowners and their employees.

The subject of the dispute is the standardisation scheme that is sought to be implemented by the millowners. The details of the scheme derive from a body of statistical and technical data on the accuracy and relevance of which the parties to the dispute are not

# TEXTILE CRISIS IN COIMBATORE

## ANALYSIS OF FACTS AND MOTIVES

by G. N. SRINIVASA RAGHAVAN

(A first-hand report is presented here of conditions in the Coimbatore textile industry. The writer, Sri G. N. Srinivasa Raghavan, is no stranger to readers of SWATANTRA. He spent a week in Coimbatore seeing all that was to be seen, talking to people engaged in the industry and collecting as much information as could be collected. It is to be hoped that the valuable data he has incorporated in his report will help towards a correct and balanced understanding by the public of the realities of the Coimbatore strike situation, in particular the complex vagaries of the scheme of standardisation that has been the cause of so much confusion and controversy.—Ed. S.)

mutually agreed. But the scheme is simple enough in its outline. It increases the quantum of work assigned to each worker. The Standardisation Committee has chosen, for reasons that are not quite clear, to lay down what it considers to be necessary and reasonable work-loads without giving any indication of the difference between the existing and the proposed standards of work in each category. But the general degree of increase in the work-loads may be surmised from the fact that out of the total complement of 38,000 textile workers in Coimbatore district, 11,200 have been declared 'surplus' and have accordingly been served with notices of dismissal. The present crisis is the result of the workers' refusal to attempt to observe what they believe to be the unconscionably high work-loads prescribed and their resentment at the drastic retrenchment which the scheme involves.

### The Lone Exception

The Gnanambika mill is the only one out of the 34 mills in Coimbatore that has been working during the last two months. It is said to have successfully implemented the interim work-loads which the Standardisation Committee suggested as a preparatory stage before switching over, after three months, to the ultimate work-loads. This mill occupies a position peculiar to itself. It belongs to Mr. Vellingiri Gounder, one of the largest landholders in the area. Most of the workers in his mill are drawn from the families of the tenants to whom

he has leased out his lands. The unpleasantness of retrenchment consequent upon introduction of the standardisation scheme has been got over, in the case of this mill, by finding employment on the land for those retrenched. Mr. Gounder is an acknowledged leader of his community and the relationship between him and his employees is bound up with traditional economic and social ties which have proved strong enough to resist the pressure of the capital-labour conflict that has erupted all around. A kind of benevolent paternalism on the part of the management has secured for the workers in the Gnanambika mill a relatively high degree of well-being and security, and has prevented the normal growth of trade unionism. This is not to say that the increased work-loads now obtaining in the mill pass without complaint. During my visit to the mill, I was told by workers in the carding and spinning sections that the strain of the new work-loads was more than they could bear without difficulty. Before the standardisation scheme was put into effect, one worker used to look after 7 carding machines; now 14 machines have to be attended to by a single worker. One of the workers pointed to the cotton fly and dust that had accumulated on the machines and said he could not clean the machines fast enough. He was sceptical about the ultimate effectiveness of the new scheme since it involved less than adequate attention to the upkeep of the machinery. I heard similar com-

plaints in the spinning section, where a young worker shrugged his shoulders and said: "What can we do? We are not strongly organised like the people in the other mills." But it must be said that the atmosphere prevailing in the mill was one of pastoral calm rather than of rebellious discontent. When I reached the room where the strength of the yarn is tested, I was somewhat startled to find the 20's yarn produced in the mill breaking at 55 to 60 lbs. weight. According to the standards specified by Government, 20's yarn should break at not less than 70 lbs. weight. If this is not the normal behaviour of yarn produced in the Gnanambika mill, it would be worthwhile finding out whether the deterioration in the quality of production is the result of an undue increase in the tempo of work under standardisation.

The standardisation scheme was drawn up by a Committee appointed for the purpose by the Government of Madras in the latter half of 1947. Towards the close of December the recommendations of the Committee were received and approved by Government, who advised the managements and labour to co-operate in working the scheme. But while the millowners had no objection to a reduction in the number of their employees and consequently in the wage costs, the workers wholly rejected the scheme which, in their view, was calculated to increase the profits of the millowners by creating unemployment and imposing undue strain on the already

low vitality of those still left in their jobs.

The composition of the Standardisation Committee was unfortunately not such as to command the confidence of the workers. Of the three members of the Committee, one was a retired factory inspector whose actual participation in the textile industry ended in 1919. I learnt on the best possible authority that this member relied almost exclusively for his information and ideas on the works manager of a Coimbatore mill who also happened to be an assessor on the Committee from the side of the millowners. Another member of the Committee was an I.C.S. official who, it seems, got to know the textile industry even as he helped to standardise it. The third member was a bedeaux (time and motion study) expert from the Government's electricity department. There was no representative of the workers on a committee whose decisions were to affect the future of thousands of them. Though the managements and labour were accorded equal treatment formally—assessors from each side aided the Committee—the workers entertained doubts regarding the intentions of the Standardisation Committee.

Such an attitude on the part of the workers was only to be expected in the circumstances which led to the appointment of the Committee. Ever since Rao Bahadur M. Venkataramaiah, in the capacity of the Industrial Tribunal, awarded a basic wage of Rs. 26 with effect from April 1, 1947, to all textile workers in the province, the millowners had been considerably exercised over its effects on their earnings. They argued, and appear to have convinced the Government, that the award of the basic wage had placed an unbearable strain on the industry. Since the payment of basic wage was made binding on the millowners—who accepted it only under protest—the strain had to be relieved, they said, through a reorganisation of the industry on a rationalised basis. A few managements took the extreme step of,

closing down their establishments on the plea that it was no longer profitable to work the mills. Amid threats of similar closure by other mills, the South Indian Millowners Association brought the intended lesson home to the Government that the millowners should be assisted back to prosperity. All that the Government had to do was to help them extract more work out of a reduced complement of workers who could then be paid the basic wage without jeopardising the financial soundness of the industry. Hence the appointment of the Standardisation Committee.

### The 'Profit Crisis'

The finances of the textile industry deserve some examination. Much has been said during the last two years both by industrial magnates and popular Ministers about the decline in profits which is alleged to be leading the country towards collapse. It is difficult to assess the exact extent of this decline since the book entries do not naturally take into account the gains made through extra-legal sales and transactions. Even on the basis of the disclosed figures of profits, the decline is a strictly relative phenomenon registering an inevitable fall from the dizzy heights of wartime prosperity. This prosperity flourished quite as well under the system of 'controls' introduced in 1943 as before that period. Another feature of this prosperity was that it remained concentrated at the level of the owners and managers, and percolated to the workers in dribbles which were too meagre to offset the increase in the cost of living. It was the millowners who thrived during the war years, and not the textile industry which, on the contrary, suffered deterioration in respect of the machinery, the quality of production and the living conditions of the workers. Symptomatic of this one-sided prosperity were the amounts of commission earned by managing agents which in the case of many textile mills exceeded the total amount of wages, salaries and bonus paid to the employees. The net profits earned by several mills

were multiples of the paid-up capital, as of the wage-bill. The details of these figures, furnished by Mr. Venkataramaiah in an Appendix to his Award, are instructive in this connection. They make startling reading. It takes some hardihood to complain of a fall from the levels of wartime profits which were the product of questionable business practices coupled with the sweating of labour. Until the Adjudicator appointed by Government awarded a measure of interim relief in December 1946, the textile workers of the province were earning wages as absurdly low as Rs. 8 to Rs. 16 a month. Payment of dearness allowance was not uniform and did not exist in some mills.

It was only in 1947, after six years of inflation had drastically reduced the purchasing power of even these low wages, that the Government fixed a compulsory minimum wage and dearness allowance. The basis on which dearness allowance is calculated has been unsatisfactory. For instance, until food controls were lifted, no account was taken in the official calculation of the cost of living, of the purchases in the blackmarket which had necessarily to be made in order to fill the gap between the rationed supply of rice, etc., and the minimum needs of the worker's family. This continues to be the position in areas where rationing still prevails. It would therefore be hardly fair to suggest that labour has received more than its due as a result of the Award.

But the millowners say that ever since 1946, what with Liaquat's Budget, the fall in profits due to declining production, the interim wage relief and five months' bonus in '46, and now on top of it all the basic wage, it is the managements that have had the worse of the bargain. Not altogether, as would appear from the sanction which they obtained from the Finance Minister of the Central Government to capitalise their reserve funds which had swollen during the war. This was a transaction which brought bonus shares to the shareholders—a timely move de-

signed to forestall any demand from labour for a share in the reserves accumulated by the industry. The millowners received another measure of relief when the Government recently returned that part of the Excess Profits Tax which had been held back as compulsory deposits. Finally, the 'spare-the-rich' budget of Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty should also serve to put some heart into those who complain of a 'profit-crisis' in industry. These advantages are ignored by the millowners when they plead that the decline in their earnings has necessitated retrenchment and increased work-loads.

Even granting that the textile industry is proving unprofitable, there is a fundamental impropriety in devising any scheme of standardisation to square the financial exigencies of the moment. Standardisation ought to be based upon a study of the conditions obtaining in the industrial establishments concerned, and the capacity of the operatives to observe the suggested work-loads without detriment to their health and to the quality of production. Financial considerations, arising from a decline or a rise in the profits, are irrelevant to any scientific scheme of standardising industry.

The Award of the Industrial Tribunal recommended the formation of a Wages Board and Standardisation Committee to build up a wage structure for the various categories of work in textile factories on the basis of the minimum wage of Rs. 26. The Tribunal recognised the difficult nature of the task of evolving uniform occupational standards for factories which considerably differed from each other in their technical equipment and which had developed in a haphazard manner without regard, in many cases, even to the basic requirements of an economic unit. The need for standardisation, however, was recognised as unquestionable. But the Tribunal did not condition the award of the minimum wage upon the observance of increased work-loads or upon a future

retrenchment. In fact the minimum wage was made retrospective in effect, whereas standardisation was to come later. I questioned almost all the textile workers whom I met in Coimbatore whether they had been told, when they received the first instalment of the increased wages, that increased work was soon to follow as part of the bargain. They had been told no such thing.

But the millowners approach the whole question with the assumption that the standardisation proposals are binding upon labour, even as the basic wage award was binding upon themselves, and that the one is complementary to the other. In point of fact, this basic assumption is untenable. The proposals of the Standardisation Committee have no doubt been approved by Government, but they have not so far been other than recommendatory in character.

The rejection of the standardisation proposals by the workers arises from more than mere trade union obstinacy. From all accounts, the work-loads now prescribed would seem to be more than the workers in the Coimbatore textile industry can possibly bear. Comparisons with the standards of work obtaining in other parts of the province, let alone other countries, are irrelevant to the conditions in Coimbatore. Due to a variety of reasons, the textile mills of Coimbatore have always been inefficient compared to those in Madura, Mettur and Madras. These latter are largely owned and managed by Europeans and are altogether superior to the Coimbatore mills in the matter of technical equipment, expert supervision and upkeep of machinery. In offering increased wages to their workers even in advance of the Government's award, the Harvey, Mettur and Buckingham mills displayed a certain tact which the millowners of Coimbatore had not the imagination to practise. In Coimbatore it is the exception rather than the rule to find mills managed by efficient men recruited on grounds of merit. The tendency is to entrust the management to

one or other member of the mill-owner's family, irrespective of his education, training and competence. In fact, it is the managements in Coimbatore which stand in greater need of standardisation and streamlining than the industry itself.

### Managers' Ways

It is a measure of the inefficiency and backwardness of the textile industry concentrated in Coimbatore, that the standardisation scheme has precipitated the most violent disturbance there. The gap between the existing work-loads and those newly prescribed, is nowhere greater than in Coimbatore. In the spinning section, for instance, the piecers in a Coimbatore mill have to attend to a far greater number of breakages, given the same number of spindles and the same count of yarn, than the corresponding category of workers in the more efficient mills named above. In other words, Coimbatore mills have had to employ a greater number of workers for the same amount of work than the efficient mills. This accounts for the vast 'surplus' of labour that is said to have accumulated in Coimbatore.

One of the most important of the causes making for inefficiency has been the use of cheap and inferior cotton mixing. Using such inferior raw material is an apparently senseless procedure whose persistence is explained by the profit that the managing agents can make through the sale of inferior cotton varieties to the mills which they manage. For, the earnings of the managing agents consist not only of their monthly salary, sumptuary allowances and a specified portion of the profits, but of other items besides, such as a percentage commission on all the purchases and sales they make on behalf of the mills. It has naturally been a standing temptation to buy inferior cotton on private account and sell it to the mill at a profit. The bad quality of the yarn resulting from such practices did not affect its sale value in a market that was

too hungry to exercise discrimination. With the stoppage of yarn imports from abroad after the outbreak of the war, and with the growing internal needs, the Indian textile mills have had a closed, sellers' market. And any rigours of the control exercised by Government over the sale and distribution of yarn and cloth could always be mitigated by a requisite measure of blackmarketing.

Apart from the inferior raw material used, the mills in Coimbatore are known for their lack of adequately qualified supervisory staff. The processing methods also compare unfavourably with the mills elsewhere in the province. Such aids to better production as combers, vacuum cleaners and similar appliances are to be found in but a few of the Coimbatore mills. The net effect is that though the worker in Coimbatore might attend, say, to only half the number of spindles as the worker in Mettur, he has to bear as great a strain.

The recommendations of the Standardisation Committee provide for the rectification of some of these defects in the processes of production. The maximum speeds for the spindles have been fixed in such a manner as to ensure that the breakages do not exceed specified limits. The quality of cotton used will also have to be improved if the permissible number of breakages is not to be exceeded. These provisions, however, are meant to ensure the successful observance of the proposed work-loads, and are of remote interest when the controversy is really about the increase in the work-loads.

### That Unblest Scheme

An element of needless confusion has been added to the problem in the form of the Committee's prescription of 'interim work-loads' to be replaced three months later by the full and final standards of work. As these lines are being written, the Madras Government have issued a Press Note announcing that they have called upon the millowners to open the mills on

March 22 and to run them on the basis of these interim work-loads.

A word about this interim scheme. It was hastily drawn up by the Standardisation Committee, within 24 hours in fact, because of the howl raised by the trade union representatives on seeing the scheme of work-loads originally prepared by the Committee. This interim scheme was offered as a concession to labour, for a period of 3 months, during which it was to acclimatise itself to increased work in order to be the better prepared for the implementation of the full and final scheme of work-loads. The last-minute offer of such a transitional arrangement is explained by the wide gap between the work-loads suggested by the trade unions for standardisation, and those prescribed by the Committee. For instance, the trade unions have suggested in their memorandum that the number of spindles allotted to a worker in the spinning section should range between 70 and 232, depending upon the count of the yarn; whereas the Standardisation Committee has allotted a minimum of 320 spindles per worker and a maximum of 936. The interim scheme is meant to be a compromise between the two sets of figures. It allots between 140 and 290 spindles per worker. But this compromise is merely arithmetical. It satisfies no party. The workers in Coimbatore have rejected the interim scheme as unworkable. The millowners consider the scheme illogical and unscientific—though they are prepared to countenance it as a purely temporary arrangement. It has, after all, enabled them already to effect a retrenchment of 11,200 hands and a proportionate reduction in the wage-bill. To the Standardisation Committee, the interim scheme is a make-shift devised by it to suit the occasion and is not an organic part of its conclusions. I attempted to discuss the feasibility of the interim scheme with Mr. M. Krishnaswami Iyer, a member of the Standardisation Committee. He did not conceal his disgust at the unscientific arrangement which, in his opinion, has

nothing to recommend it except that it might appease the workers. Indeed he felt so strongly on the matter that it proved impossible to get him to discuss the merits of the interim scheme.

As for the promised reabsorption of most of the 11,200 retrenched workers, my enquiries elicited the news that not all mills can work the proposed third shift. Among the reasons offered by the millowners is shortage of the required categories of workers. Further, the failure of the last monsoon has reduced the supply of electric power. It is not clear how these difficulties are planned to be overcome by the Government who have claimed that they have "made arrangements to see that those workers who are thrown out of employment as a result of the implementation of the interim scheme, should be absorbed in a third shift."

### Role Of The Government

By announcing in their Press Note that "the interim scheme will be enforced without any change," do the Government mean to take responsibility for seeing the standardisation scheme through? A decision to that effect will make the Government a party to the present dispute between the millowners and their employees. It will confer the formal status of a Government award on the scheme of standardisation. The appeal has been made to the Government by some disinterested public men to scrap the present controversial scheme, and to constitute a fresh body on which all interests including the consumers and the workers will be represented, to go into the whole question. But the Government appear to have ignored this appeal by intervening on behalf of the millowners. This can only aggravate the already explosive situation.

For, the workers in Coimbatore appeared to me to be firm in their stand against the present scheme of standardisation. Within the limits of the strain created by unemployment and hunger, the bulk

of the workers are determined to stay out of the mills if the increased work-loads are insisted upon. The Government claim to have received "information that the workers are anxious to return to duty." This is but the traditional prelude to extending the help of the police in breaking industrial strikes, and is of a piece with the earlier pronouncement of the Government that last year's Award which fixed the minimum wage for textile labour might be allowed to lapse as from April 1, 1948, if the workers continued to oppose the standardisation scheme. The threat was unworthy of any Government with the least sense of responsibility. If the Government cannot improve the living standards of the working population, they could at least ensure that the existing standards are not depressed. The threat of a relapse to the old wage standards held out by Government is in curious contrast to the opinion expressed to me by the Secretary of the South Indian Millowners Association that it was not the desire of the millowners to solve the present crisis by cutting down the existing wage levels.

The unsympathetic attitude of the Government has not been without its effects on the mill workers in Coimbatore. Leaving aside the members of the Communist labour union in the town who were never encouraged by their leaders to hope for much good from the Congress Government, even the workers organised in the District Textile Workers' Union have largely become sceptical. This Union which was formerly the stronghold of Congressmen, and which decided the election of Mr. Kuppuswami on the Congress ticket to one of the labour seats in the Provincial Assembly, has now been captured by the Socialists. A group of workers whom I met at a branch office of the Union were emphatic in saying that they would not vote again for Congress. They had seen what their Congress M.L.A. had done for them, they said. And no one seemed willing to consider the offer of good

offices by Mr. Kamaraj Nadar as entirely disinterested. His periodical incursions into the field of industrial relations on behalf of labour are looked upon with good humour as political stunts from which whatever good may result will be quite acceptable, thank you.

While the morale of the workers seemed to be high, I was surprised to find that the trade unions had not made any arrangement for the relief of the unemployed workers. They are managing to get on, some by going to work as hired labourers on the land, some by finding casual employment in other occupations, and the rest are living with the earning members of their families. Not all the labour leaders are, however, free to attempt any relief work; most of the Communist trade union leaders are either in jail or in hiding due to fear of arrest.

But an even more serious handicap for labour than the lack of adequate strike relief, is the division in its ranks. The official Congress faction in the District Textile Workers' Union is in perpetual conflict with the dominant Socialist wing. Mr. Kuppuswami has already denounced the present leadership of the workers and has said that there can be no fair settlement of the dispute so long as that leadership continues. Both the Congress and the Socialist sections are, in turn, opposed to the Communists. It may well happen that what has until now been an unanimous

#### SWATANTRA

156, Lloyds Road,  
Royapettah, Madras.

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move on the part of the workers to resist the standardisation scheme may be split as a result of the acceptance of a compromise solution by any one section unilaterally. There is no doubt that such a development will seriously impair the strength which organised labour in Coimbatore has steadily gained during the last six years. This possibility does not seem to have been overlooked either by the millowners or by the Government.

The course of action pursued during the coming critical days will

be of great consequence both to the maintenance of peace and to the future of the textile industry in Coimbatore. If, instead of making a sincere, vigorous effort to arrive at a peaceful and just solution, the Government should launch on an ill-considered policy of police action, they will only contribute to the worsening of industrial strife and the prolongation of the loss in cloth production. The public can ill afford such a costly policy.

(March 21, 1948).

## AN INTERVIEW WITH PEARL BUCK

PEARL BUCK has answered with singular candour a series of questions put to her by Hiro P. Shroff, an Indian journalist.

Q: In spite of the fact that women in America are very well advanced in every respect, why has there been no woman President of the United States?

A: Women in the United States are well educated, but they have never taken much interest in politics. For this reason there has never been a woman President, and I don't think there can be one in the near future.

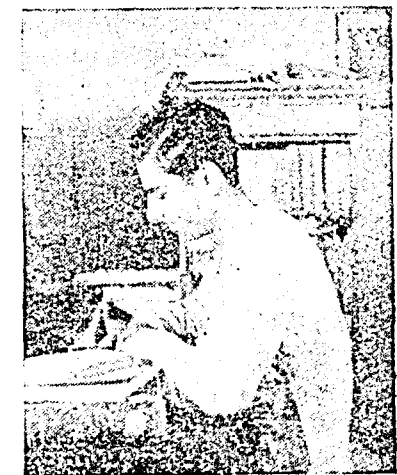
Q: In spite of the fact that the Americans are very well off materially, do you believe that the average American lives a happy and peaceful life?

A: The average American lives an extremely carefree and on the whole peaceful life. Just now he is troubled about the conditions of the world and his own responsibility.

Q: Americans talk of the Four Freedoms, Democracy, One World, etc. Then, how do you explain lynching?

A: Americans are very conscious of the evil of lynching. Our country is a large one and in the South there is strong prejudice against coloured persons, because of the large number of such persons in relation to a few whites.

For this reason there is some fear of the coloured persons and inexcusable, although occasional, lynching. It is a matter of shame to every American.



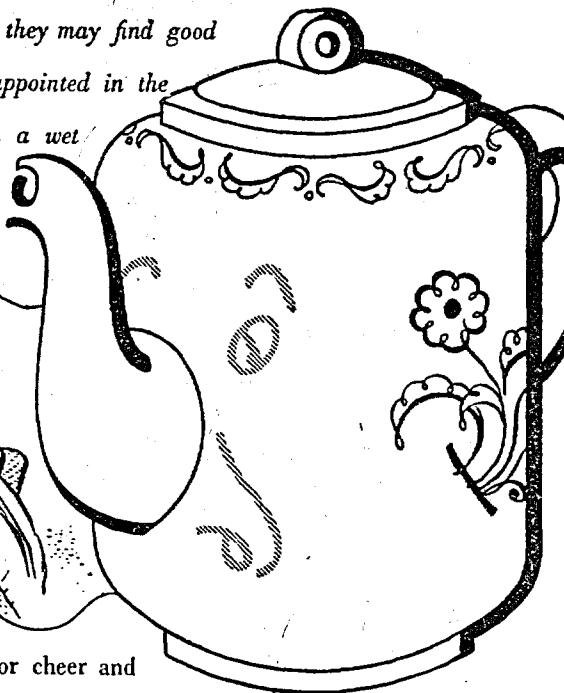
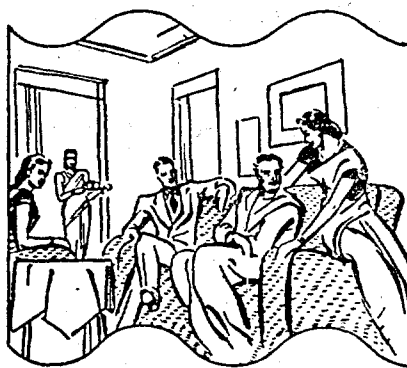
Hiro P. Shroff.

Q: The general impression of Indians about American boys and girls is that they are immoral. Is this impression correct?

A: American boys and girls go to school together from the time they enter kindergarten, and they are accustomed to living in the same world. I do not think that there is more immorality among them than there is in other countries.

“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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3. Use one teaspoonful of good tea for every person served and one for the pot.
4. Let the tea infuse for 3 to 5 minutes before serving.
5. Add milk in the cup, not in the pot.

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THE Mountbatten Mystery deepens. Consider the facts—and the background.

Lord Louis Mountbatten is a charming gentleman. Lady Mountbatten is a charming lady.

In contrast with the usual stiff-necked stuffed-shirt *Laath Sahibs* we have had, the Mountbattens are affable, informal, sociable—more American than British, more like a handsome Fairy Prince and beautiful Fairy Princess than imperial proconsuls.

Louis Mountbatten, in his youth, had the reputation of a gay playboy, and Lady Mountbatten, an exquisitely dressed glamour girl, was the life-and-soul of smart London Society. Among Britain's top-ranking aristocrats, they belonged to the younger, go-ahead, sporting group. With equal ease they moved among their royal relations and among the theatre and artistic crowd of Chelsea. Despite their social informality, however, they were respectable Tories, born and brought up in the tradition of imperialism. During the war, Admiral Mountbatten provided the model and inspiration for Noel Coward's idealized Naval Officer in the film "In Which Serve", besides conducting the Burma Campaign.

#### CHURCHILL'S AGENT

What is not generally known is that during the war years he also carried out several delicate and important diplomatic assignments for

Premier Churchill. Could it be without significance that all these assignments had something to do with moves to the detriment of the Soviet Union—e.g. the delaying of the Second Front—or the advancement of Britain's imperialist interests? Read on.

In June 1942, the American General Staff, after heated debates, had finally persuaded their British counterparts to agree to launching the cross-channel Second Front in July 1943 (and not 1944, as Churchill wanted). It was to be known as OPERATION OVERLORD and military planners went to work. The American Generals returned from England in an optimistic mood.

Then our gay cavalier stepped in! Here is the testimony of Martin Sommers, Foreign Editor of the "Saturday Evening Post":—

“... Something happened—something very strange, as it turned out. On June 3, 1942, Lord Louis Mountbatten arrived in Washington to be the guest of the President at the White House. Lord Louis, an affable storyteller, is the kind of convivial aristocrat for whom President Roosevelt always had a soft spot. He invariably called him "Dicky", as members of the royal family did. Mountbatten made good use of the hospitality he enjoyed. One day not long after his arrival he talked to the President for five hours at a single stretch, and all of that time he talked against the cross-Channel operation planned

for 1943. He had misgivings, doubts and finally firm arguments.

"Mountbatten had the run of the White House for a fortnight—and then came Churchill. The Prime Minister arrived on June eighteenth and fell comfortably into the place that Mountbatten had gone before to prepare for him. He, too, was now definitely against the cross-Channel operation in 1943."

And so Mountbatten and Churchill managed to get the Second Front postponed, because Britain's imperial interests demanded, instead, action in the Mediterranean and in South East Asia and because Churchill did not want to divert the German armies pressing upon Russia!

Throughout the war, Mountbatten was at Churchill's side—and always serving the interests of Imperialism. This is what Elliott Roosevelt, the late F.D.R.'s son, has to say about the role played by Mountbatten ("as handsome and dashing and glamorous as his reputation") at the Casablanca conference in January 1943:—

Father was grinning at some secret thought.

"What's it, Pop?"

"Thinking of Mountbatten", he answered. "You know why Winston has Mountbatten here with him? It's so that I can be filled up to the ears with arguments about how important it is to divert landing-craft to South-east Asia."

I looked my astonishment and incredulity.

"Sure", he went on, "Burma. The British want to recapture Burma. It is the first time they have shown any real interest in the Pacific war, and why? For their colonial empire!"

"But what's that got to do with Mountbatten?"

"He is their choice for Supreme Allied Commander for a brand-new theatre—South-east Asia."

#### PANDIT MOUNTBATTEN KI JAI

From Washington and Casablanca—to Delhi! Could it be that India's "spiritual" atmosphere transformed Mountbatten? Could it be that the trusted confidante of Churchill really became an admirer of Gandhiji and a friend of Nehru?

Ever since their arrival here, the Mountbattens have been exercising the full battery of their charms on the Indian leaders. A friend who knows something about New Delhi politics once told me how, on his arrival, the new Governor-General worked to win the confidence of all the leaders by playing on the psychology of each—talking to Gandhiji on non-violence, to Jinnah on the historical affinity between Christianity and Islam, to Nehru of Harrow and Cambridge, to the Sikh leaders of the valour of the Sikh troops in the Burma campaign!

From "Quit India" on August 8, 1942, to cries of "Pandit Mountbatten Ki Jai" on August 15, 1947,—it was, indeed, a miracle! Was it a miracle of spiritual conversion and 'change of heart' or was it a miracle of diplomacy?

#### IMPERIALISM, 1948 MODEL

It should not be forgotten that it was Mountbatten who "sold" to India the packet of Partition, who set up the Boundary Commissions, and who must accept responsibility for what the Boundary Commission troops did on either side of the border.

But we are a sentimental people, and the spectacle of a British Governor-General ("A cousin of the King, actually—and so handsome, my deah") saluting the National Flag, or squatting near the funeral pyre of Mahatma Gandhi, are enough to cancel hundred and fifty years of imperialist rule which ended so "peacefully" in the splitting up of the country, the mutual mass massacre of lakhs, and the uprooting of millions.

Pandit Mountbatten Ki Jai, indeed. Pandit Chanakya could teach him nothing!

Churchill sent Mountbatten to Roosevelt to "sell" him the idea of postponing the Second Front. He took him to Casablanca to "sell" the invasion of Burma. Why was Mountbatten (of all the most unlikely people) sent to India?

Could it not be for the purpose of retaining India within the framework of the British Commonwealth—for Britain's commercial advantages, and for the purpose of securing bases and India's manpower in a war against Russia?

Dominion Status? Oh, no! No one expects to sell that packet to Nehru. Free India can never be lured back into the spider's web of Empire. Call it a Commonwealth! Call it, rather, a federation of "free" nations linked by treaty! Imperialism must put on a modern, more acceptable garb.

British and Anglo-Indian papers are openly advocating a "United Nations of the British Commonwealth" to prepare for "all emergencies", and we are informed by a British source that

"it is with the same idea in view that Earl Mountbatten is reportedly sponsoring an alliance between the members of the Commonwealth in South-East Asia with India as the pivot. These countries are India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya and Australia. Australia held the key position during the war in the Pacific but presently the pivot is India". (Against Russia, of course!)

Is it not significant, then, that neither Premier Nehru nor any other top-ranking Congress leader has so far categorically reaffirmed that Free India shall COMPLETELY break with the British Commonwealth? Every time this question is raised, there is quibbling about "Whatever form the Indo-British relationship may take in the future". (Surely "Quit India" left no doubt about that. Or did it?)

These are, to say the least, ominous portents.

For our leaders are too naive and too susceptible to the Mountbatten

charm and his "friendly" approach. I wish we could place as great a reliance in their strength of will as President Roosevelt had in Admiral Ernest King. Said he to his son:

"Don't worry. Mountbatten has a lot of charm, a lot of persuasion, but I doubt strongly he'll be able to show enough to convince Ernie King. Try taking some of our Pacific landing-craft away from him."

How one wishes we could say with equal conviction:

"Don't worry. Mountbatten has a lot of charm, a lot of persuasion, but I doubt strongly he'll be able to show enough to convince Nehru. Try "selling" imperialism in any new garb to him!"

#### TO OUR ETERNAL SHAME

In our national, collective complacency we Indians (both Hindus and Muslims) are often in the habit of claiming that no other people are so jealous of their women's honour as we are. Are we, really?

During the communal massacres and the fanatical frenzy that had Eastern as well as Western Panjab in its grip for several months, tens of thousands of Hindu and Sikh women were kidnapped and held captive by Muslims in Western Panjab, and tens of thousands of Muslim women were kidnapped and held captive by Hindus and Sikhs in Eastern Panjab.

It was, is, and shall remain a shameful blot on the history of India and of Pakistan and on the honour of Muslims and Hindus and Sikhs. The plight of these women (of whatever community) constitutes one of the grimmest chapters in human history.

After many months, leaders and Governments both of India and Pakistan launched a campaign for the recovery of these hapless women. Elloquent and moving appeals were broadcast and published on both sides. As a result, a few hundred Hindu and Sikh women were recovered from Pakistan and sent to their relatives in India, and a few hundred Muslim women were recovered from India and sent to

their relatives in Pakistan. Many sensitive ones have refused to come over—they dare not face their relations after what they have gone through! But, even then, the number recovered on either side (significantly almost equal) is only a very small proportion of the thousands who were kidnapped.

What is amazing, however, is this:

To the knowledge and in the presence of Pakistan authorities, kidnapped Hindu and Sikh women have been recovered from the clutches of their captors. The criminals are known. YET NOT ONE OF THEM HAS RECEIVED ANY PUNISHMENT!

Nor is the record of India any better. To the knowledge and in the presence of East Panjab authorities, kidnapped Muslim women have been recovered from the clutches of their captors. The criminals are known. YET NOT ONE OF THEM HAS RECEIVED ANY PUNISHMENT!

In other words, both Governments have condoned these criminals, these human beasts, who dishonoured helpless women—a crime which is regarded by many decent Indians as worse than murder!

Has the honour of women become so cheap and worthless both in India and Pakistan? Has public and governmental morality descended to such a low level on either side? Shall we ever be able to live down this shame?

#### MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Re: The question of India's future relations with Britain and the British Empire (also called Commonwealth): "If we claim independence today it is with no desire for isolation. On the contrary, we are perfectly willing to surrender part of that independence, in common with other countries, to a REAL international order. Any imperial system, BY WHATEVER HIGH-SOUNDING NAME IT MAY BE CALLED, is an enemy of such an order, and it is not through such a system that world co-operation or

world peace can be reached". (Your *Autobiography*, page 420).

Re: Your and your Government's apparent faith in gradual elimination of capitalism and its replacement by public ownership of key industries: "That brilliant English writer, Professor R. H. Tawney, has written an appropriate and arresting passage dealing with the notion of gaining power in stages and with the co-operation of the ruling classes. He refers to the British Labour Party, but his words are even more applicable to India . . . . Professor Tawney writes: 'Onions can be eaten leaf by leaf, but you cannot skin a live tiger (of capitalism!) paw by paw; vivisection is its trade and it does the skinning first . . . .'" (Your *Autobiography*, page 422).

Re: Your ministers' oft-repeated excuse that they cannot usher in an era of social justice all at once by a miracle: "The Soviet Union is an exciting land with all these changes taking place from day to day and hour to hour . . . . The old palaces of the Tsars and the nobility have now become museums and rest-houses and sanatoria for the people . . . . But no part of it is as exciting and fascinating as the desert steppes of Siberia and the old world valleys of Central Asia . . . . now bounding ahead at a tremendous pace. To give you some idea of these rapid changes, I shall tell you about Tadzikistan . . . In 1929 there was only one dispensary in the country. In 1932 there were sixty-one hospitals and thirty-seven dental clinics, with 2125 beds . . . . The progress of education . . . in 1925: only six modern schools. End of 1926: 113 schools with 2,300 students. In 1929: 500 schools. In 1931 over 2,000 educational institutions with over 120,000 students . . . . All this sounds almost incredible." (Your *Glimpses Of World History*, page 863).

#### BOOK OF THE WEEK

Surely there must be few such versatile people anywhere in the world as Harindranath Chattopadhyaya—poet, prose-writer, play-

wright, critic, composer, singer, dancer, actor, director and producer both on the stage and the screen! Remarkable literary and artistic talent, of course, runs in the family. He is the younger brother of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu—poetess, orator, politician and now Governor. His elder brother was Virendranath, famed revolutionary who died in exile. All his other sisters have shown brilliance in literary, artistic or educational fields.

**LIFE AND MYSELF** (Nalanda Publications, Bombay 1) is Harin's first essay in autobiography and, by any standards, a remarkable book and an enjoyable literary treat. The first volume which is just published is called "Dawn Approaching Noon" and brings the self-told story of Harin's life up to his return from Europe after studies at Cambridge and a European tour. The most delightful part of the book concerns his childhood memories . . . "I was born on the 2nd April, 1898 . . . . Everybody tells me I have just escaped being an April Fool. But in my heart of hearts I seem to be convinced that the influence of the day previous to my birth has exerted itself right throughout my life. . . . I have been a sort of fool walking God's earth with little knowledge of men and events . . . . I have had an unshakable faith in man, despite my being considered most unwise, and this faith has led me into many an awful predicament and sorry situation, making me marvel for a moment at the fool I was born and at the utter foolishness of faith which thought, however, does not last long. For faith is the keynote of my life, and without it I could never think of breathing a single breath or living in the midst of men—and women". This humanist philosophy of life colours his lyrical-cum-philosophic narrative throughout the book.

Harin gives beautiful and affectionate pen-pictures of his mother ("a true embodiment of generosity and affection"), father ("tremendous epoch of largeheartedness"), his nurse Gagga ("she walked with her whole body which trembled like jelly, every bit of flesh alive and

throbbing with an almost primitive sincerity of passion . . . . a sort of figure that Rodin might have desired to catch in rough-hewn ebony, or Hogarth to paint and include among his masterly studies of exquisite crudeness"), and a tailor called Balayya ("he was part of the vision of beauty").

He gives a vivid description of the strange melange of people who came to their house ("Our home was something of a cross between a museum and a zoo"), and writes about boyhood dreams, the dawn of adolescence and the stirrings of poetry within him, romance and love and the realization of his life-mission ("to dream and express myself, to catch the mysterious moods that are born past our normal mental plane"). Harin has had an extremely eventful journey through life and it is delightful to travel with him; he has met strange and interesting and important people and it is fascinating to meet them through him. Among others, we meet his great elder brother Viren, whose memory Harin holds in deep affection and adoration. One of the most touching passages in the book describes his meeting with Savarkar, in the days when the latter was an inspiring, heroic revolutionary, and years of suffering had not turned him into a cynical and embittered communalist.

Harin has had a "full" life—in every sense of the word—exciting, adventurous, may be foolish, may be reckless, but always guided by that inner light, his love of humanity, and his passion for self-expression. And reading of it, one realizes (in the words of Chesterton) that—

"It is something to have wept as we have wept  
It is something to have done as we have done;  
It is something to have watched when all men slept;  
And seen the stars which never see the sun;  
It is something to have smelt the mystic rose,  
Although it break and leave the thorny rods,

It is something to have hungered once as those  
Must hunger who have ate the bread of gods."

#### STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"NAGPUR: Mr. R. S. Ruikar, President of the C. P. Textile Workers Federation and eight other trade union leaders were arrested this morning and detained under the Public Safety Act. The arrests were a sequel to the one-day general strike on March 16 last protesting against the Government's labour policy . . ."

"SURAT: Four workers of the R. S. S. who were arrested following the ban on the organisation have been released on their giving a written undertaking that they will have nothing to do with unlawful associations in the future."

—Two news items which appeared on the same day.

#### HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"SIMLA: Replying to a question in the East Punjab Assembly to-day, Sardar Swaran Singh, the Home Minister, stated that 138 officials had been arrested in the East Punjab so far, for participating in the loot during the last communal disturbances. The Home Minister revealed that property worth Rs. 2,30,233 had been recovered from these officials."

"KARACHI: More than 200 cases have been registered against members of various departments other than the police service for offences connected with the looting and misappropriation of evacuee property in West Punjab. The accused include 18 magistrates, 13 tehsildars, 31 civil court and revenue employees, 12 P.W.D. men, 36 railwaymen and 62 employees of the Excise, Canal, Education, Agriculture, Civil Supplies and Postal Departments . . ."

## HOME MINISTER'S ATTACK ON CHIEF JUSTICES

by B. LAKSHMI NARAYANA

WHILE replying to criticisms during the Budget debate in the Legislative Council on 6th March, 1948 the Home Minister Dr. Subbaroyan referred to what the two Chief Justices of the Madras High Court (evidently the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Gentle who has retired and the Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. V. Rajamannar, the present officiating Chief Justice) had stated about the independence of the judiciary and expressed his surprise at the speeches of both the Chief Justices. Did they want an 'imperium in imperio'? He proceeded to observe: "The Government and the State as an administration were a single unit, and if the judges thought that they were above the constitution it only meant an 'imperium in imperio'. I feel it will be a dangerous expedient if these judges think that they are so independent as to deem themselves to be separate from the State as a whole. Such a difficulty was felt with regard to President Roosevelt's 'New Deal' policy, when the Supreme Court consisting mostly of Republican judges, put obstacles in the way and eventually the administration had to pass a special legislation to increase the number of judges of the Supreme Court, and put in judges of the persuasion of the party in power so that the policy of the party could be carried out." Dr. Subbaroyan said that as a constitutional lawyer he was also interested in the independence of the judiciary, but at the same time, he added, "I must protest if the judges protest too much about their independence, because they could be independent without this protest. I am all for their independence. But if these protests become constant, it only means that they feel that they are not bound by the constitution. This is an opinion which no one can possibly accept."

Now what are the speeches of the learned Chief Justices referred to by the Home Minister? Mr. Justice Gentle stated during the course of his farewell speech on January 16, 1948: "Heretofore, the courts in this country have commanded universal respect and regard. Indubitably, that must be retained. That continuance will prevail only so long as the courts remain completely independent; and the Judges are, and are recognised as being devoid of any semblance of adherence to party, person or patron. Judges must in all their actions act with the fear of God but without the fear of man. That is no more, and no less, than what every subject is entitled to expect, and to receive from the seat of justice; and is essential in order to preserve good order and general well being, of the State and its citizens."

Mr. Justice Rajamannar in his reply to the welcome extended to him by the Advocate-General on behalf of the Bar on 19th January, 1948 said: "It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that the greatest device for the maintenance of public confidence in a State is an absolutely independent judiciary, and linked up with it, is the other great principle known as the Rule of law. And new India should foster both." He gave the assurance that he would strive his utmost to ensure fair administration; and see that justice was not hampered, or diverted by political interference or party exigencies. "Any attempt to weaken or destroy the independence of the judiciary will be resented by me," he said. "The fair name of the country must, I believe, be as dear and sacred to those who are at the head of the Government, as it is to us."

Any casual reader of these observations of the two Chief Justices would heartily endorse them in toto

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In the name of the liberty of the individual citizen. But the Home Minister who claims to be a constitutional lawyer finds in them an 'imperium in imperio' an attempt on the part of the Chief Justices concerned to be so independent as to deem themselves separate from the State as a whole. Does the 'independence of the judiciary' of his conception mean that judges should be of the persuasion of the party in power? If that is so, he would be assuming the role of the worst medieval kings of England that fought the judiciary to force them to carry out their behests, and fell.

Even the American precedent relied on by Home Minister is absolutely misleading and incorrect. The alleged attempts of the American President were severely criticised and finally countermanded by the Senate. After all, in India, we have the precious precedents from British constitutional history which have guaranteed the independence of the judiciary ever since the Act of Settlement of 1701.

Relying on accepted authority, it may be stated definitely that "independence of the judiciary" means only independence from executive control in the State; from direct or indirect influence of the Crown, or the Ministry; from any fear or favour of man. It implies permanency of tenure of office until removed by His Majesty the King on an address by both Houses of Parliament.

The judges are exempt from unfavourable criticism in Parliament. They possess a wide immunity from liability in respect of their judicial actions. It is contrary to judicial etiquette, for a judge to take any active part in politics while in office. They lack initiative. They have no part in executing their judgments. By their interpretation, they create the common law to some extent. It is the duty of the Crown and of every branch of the executive to abide by and obey the law.

If there is any difficulty in ascertaining it, the courts are open to the Crown to sue; it is the duty of the executive in cases of doubt to ascertain the law in order to obey it, not to disregard it. An essential part of judicial functions is to interpret the extent of the rights of the executive, whether under prerogative, or statute law. It lies with the courts both to determine the validity of executive legislation and decide whether particular actions fall under such legislation. These are some of the very important functions of the judiciary in the State. How can 'freedom' survive if judges are to play the second fiddle to the Home Minister, or the executive, for carrying out their policy?

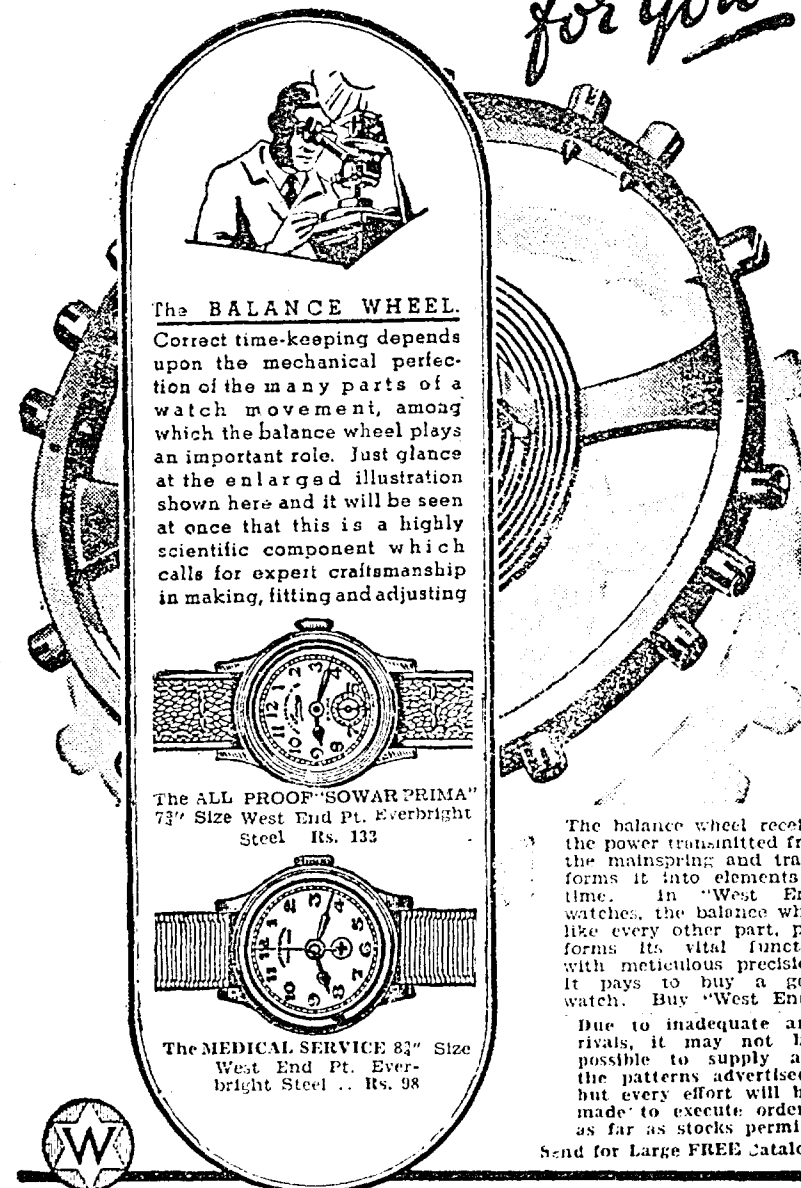
Lord Atkin in 1942 Ac. 206 at page 244 observes, 'It has always been one of the pillars of freedom, one of the principles of liberty, for which, on recent authority we are now fighting that the judges are no respectors of persons, and stand between the subject and any attempted encroachment on his liberty by the executive, alert to see that any coercive action is justified in law'.

It is the duty, therefore, of every citizen in independent India (where we want to establish the sovereignty of the people through the Indian Parliament) to rescue the country from such ambitious Home Ministers making a bid for securing autocratic powers for themselves or 'their party' at the expense of the 'rule of law' or the fair name of justice. It is but proper that the Constituent Assembly should make a note of this while settling the constitution of the country.

The observations of the Madras Home Minister at the present juncture are very unfortunate. They have set every reasonable citizen thinking about the nature of the State he wants to evolve, by putting in judges to carry out 'his policies'. Specially so, when there are so many vacancies in the High Court to be filled up.

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# AGRARIAN POLICY OF MADRAS GOVERNMENT

by K. G. SIVASWAMY

THE manner in which the Madras Government has been implementing the policy of industrial truce does not seem to augur well for the future of food production in the province. The next crop-season should begin shortly. Fields have to be ploughed. Canals have to be cleared of silt. Cattle have to be penned. But landlords and tenants and labour are still quarrelling over the share of produce of the last crop. There have been strikes and lockouts in Tanjore district leading to unemployment among the traditional labour and partial starvation. Landlords in Tanjore district have set at naught the agreement entered into by them with their labour and tenants by refusing to pay the wages paid during the last two crop seasons. They have been assisted in this breach of agreement by the Collector of Tanjore who has set his seal of approval to it in the name of 'clarification and interpretation' to which however labour has refused to be a party. Further, the landlords, not sure of police help for their violent campaigns have recruited and are maintaining Thevans from Ramnad and local hirelings at heavy cost to do physical violence to their labourers. These are not recruited for any harvest work but for running a parallel government. Cases of assaults, abuses, and physical injuries on labour are rarely registered by the police and private cases rarely get convictions by magistrates. Sec. 144, a section intended for emergencies, has been the daily food on which the present Government is nourished for the last thirteen months and more in certain taluks of Tanjore district. It applies only to labour but not to landlords who hold meetings to prevent their employment in another farm, when locked out from one farm. In Chengleput taluk there have been convictions of in-

nocent Harijans in an agrarian dispute. In Solavandan, Section 137 proceedings are still hanging over the Congress kisan workers. In Nellore the 'malas' are being put down by the landlords with the aid of the police. Disputes over produce-sharing have become common all over the province.

It is deplorable that the Government does not feel the shame of being afraid of its own people, and the humiliation of having its own rule superseded by landlords who are maintaining private armies. The difference in the wage which labourers are demanding according to agreement and which landlords are refusing to pay will not amount to more than Rs. 85 in a whole year. If the landlords who have been pampered by an additional increase in the price of paddy, by payment of bonus, by being freed from agricultural income-tax, who are promised more reduction in land revenue in the future, and whose land revenue instalments have been suspended pending remissions for the current year are so petty-minded as to withhold this legitimate wage, and if Government arrest the labour leaders from its own party ranks who do no more than plead for adherence to the agreement, wink at the private hired gangs maintained by landlords which are the chief cause of provocation and violence, arrest labourers, and give the co-operation of the local revenue and police officials to landlords to conscript labour to slave for a dictated wage, who is to blame for the absence of industrial truce? Why is not Government introducing legislation fixing fair rents for tenants which the Congress promised as early as 1937 and enforced in the adjoining province of Bombay in 1938? Why is not the 'Tribagh' movement blessed by Mahatma Gandhi and now enforced

in Bengal, Orissa, Bombay and U.P. not carried out in Madras? Why does not the Government stay eviction of tenants and labour from house sites as other Congress provinces have already done? Dr. Rajan said that three-fourths of the producers of paddy are tenants. Has anything been done to get them a share of the bonus or the benefit of the higher price? The rentiers who do not produce are granted relief while the producer not only does not get any relief but all the powers of Government from their repressive armoury along with economic sanctions of the land-

holder are brought down on the labourer who asks no more than that landlords should stick to the agreement which they had entered into. To add to all these troubles even the constitution does not seem to work properly. It looks as though there is no Minister for Law and Order but only a subordinate official under the Prime Minister. The situation is gloomy. Labour will have to put up a continuous struggle on sound trade union lines without being misled into violent actions which will only recoil on them.

## BUS TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN MADRAS

by K. RAGHAVACHARI

IT is difficult for any body to comprehend the real reason for the hurried act of Government in nationalising transport. They have done it in the City and are going to extend it all over the province. We hear that experts have been selected and a comprehensive scheme has been drafted but from what we see to-day, it is difficult to imagine that it will be a perfect job.

The Government could well have taken some time to go into the details and different methods of transport and avail of the best one at cheap cost. Obviously, they have not done so but hastened to put through petrol buses replacing company-operated vehicles by stages, which in itself is not a satisfactory move. Are Government aware that Diesel transport is economical both from the point of maintenance and return? It might be said in this connection that procurement may take sometime but in view of the economy and the long life of this type of transport, Government could have formulated their scheme in this context. What we see to-day on the roads is a transport maintained at high cost and greatest discomfort. For what reason?

The total cost of Diesel transport would be half of what they propose

to spend now on petrol transport. In maintenance, the same ratio prevails. Another important aspect is that in these days of petrol insufficiency and control, Diesel transport is the only right course in view of the abundant supply of it and at cheap cost. Will the Government explain why, when they have experts at their command, they preferred the costlier system of transport?

Take, for example, the roominess and comfort of the Diesel coaches and compare them to petrol coaches. Obviously, there is a vast difference. For a lesser cost, you have in Diesel, comfortable, elegant, sturdy and large accommodation. These give more returns than petrol coaches. The standing passengers in the present day buses are a curse of the system, and it is disquieting to see the general public suffering for no fault of theirs.

If Government say that the procurement of Diesel buses is difficult, the answer is that chassis are easily available and the body work could be entrusted to firms like The Allwyn Metal Works at Hyderabad or The Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co., Ltd., at Bombay who are competent to do this work. As a matter of fact, the Hyderabad Government under the regime of Sir Mirza

Ismail introduced State-owned Diesel services and the body work done by Allwyn is a standing testimony to Indian skill and efficiency. These buses, as anybody would have seen at Hyderabad, are so comfortable that one prefers them to any other form of transport. Bombay Bus Service is another example of this kind of Diesel transport.

In Madras the system of supervision is antideluvian in its methods and in the most busy hours, the staff of the Transport system occupy all the available seats while paying passengers hang on literally and many times are denied entry into the bus. Over-loading seems to be applicable only to paying passengers and not to the staff. Passengers are prohibited from standing near the entrances and exit but the staff can freely stand on the foot-boards. Again, the issue of tickets in the State Transport could have been done by the incorruptible automatic

machine as is done in Bombay. These machines are cheap, efficient and would ensure all safety eliminating the frequent checking, etc. If these machines are not procurable from other countries, they could be designed and fabricated locally. One cannot but feel miserable to see that these buses travel most of the time in certain areas at speeds below 10 miles per hour and if passengers complain, the reply is that police are prosecuting. Surely this cannot be, and the minimum speed, taking all safety measures into consideration, would be at twenty.

Is there no remedy for all these and will Government take the advice of people who know the subject and put them on their regular committees to help them in evolving a better and efficient system of operation, maintenance and control? The suffering public seem to take all their sufferings rather philosophically.

## THE RETURNED WARRIOR

by N. S. R.

IN one of the noblest anecdotes of English literature, it is related that Browning "was once standing in a shop when the proprietor remarked that he remembered Shelley standing on that identical spot. Browning started and turned pale with emotion, exciting the laughter of his companions". That moment lives in poetry in the stanza:—

*Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,  
And did he stop and speak to you,  
And did you speak to him again?  
How strange it seems and new!*

To a cricketer, a Test player cannot fail to possess that mysterious grandeur which the "Sun-treader" owned in the sight of Browning. This awe must necessarily be enhanced when it is considered that the Test cricketer has only recently returned from a notable tour overseas. It was my fortune last week to meet in company a local cricketer who, till a few months ago, appeared only one of the many good players of Madras, but who is now entitled to the honours which appertain to a Test cricketer.

When this player journeyed to Australia, one murmured to oneself:—

*"The minstrel boy to the war has gone;  
In the ranks of death will you find him".*

If cricket, like hunting, be the image of battle without its guilt, it looked uncommonly like Luxembourg declaring war on Britain. It appeared pathetic that this bowler should have been required to dismiss Bradman, Barnes, and Miller. One felt as anguished as Francis Thompson did while he contemplated the prospect of Lancashire offering a challenge to Gloucestershire in the days long gone by:—

*"It is Gloucestershire up North,  
The irresistible,  
And new-arisen Lancashire the foe.*

*A shire so young that has scarce  
impressed its traces,  
Ah, how shall it stand before all  
resistless Graces?  
O, little red rose, their bats are  
as maces  
To beat thee down, this summer,  
long ago."*

These fears have not been proved groundless, but the patriotic Madrassi is entitled to derive satisfaction from the knowledge that this city's representative was not so completely overwhelmed in the massacre that had overtaken the entire team as was apprehended.

The Test cricketer discoursed of his experiences in the Antipodes. To hear Bradman and Barnes, Lindwall and McCool referred to familiarly as if they were one's neighbours was exciting. When the modest voice acknowledged the ability of Morris, or the supernatural skill of McCool in the slips, or the tempestuous menace of Lindwall, one felt like listening to Othello as he talked of

*"... the Cannibals that each  
other eat,*

*The Anthropophagi and men  
whose heads*

*Do grow beneath their shoulders".*

It was as if Olympus had suddenly been located on the Island Grounds. Raleigh, in the famous picture painted of him as listening to the stories of a sailor just returned from the Spanish Main, could not have been more enraptured.

This sense of exaltation appears to be peculiar to cricketers. There is no player so incompetent or so advanced in age who does not tingle with delight as he listens to famous deeds wrought by famous men. One could have sworn that as the Test player walked out of the room, he trailed clouds of Melbourne and Sydney. There was also doubtless an aura of Hobart, where he performed a hat-trick, and an echo of the sweet sound of Miller's wicket rattling to the ground.



# 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.

## "Swatantra" Charged With "Stereotypedness"

It appears as if the views expressed in your journal and the articles of your contributors are assuming a certain stereotypedness, though the journal is still as popular as ever.

Your contributors are almost always anti-Marshall, anti-U.N., anti-Nehru (in foreign policy and Kashmir policy), anti-Patel (in home policy and Hyderabad policy), anti-decontrol, anti-High Command, etc. They are almost always near-Communist but not Communist.

Your New Delhi diarist oscillates between praising Nehru this week and laughing him to ridicule the next.

Your leading articles almost always lead to the inevitable conclusion that Omandur is a zero. (Your favourite "Omandurian ineptitude" is becoming a close rival to that other phrase, "Himalayan blunder".)

You seem to take tips from your Delhi correspondents and write with an amazing cocksureness about Nehru-Patel conflicts in the Cabinet, and Gandhiji's opposition to reference of the Kashmir issue to U.N., etc., which later prove to be without foundation.

Many readers of your journal like me would wish the contributions to be more refreshingly varied.

W. BHARATA RAO.

Berhampur.

## The Vanishing Point Of Case-Law

In his interesting article, "Antidote to case-law", published in 'Swatantra' of 28th February, Mr. S. Rajagopalan has raised the question as to how best to circumvent the difficulties resulting from the prevailing canons of judicial interpretation of statutes as in his opinion, they have contributed not a little to the ever-increasing volume of case-law, but unfortunately he has left it unanswered. He however pointed out that unless these difficulties are overcome any amount of remodelling of statutes with the aid of judicial decisions will not make the statutes unmistakable in their legal import.

The rule of interpretation cited by him (an obiter dictum of the Privy Council in Premial's case) is quite in line with the time-honoured English

tradition which insisted on a literal interpretation, treating the statute as though it were a formal deed or document. Bentham wrote, "From what other sources can his (legislator's) will be collected, than from the signs and those, the only ones, which he has made choice to express it? In searching after his will there may be occasions indeed to travel from one passage of the instrument to another; but out of the instrument, so long as the words of it are intelligible, there can be no pretence for travelling." To decide according to the dictionary is deemed far safer and more in keeping with the strict judicial function than to travel beyond the statute in seeking to ascertain legislative intention. Perhaps the fear is that when once such an excursion is permitted and launched upon, the courts have to commit themselves to speculation upon matters of policy with which they are not concerned and which do not admit of judicial determination.

The eminent French jurist, Francois Geny, spared no pains in criticising the tradition of logical interpretation of statutes, as it pre-supposes an all-sufficiency of written law and leans heavily on the strict division of powers between the judiciary and the legislature. In his view the codes must be interpreted "by a rational as opposed to a purely logical method in harmony with equity and the needs of practice by providing a wider and freer construction of the texts." As it is most proper that the interpretation should be made in the light of the intention of the legislator as it stood at the moment the law was framed, it becomes logically necessary that legislative intention should be gathered from the preamble of the statute, statement of objects and reasons and the record of preparatory proceedings such as the select committee report and the legislative debates. But it should be ensured that these helpful data are not presented to the courts in that amorphous form, but reduced to clear propositions of law and incorporated in the statute as part thereof. The courts would then be able to interpret statutory provisions in a manner consistent with the intention of the statute as revealed and declared in the statute itself. Bentham

had anticipated all this when he insisted that the codes should contain a running commentary of reasons and explanations. The same idea has been reiterated by our modern legal theorists. "The desirable thing", says Laski, "is to attach to them (Acts of Parliament) an authoritative explanation of the intention." Such a reform in the art of legislative drafting would make the statutes more explicit in their intention and less difficult to interpret.

Legislation, yet more legislation, with newer devices to check the licence of judicial interpretation, is the only method of making our laws precise, clear, simple and direct. While it is conceded that "no legislature can possibly succeed in making every law properly worded", it is idle to speak of an effective antidote to case-law which is ever bound to evolve in close association with the statute as a complementary process in the legal system. Case-law grows up in the very cradle of a legislative enactment as its inseparable but unnoticed bedfellow. While legislators feel their way rather than see it, "taking up the ground by bits and parcels and without so much as attempting any general survey of the whole", the courts make their approach from the concrete context of factual situations. Judicial decisions thus provide the necessary vitalising hormones which help to mould into living and meaningful form the abstract provisions of a statute which may suffer from patent oversights and omissions and also from want of the right amplitude and discrimination.

As is well known, good drafting in the technical sense is not necessarily clear drafting in the popular sense. Most of our modern statute law is hard to grasp, and more likely to be so as we enter a period of increasingly detailed regulations governing the affairs of a modern community. A self-explanatory code is a legislative ideal when "a man needs but turn the book in order to inform himself what the aspect borne by the law bears to every imaginable act that can come within the probable sphere of human agency." The emergence of such fool-proof, judge-proof codes will no doubt be the vanishing point of case-law. But that grand consummation is not to be thought of outside Utopia where, at any rate, according to Marx, the State itself would have ceased to exist and with it all problems of law-making and perplexities of interpretation.

K. S. PATHY.

## Capital Versus Labour

Of late the question of stabilizing the relations between Capital and Labour has been engaging the special attention of the best brains in the country. The problem can be solved to the best advantage of the community only when both Capital and Labour realise the importance and necessity of one to the other and of both to the community at large. After all, Capital without labour is dead and Labour without Capital is inefficient. Far from being poles apart, they are the two coefficients in a joint result.

The capitalist must be made to realise that the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a fortunate few to the detriment of the millions cannot be tolerated, that the capitalist should work not merely for his personal gain but for the welfare of the common man and that the wage-earners should be given their due.

The labourers, for their part, must realise that it is not in the interests of the community to strain things to a breaking point and that progress can be made only by steps. All attempts on the part of any party to interfere with increased production by fermenting strife among the labourers should be severely checked. If the labourers prove themselves unreasonable in their demands, the Government should not hesitate to adopt a blended policy of concession and compulsion. Failure on the part of the Government to take a firm attitude in this regard would result in the industrial situation in the country running beyond redemption.

Thus the problem is one which requires the exercise of the utmost caution, tact and vigour by the Government, the employers and the wage-earners.

R. NARASIMHA RAO.

Elkare.

## Strange Doctrines

The statements recently made in the Legislative Council by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan in support of decontrol of food grains have done little to mitigate the fears and anxieties of the public with regard to the disastrous effects that are likely to ensue as a result of the policy of decontrol. Dr. Rajan stated in the Legislative Council that Government resorted to decontrol of food grains in order to avoid an expenditure of rupees one crore. To decontrol food grains to avoid an expenditure of rupees one crore is an unsound and dangerous economic doctrine. No people can appreciate a doctrine which jeopardises their very existence on

earth and no people can be happy over the negative realisation of a sum of rupees one crore when they know that it is to be reared over their ashes. It is not a happy state of affairs when more roads are constructed, more people are educated and more transport buses are brought in while thousands die of starvation.

According to Dr. Rajan himself, the province is short of food grains. Dr. Rajan suggests that the daily ration must be cut to 6 ounces because if people eat at the rate of 8 ounces, the deficit will be augmented and he has moralised that six ounces of food is better than starvation. Tomorrow he may choose to say that death from disease is better than death from starvation. Would it not be wiser to subject the people of non-rationed areas to this economic doctrine as people there are wasting huge quantities of rice while their brethren in deficit areas are partially starving? But then Dr. Rajan has advanced a queer and preposterous argument that people who do not produce rice have to get less than those who produce. His reply to a member of the Assembly who questioned the propriety of partially starving Madras while allowing people in decontrolled areas to overeat themselves was: Madras do not produce rice. If so, I would like to ask Dr. Rajan whether he is entitled to use a car since he has not produced a car himself and whether he is entitled to eat food which he has not cooked himself.

Unless rationing is immediately restored and unless the present unpopular Ministry is removed and a popular Ministry set up the food crisis will engulf us all. Even the enemies of Sri Prakasam have admitted that if he did nothing else for the province he saved it from the disaster of food shortage. The gravity of the food crisis calls for the immediate restoration of Sri Prakasam to the premiership of the province.

K. S. SUBRAHMANYAM.  
Rajahmundry.

#### "Out of the Beaten Track"

When many of our thinkers and leaders are still "slaves, who dare not be in the right with two or three" and intellectual slavery still blinds many of our writers, to have "d...d" our long Indian culture is a very bold deed. The rare distinction of having done this goes to Dr. C. V. Chandrasekharan. His article on "Culture be d...d" in 'Swatantra' of 6th March

was something completely out of the beaten track and it was most refreshing to the mind. Of course, the article must have shocked not a few who might have been resting too much on ancient laurels.

The glorious past of India, 'the great cultural heritage of India' and similar expressions are oft repeated by all and sundry and the words have become too hackneyed by constant usage to convey any real meaning. And these are the very words on which most of us have been relying, to build the future of India.

That our past glory is just dead and that its light is lost, many of us do not recognise. While other nations have built for themselves new lamps of culture and civilisation, we have been content to live in the dim light of the distant past and grope about in semi-darkness. Our communal feelings, our class consciousness, our ignorance of the real values of life, our intolerance, all these have persisted too long in our minds and lives, and they have made our present almost ugly and horrid. Sheer antiquity cannot lend grace or beauty to anything ugly. If we wish to dispel the shadows which darken our existence, we must find a new torch of freedom, a new lamp of tolerance and a new light of brotherly love.

The youths of this country who have a special responsibility in building up its future should feel highly thankful to thinkers and writers like Dr. C. V. Chandrasekharan for rousing them from their slumbers and for reminding them of their real task.

"AN INDIAN YOUTH".

#### Help People Survive

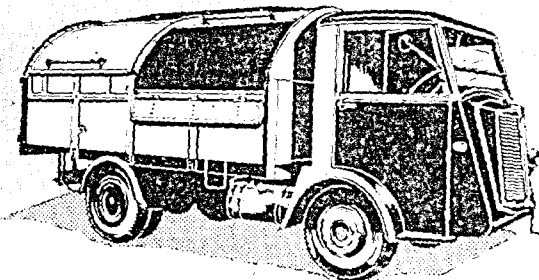
If this Government, calling itself a Congress Government, really wants that people should survive, all restrictions on movement of food grains—both inter-district and within the district—should forthwith be removed. It is not enough if officers, richer classes and black-marketeers are safe.

Ongole. B. NARASIMHA RAO.

We have received a copy of the picture "Lord Kumara Guru" painted by Mr. T. M. Subramanyam, a well-known artist of the city. It is printed on photo-offset by Messrs. Associated Printers, Madras, in ten colours. Bearing the impress of high technical ability of the Printers, the picture will be an adornment to any home.

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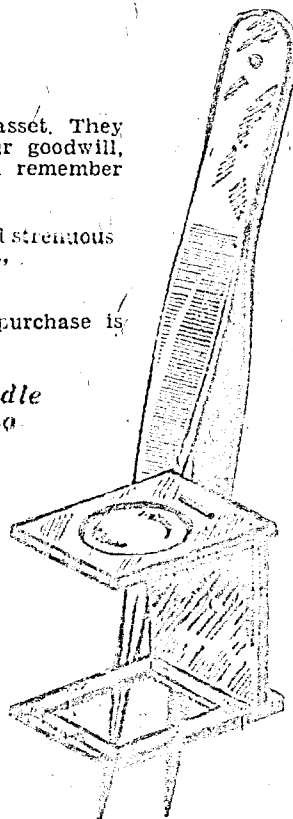
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