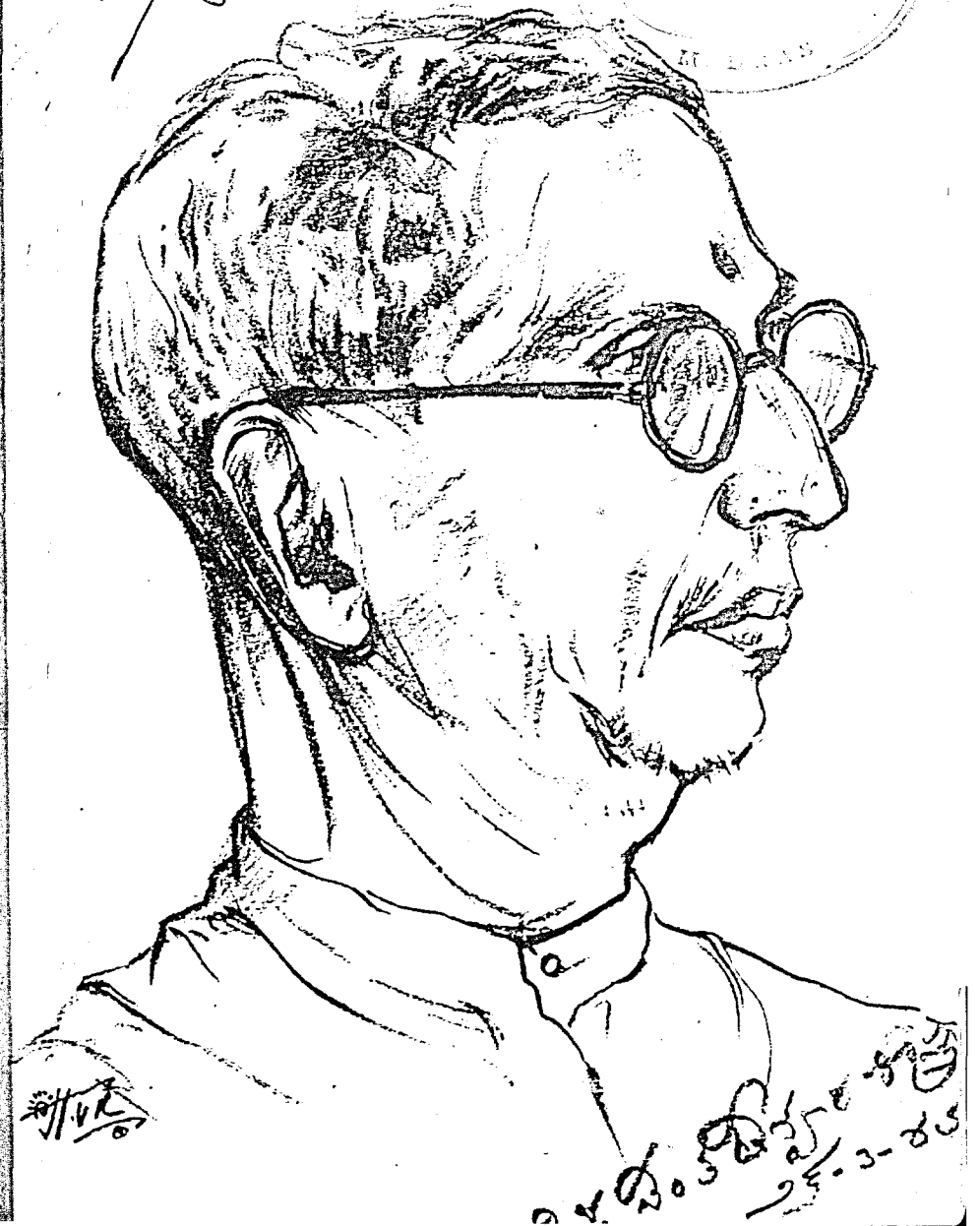
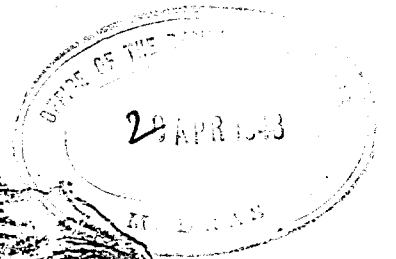


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SWATANTRA

EDITOR: KHASA SUBBA RAO

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BUDDHIST MONK

—by H. V. Ram Gopal

SWATANTRA

VOL. III
No. 8

SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1948

ISSUED
WEEKLY

TRIUMPH OF AN ABERRATION

THERE is general acceptance that in qualities that count for leadership in any sane political contest, Sri Prakasam who lost in the Congress Legislature Party election is superior to Sri Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar who won. Sri Prakasam is a giant of the Congress movement. In South India there is none that can be compared to him in political importance except C.R. In the present Madras Legislature he is the most outstanding figure. None of its members comes anywhere near him in stature, in record of national service, magnitude of sacrifice and renunciation, in grit, courage and daring, in loyalty to Congress principles, and in ability, experience and popularity. That, in spite of all the supremacy of his unparalleled position he should suffer defeat at the hands of one like Sri Omandur, an unimpressive rival with no comparable gifts of leadership, is an anomaly for which any reasonable justification is out of the question. It can be accounted for only as the triumph of an aberration. Communalism is that aberration.

It is undeniable that not a few who would have otherwise voted for Sri Prakasam were persuaded to withhold support from him mainly under pressure of communal considerations. The election was fought in an atmosphere that precluded fair dealing to Sri Prakasam. Prejudice against him was mobilised by the supporters of Sri Omandur on two grounds. They said that

Tamil interests would not be safe in the hands of an Andhra Premier. If the allegation were true, it would follow that Andhra interests would not be safe in the hands of a Tamil Premier. In a composite province with a mixed population, there is no meaning in holding a common election while intolerance is fostered on linguistic considerations. How effective the cry of Tamil Nadu in danger actually proved may be gauged from the fact that even a Minister of the standing of Dr. Subbarayan was intimidated by it into abandoning a course to which he had pledged himself earlier and acting in just the contrary way. If this was the plight of a Minister, what is one to think of other lesser voters, mere legislators, who participated in the election? For those who felt that an Andhra Premier would endanger Tamil interests, it were more honest to insist that Andhra candidates should be excluded from the election altogether, for then theory and practice would have been brought into harmony. There would have been no fraud taking away by underground pressure a right to equality of opportunity ostentatiously maintained on the surface. Secondly, it was urged against Sri Prakasam that he was a Brahmin. It would have been fairer to deny to Brahmins, outright, the privilege of aspiring for the party leadership, than allow it to them in theory while robbing it in practice of all efficacy with sabotaging activities. It is for the proper Congress autho-

rites to consider whether, in the face of so much intimidation and propagation of communal prejudice, the validity of the election is worthy of being taken for granted.

The fact that so many legislators falling under the categories of Tamil and non-Brahmin actually supported Sri Prakasam is an index of his political importance as a gallant defender of the old non-communal national spirit of the Congress against the insurgent might of apostles of communalism who with various devices have somehow come into key positions in the Congress organisation. Leaders like Pandit Nehru have been pronouncing warnings about the menace of communalism to the future of independent India without detriment to their own share of power in the name of the Congress. In the Central Government, the communal elements though admitted to power, continue as yet in a subordinate position. Sri Shanmukham Chetti has not come to the stage of imperilling Pandit Nehru's leadership. But in Madras, the reign of communalism has become all-supreme in the very citadels of the Congress Government. Several of the present Congress Ministers are ex-Justicites who formerly made themselves merry with the favours of the British bureaucracy; they made the best of the world of foreign rule and are now making the best of the world of freedom too. The Premier's spiritual affinity is not with Congress patriots but with Justicite opportunists. Sri Prakasam is the one powerful bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the communal forces that have swamped into the Congress of late and he is waging his battle against them with an undaunted determination that no reverse or defeat has been able to subdue. Though the power of the Congress is captured by the communalists, the authentic non-communal spirit of the great

national organisation has been inherited by Sri Prakasam in South India. If his resistance to the present leadership is withdrawn it will mean perpetuation of the surrender of the Congress to the Justicites and the end of all the precious principles of freedom and equality for which the Congress strove and suffered during the past quarter of a century.

The top leaders of the Congress cannot look idly on while the power and influence of the Congress are usurped in this manner by communalists and utilised for purposes altogether opposed to Congress pledges. Pledged as the Congress is to a non-communal outlook, it is faced with the terrible position that a majority of the members of the Congress Legislature Party owing their election to the Congress ticket have forsworn the true creed of the Congress and adopted its opposite by becoming communalists. If the present legislators and the Government elected by them are allowed to go on unchecked, they will use all their resources to infect the popular mind with the poison of communalism and the very machinery of the Congress will be used to undermine its proclaimed objectives. It is not right that Congress machinery should be used in this way by persons disloyal to Congress principles to promote ends of their own. If the communalists claim that the masses are with them, they are entitled to all the political advantages pertaining to such a position, but not under cover of the Congress organisation.

It will not do merely to preach against communalism as Pandit Nehru has been doing. The Congress machinery should be taken out of the hands of the communalists and communalists should be prevented from governing and from otherwise exercising power and influence in the name of the Congress. The Madras Legislature Party which has been captured by communalists should be dissolved. No

Congress ticket should be allowed to persons of known communal mentality. The communal policies of the Madras Government amount to an outrageous negation of Congress principles, and despite outward proclamations of devotion to Gandhian teaching, it is the spirit of the Justice Party routed at election after election, that has

captured now the seat of the Government in Madras. A position like this is more dangerous than the Kashmir menace and the Hyderabad atrocities. It is surprising that there is as yet no sign of any attempt to counteract its mischief from the Congress President and other responsible leaders of the Congress organisation.

Sotto Voce

Black Beauty



CIVILISATION seems to be one long alternation of forgetting and remembering. I find a press correspondent proclaiming with a great flourish of trumpets that the resourceful people of Kumbakonam have discovered a substitute for that coffee which has become as unattainable as salvation. But when I was a chit of a boy 'Avaramboo coffee' was the only coffee that many people knew. Indeed if they had been supplied the genuine stuff they would not have found half as much delight in it. Ponnavaarai, whose bright yellow flowers dried into a semblance of tea leaves, grew in abundance on the banks of the Coleroon; it was, with the cheap fuel known locally as 'kasan kuchchi', the only exportable surplus of that inhospitable region.

We are told that Ponnavaarai "has the colour, taste and flavour of coffee." That is as it may be; but it is true that the people who happily consumed it were firmly persuaded that they saw in it all these virtues. And those who, in a fit of economy, deserted the Arabian concoction for the home-made brew swore that Avarai had positive medicinal pro-

perties, unlike bilious coffee. This ingrained habit of looking for the pleasant in the wholesome led to the emergence of other claimants for the honours accorded to coffee. Thus, coriander seed coffee was almost as well established as the article without the adjective.

All the time there was an innocent conspiracy to hide the central truth that none of the substitutes offered that mild exhilaration which makes the coffee-maniac. Many in fact did not know that the effect was to be looked for. And some at least who knew would have been scandalised at the open avowal. Did your neighbour, who flaunted his coach and pair, have his coffee poured out in company from silver mugs, coffee prepared from Peaberry seed, pure cow's milk and crystalline sugar? Your spouse was not to be beaten. She got the used powder from next door on the sly, dried it up and then duly made a decoction which you drank, sweetening it with palm jaggery and dilute buffalo's milk. And you belched satisfaction as loudly as the enjoyer of the annates.

It is difficult for this generation to realise with what shamefacedness its ancestors took to coffee. For like all new fashions it was definitely disreputable before it spread like a forest fire. I vividly recollect the day now fifty odd years ago when in our remote village a neighbour brought the good tidings. Having been a wastrel all his life—for that was how his long absences, his ostentatious affluence and his apparent lack of skill and interest in rural pursuits were accounted for—the greybeards were not surprised that he should be drinking outlandish stuff. But younger men like my father were not to be put off by the familiar argument that what the Sastras did not mention they forbade.

So coffee made its first appearance at M—in my ancestral abode. My mother flatly refused the use of the kitchen. The nearest she could bring herself to tolerating the pollution was to allow the oven in the back verandah to be used. When, assisted by my father who played the neophyte with zeal, our 'foreigner' performed the ritual of grinding, steeping and straining, my mother went about as miserable as if some fearful and unlawful mystery were being performed by a master of black magic. And when it was all over she instructed the woman servant to cleanse thrice over the bronze and brass vessels that they had used.

TOILSOME DIGGING

The Royal Commission on the Press is making a powerful amount of work for other people. Quite apart from its voluminous questionnaire—32 questions, the last divided into twelve sub-questions—on an immense variety of aspects of journalistic activity, demands are made for information regarding the finances of each journal which even in the case of so modest a publication as *The Spectator* would, it is computed, provide an accountant with a full week's work. Take part of a single sub-head of one clause: "Expenditure of each newspaper or periodical, divided into management and establishment; editorial; advertising department salaries and expenses; paper and ink; production; circulation and publishing, including transport; canvassing and publicity; readers' insurance; other expenditure." This (and more), it may be observed, is required for each of the last ten financial years. With the strongest desire to be scrupulously polite to the Commission, and a profound consciousness of the importance of papers like *The Spectator* in the general order of things, I cannot refrain from asking what useful purpose can be served by the laborious excavation of this and other similar information—for much more is asked for—at a time of notorious labour shortage.

"Janus", in the *Spectator*, London,

Well, it was not many months before the blessed soul succumbed to the charm herself. It was pity that weakened her defences. My father, who could be as tenacious as he was gracious, faithfully stuck to the back verandah. Not having much skill with pots and pans he perspired profusely and daubed himself with soot all over. How could a good woman be hard-hearted enough to see this going on week after week and not feel compelled to interfere? So she began making the coffee for him, though metaphorically speaking she stopped her nose lest she should inhale the forbidden fragrance. I don't know how it happened, but like all our transgressions, I suppose it came about in a fit of absent-mindedness. Anyway before she knew what she was doing she was a confirmed addict.

With me, as you must now see, coffee had the sanction of filial piety. And I have tried to be faithful to it in my own fashion. None of your substitutes for me; I was never the one to fob myself off with cheap consolations. I would far rather skip the matutinal drink than debase myself by drinking tea, which in any case I cannot abide. I like to assert my independence of this enslaving habit once in a while. But, let me confess, the reunion is all the sweeter.

VIGHNESWARA.

SIDELIGHTS :

It is not by the gray of the hair that one knows the age of the heart.
—BULWER.

DR C.R. REDDI is to preside this week over a conference of admirers to do honour to Sri Vavilla Venkateswara Sastrulu on his at-



V. Venkateswara Sastrulu

taining the venerable age of sixty. Dr. Reddi is a difficult man to please, extremely careful with his praise. The Chinese revere age for its own sake, and the older a man grows the more fortunate he is rated in their regard. No such sweeping and comprehensive sentiment of respect for years as such belongs to Dr. Reddi who is nothing if not highly fastidious in his approbations. To have induced affectionate interest in such a cold critic and tough estimator is no small feat. It is a measure of the non-ephemeral worth of Sri Sastrulu as a man and a man of letters.

In promotion of the literary consciousness of the Telugu-speaking world, none has excelled Sri Sastrulu. The laurels in this age go generally to the loudest noisemaker. One has to be in the market place with trumpets and loud-sounding nostrums to attract the attention of the multitude and gain entry to the company of celebrities. Sastrulu has an antiquated old-

fashioned disinclination for modern ways of self-advertisement. In disregard of the fashion of the time he has placed reliance on work and service and let them speak as sole agents on his behalf to contemporaries and posterity. The method had the daring of the exceptional but it has worked. "Vavilla" is now a household word familiar in the mouths of all whose mother-tongue is Telugu, and there is scarcely a Telugu home unadorned by one or other of the numerous classics which Sastrulu rescued from entombment in palm leaves for propagation on a wide scale through the printing press. He inherited a not over-prosperous commercial firm. He has converted it into a public institution.

In politics he has revolved in an orbit of faithful allegiance to select admired personalities. Tilak and S. Srinivasa Iyengar have been, (and despite the gulf that divides the dead from the living), continue to be the two outstanding idols of his passionate reverence. They are to him living presences exerting an imperishable influence. The prodigious public work of Tilak and S.S. covers only a fraction of their enormous association with their fellow-men. They spent the greater part of their energy in befriending the needy and encouraging the promising in quiet ways that never found the limelight. Sastrulu has found pride of lieutenantancy by adopting unostentatiously the same role of a Good Samaritan to the limit of his opportunities and means. His life is full of glorious episodes of unadvertised private benefactions, and this is what most endears him to me though of course he is by no means lacking in qualities that charm. His gift of sarcasm and biting irony, his tenacious memory and astonishing fund of anecdotes, his chronic tendency to non-conformity and joy in controversy, his intense immersion in hopeful plans for the future, these make him an extremely lively and agreeable com-

panion, and despite his sixty years, there is in him an eternal element of youth and boyishness. Who can measure the strength of children? The inhibitions of age make for a certain shrinking from life's full adventure. The resulting cowardice is glossed over with words of philosophy, the more the departure from the spirit of fellowship that is true philosophy's genuine mark. This is the cruel caricature of age. To have evaded it is the distinction of Sri Venkateswara Sastrulu.

The inaugural number of **REPUBLIC**, the new venture of Sri V. Kalidas, is an imposing production. Most of the great names in the country adorn its pages either as contributors or through photographs in unique poses. One of the photographs, showing Pandit Nehru at billiards, is particularly captivating. The number bears the stamp of the vigour and dash which all who know Kalidas cannot fail to associate with him. He was the real founder of this journal. In those days permits for periodicals were hard to get. But his boundless confidence and enthusiasm overcame all difficulties. None could have done as much as he did, then, and but for him there would have been no

SWATANTRA. The subsequent severance of his connection with it left a gap that will perhaps never be filled.



V. Kalidas

Though nearly two years old now, it has never ceased to fill me with regret and painful qualms of disquiet and unrest. Kalidas is a go-getter of unquenchable resourcefulness. His abilities are greater than what he has got out of them so far. If **REPUBLIC** helps towards a better balance between the two, journalism in South India will have acquired a Northcliffe of a sort.—**SAKA**.

MORE AUSTERITY

There can be but few who, in the matter of capital letters in general, have not fallen sadly away from the standard of their copybook days. There are some people so lost to all the charms of calligraphy that their capitals are but slovenly imitations of print. There are some instances such as those of O, S, X, and Z in which the printed capital is almost universally used in handwriting and may even be preferable, since the old writing master's version is, as Joe Gargery might have called it, "too architecto-aloral." On the other hand there are certain letters which merely to print in a lazy or cowardly manner is to lose some of the intensest joys of penmanship.

With the few exceptions mentioned all the capitals in the copybook are rich in that indefinable quality called deportment, and it is greatly to be feared that deportment among letters is dying out. A certain amount of curleywigs, graceful, artificial and yet not too heavily ornate, are essential to it, and curleywigs are on the wane. An age of utility and austerity has taken its toll, and Ks are no longer what they were.

The Times, London.

SOCIALIST PARTY'S POLICY

by JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

HAVING come into existence in 1934, the Socialist Party is passing through the fourteenth year of its life. During these years the Party has grown steadily, till it is today in respect of popular support—though its membership is still confined to a small band of active workers—the second largest political party in the country.

Up till now, and except for the Bombay municipal elections, the Party has not functioned as an independent political party. Though it has had its separate membership, constitution and rules, and functioned among the working class and the peasantry independently, politically it functioned as a part of the Congress. In other words, for purposes of political action, the Party was not separate from the Congress; and on political issues the Party did not go beyond propagating its views and putting them before Congress committees. Summing up the total result of the Socialists' work within the Congress, one might say that we acted as a check on the politics of compromise; we strengthened the organisation as an instrument of struggle; and we were able to produce a climate of Socialism within the Congress. The fact that every Congressman today is anxious to describe himself as a Socialist, whether or not he is actually one, is a tribute to the work of our Party.

There is one criticism, however, regarding our work within the Congress that I myself would like to make. Looking back it seems to me that we would have done well to associate ourselves with the constructive work of the Congress to a far greater extent than we did. We Socialists were responsible—and I more than others perhaps—in creating the feeling that all constructive work was unrevolutionary, and for Socialists, a waste of time. I should like to put on re-

cord that that was an immature and mistaken view. Possibly, if we had come into the field of constructive work we might have developed aspects or types of it that would perhaps have enriched it. But whether that would have happened or not there is no doubt that we have impoverished ourselves a great deal by keeping out of that valuable field of activity, which would have given us experience and wider mass contact and enabled us to understand rural India in a more intimate manner.

A criticism that has recently been made is that the Socialists always failed to anticipate events or that our estimate of future events has more often than not turned out to be false. For instance, it is said that history proved us wrong when we suggested that the settlement with the Cabinet Mission was not going to bear any fruit and that another conflict was unavoidable with the British. In the same way, we are accused of wrong judgment when we boycotted the Constituent Assembly on the ground that it was not to be the final authority to draft the constitution of free India.

I fail to see how our judgment has been falsified by history. I have no doubt that had we not given up our fundamentals, a conflict with the British was inescapable. What the form of that conflict would have been it is difficult to tell. But, after the conspiracy hatched by Wavell and Jinnah had succeeded, the Congress had clearly no alternative but to throw overboard the entire agreement and go into the wilderness again. That was avoided at a great price, a price that none of us ever thought the Congress would agree to pay in any circumstances.

The whole strategy of the Socialist Party and our reading of the situation were based on the assumption that the Congress would never accept partition. If partition had not been accepted, the Congress

had no alternative but to resign from the Interim Government and face the British once again on the issue of full independence and undivided India. It is true that the Congress had accepted, with the concurrence of its Socialist wing, the principle of self-determination. But that principle was to be applied after the British had quit and not with their help and under their aegis. When the Congress accepted partition, it accepted partial and not complete independence. I repeat once again that had the Congress not deviated from its true path and compromised with its principles, there was no alternative for it but to follow the course of action that the Socialist Party had suggested.

Coming to the Constituent Assembly, it has been suggested that, having once boycotted the Constituent Assembly, we now feel sorry that we have been left out of the picture. We do not at all regret having boycotted the Assembly. We were anxious by doing so to make it clear to the country that the whole basis of compromise with the British was wrong and should be rejected. To accept a part of that compromise and reject the whole would have been the height of political opportunism. As events developed, and the Muslim League walked out of the Constituent Assembly, it was clear that what remained of that body was no longer capable of drafting the constitution of free India. The only thing that remained to be done then was to tear up the whole agreement with the British, to get out of the Interim Government and of the Constituent Assembly, and to call finally a real Constituent Assembly elected by the people. The Assembly would then have become the centre of revolutionary power and challenged the British authority to a final show-down. The Socialist Party would have heartily cooperated with such an assembly and taken full responsibility for enforcing its decisions.

We were told that such a course of action would have led to civil war, which the acceptance of Pakistan would avoid. We replied

that, in the first place, the risk should be taken, and, in the second place, acceptance of Pakistan would not remove but accentuate that risk. Easily gained power, however, was too much of a temptation to be resisted, with what tragic results history has already shown. And yet there are people who boast of their victory and their wisdom and accuse others of talking hot air.

This brings up the question which after a long career of controversy has now received its final answer. We have long debated the question: Within or without the Congress? There have been weighty arguments on both sides, but the weight has lately been shifting to one side alone.

The A.I.C.C. at its last sitting adopted certain fundamental principles of a new constitution of the Congress. These principles make it clear that the Congress is no longer to remain a national front. The Congress is to become now a party and the Indian National Congress which stood for the whole nation and fought for its freedom and received the allegiance of all sections of the people is no more, or lives only in name. Logically the name too should have gone, so that the great traditions associated with that name should have been kept unsullied by party politics. In these circumstances, the Socialist Party had to leave the Congress.

Further, the need for an opposition party in the country has increased rapidly in recent months. The presence of Gandhiji in our midst was a powerful guarantee of civil liberties and people's freedoms. In his absence the dangers of authoritarianism and totalitarianism have grown.

In the days of the British, the Congress was the conscience of the people and their tribune. Now, the Congress is so identified with the Government that it has lost the power to protect the rights of the people. As a matter of fact, its main task today is to defend the Government and justify to the people its every act—right or wrong.

The result of all this is a frightful situation. Criticism, even fruitful criticism, is resented and sought

to be suppressed. Means of propaganda that are in the hands of the State, such as the A.I.R., have been used for party ends by the party in power. Administrative authority is exercised illegitimately to curb the activities of political workers who become thorns in the side of supporters of the Government. There are examples of trade union workers being put into prison on the recommendation of I.N.T.U.C. bosses. Liberal use is being made of Sections 144 and 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code to put down political rivals. The Public Safety Acts are being misused to the same ends.

Taking into consideration all the aspects of the question, the conclusion we have reached is that we must leave the Congress and function as an independent political party.

Our decision to break away from the Congress will cause serious anxiety to many friends who may have no interest in party politics but are deeply concerned over the future of the nation. I refer to those friends particularly who believe that at a moment of national crisis it is not parting of ways that is necessary but joining of hands. The sense in which we are prone to understand an opposition is the sense in which the Congress was an opposition to the British Government. But in a democracy an opposition party is not an anti-national party; rather, it is a party that advocates a different, and according to it, a better way of serving the nation than the party in power. During the British period, to be anti-Congress was to be anti-national, because the Congress stood for the nation as against the foreigner. Now in a free India we must accustom ourselves to the idea that to be opposed to the Congress is not to be opposed to the nation, but rather to be opposed to certain policies and methods of government and to advocate alternative policies.

That the country is passing through a great internal crisis and that there are external dangers of incalculable gravity no one can deny. At such a time all parties in

the State, sharing common objectives and common ideals, should come together and cooperate in facing the crisis. There is much in common between the Congress and the Socialist Party: their faith in secular democracy brings them nearer together than any other two parties in the country. This naturally means that the Socialist Party will ever be ready to fight for the defence of the State and of democracy and against the forces of communalism and reaction; and, in this fight, it would be happy always to join hands with the Congress.

Finally, a word about the methods or means to be employed by the Socialist Party. Since the victory of Stalinist methods in Russia, it has been commonly believed that there is no room for moral values in Marxism. I should therefore like to state in the clearest possible terms that I for one have come to believe that for the achievement of Socialism, a strict regard for means is of the highest importance. Socialism means different things to different persons, but if by Socialism we mean a form of society in which the material needs of every individual are satisfied and also in which the individual is a cultured and civilised being, is free and brave, kind and generous, then, I am absolutely clear that we will never reach this goal except by strict adherence to certain human values and standards of conduct. It is too often believed that all would be well if only there were no exploitation in society and everyone was well fed and well clothed and housed. But a society of well fed and clothed and housed brutes is a far cry from Socialism.

Democracy requires that the people should depend as little as possible on the State. And, both according to Mahatma Gandhi and Karl Marx, the highest stage of democracy is that in which the State has withered away. Totalitarianism, as distinct from a strictly transitional 'dictatorship' of millions of toilers over a small defeated class of vested interests, can hardly be a half-way house to full democracy. Accordingly, the type of

mind that I should like to see develop within the Socialist Party is one that would make every one of us indifferent to whether one is Prime Minister of the Republic or a trade union or other field-worker. If, through constructive work, we succeed in eradicating caste, superstition and bigotry, if we succeed in enlisting the cooperation of hundreds of thousands of selfless workers to whom the seats of power offer no attraction—if we succeed in all this, we shall also succeed in building up a Socialist society. In this event the State will play its inevitable role which would go little be-

yond the imprimatur of the law on what has already been accomplished, or on what cannot be prevented from happening. The State in this manner will become an instrument in the hands of a popular Socialist movement.

The Socialist Party shall remember today, and never forget it in the coming years, that it would be by constructive work, rather than by the tactics of a parliamentary opposition; by positive service rather than by exploiting the mistakes and faults of others, that we would succeed in establishing a democratic Socialist society.

MORE ABOUT THE NIZAM

by A. LAKSHMAN RAO

The Nizam who today occupies the position of a helpless and neutral spectator of Belsen camps in his State does not appear "in a diamond-studded turban, a brocade gown and pearl buttons. But he is a shy, extremely modest fellow . . . , in dire need of a haircut. He usually wears a homespun Indian coat, very old shoes, and a turban your Indian bearer would have discarded years ago. Behind his well-chiselled forehead one of India's most brilliant brains works on a 24-hour shift". (These words I borrow from the veteran journalist Mr. Ernest O. Hauser who was in India as the correspondent of the Saturday Evening post.) According to the estimation of another writer the Nizam owns a property worth some 2000 million dollars, but despite the fact that he is the richest man in the world he spends only 20 dollars a month (Rs. 60).

He drives a ramshackle Ford "and is altogether a likeable if lonely little man. Economy is his outstanding characteristic. He owns incidentally the world's largest gold table service consisting of solid gold plates, platters, knives, forks, ash trays and salt shakers for 150 people. Buckingham Palace has one for 24 only!" According to the American correspondent, the Nizam has no treasure house. "Most of his wealth—protected only by an electric burglar alarm—is piled in the two main buildings where he lives. Gold in coin, bars and large keg shaped blocks are stacked along the walls of what used to be living and bed rooms. It fills the parlour and garage. It is stowed away in half forgotten corners. Twenty years ago, a truck-laden with gold bars

drove into the palace grounds. There was no place to store them in and as a temporary measure, Osman posted a sentry to watch the precious cargo. Today the truck still stands there, its wheels embedded in the soil, its body partly covered with grass. The gold is still there, and so is the sentry."

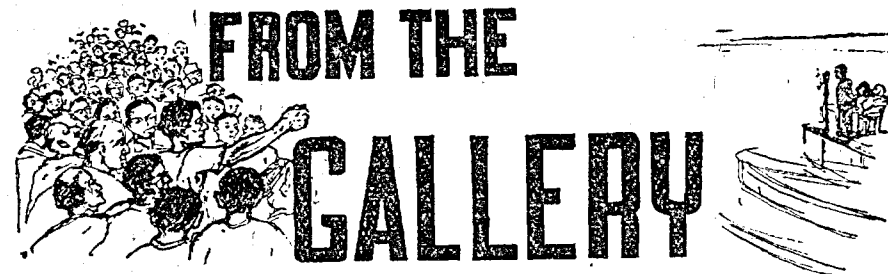
The Nizam has got admirers not only in Hyderabad, but throughout the Muslim world. Until the Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen came out openly to flout his authority, he was indisputably "a benevolent despot". Feudalism is disappearing today from every corner of the world, and it cannot survive in Hyderabad, though it is in its unadulterated naked form there. It must end without bitterness and mass human slaughter. The Nizam was friendly to the British and he will see the wisdom of friendship with the coming Indian Republic. That is the way to progress and prosperity, both for him and his subjects.

SWATANTRA

156, Lloyds Road,

Royapettah, Madras.

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

THE most amusing result of the re-election of Mr. Reddiar as the leader of the party is the 'hara-kiri committed by' the 'Rajaji group.' It was a misfortune that brought it into existence; and it was another misfortune that has destroyed it. It thus provides a topical illustration of the old story of the 'dog it was that died!'

Mr. Vaidyanatha Aiyar's recital of events that took place behind the scenes was a piece of self-defence that is likely to do more harm than good. While Dr. Subbaroyan does not come out with flying colours, Mr. Vaidyanatha Aiyar's revelations can only exacerbate the already strained communal feelings. It is tragic that questions of fundamental importance should have been side-tracked by the setting up and knocking down of the Brahmin bogey.

As for Mr. Reddiar, he now stands out as the helpless victim of forces which neither he nor any one else can control. Such romance as clung to his unpretentious obscurity and well-advertised sanctimonies has faded out in the drab light of common day, to expose a man of narrow vision in pursuit of small things. It was said of Cincinnatus that he left the plough to set right the government, and having achieved it, went back to the plough. Mr. Reddiar too deserted the plough; but has now shown an unwillingness to go back to it which is deplorable for the double reason that neither husbandry nor politics has gained by his pertinacious pursuit of power. That we should be governed by mediocrities is not our great-

est handicap; but that our leaders should be inspired by a series of aversions and antipathies is our unmerited fate.

For consider the complexion of the Ministry. Under a capacious Congress label, we have parochialists. It is not national but communal; it is not Hindu, but anti-Brahmin, anti-Aryan. Its love of regional languages is really camouflaged hatred of Sanskrit. The principle of Cabinet solidarity and responsibility is foreign to it, since no two members of it are blessed with identity of outlook or of conviction. If reports are to be believed one half of them are engaged in watching the movements of the other half; while a sort of super-subtle Gestapo is being wielded by our rustic Cincinnatus inducted into the seats of the mighty.

If only better counsels had prevailed in opposition circles, a better result might have been achieved. But the tenacity of Mr. Prakasam or of his supporters must be held responsible for the continuance of a ridiculous situation. Since Brahmin-hatred works like a sovereign specific and unites all incompatibles under one fear—and inferiority—complex, such a crude and ready handle should not have been furnished by those who ought to have known better.

In the midst of all this welter, it is a minor if also comic detail that Dr. Rajan has played the part of the Vicar of Bray with lucky astuteness. He remains with the winning side. What amends Dr. Subbaroyan is going to make for his part in the fiasco remains to be seen. If he had stood out or even now gets out, it

is not yet too late to save something from the wreck. But it must be frankly acknowledged that between the devil of provincialism and the deep sea of communalism, there is no near prospect of normalcy in the political field. Demagogues, tuft-hunters, fanatics and near fascists may be safely counted on to run the show until we run into a ditch.

The Pathans have been the playboys of the Indian empire, and assumed a legendary stature and importance which were deliberately promoted by the imperial power for imperial reasons. But with the full blast of their fury directed against Kashmir, it was elementary common sense for the Indian Government to take the precaution of declaring them foreigners. Their excursions into Jaisalmer and other parts of the Union abutting the boundaries of Western Pakistan were not exactly carried out in the spirit of holiday hikers. Not only are they foreigners in a legal sense, but in the international sense, they are subjects of an enemy State.

It is therefore surprising to read in the papers that a meeting of the Frontier Assembly wasted some of its time denouncing the Indian Government for doing an obvious thing. Dr. Khan Saheb seems to have out-heroded Herod in the course of his speech. The Speaker of the Assembly went out of his place to make a speech exhorting the Pathans to stand together and appealing to Afghanistan to revise its attitude towards Pathanistan. All which naturally makes the Hindu wonder whether the Muslim

could ever forget his religion in considering non-religious problems.

One more meeting has been held by Muslim Leaguers in the city to protest against the proposed abolition of the Government Muslim College for women. It appears that it must be maintained as a State institution while being open to all communities. From this, what is demanded is a symbol to assuage the vanity of one community. This importunity of one community for special privilege is in odd contrast to the demand of another minority community that they should not be subjected to death by slow strangulation. It would be interesting to watch the manner in which the Education Minister tackles these two problems; for it will reveal the order in which he entertains his prejudices and antipathies.

The Indian Government's final disposal of the question of I.N.A. personnel is an instance of splitting the difference or cutting the baby in two. It is calculated to leave all-round dissatisfaction, while at the same time, it must be acknowledged that there could be no wholesale rehabilitation of them in the army. In the attempt to whitewash them, the country will probably be spending more than if no attempt had been made to have the cake and eat it too. To extol their patriotism and devotion to Subhas Babu, and yet to deny them the chance of returning to their places in the army is not quite convincing. It is a painful dilemma, but the worst part of it has already been solved by time.

GROUNDLING.

APPROACHABLE

With a look of appeal, a boy stood on the bank of a small river and watched a company of horsemen fording their way across the stream. It was Thomas Jefferson and a party of young men. The boy wanted to be taken across, but he remained silent until Jefferson approached and then asked him for a lift.

When the youngster had been set down on the other side of the river, an observer asked him why he had not spoken to one of the younger men.

"Well," replied the boy, "I suppose a man carries 'Yes' or 'No' in his face. The faces of the young men said, 'No,' but the kindly old gentleman's said 'Yes.'"

Short Story

The Poetry of the Sea

by Jaiboy Joseph

IN life most aspirations are often dashed to the ground by unforeseen calamities. But the impartial critic will always grant that a certain compensation in the nature of things is always at work. A calamity may change the life of a man but it is not always for the worse.

It was in the year 1942. My friend A.H., his cousin Ramanujam and I had settled down in the English class room long before the first period began. It was quite early, so Ramanujam and I indulged in some horseplay to while away the time. We drew funny faces on the board, and scribbled a lot of nonsense. But A.H. excused himself on the plea that he was unwell and never joined us in the fun. He was quietly seated reading. After a few moments we called him, whereupon he came near us and asked us to feel his hand. It was cold and limp. He then told us that he had not the strength to grip objects properly. True, he was feeling a bit indisposed the whole morning. Ramanujam and myself called him a hypochondriac and told him that nothing was the matter with him and that he was just feigning illness to avoid the first period. We however got him removed to the college hospital and went about our business. In the afternoon much to our surprise we heard that he had been removed to the General Hospital.

In the hospital the doctors had diagnosed it to be a case of infantile paralysis. It was a very rare disease in this part of the world and it was strange how A.H. contracted it. Months of physio-therapy did not cure him; he was left with residual paralysis. He was considered a lost case; he could hardly move his lower limbs and was forced to use a wheel chair. He had to stop his education. The doctors had ordered complete rest. His

parents bought a bungalow in Adyar—a bungalow which overlooked the sea—and there A.H. lived the rest of his days. Ramanujam too lived with him to keep him company.

After my Inter I migrated to a college in the north and for a long time I heard nothing about A.H. Ramanujam I heard went down from college in a blaze of glory as far as athletics was concerned and was doing some miscellaneous clerking in a petrol bunk. It was just the job for Ramanujam, for it was hardly possible for him to continue his studies; he was a dullard and he made no bones about the fact, he admitted it freely. He knew that physically he was a success—his was one of the most well-shaped bodies I had ever seen. A.H. too had been a failure in studies. He had talents, I was sure, but he buried them deep in the earth. He was one of the most lazy fellows I have ever come across. He had always wanted to throw up studies and join the Navy. But now I knew that unless a miracle happened his dream would not be realised.

It was during the summer holidays that I met A.H. and Ramanujam again. I had been out sea-bathing with a couple of my friends at the beach near A.H.'s house when I met them. Ramanujam had carried A.H. in his arms and placed him on the sands near to where the waters lapped the shore. Ramanujam told me that A.H. liked to sit there just in order to see him swim and lark.

We made it a point to bathe practically everyday after that. To swim in the company of Ramanujam was delightful. As he was a strong swimmer it was delightful to watch him go far out into the sea. Always A.H. was on the shore looking at us. I always tried to avoid talking

to him; sadly enough my attitude to him had changed because he was a cripple. But he had changed considerably, his face no more wore the signs of sluggishness. It looked intelligent but there was a nervous agitation on it which worried me. Now and then the muscles of his face would twitch into a spasmodic and uncontrollable tic. He would look perplexed. I asked A.H. how he spent his time and he replied that he had cultivated certain very interesting habits which helped him to forget his miserable plight. If I cared to call on him that evening he would tell me something about it. I had never visited A.H.'s house for a very long time and his mention of his interesting habits mystified me.

Ramanujam, when we were bathing let the cat out of the bag when he told me that A.H.'s latest penchant was literature. I was surprised. If this was true the time had wrought a remarkable change on him.

I visited him that evening and my surprise was more than justified. The room had radically altered since I last saw it—the arrangement of the furniture and things were different. There were shelves all round stacked with piles of books. The collection showed a remarkable catholicity of taste—there was the whole host of prose and poetry writers whose voices swell the chorus of English literature to its incomparable richness. After scouring his library I sat near him; he was sitting on the wheel chair close by the window which looked out on to the sea. After some small talk he embarked on a theme which seemed to me most astonishing. "The sea has a peculiar fascination for me", he said. "It has fascinated me so much that I've made a private anthology of all that has been written about it in literature". He then produced a well-bound bulky notebook of great length and breadth and I turned its pages. It contained a wealth of references to the sea culled from many authors. He had himself written a lot about sea deities found in classical mythology. There was a remarkably simple

translation from the old English of Beowulf's swimming match with Breca. There were the relevant passages from Marlowe's poem Hero and Leander, the most poignant love-story ever and beside it was Keats's sonnet—dripping with moonlight—"On a picture of Leander". Evidently the blue Hellespont between Sestos and Abydos had captivated the imagination of A.H. He had himself written the story in a soft flowery languorous style, all his own. There were heaps of quotations from Virgil and Swinburne right upto moderns like Tennyson, Flecker and Bridges. He told me that he had compiled it on the unique principle of including only those poems and passages which he knew by heart. As I sat down to read one of the poems I found that my mind was elsewhere. I fell into a brown study.

I wondered whether this strange fascination was a perversion of A.H.'s or a genuine liking. True, people sometimes have strange likings but all such likings are such as can be deduced from one's own experience. A frail man will rationalise for himself a philosophy of non-violence while a strong man a philosophy of unlimited violence. But A.H.'s liking for the sea was analogous to that of the blind man who said that he liked the beauty of the sun-set. Or even to that of a deaf man who claims to enjoy a symphony. A.H. with his disabled body could never, never feel the frenzy of the cool surf on the bare body as we did when we bathed.

At this point I was awakened from my trance by A.H. claiming to recite any poem or passage which I suggested from his anthology. I came across Byron's stanza in Don Juan. The poem was so often read and heard by me both in school and college that I would always be filled with an uncontrollable nausea when I came across it anywhere. But due to an unpardonable feeling of naivette which seized me then, I in my haste to hear him, mentioned this poem. Before I could withdraw my suggestion A.H. had begun and never shall I regret having asked him for it, for as soon as he

began to speak, his voice changed, and the lovely words drifted through the room with all their music and cadence. He declaimed it from end to end; from "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods " to "Thou goest forth dread, fathomless and alone". I was amazed.

After this he told me many things of the part that the poetry of the sea played in his life. How in times of mental stress he would call upon Flecker's precious lines "West of these out to seas colder than Hebrides I must go"....., to allay the fever of his soul; how certain portions of Tennyson's Ulysses would fill him with thoughts that lie too deep for tears.

The shades of night had fallen by now and he had already declaimed much from Isaac Watts, Richard Bonfield, Wordsworth, Milton, Thomas Hood, Matthew Arnold and a host of others. He looked exhausted and I felt very guilty within myself for having allowed him to declaim so much. But I realised how irresistible it all was. As I was about to leave him something terrible happened, something which will never be effaced from my memory because of its unexpected nature. A.H. broke into tears and in a voice choked with bitterness complained of his miserable plight. Why, he complained, was he condemned to the life of the wheel chair when all the world was in joyous holiday? Others could sport on the sea shore, cross the blue ocean to lands far, far away and enjoy the sweets of life, but not he. There were so many things in this astonishing world which others could do but he was denied them. And why, why?

Then he made a confession which I felt was like a knife in my heart. For I could never imagine such a noble spirit—so full of poetry—sinking so low as to become the victim of the green-eyed monster, jealousy. "In my heart of hearts I am jealous of Ramanujam", he said, "because he can taste the wonders and glories of life." He then broke into violent sobs and

I left him rather embarrassed. The next day he was on the beach but I did not talk to him. That fatal day a most tragic event occurred. Ramanujam went far out into the sea for a "hearty swim" as he chose to call it, never more to return. The fishermen searched in vain for his body. The best plausible theory offered was that he had been completely eaten up by sharks. That day along with another friend I had to carry A.H. home. He was crying like a child and I very well understood his grief, for how often had Ramanujam borne him on his back! He developed a high temperature that evening and the doctors were full of misgivings about his recovery. There were bursts of tears from his relatives. I stayed by his side till midnight when a strange thing happened. A.H. from his sick-bed, with a wan smile on his countenance, in a feeble voice, declaimed something which I



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caught by bending over him. "You never enjoy the world aright, till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with heavens, and crowned with the stars....." These I discovered later on were a few lines from Thomas Traherne's "Centuries of Meditation."

I never understood the significance of those lines but they sounded gloomy and portentous in spite of all their beauty. Only a miracle could save A.H.

Yet the miracle did happen. The next day I had to leave for Delhi in connection with an interview for a job. It was a stormy year for India. The struggle for freedom was at its height, and I soon forgot A.H. A couple of months after my arrival at Delhi I got a letter from A.H. saying that he had conquered his fever and was doing well now. I was not very exhilarated by the news because I was too worried about my future. I had bungled the interview.

By the end of the summer of the year I returned to Madras. I called

on A.H. and I found him as usual sitting by the window which looked out on to the sea. After retelling to him all that happened to me I congratulated him on his recovery and he wished me all luck in my future undertakings, whatever they might be. There were a few moments of silence, after which he made a gesture towards the sea and said that there was after all a divinity that shaped our ends, to which I acquiesced nodding my head. His face no more wore that old nervous agitated expression but his voice was full of sadness and I knew what he was thinking; for I, too, had seen Ramanujam go out into the sea no more to return. I was somehow reassured by what A.H. said.

By now the light had thickened and a gentle sea breeze cooled our faces as we looked out of the window. The evening star was out; the harbour lights were twinkling in the distance and the dark and deep blue ocean was sending its frantically leaping waves to the shore. It was a beautiful moment.

NETAJI & SRINIVASA IYENGAR —THE STORMY PETRELS

by M. S. SRINIVASAN, M.A.

TO those who have studied the inimitable parallels of Plutarch, the English adage, 'it is ill-comparing the trophies of heroes', appears trite and meaningless. Even to compare the incomparable is to establish and appreciate the sense of human values better; and Netaji and Sri S. Srinivasa Iyengar had much in common in their illustrious career and political philosophy to escape even the superficial watcher of contemporary times.

Both embodied in themselves the strength and weakness of character of the provinces to which they belonged. They were representative men.

To an intellectual pride and tutored imagination, a Bengalee adds an unrestrained emotion and political super-consciousness. Ever in the van of Indian culture and progress and eclectic in his religious beliefs, he is at every turn a true *Vaishnavite*, the spear-head of the *Bhakti* cult which he has cherished traditionally. The teachings of the twin stars, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, ever haunt him and bind him with chains of adamant to India, of the Vedic times, and yet he is too modern to forget the teachings of the Brahmo Samaj. With him from thinking to acting is but one step. He is so convinced of the superiority of his culture and civilisation that he dreams of making India a Greater Bengal. He believes that to be parochial is to be patriotic. Subhas Babu is thus the best product of the Bengal of Rabindranath Tagore.

A Madras Brahmin has the mind of a lawyer and the heart of a philosopher. He loves intellectual pursuits to such an extent that he is liable to confuse thinking with acting, a phrase with a problem, and mastery of languages and

knowledge with the concept of good life. He is a thorough-going rationalist. His unruffled temper, controlled emotion and catholicity of views aid him to take his colour after his environment. He has no



Subhas Chandra Bose

cherished ideals, though he loves to discuss them; he is not the man to die for a cause, though he propagates it. He is so cosmopolitan in outlook that the interests of his country are on a par with those of the world. He believes that he is a traveller between this world and the next, between life and death and between modernity and ancientness. He is individualistic enough to abhor the community of life, but he clings on to it because of his innate attachment to native institutions which he neither knows how to reject nor chooses to pattern anew. The sheet-anchor of Fate to which he is inextricably bound always represses his personality. Sri Iyen-

FOR COUGHS AND COLDS

Remember

SIROLIN

"ROCHE"

USED ALL OVER THE WORLD

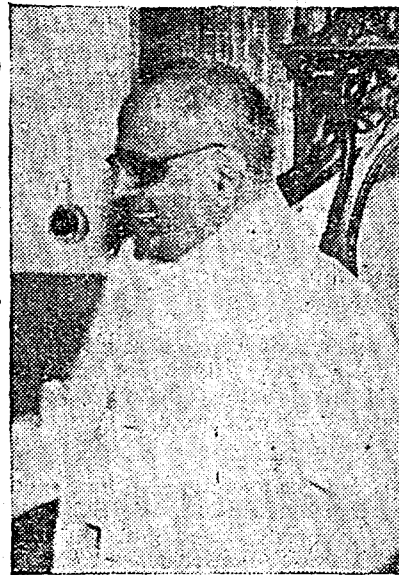
gar is the gift of this philosophy and rationalism of South India.

Netaji and Sri Iyengar had abundant self-confidence, intellectual pride, intense patriotism and amazing flair for originality. They found Gandhiji too conservative and docile in his political principles and actions. Whenever they were within the Congress they attempted to force its pace and whenever they were outside it, they tried to galvanize its programme and revolutionise its policies. They considered no sacrifice too great for their country's independence. They felt that the means always did not justify the end, and any means was good to browbeat the villainous foreign imperialist. If they erred as extremists, it was owing to their passionate love of the motherland. Their revolutionary outlook, leonine courage and masterful self-will brought them nearer and made them life-long friends. As leaders of the Forward Bloc they laboured to break the back-bone of the conservative Gandhian Congress and failed, not ingloriously. It is a wonder that the Bloc thrived at all under their relentless leadership.

The fame of Sri Iyengar rests mainly on his work as a lawyer, a legislator and a protagonist of the Independence resolution in the Madras Congress. A proud disciple of the school of advocacy of Sri Bhashyam Iyengar, he has left his indelible impress on Hindu law. His mastery of facts and marshalling of arguments were phenomenal. His knowledge and grasp of the law of a case were so complete and unique that it was difficult for the judge to follow him unless he was endowed with the same, or nearly the same, mental apparatus—quick thinking and rapidity of assimilation.

On the floor of the Indian Legislative Assembly he played as meritorious a part as Pandit Motilal Nehru himself. In fact the rivalry between these two kings among men has grown into a legend; and it was left to another gifted South Indian, Sri A. Rangaswamy Iyengar, to

bring about often the reconciliation between them. The passage of the Congress from Dominion status to Independence in the Lahore session of 1929 was in no small measure due to him. Nothing pleased the spirited Subhas and



Srinivasa Iyengar

the mettlesome Iyengar more than this neo-Congress, but it was the beginning of their end as Congressmen.

Like Subhas, Sri Iyengar spurned official positions. Like him also, he used the Presidentship of the Congress for ridding the party of cant and unconventionality. Like him again, he was not prepared to sacrifice in public speaking solidity of matter for literary finesse. Though their opposition to the orthodox Congress found much common thought to unbosom to each other, the character of Subhas had a religious and mystic veneer which Iyengar lacked. The latter was not tired of harping on "the hopeless mess of religion and politics" of Gandhiji. Dilip Kumar Roy is right in saying that Subhas would have been a 'yogi' if he had not chosen to be a politician. Subhas' escapes to the Himalayas and his attachment to

the lofty teachings of Swami Vivekananda are well-known.

It is a strange irony of Indian politics that Subhas and Iyengar, on the one hand, and Gandhiji and the younger Nehru, on the other, should have remained in opposite camps in spite of their kinship of intellectual accomplishments and political beliefs.

Subhas and Iyengar were born fighters. Both were superlative organisers and administrators and were the heart and soul of the Congress in their respective provinces. Nevertheless, the career of Subhas before 1940 was more chequered than that of his compeer. He was the lieutenant of C.R. Das, the head of the National Corps in 1921, the Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation three years later, the Secretary of the A.I.C.C., the G.O.C. of the Volunteer Corps (a prophetic

role) in 1928 and the President of the Congress in 1938 and 1939.

They were free from communal bias and their friendship with the people of all communities was remarkable. They were for a sort of *entente* with the Moslem League and suggested from time to time various plans to implement it. Subhas was majestic in his loneliness, but Iyengar's generosity extracted instinctive loyalty and allegiance from a host of followers and *chelas*, whom he liked to gather under his banner.

The younger generation cannot have better models than both these great leaders for intellectual eminence, tolerance in communal matters and high devotion to popular causes. Bengal and Madras which have much in common in spirit and in matter, must continue to cherish the memory of the two stormy petrels.

"I understand your husband is musically inclined," commented the neighbour.

"Yes, but frankly, his best notes are produced on pay day," responded the budget-conscious wife.

PROPERTY

177, Royapettah High Road.

A WARNING TO THE PUBLIC

Sympathising with Sri K. Srinivasa Ayyar alias Sri K. S. Aiyar, Proprietor, K. S. Aiyar's College, in the several vicissitudes of life he has struggled through, and trusting the representations he had made to me from time to time, and on the faith thereof, I entered into certain arrangements with him with a view to giving him a status in life and to inducing him to effect savings from his earnings. In furtherance of it and subject to the terms and conditions of the agreement arrived at between us on the 31st of January, 1945 as modified in some respects by the agreement between us dated the 25th of December, 1945, I transferred the aforesaid property to him by a sale deed dated 16-10-1946, at my cost price, notwithstanding the fact that the value of the properties had by then increased enormously. The sale was for Rs. 25,800/-. The condition subject to which the sale was made and embodied in the agreements aforesaid, was that a sum of Rs. 10,800/- should be paid to me on the 15th January, 1946 and the balance of the sale amount of Rs. 13,000/- on or before the 1st of February, 1947, and in case the amount is not paid in full by the 1st February, 1947, the sale shall become void and that he shall be entitled only to the refund of the moneys deposited with me from time to time.

He has paid so far only a sum of Rs. 7,500/- despite every consideration shown to him to achieve the aims with which I originally entered into arrangements with him. The balance not having been paid by the 1st February, 1947, the sale has become void and he is entitled only to the return of the moneys deposited by him with me from time to time. The title deeds are with me. In the circumstances set forth above, the said K. S. Aiyar has no longer any title to the property. I am always ready and willing to repay the said sum of Rs. 7,500/- to him. I have also intimated to Sri K. S. Aiyar that he is bound to execute a deed in my favour in accordance with the undertaking he has originally given.

In these circumstances, if any person should either buy the said property or advance any money on it or give credit to the said Sri K. S. Aiyar, as though he were the owner of the said property, he will do so at his risk.

"Lloyd Corner,"
Royapettah, Madras-14.

A. V. RAMAN,
20-3-1948.

SRI VAVILLA VENKATESWARA SASTRULU

by J. RAMAMURTHI

WHO manages the printing press? Who edits the journals? Who runs the publishing house? . . . To each of these three questions the answer was the same uniform: "He" from three employees belonging to the three different departments of "Vavilla House", who pointed pathetically to a small room upstairs, twelve feet by eight. And the "He" lies there stricken with a malady that denies him the use of his limbs.

Sri Vavilla Venkateswara Sastrulu, generally addressed as Sastrulu or Sastri is to be found there literally bedridden and sprawling on a small bed. A couple of rickety chairs, a small book-case and a few odd things at a window-sill complete the ornamentation of the room. Two or three pictures hanging on the wall tender an apology for the total neglect of aesthetics.

The son of a revered Sanskrit and Telugu scholar, Mr. Sastri has reared on the slender foundations laid by his father the superstructure of the premier publishing house of the South. The Vavilla Publishing House is as unimposing as its proprietor is unostentatious; but no home, where the Telugu alphabet is lispied, can truly be unaware of its existence and influence. If there is no superficial imposingness about the House, neither is there any "imposition" of heavy prices on its well got-up publications, nor any "imposture" of the publishers by way of advertisement and boosting! What the idle sightseer has perchance lost the studious reader has surely and inevitably gained!

"Office, what office?" Mr. Sastri would retort, if you were to ask for the locus of his office. "A small table that will be slipped into position, when wanted, is all that is needed to make this an office." From this small room of his, prostrate in his bed, the hand of another now and then helping him to a sitting posture or to take a

pinch of snuff, Mr. Sastri has been running the whole establishment these four years, since the malady first struck and disabled him, by the sheer force of his will and the drive of his indomitable spirit. With a mind nonetheless clear and an equanimity more chastened than disturbed, he corrects proofs when they are read out to him, answers queries, orally and on slips of paper, passes orders and writes an occasional letter with his right hand, fortunately unaffected by the paralytic stroke.

Thin and somewhat emaciated in body, his lean face turning this side and that fully intent on business, he receives visitors while he transacts business, talks while he writes and sometimes confuses his hearers while keeping his mind perfectly clear. In between these operations, he reads a book or journal or plays with children who have unlimited access to him at all times.

He talks in clipped sentences and talks more than is healthy for an invalid, with a regular punctuation of smiles. "What do you know, Sir!" He would at times snap out, when you interrupt him with a doubt of yours. "He was my classmate for three years at . . . He is my host when I go there . . . It was I that introduced him to . . . I had been a member of its managing committee" and so on. He would not mince matters or mix opinions: a spade is a spade to him, whatever its alias or however big its size. There is a tone of finality—something Johnsonian—in his criticism and argument, which is never without an anecdote to reinforce it.

Mr. Sastri is a realist and shuns untenanted idealism, he whines not for the past, he has no tremors for the future. Things take their shape according to circumstances, and circumstances which are unceasingly created and re-created by nature, cannot be forced and burgled without detriment to progress; evolu-

tion, not revolution, is nature's way—this seems to be the substance of his philosophy. He has few doubts and no illusions; action in the present "tense" and no plea for laziness on behalf of an eventually bigger future are the only things acceptable to him.

His friends and acquaintances range from school boys to high court judges, ministers of state and maharajahs, to all of whom he is uniformly courteous and obliging and whose testimony to his great qualities has been ever on the increase. A peep into his correspondence will disclose the range of his acquaintances, the variety of his interests and the multiplicity of his connections. An appeal here from a writer for help, a request there from a schoolboy to attend to a "certificate" business, an enquiry from another place for a job and solicitations for charity of many kinds from many quarters—all receive consideration and response at his hands. Public men and public servants, leaders of thought and action, men of all political complexions and sectional interests are among his friends; and they converse with, write to and get discussed by him, whose main job as a publisher should ordinarily have veered him more truly and exclusively to writers and authors of books. But scholar, writer, editor, publisher and public man that he has chosen to be in one, he finds his tastes and interests spread inevitably over a whole cross section of society. Bodily ailment has not bred in him any peevishness, nor has it dulled his sensibilities.

Mr. Sastri loves books, not as a publisher or seller does, but loves them with a passion not unmixed with jealousy, as is borne out by the secrecy with which he guards them, somewhat in the manner of George Gissing's Christopherson. He does

not flaunt them to the public gaze, if only to avoid incurring the attendant risks, but keeps them in the background of his literary tastes and activities, as modestly as he himself lives. Many, if not most, of his fine and varied collection have been books received for "review"—and this reveals the strength of his journals "Trilinga" and "Federated India", which though not very remunerative, command a sort of steady "civil practice" amidst the roaring "criminal practice" of some of their contemporaries.

Whether he has read them all or they could all have been read at all, what with his business preoccupations and social activities, is a question mark. Perhaps he has been content to follow the simple and homely advice of Bacon by "tasting" some, "chewing and assimilating" some others, and relegating the rest to the shelf for reference in case of necessity.

But for his shrewd common sense, infinite patience and dogged perseverance combined with an over-all business efficiency, the Vavilla House would not have been the institution that it now is. I see him, the Andhra Caxton-Blackwell, who has brought out from their "cloisters" the tightly-bound sheaves of palmyra leaves—sealed books of ancient lore, Sanskrit, Andhra and Tamil—into glorious print and redeemed authors and pundits from their "garrets" into the glare of full publicity. Combining business with cultural advancement, economy with liberality and political moderation with social popularity, Sri Venkateswara Sastri, kind, generous and affable, has written his full chapter in the pages of Andhra Renaissance. And if he does not talk much of religion at sixty, surely and by no stretch of imagination can you put him down for an atheist; it only means that he has still work ahead!

TOO BRIGHT

With a haughty air the elderly woman entered the jeweller's shop and settled herself in a chair. Then she inspected the youthful assistant through her lorgnette and said, coldly: "I want a present for a peer, but it must be inexpensive."

The young man's desire to help went several steps too far as he suggested, briefly: "Well, madam, what about a tin of metal polish to clean his coronet with?"—Exchange.

LEFT UNITY NOW TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

by M. M. C.

IT is the just hope of all lovers of Indian democracy who perceive many ominous signs of Big Business offensive against our hard-won freedom that efforts at consolidating the Left parties will soon be revived and carried forward. Left unity was never before so urgent in our national life as it is today.

I am not oblivious of the obvious hurdles to Left consolidation. Defeatism, accentuated by previous failures and lost chances, mutual suspicion and lack of faith in the results that might follow after all the crossing of hurdles—these are the stumbling blocks to unity. But when one considers the common danger that people all over India face today and the widened chances of reaching agreement on fundamentals, there is no cause for pessimism. It is not difficult to outline a common fundamental programme which can be the broad basis of unity between all Left parties.

Firstly, complete eradication of all traces of the communal canker from our body politic. A ceaseless fight is yet needed to stop all communal bodies from spreading hatred among our common people. What is needed is an uncompromising stand against riot-mongers and those who call for war between the Dominions.

Secondly, united stand against all princely autocrats in support of the States people struggling for democratic liberties. The bourgeois leadership is compromising with feudalism for fear of advancing democratic masses. No compromise, but all-out struggle against princedom must be our slogan.

Thirdly, guard the working class movement from disruption by the agents of Big Business. Already a parallel trade union body has been established under a national name to counteract, split and smash the united struggle of the working class fighting for social advancement

under the banner of the All-India Trade Union Congress. Solidarity and unity of the working class to which all Left parties look to for national and social salvation, must be the *sine qua non* of any Left unity.

Fourthly, fight for a democratic constitution for free India, to really establish a socialist republic, accepting the fundamental rights of labour for a living wage, old age pension and social security and of the peasant for the right to own the land he tills free from zamindari domination, accepting the right of self-determination of nationalities and proportional representation in legislative bodies.

The new constitution now being framed by the Indian Constituent Assembly is at best a mockery of democracy. It grants adult franchise and elected executives on the one hand and autocratic and sweeping powers to the executive on the other. It guarantees no fundamental rights to labour or peasant, while it guarantees adequate compensation to foreign and native capital as a fundamental right. Self-determination of nationalities has no place in the constitution and proportional representation has been rejected.

Fifthly, fight for nationalisation of key industries and abolition of all forms of landlordism. This change in the form of economic relationship alone will lead India to economic prosperity. Any attempt to pamper Big Business will keep going the colonial economy. This will also leave the field open for the foreign capitalists to continue and increase their strangle-hold on the economy, reducing our political freedom to a mere name.

The dangers are imminent and real. National sovereignty and democratic progress demand urgent Left consolidation on the basis outlined above.

CHRISTIANS IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

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

THE Christians in India can legitimately feel proud of the fact that they have never made a nuisance of themselves to their sister communities in the country. Under the British rule, when there had been a premium on communal separatism and minority intransigence, the Christians managed to live without betraying much of the symptoms of minority complex. But it must also be admitted by the Christians that their contribution of service and sacrifice to the cause of the liberation of the country from foreign domination had not been very substantial. One important reason for their failure to play an active role in the national struggle is to be seen in the distribution of their population. Even though in population the Indian Christians number a little more than the Sikhs, their political strength has been very insignificant when compared with the latter. The Sikhs, though small in numbers, mainly belong to one geographical area and this has given them unity and strength and even a disproportionate degree of political influence. But out of a total Christian population of about 64 lakhs, nearly 29 lakhs belong to the Indian States and the rest are scattered all over the various provinces. In no province are they able to play an effective part, their average strength in British India being only 1 per cent of the total population.

Another important reason for the lack of enthusiasm of the Christians in the national movement was the unhealthy influence of the white missionaries over the vast majority of them. With a few honourable exceptions the foreign missionaries in India had generally taken a hostile attitude towards the nationalist struggle in the country and openly discouraged their Christian followers from taking part in it. The poor and the backward among the Christians—and they are in a major-

ity—dependent on missionary help for their education and employment, could not afford to displease their superiors and when loyalty to the missionary became incompatible with loyalty to the national cause, they had to sacrifice the latter for the former. Whatever might be the invaluable services rendered by the foreign missionaries to the cause of educational and social uplift of the Christians in India, they cannot escape the charge that they have consciously or unconsciously prevented their Christian followers from playing their full part in the nationalist movement. It is really a matter of shame and humiliation to find Christians in many parts of our country living a spoon-fed existence, tied to the apron strings of the white missionaries. Constant contact with the missionaries has unfortunately created in many of them a deplorable complex of inferiority and they look up to the missionary as their teacher, patron, moral guide and adviser. But in spite of these influences, the Indian Christian could never forget that he was an Indian and that his interests were inextricably linked with those of his Hindu brethren. The Christians in India, unlike some other minorities, have no distinct culture or civilisation to speak of, and no political objectives to aspire for. Their past, present and future are bound with those of the Hindus and naturally they could not afford to be completely cut off from the currents of nationalism.

Partition has seriously affected the position of all the minority communities, but in the case of the Christians it has made very little difference, as the number of Christians in Pakistan is very insignificant. Perhaps the only difference it has made for the Christian community is that it has slightly increased the percentage of its population in the Indian Union. Neither would the abolition of weightage in

the legislatures affect the Christians seriously because they do not enjoy much weightage in this field at present. Christian representation in the legislatures according to the 1935 Act is very insignificant except in Madras where they have nine members. But even according to their population strength they are entitled to nine seats. In the lower house of the federal legislature they were given eight seats while they were entitled to only five, but in the upper house they were not given any seats, even though they were entitled to at least two. Thus the abolition of weightage in the legislatures will not at all affect the Christian community adversely. Some Christian leaders have been very zealous about retaining the system of reservation of seats and they have succeeded in making the Constituent Assembly accept their proposals, though only for a limited period. This only betrays a lack of confidence in the sense of fairplay of the majority community, and one wonders whether there is any justification for it. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Indian Christians were given more seats than were warranted by their population strength, even though no statutory minimum was prescribed for Christian representation. In fact Christians will find it more advantageous to have no reservation of seats.

It is a well known fact that Indian Christians have never been enthusiastic or happy about separate electorates which was an unsolicited gift of the British Government. Separate electorates had only served to destroy the political influence

of the Christian community and the Christians have every reason to feel happy over its abolition.

Under the British rule minorities have been always encouraged to agitate for statutory safeguards; Indian Christians also have asked for and obtained some rights and privileges. But now the minorities in India are convinced that the British devices of introducing safeguards were not intended to protect the interests of the minorities, but only to 'guard' their own interests 'safely'. The experience of the last six months should convince the Christians in India that the surest and safest safeguard for them is the goodwill of the majority community. The declaration of India as a secular state should disarm the Indian Christian of his fears and misgivings, if he has any. In the matter of the important political appointments like Cabinet Ministers and Governors, Christians have been given more than their legitimate share. In the discussions and decisions of the Constituent Assembly the Christian viewpoints have been fully respected and in the declaration of Fundamental Rights and the guarantee of religious freedom the majority community had been generous. It is quite necessary that the Christian community in India should appreciate these facts fully. Christians can naturally feel proud of the fact that even in the worst days of communal politics their community had not produced a Jinnah or an Ambedkar. But this is only a negative virtue. The greatest service that the Christians can now render to our new-born nationalism is to forget that they are a communal minority.

THE TREND

Prof. Albert Einstein may be regarded as omniscient on the subject of the atom bomb, since his initial research made it possible. But he does not regard himself as all-knowing. The other evening he was asked by friends what new weapons might be employed in World War III. He shook his head, and after several minutes of meditation, said, "I don't know what weapons might be used in World War III. But there isn't any doubt what weapons will be used in World War IV."

"And what are those?" a guest asked.

"Stone spears," said Einstein.—Boston Globe.

THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGES

by R. B. N.

THE historic change of 15th August, 1947 gave a fresh impetus to the re-examination of those aspects of national life which owe their existence to the political conditions of the last two centuries. The scheme of things is being changed so as to promote national regeneration. In this introspective mood, the English language has not escaped attention. It is being pushed down from pride of place in the official and educational world. While this is a natural reaction, it is necessary that the danger of any scheme of linguistic priorities being based merely on an outburst of sentiment should be averted. The salutary warning of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad did not come a day too soon.

Our linguistic needs are too many to permit of easy solution, particularly in non-Hindi speaking areas. The role of the regional language cannot be overlooked in the anxiety to provide for a national *lingua franca*. The regional language is the natural medium for the cultural expression of the region. It is not merely the language of the market place; it is the language of the home, the language learnt by every baby. It is almost a part of the nature of the area. The regional language has the largest claim on the young ones. Then there is the need for a medium for inter-provincial communication in the spheres of trade, administration and diplomacy, and also to facilitate travel. Along with the regional language and the national *lingua franca*, English claims recognition by virtue of its present position and also its intrinsic worth from the standpoint of literature and global importance. Further, there are the claims of Sanskrit and Persian. If all these are to share honours equally, the younger generation will have little time and energy left for anything else after mastering the various scripts, grammars and usages. While linguistic attainments

in individuals are worthy of respect, to burden them with multi-lingualism is a criminal waste of vital energy. Only a judicious balance of claims can release creative energy for purposes of happier living.

The regional language does not present much difficulty. Already it has become the medium of instruction in most secondary schools. It is a maxim of educational theory that the mother-tongue is the best medium of instruction. In the case of students whose mother-tongue is not the regional language, there must be provision for instruction in their own language, provided that does not entail a very heavy burden. It should be possible to teach that language as an optional in the secondary stage of education.

It is urged with vigour in certain quarters that Hindi ought to enjoy the position held by English today, that not only should it be the official language of India, but also the medium of university education in the country. The replacement of English by Hindi immediately is demanded. Is such an abolition of English desirable? Is it practicable? Is English no more than the imperialist's means of retaining his hold?

At the last Writers' Conference at Benares under the auspices of the P.E.N., the crowning event was a reception to P.E.N. members at the Nagari Pracharini Sabha at which the guest of honour was Madame Sophia Wadia. She could not speak Hindi, and the organisers would have no other language. She could therefore not speak at all.

English is not merely the language of commerce and diplomacy; it includes within its compass a noble literature whose forms and patterns, thought and ideas have influenced not a little the renaissance in Indian languages. As Mr. Amarnath Jha observes, "It (English) must continue to be studied in this country, both because of its global importance and for its own sake as

enshrining a noble literature at the springs of which many Indians have drunk deep and from the loftiest strains of which we have derived valuable inspiration."

Indian languages are far behind modern European languages in information in any department of knowledge. Students engaged in advanced studies in any field of human inquiry are severely handicapped if they have no acquaintance with English (or other European languages). *May's Parliamentary Practice* may be translated to Hindi, but that will hardly give an insight into parliamentary practice. Nor is a mere translation of standard works likely to solve the problem. In these days of specialised knowledge, one has to keep in touch with current thought in other countries with the aid of technical journals at first hand.

English has to continue as the medium of instruction in the university stage until the regional languages are developed sufficiently to take its place. Even after the necessary textbooks are made available and the regional language becomes the medium, an acquaintance with English should be the condition of higher education so that there may be direct access to the relevant matter and also a parity with studies in the same subjects

elsewhere. To introduce Hindi (in regions where it is not the regional language) as the medium in the university stage is to sacrifice the regional languages, which is hardly conducive to the cultural development of the various linguistic groups.

In the secondary stage, while the regional language is the medium, English must be taught compulsorily. Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian may become optionals. That not more than two languages should be compulsory is a healthy educational maxim.

In areas where Hindi is not the regional language, Hindi will have to remain as the *lingua franca*, a linguistic medium for inter-provincial communication. It should not be difficult to gain a working knowledge of it in a year or two. Attempts to make it the official language of such areas, or the medium of higher education, or in any other manner to jeopardise the regional languages will be harmful. English may continue as an official language in the Union under a bi-lingual scheme. English will then exert a wholesome influence on the national life. By sharing experience with the world, the administrators, the legislators, the educationists and others will bring to bear on their activities a breadth of vision that will be hardly possible otherwise.

Some Sound Advice

Do you want to prevent a nervous breakdown? Dr. Louis Bisch in "Your Nerves" gives you these rules:

1. Don't repress your emotions. Let off emotional steam. Laugh, sing, shout.
2. Remove all feelings of guilt that you may have over past and present happenings.
3. Don't punish yourself needlessly.
4. Reduce your degree of over-sensitiveness by getting tough. Be outspoken, stick to your opinions, ask questions.
5. Add variety to your life, Change your routine regularly.
6. Try to get eight hours of sleep every night.
7. Conserve your energy. Learn how to work to make the most of your time. Don't waste time in wishful thinking and idle gossip.

RAMGOPAL, EXPONENT OF GENUINE INDIAN ART

by E. KRISHNA IYER

DISCERNING connoisseurs of Indian Dance would have been immensely pleased to read the report that appeared in our papers some time back about the mounting appreciation for Ramgopal's dances

Indian, had been till recently under that illusion. In these depressing circumstances, some of our classical dance forms suffered neglect and deterioration for want of discerning patronage.

So much so, when Anna Pavlova, the famous Russian danseuse, visited India in 1928 and 1930, the condition of our dance art and its traditional exponents appeared to be pitiable to her eyes. Still she picked, with the help of Uday Shankar, what she was able to find in the North Indian Kathak type and setting it in the background of western music and presentation, she fashioned some new types of oriental dances.

Later, Uday Shankar formed his own troupe and toured Europe and America, presenting what purported to be Indian dances, taking the cue from Anna Pavlova. Perhaps to him, what he knew of Indian dances was not presentable as such without being westernised to please western audiences. This kind of outlook and habit caught most of our other globe-trotters also who followed in his wake. Menaka (Mrs. Leila Sokey) of Bombay also toured in western countries presenting Indian dances mostly of the Kathak type. It is true that these early artistes contributed to the popularity of Indian dances in the western world and to raise India in its estimation. But in their pioneering efforts, the purity of our classical traditions had to be sacrificed.

Meantime, the historic press controversy between the present writer and a leading social reformer over the revival of our classical art helped immensely to consolidate the sporadic efforts in various parts of the country in that direction and set in a nation-wide renaissance in the art. Some of our scholars began to delve deep into the ancient



Ramgopal

in London and Paris and about the invitation extended to him to take part in the ensuing International Festival of Arts in New York in October. More important than this is the report that his Indian dances are genuinely classical and that he is not prepared to mix up western styles in Indian art even to placate European tastes.

For a long time, only a few savants like Professor Sylvian Levi, Dr. Cousts Sachs and Rolfe De Mare had understood the real greatness and beauty of our ancient dance art. To most other westerners, Indian civilisation and traditional fine arts appeared to be crude and to require regeneration on western lines. Most of our English-educated countrymen too with their inferiority complex about most things

literature connected with it and to disseminate knowledge about the real nature of our classical traditions and about the comparative values of their different forms.

When in this atmosphere Uday Shankar visited Madras and displayed what purported to be Indian classical dances, the unclassical and westernised nature of his art was exposed by our scholars. Then most of the globe-trotters of the time began to nibble at Kathakali and to render it with their wonted mixtures of alien styles. Fortunately the Sadir-Bharatha Natya was untouched by them, as it appeared to them to be too austere and remote a goddess to be easily meddled with!

By this time, Tamil Nad and Kerala artistes with genuine Bharata Natya and Kathakali art had come up and familiarised both North Indian and Southern audiences with the richness and real beauty of classical traditions in all their purity. The display of the then available styles of Bharata Natya by the best artistes of the day and the glorious tribute paid to Kumbakonam Varalakshmi's exquisite style in particular by the Japanese poet Nogu Suchi in the 1935 Congress Music Festival at Madras laid the coping stone to the arch of widespread realisation that our classical technique and traditional modes in the dance art could be presented with effect to please any audience without any need to mix up western styles to embellish them.

Ramgopal was the first among the world-touring dancers to take to Bharata Natya also and to expound what he learnt of the various forms of Indian dances in these classical styles without westernising them or without making an incongruous

mixture of Indian styles. His art is noted not only for the beauty of its poses and movements but also for its traditionally correct *mudras* and wealth of facial expression. That with his innate faith in the presentability of our classical styles as they are, he expounds them before European audiences without westernising them and gets all the greater appreciation for it in Paris and London, is a great tribute not only to his faith and courage but also to the intrinsic worth of our great classical traditions.

Ramgopal is a Bangalorian. Endowed by nature with an exceptionally graceful personality, he took to dancing very early in life. In 1936 he joined the troupe of La Meri who visited Madras and travelled with her as far as Japan. Later he went to Europe by himself and easily won fame and fortune by solo dances first and by troupe dances subsequently. In 1941-42 he took intensive training in Bharata Natya under the old veteran Pandanallur Meenakshisundaram Pillai and proved that certain aspects of this essentially feminine art could be handed also by men with exceptional physical charm. Organizing an art training centre at Bangalore, and gathering successive troupes of talented artistes, he expounded his art in important cities in India and Ceylon and won widespread appreciation for his genius. He is now again in Europe delighting London and Paris audiences with his genuine Indian classical dances.

That such a rare Indian dancer of world renown should be selected to represent India at the ensuing International Festival of Arts in New York is a happy augury for free India and is an important milestone in getting increasing world appreciation for our classical art by proper methods.

SOMETHING FOR THE BOOK

The United States Government marks its press releases with the advance date of publication and the more important ones carry an additional notation in red ink: "Confidential, Hold For Release."

From the Department of Agriculture one day arrived one of these red-linked dispatches, and the editors naturally took care to observe the release date.

At the proper time the item was published. It was a recipe for a new cake.



THE capitalists hate the Communists. The Fascists shoot the Communists (as they did recently in Calcutta). The Socialists distrust the Communists. The Government (as in Bengal) bans the Communists.

And yet very few of the enemies and critics of Communists know anything about them, their Party and their Party Line—that strange, straight line that, like the Equator, goes round and round without any deviation! Apart from the popular legends (the Communists are godless atheists, paid agents of Moscow, immoral rakes, long-haired and bearded Bolshies, etc.) the average newspaper reader knows next to nothing about the Communists. Even the legends have become out of date. For instance, today you will find it difficult to spot a long-haired Comrade, and I won't be surprised if there is a Party directive on the subject of regular haircuts! I know that drinking is officially forbidden (or at least very severely frowned upon)—as I also know that now and then individual Communists do sip a peg or two on the quiet!

ENTER 'BEETEE', EXIT 'PEESEE'!

I am neither a Communist nor a fellow-traveller (if by that is meant a non-official adherent to the Party Line), and on various occasions I have publicly expressed serious ideological differences with my Communist friends. That, however, need not give me a Communist phobia. Political differences need not develop into blind-spots of pre-

judice. And in any case, even if the Communists are "enemy number one", is it not one's duty to know everything possible about the "enemy"?

And yet most of the Indian newspaper readers can—and do—get more details of a Fascist meeting in Nuremberg, a Communist rally in Milan, a Shinto ceremony in Tokyo, a cricket match in Australia, or a horse race in England, than about the Communist Party of India's Convention recently held in Calcutta. So far as the bulk of the Indian press is concerned, this Convention need never have been held.

How many in the country (who get epileptic fits every time the word Communist is mentioned) know that at this Convention the Communist Party of India almost split into two, that the old General Secretary and most members of the old Central Committee were overthrown on the charge of anti-Marxist deviations of ideology and policy? How many are even vaguely aware that at this Convention the Communist Party not only threw the old leadership overboard but also disowned several of its previous policies? And that the discredited General Secretary, instead of defending his actions, wept helplessly and went into an emotional harangue—against himself?

The substitution of hard-bitten, lean and lanky Maharashtrian B. T. Ranadive (known to all his comrades as "Beetee") for the soft-spoken, shortish and stocky

Kumaon-born P. C. Joshi (affectionately known to Party members as "Peesee") is not merely a change of personalities. It indicates and symbolizes yet another radical re-orientation of the "Party Line"—from "All support to Nehru Government" (in August 1947) to conditional support to Nehru Government (up to January 1948) to unconditional hostility to the "bourgeois" Nehru Government (March 1948)! "Peesee", as General Secretary for six years, represented the policy of the "United Front", of co-operation with progressive nationalist forces, of respectful criticism of Gandhiji and national leadership, of broad-based co-operation with non-Communist progressives in cultural as well as political fields. His own personality—a strange blend of lovable humanism and untiring, almost fanatical devotion to the Party—was a definite asset in the pursuit of that policy. "Beetee", on the other hand, represents the new policy of open class warfare and uncompromising hostility towards the "National" Government. And the dry, single-track, somewhat humourless personality of this brilliant economist-turned-revolutionist will no doubt rob the Communist policy of whatever elasticity and resilience it had acquired during the "Peesee" regime.

At the Party Convention, "Beetee" Ranadive who led the assault on the "Right-reformist deviations and vacillations" of Joshi, took four hours to read his lengthy Report on Self-Criticism. Summing up he said:

"To-day Comrade Joshi unreservedly accepts the political thesis though he will certainly have to struggle very much to make a complete turn. For a time there was a serious situation inside our Party. Reformism had invaded our ranks".

The amazing part of the proceedings, however, was that "Beetee" was followed by "Peesee" who

"fully supported Com. Ranadive's report. He said that he himself was the leader and organiser of the Right-reformist de-

viations inside the Party and he was the last among the Central Committee members to accept the political line of the (new) thesis. He mercilessly criticised his own mistakes and traced its ideological roots to the repudiation of Marxism and Leninism. HE WAS OVERWHELMED WITH EMOTION (Shades of the Moscow Trials when self-confessed traitors vied with one another to curse, abuse and expose their own respective disruptionist tactics!)

I TOLD YOU SO, COMRADE!

A significant admission in Ranadive's "self-criticism" relates to the Communists' support of the League's Pakistan ideology—a policy which I had all along severely criticised as being not only anti-national but un-Marxian. A long time ago I wrote:

"The Communist Party of India provided the Muslim separatists with an ideological basis for their irrational and anti-national demand for Pakistan. Phrases like 'homeland', 'nationalities', 'self-determination', etc. were ammunition supplied by the Communists to the legions of Pakistan".

After all these years of being dubbed an "emotional petite bourgeois nationalist" for my anti-Pakistan stand, it is some consolation to find my "thesis" confirmed and vindicated by no less a person than "Beetee" Ranadive who said in his Self-Criticism Report:

"We often applied the principle of self-determination in a manner which helped the separatist demand of the Muslim League for Pakistan".

POSERS FOR THE PARTY

The other day when I met the new General Secretary I asked him a few searching questions which "Beetee" answered in a halting, deliberate, cool and passionless tone, in sharp contrast with the gushing, warm-hearted, impulsive manner of "Peesee".

The Communist Party of India, he said, is 20 years old but it had functioned on a real all-India basis

only since 1938, had worked legally only for six years. The membership now stands at 89,000—both part-timers and whole-timers who, mostly, live on less than forty rupees a month and the hope of revolution! The Party is strongest in Andhra and Bengal.

To what do you ascribe the failure of your party to grow more popular in the country? "Beetee" pondered my ticklish question for quite some minutes before he replied. He gave five reasons:

1. For the first few years only isolated groups worked here and there. It was much later that the nucleus of an all-India party was established.

2. By the time the Communists arrived in the political field, the earlier "nationalist movement" was already entrenched.

3. Communists had to contend with a strong anti-Communist prejudice and misrepresentation engineered by the capitalists.

4. "Perhaps", he said, "our own mistakes also retarded our progress".

5. India was kept isolated from the international cross-currents by imperialists and hence the impact of Communist ideas was not very strongly felt here.

NO DANGER OF WAR?

Other interesting points which emerged from the interview:

"Beetee" thinks there is NO immediate danger of world war, though American capitalism is spreading a war fever. More likely is a pattern of intervention—e.g. in Italy, as in Greece.

The ideal of the Communist Party is "a democratic state going towards socialism". The people's disillusionment with the Congress governments, he hopes, will help them to appreciate the Communist view-point.

"Beetee" has no personal contacts with any Socialists, but he hopes for co-operation with them on specific issues—e.g. in the Bombay Corporation. In the rank-and-file of both the parties,

he said, there is a definite sentiment for Left Unity.

And here are some personal side-lights on the new General Secretary of the C.P.I. He is 44 years old, married (to a former Maharashtrian film star), was a student of the Bombay School of Economics, has been to prison thrice and spent a total of seven years in jail.

WHEN FRIENDS BECOME FOES

It is ironic to recall that during this interview "Beetee" told me that the Party Headquarters was being immediately shifted to Calcutta—"because we have a better base there". Only three days later the blow fell in Bengal. The Party was banned throughout that province, followed by large-scale arrests of Communist workers.

It is a still greater irony to recall that five years ago both the Governor and the Premier of Bengal were the favourites of the Communists and were often praised in the pages of the "People's War"—"C.R." (who was then out of the Congress) for his support to the "self-determination" demand of the League and to the "People's War" line, and Dr. B. C. Roy for his humanitarian work during the Great Famine!

RUSSIANS ARE NOT ALL RED!

Any one who imagines that the average Soviet citizens are cast in the same mould as their Communist friends in India would be pleasantly surprised to meet a Russian in flesh and blood. To begin with, you will notice that the Tovarisch from Moscow or Leningrad is no more like a "Bearded Bolshie" of the cartoons than Jawaharlal Nehru is a naked fakir sitting on a bed of spikes. The Russians I have met so far look—and behave—more like friendly, informal, non-capitalist Americans. Few of them are members of the Communist Party and, now that the revolution has been consolidated, their interest in politics has none of the fanatic's zeal.

The other day I met a young official of the Soviet Trade Mission, Artemi Chumachenko, a smiling gay person, who lives in Calcutta and seemed more interested in rassogolas than revolution, and the

only thing "red" about him was his face! It was quite a surprise to hear him talking Hindustani which, despite his apologies, was quite fluent. He told me he had been learning the language for only six months. Quite a linguistic achievement!

Chumachenko told me an interesting story of how, on board a Soviet ship, he heard some sailors singing a song about India. It was a Russian rendering of a song written in Tadjik by Tursun Zadez, the Tadjik poet (who came to India to attend the Asian Relations Conference), and described the natural beauty and potential wealth of India, contrasted with the misery and plight of its people under imperialism.

Indo-Soviet relations would greatly improve if we could meet more such genuine Soviet citizens instead of the local over-zealous Indo-Russians!

I.L.P., R.I.P.

The Independent Labour Party is dead—or, rather, it has committed political suicide, by dissolving itself. May it rest in peace!

This party of noble traditions died of old age—it was 56 years old. Also it died of "goodness" and, like the death of Gandhiji, demonstrated "the danger of being too good". The I.L.P. possessed neither the opportunism of the Labour Party nor the fanatical ruthless single-mindedness of the Communists.

The I.L.P. was founded by the great Socialist, Keir Hardie, who shocked the top-hatted House of Commons in 1892 by taking his seat dressed in a proletarian cloth cap and a provokingly revolutionary red muffler. Among the founder members was George Bernard Shaw, as also the late Ramsay MacDonald of unhallowed memory.

Keir Hardie was one of the most picturesque figures in the world socialist movement. Bearded, like Karl Marx, he was that rare thing—a proletarian intellectual. In his "Inside The Left", Fenner Brockway thus describes his first meeting with Hardie:

"I had some difficulty in finding his lodgings. Hardie was living in a little rabbit-warren at the back of Fleet Street. It was a white-washed alley so narrow that if one stretched out one's hands one touched both walls... Hardie had a healthy suspicion of journalists and he received me uneasily. His clothes were of tweed, with a belt round his waist... His head was magnificent—domed and framed with white hair brushed back in a curve. My first impression was of a gruff old sheep-dog."

When reporter Brockway left, Hardie warmly shook his hand and said, "Young man, if you want to serve your day and generation, you'll join the Socialist Movement". Brockway did!

The I.L.P. was never afraid of taking an unpopular line, in pursuance of its Socialist principles. In 1914 the I.L.P. declared:

"Workers of Great Britain, unite with the organised workers of France and Russia, in saying that though our Governments declare war, we declare peace." And Hardie wrote: "Already the roar and song of war-maddened people is filling the streets of London. The I.L.P. at least will stand firm. Keep the Red Flag flying!"

On the issue of anti-imperialism in general and Indian freedom in particular, the I.L.P. had an impeccable record. It never equivocated in its demand for liquidation of the Empire, and unqualified and immediate independence for India and all the colonies. During the Civil Disobedience movement, the I.L.P. M.P.'s Jimmy Maxton and Fenner Brockway were the only champions of the Indian cause in Parliament.

In Britain no one seems to have shed a tear on the passing away of the I.L.P. But India will genuinely mourn the death of a Party that always stood by India.

SPIRITUALISM MARCHES ON

The forces of spiritualism continue to make encroachments on the domain of the Left. Rahul Sank-

atayan left the Communist Party for the sake of Hindi *bhasha* and the Hindu *dharma*. "J.P." prescribes a spiritual *kaya-kalp* for the nation. (I believe there was a furore over this in the Socialist Party convention and "J.P." said by "spiritual" he had meant "psychological", but did not explain why he chose three spiritualists and not three psychologists!)

And now I reliably understand that a very prominent Socialist Party leader is retiring from politics, retiring to an ashram to sit at the feet of a spiritual *guru*! So help me, shades of Karl Marx, Lenin and Keir Hardie!

MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Re: Your and your Government's declared policy of progress by slow degrees, nationalisation in easy stages, gradual increase in workers' wages, and strong opposition to any radical measures for social and economic change: "Moderation is not a bright and scintillating virtue. It produces dullness... Moderation and conservatism and a desire to avoid risks and sudden changes are often the inevitable accompaniments of old age. They do not seem quite so appropriate in the young, but ours is an ancient land, and sometimes its children seem to be born tired and weary, with all the lack-lustre and marks of age upon them. But even this old country is now convulsed by the forces of change, and the moderate outlook is bewildered. The old world is passing, and all the sweet reasonableness of which the Liberals (or, shall we say, Congress leaders? K.A.A.) are capable does not make any difference; they might as well argue with the hurricane or the flood or the earthquake." (Your *Autobiography*, page 411). Are we, then, to presume that the "eternal youth" is at last growing old?

BOOK OF THE WEEK

It is also definitely the Book of the Month, and perhaps the book of the Year—Madhuri Desai's "TO THE BUILDERS OF TOMORROW" (Oxford University Press, Rs. 8-8).

I can think of very few books which have dealt with such a seri-

ous, human problem in such a lively, entertaining manner—books like "Moscow has A Plan" or Minoo Masani's "Our India".

"To The Builders of Tomorrow" may be described as a popular history of Medicine—"the long way that Medicine has travelled from the marshes of magic and mysticism to the bright and promising fields of scientific and rational practice" But it is much more than that. It is a fascinating and inspiring saga of man's long and heroic battle against disease. And for once the heroes who are glorified are not kings and emperors, tyrants and conquerors, but the gallant band of scientists and physicians who have contributed so much to human life and human happiness.

Written as it is in the form of letters to the author's children, the book has special value for us in India and I would like to see it translated in every single Indian language and made available to every school student.

The illustrations by Nivedita Parmanand are excellent, educative and imaginative; while Sunil Janah's photographs—so realistic, so grim and yet so artistic—by themselves constitute a sociological study of the miserable and unhygienic conditions in which millions of our countrymen are forced to live.

One suggestion: In later editions, why not add a chapter on that newest and most fascinating (as also the most misunderstood) branch of the science of healing—psychiatry?

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"Corruption, nepotism, jobbery, and red-tapism are rampant all over (East Punjab). Communalism is safely entrenched in positions of power, influence and vantage... Those who looted helpless Muslims do not always hesitate to loot their own helpless co-religionists. Reaction reigns supreme... the provincial Sangh Sanchalak, R.B. Badri Dass, has not even been warned, although he had the audacity to print leaflets in defence of the R.S.S. even after Gandhiji's assassination

The States in East Punjab are in the grip of rank autocracy and feudalism. The rulers and the ruling classes . . . are employing fascist and 'goonda' tactics to stem the rising tide of popular forces".—JANATA (The Socialist Party paper).

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"CUTTACK: Priyambada Debi, a lady Member of Orissa Legislative Assembly was aggrieved that while a reward of Rs. 3 was offered

for killing a male monkey only Rs. 2 were given for a female monkey. She demanded that in these days of sex equality no differentiation should be made between male and female monkeys".—U.P. Paper.

"LAHORE: According to a Muslim astrologer, Muslims will soon get another Empire—this time in China, where a Muslim revolt is predicted in May 1948".—Pakistan paper.

THE "ACCOUNTANCY" OF CRICKET

by N. S. R.

"For the rest, apply to the scorers", once wrote Mr. Neville Cardus, with the air of one consigning an object of contempt to the nethermost pit. He has elsewhere spoken severely of the "accountancy" of cricket. Much respect is necessarily due to the opinions of so distinguished an author, but it does not appear that the facts and figures of the game deserve to be treated with contumely. It is undeniable that, compared with essays on style and method, these ought to be content with an inconspicuous place in the literature of the game. This inferiority of stature has been so universally acknowledged that no one presumes to set Mr. E. L. Roberts above Mr. Cardus himself. But to acknowledge this is one aspect of the matter; to deny any merit altogether to compilations is quite another. Records serve the ends of the game at least as much as most poetical rhapsodies.

This fact has been amply recognised in England, where the possessor of all the eighty-four editions of Wisden counts himself exceedingly fortunate. But, until recently, the task was not so much as attempted in this country.

The compiler of that publication, "Twelve Years of Ranji Trophy", has now placed before the public the records of the last season.* The game in India knows no more patient student or perspicacious critic than Mr. Gurunathan. He combines in himself the attributes of an active participant in the game and the diligent "accountant" of Mr. Cardus' phrase. The result of his labours is a pleasant little volume, full of the good things of the game. Modelled on Wisden, than which a better inspiration can scarcely be found,

it contains complete records of all the matches played in the Ranji Trophy Tournament, the Inter-University Tournament, and the "festival fixtures" played in this country in 1946-47. In addition, the scores of the Indian team in England in 1946 have been included. This compilation compels admiration not only because it is presumably the only one in the field, but also because it is difficult to see how it could have been done better in accuracy of figures, knowledgeableness of criticism and attractiveness of presentation.

The compiler, who has chosen the Nawab of Pataudi, V. M. Merchant, V. S. Hazare, L. Amarnath and V. Mankad, as the "cricketers of the year", has included articles by C. K. Nayudu and Mr. Berry Sarbadhikari. It is unpleasant to find the former distinguished player emitting the familiar tackle about "brighter cricket", that is to say brighter batting. It is not clear why this branch of the game alone should receive such honoured attention. Mr. Sarbadhikari contributes a meandering account of the Indian tour in England. One may gather from it that he once sat next to Commander Fry, and that on another occasion he took tea with 'Bean' Vincent of The Times, and Harold Dale of the Express. These incidents cannot, however, be considered valuable lessons for the game in India.

But the wise reader will turn to Mr. Gurunathan's volume less for the views of its contributors than for the unerring array of figures, so patiently compiled and attractively presented. It is comforting to learn that it will be published annually. It will serve to remove from Indian cricket the stigma of what may be called illiteracy.

* Indian Cricket Almanack for 1946-47. Compiled by S. K. Gurunathan. Price Rs. Three. Published by Kasturi and Sons, Mount Road, Madras.

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OUR DEFENCE FINANCES

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

DEFENCE has become a subject of primary importance for us for obvious reasons and we have been promised a separate defence budget from this year onwards by the Minister for Defence. It is good for technical experts to have an important say on the defence problems but unless the people take an intelligent interest in them, not much can be done by soldiers and experts alone. "War" as Chateaubriand remarked "is too serious a matter to be left to the soldiers alone". An intelligent public opinion alone can correct lopsided or myopic errors of experts and maintain the nation's morale in all crises.

A defence budget as a humorist remarked is a onesided budget, all debits and no credits. But even within its limited compass, the figures of defence expenditure are no true guide to the efficiency of our defence. Leaving aside inefficient planning and expenditure, it cannot estimate such human factors as the mental alertness or morale of the nation and its army, the vulnerability or defensibility of the frontiers and the soundness of its foreign relations. Defence finances again depend much on the total volume and level of the nation's industrial development, apart from the incalculable human factors. To have a clear idea of the finances of defence a thorough examination of our material resources and the level of industrial production is necessary.

The question as to what percentage of the nation's income can be spent on the army, has to be answered differently for different countries and for different circumstances. It was usual for our leaders in days gone by to criticise our army expenditure as too high for poor India, while the usual British retort was that the percentage was ridiculously low compared to other countries. It is clear that these percentages can never be fixed arbitrarily. Defence expenditure, though unproductive, is a necessary evil in an imperfect world. We will have

to spend as much on defence as will secure a reasonable preparedness against all foreseeable aggression.

After partition, we have been the worst sufferers by the division of the army. Considering our area, population and the length of our frontier we were entitled to three-fourths of the army's equipment, but we have been allotted on an average only two-thirds. We are thus starting with a heavy initial handicap. Even this deficiency could have been easily made up by our industrial production but actually it is augmented by other reasons. First is the enormous cost in material of the operations in Kashmir, with comparatively little loss to Pakistan. Second is the absolute lack of capital equipment and technical assistance. Thirdly, the very length and vulnerability of our new frontiers necessitate far greater expenditure. But as Dr. Ambedkar pointed out in his 'Thoughts on Pakistan' "A safe army is better than a safe border". It may be urged that we are relieved of the burden of large subsidies to frontier tribes, but we are paying it in a different form in Kashmir. Again, the Punjab was benefiting far in excess of her productive capacity, due to the old army policy, while now we are free to readjust our defence expenditure rationally. But while the losses are immediately crippling, the gains may take time and will need wise statesmanship to materialize.

Let us now analyse our material resources from the viewpoint of defence. Of coal and iron, which are the backbone of army ordnance, we have just enough. Our potential resources in iron are very large but our coal resources in area and volume are too limited for the exploitation of all our iron, unless some other process with less or no coal is worked up successfully to utilise our iron ores. At present the iron production is just sufficient to meet our transport, housing, and

general industrial requirements. Our coal however is not even sufficient for our transport needs, while we have no petroleum and no big coal-tar distillation industry. Even from the peacetime production point of view, many scientists have condemned the unwisdom of the suicidal policy of wasting our meagre coal resources as fuel, while we lack organic chemicals and petroleum. In fact our lack of petroleum may cost us heavily, unless we have a planned production of synthetic petrol from coal, and types of liquid fuel like power alcohol, etc. The organic chemical industries which are vital for defence depend on a large coal-tar distillation industry, which however is still in its infancy. All this makes clear the supreme importance of conserving our coal resources. The heavy chemical industry which is the backbone of the explosive industry has also to be developed to a great extent, though we do not lack raw materials. The plastics industry, vital to defence, especially in aircraft construction, has also yet to be developed on the basis of a large basic organic chemical industry. From this cursory survey it can be seen that we are not deficient in raw materials except petroleum, which however can be remedied by planned production of synthetic petrol.

Next to ordnance, food and transport are important requirements of defence. An army marches on its belly. Good transport multiplies the strength of an army hundred-fold by increasing its mobility. Our food production is not sufficient to meet our peacetime requirements, and our transport both by rail, road and sea is woefully inadequate. The demands of defence do not differ from those of commerce and general wellbeing in these respects, only they are larger and more pressing.

What are the additional problems of defence finance over those of general finance? Peacetime planning aims at the maximum utilization of all our resources, by production and its equitable distribution and not much more. It envisages a vigorous free exchange of goods between countries. But defence finance has to look at the country

as an isolated unit in a crisis. It must take into account all our resources and requirements for defence and then plan for (1) the conservation of all items which barely meet our needs, (2) provision, against a blockade or embargo, of all non-available goods and (3) a smooth transition of peacetime production into war production. The first requires careful State control and planning of the relevant industries. The second requires production of efficient substitutes like synthetic petrol to overcome the deficiency in the natural product. Even during peacetime when natural products are cheaply and easily available a synthetic industry can help to keep down the prices of the natural product and provide against an economic war and sometimes search for synthetics provides products more efficient than the natural one. Also building up of sufficient stocks of the deficient items during peace is a recognised method of providing against a blockade. Thirdly, smooth transition from peace to war finance requires vigilance on the part of the State over all industrial production in peace with full statistical details, control of all industries directly affecting defence like iron and heavy chemicals so that factories and workshops can be switched on to defence production at short notice, and in addition, construction and maintenance by the State of what are called 'shadow factories' for all underproduced war essentials, factories needless or unprofitable in peace but ready to undertake war production at short notice.

We have no big armament industries, nor apparently any definite plan on the subject. Proposals for universal military training can have value only when organized armament production goes hand in hand. We can appreciate the crushing burden of the problems facing our Government and the supreme need of secrecy in defence matters but the present silence on the subject is not quite reassuring. As Dr. C. R. Reddi has been pointing out over and over again, history provides little time for us to adjust ourselves to changing conditions,

CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

by R. VENKATESWARAN

NO one can cavil at the description of artists as being the most conscious beings of their age. The great men of letters today have been forced to orient themselves some way or other with respect to the unspiritual forces at play in the modern world. From the muddle of the present time, some like T. S. Eliot and Graham Greene have taken refuge in the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church; others like Stephen Spender and Cecil Day Lewis have taken to the gospel of Karl Marx. Christopher Isherwood, brilliant novelist and noted playwright, has gone further, for he has found peace only in the perennial philosophy of India and lives in retirement in the Ramakrishna Ashram at Hollywood.

The best introduction to Isherwood is his autobiography, *Lions and Shadows*, which he describes as an education in the twenties. The title has no special significance; he says he came across the phrase in C. E. Montague's book *Fiery Particles* and fell straightway in love with it. Born in 1904 he was too young to be caught in the storm of the Four Years' War of 1914-18; but at school he had always looked upon that war with great regret, as an adventure he had unfortunately missed.

From school he went on to Cambridge where he became acquainted with Auden and Spender. He paid very little attention to his studies, being occupied with writing novels and reading them to his friends. He made a mess of his answer papers in the History Tripos examination and was barely saved from disgrace by his tutor.

Having an income of £150, he settled down to writing and travelling. His first novel *All the Conspirators* was published by Jonathan Cape in 1928 though it sold only 300 copies. Being at a dead end in this line, he tried to study medi-



cine, but soon gave up that also, because as he admits he was incapable of making any kind of measurement accurately. Also a major surgical operation which he attended filled him with nausea. Meanwhile he published his second novel, *The Memorial*. Here was a departure in the method of novel-writing; for instead of describing the incidents in chronological sequence Isherwood attempted to tell a story in close-ups and flashbacks as in a movie.

In 1929 he went to Berlin, 'that astonishingly vicious yet fundamentally so respectable city' as he calls it, as an English teacher. The fact that cigars were cheap there was an added attraction. He used his wide knowledge of Berlin and its denizens, rich and poor, to great effect in his later novels, *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* and *Goodbye to Berlin*. In the first novel we are introduced to an Englishman, Arthur Norris—a masochist, sycophant and blundering fool who lives a useless life, abused by others. Casual women, his own valet, impose on him, live on him and shamelessly ill-treat him and Norris likes it all. To his friend William, it is amazing how Norris is able to live at all, but later finds that Norris makes money out of all sorts of shady transactions like acting as a paid spy and agent

provocateur on the Communists. Still almost everybody likes him. Norris persuades the unsuspecting William to involve a degenerate German noble in a vile affair, so that Norris might blackmail the noble later on. Fortunately William is saved in time and Norris is forced to sail posthaste for South America, shadowed by his blackmailing servant who has now almost become Norris' master.

Goodbye to Berlin is a collection of stories or sketches—the scene is Germany bristling with Nazi toughs. There are brilliant pictures of the poor and the rich in the accounts of the Nowak and the Landauer families. Fraulein Schroeder's boarding house is much more real and interesting than Oliver Wendell Holmes's. *On Ruegen Island* is an account of the degrading passion of a young man Peter for the muscular Otto Nowak who exploits Peter mercilessly.

His most poignant novel is the famous *Sally Bowles*. Sally is the daughter of respectable, sabbath-observing English parents. Being stage-struck at an early age she absconds from home, goes over to the Continent and lives a garish unhappy life there. She is no good at acting and therefore has to live as a kept woman. Many of her lovers ill-treat her, she is often ill, and her strange infatuation for a German is fraught with misery for her. Telling the story in the first person, Isherwood describes how he met her at Fri. Schroeder's, how the German deserted her in her illness and left for England. After her

recovery, in spite of his offer to protect her Sally resumes her old way of living without regret. For Sally knew that she had made a mess of her own life and did not want to drag her only benefactor into it.

When the Nazis came into power, Isherwood left Berlin for London where he wrote scenarios and film-scripts. He also wrote two famous plays, *The Ascent of F6* and *The Dog beneath the Skin* in collaboration with his old college friend Auden.

In his autobiography one can sense his dissatisfaction with the order of things as they are. Later on in life, he became much influenced by the philosophy of the Upanishads. At the Ashram in Hollywood, he wrote a beautiful English rendering of the Bhagavad Gita called *Song of God*.

Isherwood is a penetrating observer of human nature. His studies of abnormal people like Arthur Norris and Peter and Otto Nowak are brilliant test cases of psychological abnormalities. One should not look for well constructed plots in his novels, but for method and expression. The movie technique as applied to the narration of a story has revolutionised the modern novel. The themes are no longer incidents, but are psychological developments under the given environments and backgrounds of the characters. In a way such an unchronological account of a person is truer because the development of a personality is certainly not like the uninterrupted flow of a stream, progressing from emotional event to emotional event.

Attributed to Harry Von Zell and not denied by him, is the introduction he is supposed to have given President Hoover some years ago. "And now," said Von Zell confidently, "may I present the President of the United States, Hoobert Herver!"

Announcer Clyde Kittell did even better (or worse) while introducing a radio address by Pope Pius XI. "We will now take you to Rome," he said, "to hear His Holiness, Pipe Po-ess—I mean, Pipe Po-ess." He stopped, horrified, and tried again. "His Holiness, Pope Pius, speaking from you to Vatican City."

More recently a St. Louis announcer, waiting for a silent interval in which to read a one-minute commercial plug, absent-mindedly chose the moment following this introductory announcement: "The next voice you will hear will be that of Pope Pius XI." During the ensuing silence the announcer quickly said, "Ajax beer is the beer for me . . ."

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"

If it is 'rational humility' to deprecate one's own cultural heritage, one can to some extent understand Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan's outburst against the Chief Justice of Madras. Mr. Chandrasekharan presumes just those things which the Chief Justice was at pains to warn us against. "The principle underlying the Varna division has nothing to do with the caste system as it exists today founded on the mere accident of birth and full of rigid barriers and inflexible restrictions and inelastic rules. An individual's born nature determines the kind of his work. In a perfect State each type must be assigned a task in conformity with the individual's inherent temperament likely to lead to conservation of energy."

So it is clear that Mr. Justice Rajamannar wants the fourfold division to be determined by a sort of anthropometric test. What a grotesque misrepresentation of such a clear enunciation has been indulged in by Mr. Chandrasekharan!

Mr. Chandrasekharan takes the Chief Justice to task for having called Sanskrit literature the greatest literature in the world. Let us not quarrel about it; let us agree to call Sanskrit literature one of the greatest literatures of the world. Mr. William Archer whom Mr. Chandrasekharan quotes with approval has made a much more preposterous claim but in his case the simple rule prescribed for us, that "the world should say it, not we" seems to be void and of no effect. A Gallup poll is not the way to test literary excellence. In that golden epoch of English poetry, the early nineteenth century, "The Omnipresence Of The Deity" by Robert Montgomery went through eleven editions before Macaulay called the bluff. How many of the sixty million Bengalis read Tagore and how many Shakespeare? Does Mr. Chandrasekharan know that the German poet Friedrich Rückert finds in the Ramayana "such lofty thoughts and such deep feeling as the Iliad does not show"? Is Goethe's rapturous quatrain on Kaldasa's "Shakuntala" of no value?

I shall conclude with a quotation from Bernard Shaw who is read by more people than have ever heard of Mr. William Archer: "This makes Hinduism the most tolerant religion in the

world because its one transcendent God includes all possible Gods. In fact Hinduism is so elastic and so subtle that the profoundest methodist and the crudest idolator are equally at home in it." So there is at least one—and he is among the greatest who does not laugh at us.

P. S. KRISHNAN.

Tinnevely.

Azad Qalam—Straws In The Wind

In *Swatantra* of 13th March 1948, the following two consecutive news-items from a daily newspaper have been quoted under the above heading:

MADRAS: The Madras Government to-day banned five Communist organisations under the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

HUBLI: 22 out of the 40 R.S.S. workers who were detained since 5th February when the Government banned the organisation, have now been released.

Whatever impression is sought to be created by these quotations, the following further news-items, also taken from a daily newspaper, clearly indicate the direction in which the wind is blowing:

SALEM: The Salem Town Police arrested yesterday 16 R.S.S. men and 5 men of the Bharata Mata Youth League and charged them for alleged riotous and indecent behaviour. (*Indian Express*, 11-3-1948).

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police arrested last night 94 R.S.S. workers from different parts of the town under Sec. 3 of the Punjab Public Safety Act as extended to Delhi Province. (*Indian Express*, 18-3-1948).

It is now sufficiently well-known that the R.S.S., under the pretext of promoting Hindu unity and culture, has always been inciting most violent communal hatred amongst the Hindus. While every consideration should be shown to the rank and file to help pull themselves out of the R.S.S., no effort should be spared to put down the R.S.S. itself as an organisation.

There is little difference between Non-Brahmin communalism and the communalism of the R.S.S. and it is therefore unfair to lay emphasis on the one and speak lightly of the other. Selfishness originates all communalism which in turn imputes motives of inability to those in authority and there-

by seeks to justify private armies to gain its own ends. It even equates the Congress effort to stamp out communalism with the plight of a thief merging in the crowd. Pandit Nehru, however, fully realises that "communalism is the greatest menace facing the country" and it is to be hoped that he will certainly overcome all obstacles in his way and finally succeed in crushing the monster of communalism.

A. V. APPARAO.

Bezwada.

Communal Politics

It is with deep regret that one reads in the papers about the slogans raised after the announcement of the leader's election within the precincts of Government House, Mount Road, Madras, slogans such as "DOWN WITH BRAHMINS". After all, the so-called Brahmin community is a minority. The slogan that Brahmins are dominating other communities will not hold water, when merit is recognised. In this connection I regret to state that Dr. P. Subbarayan's statement, though timely, is an eye-wash. He merely shed crocodile tears. The so-called Congress Ministers of our unfortunate Madras Province have openly and deliberately preached hatred against this minority community, the Brahmins. Our pre-

sent Ministry is cent per cent communal-minded and power-seeking. It is a black mark to the Congress High Command to have such adherents in the Congress fold and we demand a dissolution of the Congress itself to give room for better-minded personnel.

D. SRINIVASA RAO

Gudur.

Calculation's Hurdle

Formerly the Government of Madras said that teachers in aided schools would be paid half the difference between the average of the scales they were actually drawing and the average of the scales they were entitled to (under the G.O.) for the period January to May '47. In some schools it has been actually paid. Now the Government seem to have rescinded this order on the plea that calculations would be difficult! And there is talk of recovering the amounts in schools where they had been already paid. Government should reconsider their decision. If the only difficulty is in the matter of calculation a bonus of two months' salary might be given, as has been done in other cases.

C. B. JAGANNADHA RAO.

Member, Executive Board,
South Indian Teachers' Union,
Cocanada.

Culture At Revolver Point

Many points raised in the article "Cultured be D—d" in *Swatantra* of 6th March, call for serious consideration. The author feels like taking out his revolver when he hears "Indian leaders and Indians holding high positions speaking of the magnificence of India's culture and the glories of India's past." And he feels much more like it when he hears "talk of the glories of Tamil culture, Andhra culture, etc." But do not the glories of India's culture in the past constitute a fact of the world? What may get on one's nerves is that there is only talk, and there is no attempt either to live up to those standards or to be worthy of being inheritors of such a glory from the past. It is not talk on the glory, it is talk on the superiority of such cultures, that may provoke a person to take out a revolver.

If "perpetual talk of the glories of a nation's past is a sign of old age, senility and lack of vitality", complete indifference to it and aversion to it are signs of ignorance and obstinate stupidity. Certainly it is an aspect of "inferiority complex" if one is forced "to boost the past so that one may preserve self-respect and hold one's head high." But if one condemns the entire past and depends for "self-respect" and for "holding one's head high," on the achievements of other countries, that also deserves no other appellation than "inferiority complex".

"Not a day passes without speeches and statements boosting our past. Why is this? Other great nations do not make themselves ridiculous in this way." When Europeans talk about the literary achievements of Europe from the time of Homer, when they talk about their great philosophers and scientists of the past, when day after day we hear Europeans talk of Christian ways of approach to human problems and the preservation of the Christian spirit and the Christian civilization, is this also an instance of making oneself ridiculous? Or has the author of the article one designation for what is received from foreign countries and another for home-made stuff? I do not know if a single day passes when I do not read some such boasting of the past achievements of the West, as a claim to superiority over the Orient in the modern world.

"In the context of Indian conditions to day", is there "greater justification to be indignant with and ashamed of" the 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." Why? Is it any sin of the past or is it the betrayal of the past traditions of India by the modern educated people? If the traditions of the Vedic Rishis, of the Pandavas and of Sri Rama, of Chandra Gupta, Pushyamitra, Samudra Gupta, Harsha, Yasovarman and others had been kept up, would there have been any occasion to "hang down our heads in shame"? There is no relation between "Hinduism" and "the caste and social tyrannies which it imposed, the seclusion and subjection of women, untouchability, etc." Hinduism is a civilization, a mode of life, just like modern Western civilization. The caste system, the seclusion and subjection of women and untouchability are diseases in the decaying state in the life of a nation. The Bhagavad Gita does not regard the caste system as "a natural order of society". It simply says that in every organised society, one must take note of differences between individuals regarding their talents, aptitudes and inclinations, capacities and training, etc., and that work and functions must be allotted according to such differences. It does not say anywhere that a son inherits the privileges of a father in the State simply because he is the son. The Bhagavad Gita does not say that a son should suffer disabilities because he is the son of a father. If the father does not train his son to be worthy, both the father and the son are condemned.

If Andhra culture and Tamil culture are exhibited merely as grounds for differentiation from, and superiority over, others, then it is really an exhibition of a complete failure to grasp the true values of culture. There are various ways in which this failure to grasp the true values of culture exhibits itself in the life of the country. A constitution should be framed for India by Indians not because it is an inherent right of any State to decide its affairs, and not because there are competent jurists in the country to do it, but because an Indian constitution should reflect the traditions and the genius of India. If Indians are to be true and patriotic Indians, they should wear "national dress", should eat "national food", prepared and served in "the national way" and should speak the "national language." The true nature of a culture is that it is the heritage of modern man from the past, without any difference of nationalities.

One may study Greek antiquities and admire the administration of Athens under Pericles; but one does not thereby try to live like a Greek of twenty-five centuries ago. One may

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enjoy Shakespeare; but one does not thereby try to live like an Elizabethan in London. Similarly, there is no sin in studying the Vedas, the Puranas, the works of Kalidasa, etc. The mistake is in refusing to be modern. It is not by proscribing ancient culture that we can be modern. Let us have culture through understanding the past, and let that culture enable us to live in the modern world. It is better to put down the revolver and take some books that will give culture.

C. KUNHAN RAJA.

A Secular State?

If India is to be a secular State there can be neither Hindu law nor Muslim law. There will only be Indian law. There will not be monogamy for Hindus and polygamy for Muslims. Change of religion would not involve change of laws governing the citizens. In England, a British Muslim will be governed not by the Shariat but by the English Succession Act which will apply to the property of all British citizens whether Christian, Atheist, Muslim, Theosophist or Buddhist or Hindu in faith. When the late Dr. Mir Anwaruddin claimed by his Islamic religion the right to marry as his second wife a British girl, he was charged with bigamy, according to the laws of England, which refused to recognise the Islamic law permitting plurality of wives in England. Lord Sinha was for long denied his seat in the House of Lords because the British law did not recognise the Hindu law under which his father, the first Lord Sinha had married and which permitted polygamy.

The Legislature in a secular State can have nothing to do with sectional legislation. Every law must be a territorial law and no personal laws of religious groups should be recognised in a secular State. The introduction of a bill for monogamy for Hindus only in the Madras Legislature is the very negation of the basis of a secular State. The law of monogamy, if desirable, must be applied to all citizens irrespective of their religion. In America the Mormons as a community wanted to practise polygamy which their religion enjoined but were debarred from doing so by the laws of the American Union. Similarly, if a law of monogamy should be passed it should be made applicable to every citizen. Are the Muslims of India prepared to give up the laws of Islam on questions of marriage, divorce and succession and adopt a uniform Indian law for all Indian citizens? And is Pandit Nehru prepared to enforce a uniform Indian law on these matters on all the citizens of the Indian Union irrespective

of religion? If not, the less said about a secular State, the better. Loose thinking and talking on vital matters will prove disastrous.

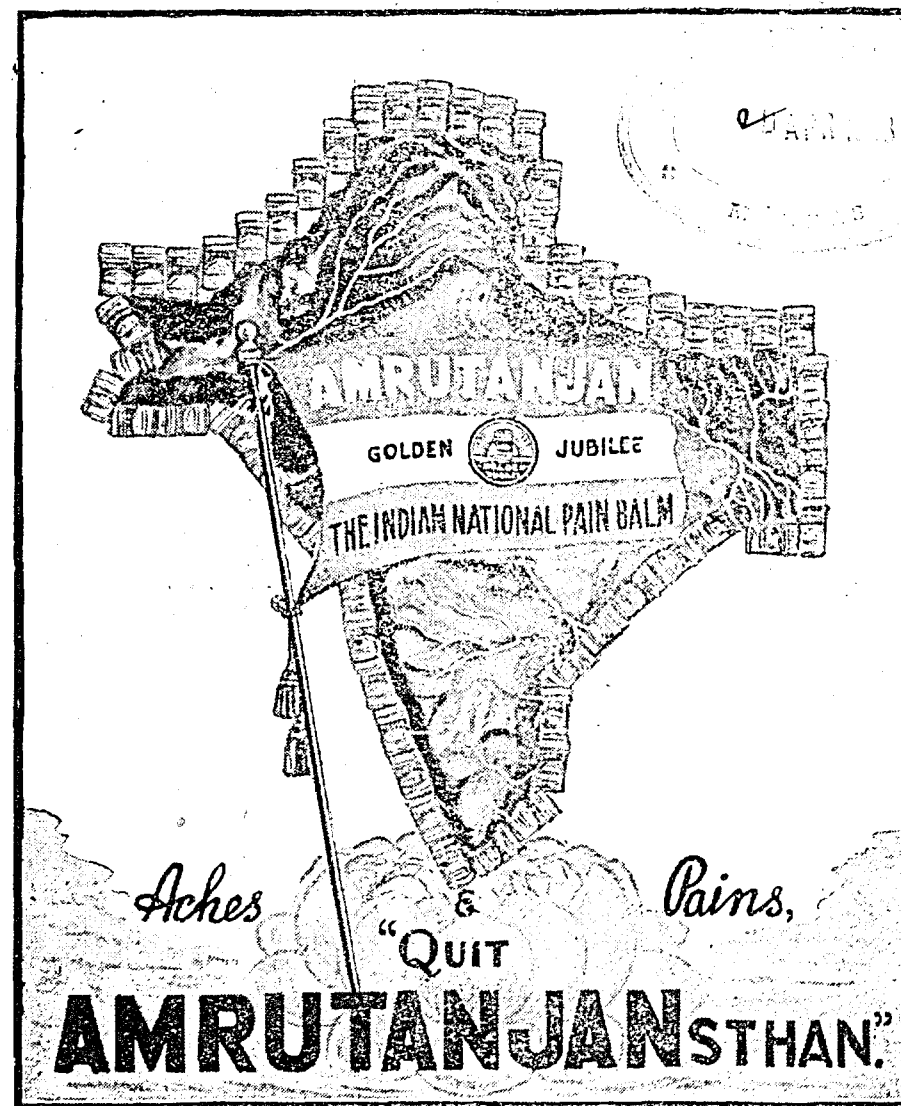
A secular State should not interfere with religious institutions except on a uniform basis. It cannot pass laws regarding management and worship in Hindu temples while remaining neutral in respect of Christian and Muslim religious institutions. Legislation was recently passed in Orissa for the management of Jagannath temple. There is no justification for this legislation except on the basis that Hinduism is the State religion. In a secular State Hindu religious endowments should not be the concern of a department of the Government. It is not fair that the State should be secular for certain purposes and religious for other purposes. Whenever Hindu interests have to be protected the Government disowns special responsibilities on the ground that the State is a secular State. Whenever Hindu religious funds and institutions could be exploited, the State quietly interferes in violation of its secular pretensions. Hindus suffer both ways.

S. SRINIVASA IYER.

Baseless Accusation

It is regrettable that the Revenue Minister should have indulged in making unfounded charges of corruption against the non-gazetted officers, when attempts are being made to establish a happy relationship between the N.G.Os. and the Government. According to the Revenue Minister, the vast majority of the N.G.Os. are earning more than they get from the Government. An unbiased examination of the position will reveal that the reverse is the case. A preponderating majority of the N.G.Os. are honest workers. Out of a lakh and fifty-thousand N.G.Os. serving the province, more than two-thirds are employed in departments and posts which are by their very nature corruption-proof. The Home Minister's revelation in this regard in the Assembly is significant. The review given by the Home Minister of the cases of corruption enquired into by the Special Officer shows that they related primarily to gazetted officers. Even otherwise, when the whole number of cases of corruption do not exceed a thousand in a service manned by gazetted and non-gazetted personnel of the total strength of about two lakhs, the community of public servants amongst whom more than ninety per cent. are honest, do not deserve to be stigmatised as corrupt, they are entitled to commendation.

T. RAMASWAMY AYYANGAR.



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BLIND CHILD

—by Veluri Radhakrishna

SWATANTRA

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SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1948

ISSUED
WEEKLY

CONGRESS RAVAGED

WE seem to be having far less of civil liberties now than under British rule. Freedom has meant license to the administrators to act as they please. The passing away of the Mahatma let loose forces of repression in the name of government which violated every principle which he laboured to teach while he lived. Persons that had not and could not have had the remotest connection with the assassination were clapped in jail in the most arbitrary fashion. Many of them still languish there and there is no knowing when they will be released. The powers of the Public Safety Act have been employed, especially in Madras, with a singular lack of administrative integrity. Not the safety of the State but the prejudices of the ruling party have determined a good deal of the police action taken under the Act.

When the R. S. S. was banned the Communists were jubilant, but now it is the turn of the Communists to be beaten with the same stick. What has happened should be a warning to the intelligent about the fatal folly of approving denial of civil liberties to members of political parties of which they disapprove. The politics of individuals has nothing to do with their rights of civil liberty, and irrespective of party all are entitled to free enjoy-

ment of such rights subject to the intervention of the courts whose standards should be above political considerations.

Every party represents an organised approach for public support and goodwill. Those influenced join with those that have influenced them in further effort to influence others. From listening to appeals, people get converted into different party loyalties, and the process of conversion from passive receptivity to active support is a perennial one going on in the midst of the people as a necessary adjunct of democracy and popular sovereignty which impose on all parties the need of wooing public favour with all the resources and blandishments they can muster to the task. It is very difficult to draw the line accurately between the active spirits of a party and the public influenced by its teaching as there is a constant reinforcement of the former from the ranks of the latter. The banning of a party therefore entails hurt to the public on the score that they had been influenced by it rather than by another party. It punishes them for what they could not help. It subjects the inexorable law of cause and effect to crude artificial interference. Since the bid of all parties is for public support, there is always the danger that banning may be resorted to by a

ruling party against a rival likely to supplant it when it sees no other way of overcoming it. Banning will then mean that the banned party is either popular or efficient and that it is penalised just because of its power and merit.

If a ruling party uses its executive power to suppress possible rivals that threaten to supplant it in popular favour, there will be no democracy, only a dictatorship with fascist characteristics. The banning of parties should follow defined principles applicable to all without distinction. Parties that took to violence for the achievement of their objectives cannot complain if they are banned for the sake of internal peace and security and avoidance of civil strife. Another contributory cause of civil strife, communalism, has been roundly denounced of late in the Union Parliament and it is now realised by the leaders of the nation that communal parties are incompatible with social harmony and progress and the integrity of the State. Extra-territorial loyalty is another ground on which political parties can justly be refused freedom of organisation, as in the event of war such parties provide a fruitful field for sabotage imperilling the very existence of the nation. In the case of the Communist Party the charge of communalism does not apply. It applies, on the other hand, to the Congress Party itself which has outlived its national objectives and sunk into discredit under the guidance of rank communalists who have managed to obtain key-positions in the Congress organisation and reduced the great name of the Mahatma to a mere matter of political trade. At a time when Pandit Nehru from his lofty pedestal in New Delhi speaks of communal parties being excluded from political activity, people here cannot help asking, "What of the Congress in Madras, with its communal G.Os, its unashamed policies

of discrimination between sect and sect, its sanctimonious humbugs that speak with the tongue of Gandhism while they act as expert mobilisers of communal sentiment to perpetuate their own stranglehold on the province in a hate-infested atmosphere?" Congress communalism, as manifested in the aggressive cries of "Down with Brahmins", "Down with Andhras", "Down with Raja!" and the like that greeted the victory of Sri Omandur at the recent election is tarred with the same spirit of violence with which the Communists are charged, and if it is a matter of choice between the two, there is more to be said in favour of the Communist objective of proletarian rule than the present regime of caste-saturated anti-Brahmin oligarchs given to close imitation of some of the most condemnable traits of the old Brahmin monopolists.

The attractiveness of Communism has of late been greatly enhanced to vast masses of people by the barrenness of the administrative record of the Congress. Frequent mercurial turns and somersaults in the economic teaching of the Communist leaders have served to mix this essential attractiveness of Communism with large doses of confusion. With the removal of the leaders to prison, the confusion will disappear and the attractiveness will remain. Poverty and unemployment are fertile sources for the spread of Communism. In the midst of prodigious advertisement of theoretical homage to the Mahatma, the major section of those propelled to power through their association with the Congress have hitherto done little more than exploit their new opportunities for hectic profiteering. They have failed to endear themselves to common people whose intensity of privation is increasing day by day. Government's ban on Communists will be interpreted by the dis-

contented people as part of a calculated technique to weed out potential opponents from the next election. The storehouse of public reverence and goodwill built for the Congress by the Mahatma was so colossal that it might have lasted for another quarter century. But our Omandurs and Nadars have

depleted it so recklessly as to have almost exhausted it. Among the factors contributing to the strengthening of Communism, the most important today, is the ravaging of the Congress of Gandhi by the communalists that have obtained hold of its machinery.

Sotto Voce

Pigeons And Pigeon-Fanciers



THE carrier pigeon is as old an institution as war. And, barring accidents, it is as reliable a means of communication as any that science has given us, wired or wireless. The accidents are apt to arise as much from the vagaries of its own temperament as from those of wind and weather. Its strong homing instincts or its notorious frailty for the other sex may make it deviate from the stern path of duty or even go back with unabated *sang froid*, the precious billet all forgotten. The distraught owner may in his vexation be tempted to wring its neck, but there may conceivably arise circumstances in which he might bless the impulse that caught the bird to play truant.

I am not for a moment suggesting that Dr. Subbaroyan was hoping for a happy accident that would entice his resignation letter to come home to roost. For many days the errant bird kept all watchers on tenterhooks. Some said it had landed fair and square on the Premier's table. Others affirmed that it did but halt there momentarily and was then seen to rise uncertainly into the thin air and flutter in and out of the Cabinet room as if manipulated by a *poltergeist*. That reminds me

of a conjuring trick I once saw, by which a poor woman was wheedled out of a silver rupee. The conjurer, one of those dumb, designing fellows who profess to foretell the future, actually made the rupee move towards him. In this affection of mental for man the simple dame saw the hand of God.

No one is, however, likely to make that mistake in regard to the affairs of the Madras Ministry, which has now settled the fate of the resignation letter after playing with it for a while as the cat does with the doomed mouse. Madras politics is in the safe keeping of Kamaraj Nadar. For sheer virtuosity it would be difficult for the most complicated patterns in Nature to beat the fabric of back-door diplomacy that A. Vaidyanatha Iyer revealed the other day to a gaping world. Dr. Subbaroyan no doubt feels sore, especially after his chivalrous defence of the Brahmins, that one of them should have been so inconsiderate as to exhibit him in an unfavourable light. He undoubtedly overrated Brahman intelligence when he expected them to follow him in his subtle argument that the communal G.O. was wholly compatible with abundant love for its victim.

That apart, he should have seen that as a love merchant he could hardly hope to compete with his chief, the Prime Minister, in whom Dr. C. R. Reddi, that Bayard of our public life, sees nonpareil excellences. Ramaswami Reddiar went on the air a day or two after his triumph. With the words "Down with the Brahmins" and "Down with the Iyers" still ringing in his ears, he made an impressive protest against those who "attempted to create religious and caste hatred". "Instead of strengthening the weak and bringing them to the forefront they are bent upon destroying them", he said.

If after this declaration of the Premier's solicitude the Brahmins are still so perverse as to believe that he is against them, well, you can hardly expect him to do anything more than shrug his shoulders and leave them to stew in their own juice. He will not cheapen himself by making such blatant demands as that Brahmin-baiting must cease. Who ever said that there was Brahmin-baiting? Not he! He did not know of any. His Government had been scrupulous in giving the Brahmins their due (three per cent). If they wanted more, why, they would by the same token be ranging themselves with the exploiters. To clamour for jobs and power, what is it but to proclaim yourself an oppressor—un-

less you happen to belong to the ruling clique in Madras?

But, of course, there are Brahmins and Brahmins; just as there are stoot-pigeons as well as carrier pigeons. Here is Dr. Rajan, as stalwart a Congressman as you could find anywhere in India. His shoulders are broad enough and strong enough to bear the most onerous burdens. His courage in sponsoring unpopular causes is second only to that of his redoubtable ex-chief Mr. Rajagopalachari. It was under that great man that he graduated in rebellion. If such a man has come to the deliberate conclusion that Omandur and Omandur alone can save the Congress, who dare question his wisdom? "They are slaves who dare not be in the right with two or three".

That is as close an imitation of patriotic clap-trap as I am capable of. But, while that serves with the *hoi polloi*, the realists of the Chota High Command with Kamaraj at their head smile their quiet smile and weave their web like the Dread Sisters. The world is to be made safe for the Tamil race and Dravidian culture—that is the slogan of the day. Well, I console myself with the reflection that the Tamils are a fairly tough people, while Tammany bosses and pinchbeck Hitlers don't last for ever.

VIGNESWARA

Mr. Shanmukham Chetty recently described the British as having administered India as a "police State". Undeniably the old regime spent heavily on what was called internal security; to the detriment of social and material development. Comparisons, however, seem premature, for police budgets in India and Pakistan have not noticeably diminished, nor has internal security improved. His criticism that Britain's exploitation of India's economic resources was conditioned by her own economy contained (as he seemed to recognize) more truth a quarter of a century ago than during the last phase of British imperialism, although admittedly war twice forced the pace. Reference to an "outdated capitalistic" system came refreshingly but rather oddly from a Finance Minister himself accused by many critics of adhering too fixedly to orthodox methods, and of misconceptions about what Socialism means.—Editorial comment in STATESMAN.

SIDELIGHTS :

Power and liberty are like heat and moisture; when they are well mixed, everything prospers; when they are single, they are destructive.—SAVILLE.

I KNOW a good few Communists. In comparison with Congressmen they are tough. Efficient. Somewhat mysterious and conspiratorial. Youth is generously represented in the Communist Party. It has no old men in it. In the Congress, on the other hand, aged men are very conspicuous. Congressmen were young in 1920 when Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the scene. In the early years of the Gandhian leadership, Congressmen displayed the energy of youth, its abandon and recklessness, its adventurousness, its immersion in risky activities without thought of return. But as time passed and the political importance of the Congress grew, fatigue overtook the Congressmen. In the moment of the triumph of the Congress, the power that came to it fell into the hands of fatigued men bent on cashing old records, whose best years belonged to the past and who have only decline to look forward to. In the hold they exercise on our new State, these are in the position of an old man with a young bride. The qualities of the situation are jealousy, possessiveness, lack of vitality, lust and craftiness.

Contemplation of these qualities of Congressmen made many discontented spirits turn to Communism. Communism is the protest of the young against the failure of the old to move with the times and solve the problems of social welfare realistically. The heat and passion and unbalance of a protestant movement are packed to the brim in the mentality of Communists. They are nothing if not intolerant. In most matters what Congressmen seek to do, Communists wish to undo. While it is the general endeavour of the Congressmen to retain for themselves the maximum of political power with a minimum of economic

disturbance, the Communists strive to seize power by forcing the pace of events into the maximum of economic disturbance that they can be made to hold.

Not only are the Communists disturbers of the existing economic order, they are disturbers too of the peace of the rulers of the day and of their hopes of enjoying their power in peace. They are visualised as supplanters of the ruling regimes; hence the enormous repression that has descended on them in a veritable orgy of self-defensive fury from the regimes concerned. The fight is between the privileged and the dispossessed. The immensity of the numerical strength of the latter is the terror that unnerves the equanimity of the former.

It is the strategy of Communists to attack entrenched authority from two opposite ends. One is the theoretical end from which the dazzling teachings of Marx are let loose. The other is the practical end of local grievances. The application of a revolutionary technique for inflaming every local grievance into the proportions of a world class fight is the favourite Communist method of acquiring influence. It entails on them the need of expertness in a multiplicity of ways. The leading Communists are voracious scholars. They are fearless agitators and tireless masters of propaganda. They are fanatics and puritans combined, with a Jesuitical type of means for inveigling themselves into key-positions of all-pervasive influence with the discontented elements of society. Their gifts of organisation are superior to those of any other party.

The contacts of Communists with people in trouble of various categories have built for them a large reservoir of power of which the full extent is not generally realised. In Hyderabad, they have taken on themselves an intre-

pid task abdicated by most others, that of putting the backbone up of a helpless persecuted peasantry against the grinding tyranny of the State's feudal lords and the murderous onslaughts of its police and military and its licensed communalists. Also, there are more women in the Communist Party than in any other. The drive they have given to the liberation of women from the drudgery of ages has been very commendable. They have established themselves as saviours in the affections of millions of poor left uncared for by other parties. (Congressmen, after intertance of office and power, have begun to cherish capitalist aspirations and no longer care for the poor. They have lost relish for constructive work of the Gandhian pattern. The new fashion is to hunt for 'permits' and other devices for getting rich quick.) In mass contact Communists have stepped into the breach left by Congressmen. (The distrust that prevails over their uncritical entanglement in the dubious shifts of Russian foreign policy, is confined to intellectuals and has not percolated to the masses yet.) So for the time being, the immense loyalty of the deserted poor taken on hand by the Communists provides them a valuable underground cover now when their open operations are thwarted by repressive Government action.

All the world over police measures have failed to check Communism. The world owes the Marshal Plan to the Communists. The Plan is an indication that American statesmen have realised that unparalleled generosity is needed to overcome the fascination of Communism to the people of Europe. Whether in Europe or India, ruling parties have need of all the liberality they can

Senate Chaplain Peter Marshall, whose three-paragraph prayers are often more profound than Senators' three-hour speeches, last week asked Divine guidance on the world's "true" problems: "The problem of lying, which is called propaganda; the problem of selfishness, which is called self-interest; the problem of greed, which is often called profit; the problem of license disguising itself as liberty; the problem of lust, masquerading as love; the problem of materialism, the hook which is baited with security."—NEW REPUBLIC.

summon to make life more worth-living to the poverty-stricken masses, if their stability is to be secured against tidal waves of Communism submerging their entire territory. The one disquieting factor about Communism is its close resemblance to the propensities of Islam as an iconoclastic religion. Muslim capacity for comradeship among themselves is of a high order. But they are not good neighbours to others. Not to belong to them is to invite the opprobrious appellation "kafir" as justification for exclusive treatment. Communist "bourgeoisie" competes with Muslim "kafir" as an incitement for abandonment of human fellow feeling. It is a phenomenon capable of converting a creed into a scourge. The capacity for hatred of the Communists for those that do not accept their doctrines, is a thing to dread in a world in which total regimentation of opinions must at all times remain an impossibility.

Sri Omandur's repudiation of Dr. Subbaroyan's statement is couched in language that reflects the very spirit that drove the Doctor out of the Cabinet. It is clear that our Premier has a deep-rooted conviction that he has to secure the "interests of good government" not least against his own Ministers. While the other Ministers apparently accepted such an interpretation of their status, Dr. Subbaroyan rebelled and quit, saving what remnants of dignity were left after the bad shaking and jolting through which he had passed in the leadership election. The ex-Home Minister is one of the brilliant parliamentarians of India. His defection leaves the Cabinet, none too rich in talent, poorer still. There is now none in it fit for floor leadership of the Assembly.—SAKA.

SENSE OF VALUES

by S. PARTHASARATHY

A serious defect in us is the woeful lack of a sense of values. At a time when the problems that strike us in the face are to find more food, to restore industrial production and to check the growing indiscipline in public life, we are still engaged in celebrating our easily won freedom in the manner of children celebrating the acquisition of new toys. We are busying ourselves in changing names of towns and streets, in vernacularising our official communications and car number plates and in doing a number of other silly things besides.

We are misinterpreting democracy. We think it confers the right on everyone to meddle in the affairs of the Government. It is no longer a case with us of finding suitable men to do the jobs in the Government, but it is one of finding jobs for the men who have become indispensable to politicians. A favourite expression with our Ministers is "What is there? Anybody can do the job." There are always two courses open to the statesman in a predominantly illiterate country: one is to get rid of the stigma of illiteracy in the quickest possible time; another is to model the administration on the lines of a Nigerian chieftainship. We seem to be preferring the latter course. One of our preoccupations today is to scale down the qualifications for administrative posts so that the yokel can be fitted into it. I asked of a villager what he thought of our Government today. His answer was: "Everything is going wrong. What can you expect if you put men in offices who are unacquainted with their work? Let everyman do the job which he knows and everything will be all right."

For a contrast, let us see how the British have used the interval between the victory day and now. Their victory, like our independence, brought forth a cropful of problems. They are not having any Churchillshire or Rooseveltshire. Though

Labour is in office, innumerable research and efficiency organisations have been brought into existence. There is no ban on the employment of foreigners. The erstwhile enemy, the German, is welcome if he has expert qualifications.

We cannot attain national manhood by feeding on mere sentimentality. We have no right to revel in our glorious past when the present is no continuation of it. It is but right that we should cherish our mother-tongues. But we must not forget that our languages have ceased to grow some hundreds of years ago. We cannot overnight vernacularise the mechanism of modern Governments nor the sciences. No one is enamoured of the English language except for its rich vocabulary. Our present generation of scientists, administrators, political thinkers and businessmen have grown accustomed to the use of the English language, and only feel at home in it. We cannot expect them to learn the new vocabulary to their vernacular at this stage in their lives and still do their work efficiently. Let us by all means have a plan for supplanting English by our vernaculars in the course of some years, so that the younger generation when they take their places in our national life may use them exclusively if need be. But let us not add to the confusion that is prevailing in the country by experiments in the sentimental field.

The Ministers for Education in the centre and in the provinces have charge of the mental health of the people of this country. Whatever their eminence or their past record, it is extremely unsafe to entrust them with dictatorship in matters of educational policy. Unless we wish to repeat the experiment of Hitler with the youth of his country, we should avoid dosing the youth with literary productions from governmental and political factories. Committees composed of men of spirituality and high moral character and drawn from the educational

field should be constituted at the centre and in the provinces to advise the Governments. Their decisions should be published whether or not they are acceptable to the Government. Unless this step is taken immediately, we run the risk of mortgaging the minds of the future generation with the powers of darkness. Education of the wrong sort can easily make people provincial, sectarian and narrow-minded in outlook. More than

foreign affairs, education should receive a higher value from the present architects of the country.

It may be appropriate to conclude with a quotation from Confucius. "A piece of jade cannot become an object of art without chiselling, and a man cannot come to know the moral law without education. Therefore the ancient kings regarded education as the first important factor in their efforts to establish order in a country."

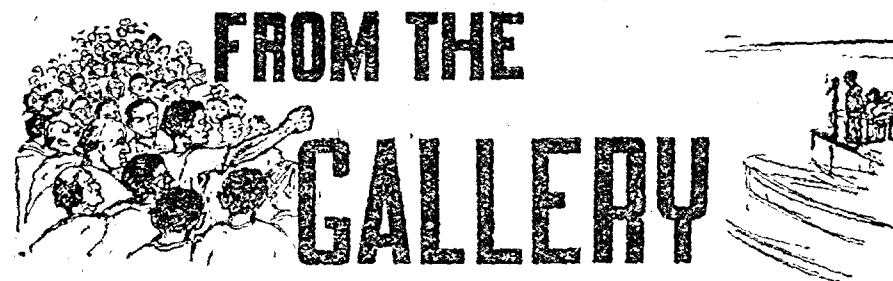
CHIEF JUSTICE IN THE DOCK!

by C. KUNHAN RAJA

Dr. C. V. Chandrasekharan has accused the Hon. P. V. Rajamannar, the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, for a statement that Sanskrit is a great language, at a recent public meeting. In India the accused never comes to the witness box to give evidence. So others do that work. "An Indian Youth" has given evidence for the prosecution and another correspondent has given his evidence for the defence side, through the columns of *Swatantra*, where Dr. Chandrasekharan has raised the issue. If the greatness of a literature is to be judged by the number of books that can be called "the best-sellers", and if the value of a literary work is to be judged by a "poll" among the people on an unqualified adult suffrage basis, the estimate of literary worth accepted till now by those who can judge will have to be "overruled". P. G. Wodehouse will be a far greater author than Shakespeare; the *Daily Mail* in London will be a far greater newspaper than the *Times*; the cheap novels in the Penguin series will be superior to the "Classics". As for Kalidasa, whom no one reads as against Shakespeare, I will refer Dr. Chandrasekharan to Sir William Jones, Goethe, Schiller and other well known poets and literary men. And what about the pilgrims from China who risked dangerous seas and vast desert regions to reach the land of Sanskrit

to learn the wisdom enshrined in it, the literary men of Western Asia who in the early Christian centuries translated Sanskrit works into Pehavi, Arabic and Syriac, the Kalifs of Bagdad who sent scholars to India to find out the new works available in Sanskrit, Akbar who employed scholars to translate Sanskrit classics into Persian and the modern European nations, not excluding Russia, that devote a lot of energy to study and understand Sanskrit. Sanskrit literature is admired and enjoyed by the whole of India which contains a fifth of Humanity. Ramayana and Bharata have influenced more poets than Homer. The Vedas have held sway for a longer period than any other literature known in the world. The Chief Justice of the Madras High Court is guilty only along with some of the most famous men the world has ever produced. If Sanskrit does not appeal to a morbid mind, that does not take away an iota from the greatness of Sanskrit as a language that has developed a literature which has equally been admired by artists, thinkers, saints and teachers of humanity in all ages and countries. During recent months, persons in eminent position in public life like Governors of Provinces and Vice-Chancellors of Universities have spoken in favour of accepting Sanskrit as the national language of India.

It is doubtful whether a writer can give anything to a reader that is not already there in some measure. All he can do is to make him conscious or more deeply conscious of what he already possesses by stimulating apprehension, by smoothing or ruffling the surface of consciousness, and, in rare instances, by striking below the surface and opening the way to vision or revelation. Books at their best and in their most favourable moments of reception revitalize. The end of reading is not more books but more life.—Holbrook Jackson in *THE READING OF BOOKS*.



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

DR. SUBBARAYAN'S exit from the Ministry deprives it of such debating talent or parliamentary prestige as it could boast of—at its best. With Mownam being in the political fashion, it would be no difficult task to find a substitute for him. As for Dr. Subbarayan himself, he has been talking cricket for so long that it is good to find him playing it for once. But the stroke which has got him out is a late-cut, executed with undoubted power if not as evident grace! Had he taken this step a week ago, his stock would have risen and remained much higher even if he had lost.

As for the defeated opposition, I think it an inexcusable waste of time and energy to bewail the rampaging of an exultant communalism. It is not flattering to admit (albeit indirectly) that there was and could be no alternative to Sri Prakasam. If there was fanaticism of one type on one side, there was obscurantism of another on the other side; which proves that it is six of one and half a dozen of the other. It is the part of wisdom to recognise the signs of the times, and stoop to conquer. To give an analogy, a British parliamentary convention has grown so rigid as to have the force of an unwritten law that the British Premier should not be a member of the Upper House. Thanks to this taboo, people like Balfour and Curzon within living memory were denied the highest prize of British public life. But the aristocratic sections have circumvented the convention, and enhanced their influence in public affairs by a politic and seasonable

surrender to popular prejudice. The Foreign Office, and the War departments still continue to be the preserves of propertied and privileged classes. The truth is that our progressives and primitives are equally the victims of their pet theories. Unless we who claim to be more advanced do really make a move, we are bound to be out-distanced by our so-called opponents. We continue to feed them instead of starving them out of political existence.

I should like to mention a few facts concerning the cultural 'cross-fire' which has been enlivening the correspondence columns of *Swatantra*. The citation of William Archer for the prosecution reminds me that he was a visitor to this country and wrote a book on his impressions of his tour. In that book, occurred a remarkably obtuse attack on Sri. Vighneshwara—the lord of obstacles whom we worship. Seeing his effigy all over the country, Mr. Archer expressed his aversion for it by describing it as a 'gross-looking, pot-bellied god, making an ubiquitous exhibition of his shameless obesity.' I am quoting from memory, and so it is quite possible that I may have improved on him!

Archer had the dubious distinction of being a one-eyed man in the midst of blind people, for his title to distinction was the accident of his introducing Ibsen to the English speaking world. He sailed on that reputation, but I am afraid he did not go very far. His appraisal of Indian cultural factors was conditioned by a sort of cock-

eyed ignorance and superciliousness which came in for severe trouncing thirty years ago. As for quotation, it is generally taken for argument, which of course it is not. For that was the trick of medieval schoolmen, and our own Bhashyakarthas, piling Ossa on Pelion without reference to relevance, proportion and probability. While authorities are used as missiles, the facts of the case languish for want of recognition.

What the Chief Justice said of caste is obscured by what others feel about it. It was Swami Vivekananda who, years ago, made an arresting declaration as to the evolution of cultural patterns through the ages. He drew attention to the Brahmanical culture represented by the world of the Vedas, the Kshatriya culture represented by the rise of Greece and Rome, Vysia culture symbolised in the spread of the British empire and its continuation in Anglo-America Unlimited, and Sudra culture which is what Communism stands for with its insistence on the sovereignty of the proletariat. We may not like the labelling or the classification, even as the author of the nursery rhyme did not like Dr. Fell, and for the same reason! But to deny basic distinctions of ability and aptitude, and differing tempos of individual development the causes of which have not yet been fully elucidated would be to emulate the ostrich and bury one's head in the sands. It is not what a man says he is that determines his place, but what he does. Jesus was a carpenter, St. Paul a tent-maker, Spinoza a grinder of lenses, Sri Vedanta Desikhar an amateur mason; but their titles to fame rest on other and more subtle grounds. The only question for determination is: Can we make to order the type of genius we want, and is it expedient that we should make it all of a piece, if we could? There can be no answer to such a poser to satisfy all, and set controversy at rest. Culture like many other terms does too often become a cant term; but damming it out of hand might also become a manifestation of cant—in the reverse gear!

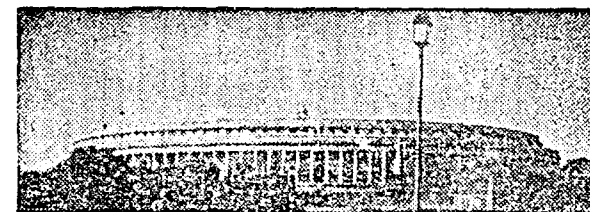
It is interesting to watch the cautious manner in which the opposition to the merger of Pudukotah in Madras is being geared up. The familiar argument is that the people's wishes have not been consulted in a proper manner. The upholders of this point of view have not a particularly conspicuous record of service in the cause of democracy. On examining some of these evangels of self-determination at closer quarters, we find other reasons at work. Pudukotah as a separate, sovereign, independent State had certain advantages over British India in matters of trade, commerce, etc. For instance, there are no income-tax, company-tax and excess profits taxes in force there. So in the war-years, these States proved paradises for the British Indian profiteers.

Every inducement is being offered by Pakistan Ministers to coax foreign capital into the fifth largest State in the world? It is only now that the public can assess fully the extent of the mordant cynicism which actuated Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan in 'soaking the rich' in the last budget of undivided India.

The strike of clerks in Calcutta bids fair to fizzle out like its fellow in Madras. But I for one long to see proofs of the might of our Government—Central and provincial—pitted against more formidable foes. Crushing the clerks is an easy enough operation; but eventually there will be a devil of a lot to pay. It is disconcerting (to say the least) to find Pandit Nehru solemnly excommunicating an inoffensive body of men by first giving them a bad name. Instead of solving problems, our matchless leader is tying up knots with dwindling prospects of unravelling them easily or peacefully. In a recent statement which he made, he remarked that 'every age has its own message.' May I respectfully remind him of the more unpalatable truth that some people are always found to make a mess of almost every message!

GROUNDLING.

NEW DELHI DIARY



by V. V. PRASAD

PATEL'S son's employer—such was the description given by the American Time Magazine to C. H. Bhabha—has at last taken leave of the Nehru Cabinet. Readers of *Swatantra* know how the importance of being Bhabha was demonstrated at the time of the Ministry's formation. Pandit Nehru wanted Bhabha to be in the Cabinet, and a Bhabha was produced. To those who asked Panditji why he appointed such a young man he said: "We must have a scientist in the Cabinet". This was an instance of the exact opposite of Shakespeare's "What's in a name?" It was repeatedly urged in this Diary that Bhabha should be given the go-bye because to persist in the wrong of letting him continue in the Cabinet would be another wrong. And two wrongs do not make one right.

At the end of the present session of the Indian Parliament Pandit Nehru is to reshuffle his Cabinet, according to reports published in *The Hindu* and *The Statesman*. This Diarist fights shy of making a similar prediction because this has been his favourite line for a few months now. It will be noted Bhabha sent in his resignation in January. And other Ministers have also been sending in their resignations from time to time, and have been prevailed upon to continue. The tradition of carrying their resignations in their pockets seems to continue. As a contribution to Truth—the spread of which is bound to have a salutary effect on all concerned—it must be stated here that one of the Cabinet Ministers has decided to resign because of the scant respect with which he has been treated by the Prime Minister. Jawaharlal Nehru is becoming more and more mellowed

since the death of the Mahatma: but the earlier impression has not been completely removed.

I would like at this stage to make a passing reference to the criticism offered by that excellent individual, Sri W. Bharata Rao, in a recent letter to *Swatantra*. One thing I can vouch for. The information supplied in this Diary has so far not been contradicted, although it is known to have upset influential quarters from time to time. The Press lives by disclosures. There is no point in trying to maintain even now that there are no Nehru-Patel differences. Mahatma Gandhi had made a reference to it himself, and Devadas Gandhi in his radio talk quoted the Mahatma as saying he would be able to set it right after his return from Wardha. It was obvious that the Mahatma was worried about it because he had sent word to Norman Cliff of the *News Chronicle* and asked him to contradict the reports which the Mahatma thought were exaggerated.

At one stage the differences between Nehru and Patel had become so acute that the Mahatma told Patel: "You can take over the Premiership. I will ask Jawaharlal to step aside." The Sardar thereafter decided to accept Nehru's leadership and made that speech in Surat or some other place saying Nehru is his leader in the Government, just as Gandhi was his leader during the Civil Disobedience movements.

There is also another aspect of this contradiction business. Governments have a habit of rushing to the Press with all manner of contradictions. Recently Mr. V. P. Menon gave a Press Conference where he tried to explain the position of various States vis a vis the

Indian Union. He definitely gave the impression that Kalat had applied for accession to India but that it was refused. Talking about the general question of accession, and in particular about the accession of Kashmir, Mr. Menon said (and I reproduce from my short-hand notes):

We ourselves left Kashmir alone. Kalat, I can tell you, approached us through one of her agents, and we refused to have anything to do with Kalat. My Government will not bribe Kalat with three million pounds.

Mr. Menon was emphasising that the Rulers always voluntarily acceded and no force or pressure was used. "You can ask any of the Rulers", he said. He declared: "The Rulers' position has been maintained intact. This has been always the object of my Minister". (Mr. Menon also referred to the Nehru Cabinet as "my Government". There was not a word about the people and their rights. One gathered that their lack of rights would also be preserved intact.

Apart from Mr. Menon, another Government spokesman also had referred to Kalat. That was Mr. Gopalaswamy Iyengar at Lake Success. On March 8, he told the world about the Press Conference held by Lord Mountbatten before August 15. He recalled that Lord Mountbatten had pointed out that the States were free to link-up with either of the Dominions, but that geographical compulsions which existed could not be evaded.

After giving this background, Mr. Gopalaswamy Iyengar proceeded to say that in the case of India this principle had been scrupulously followed. "One instance may perhaps serve to illustrate this particular contention. The large State of Kalat, which has obvious geographical compulsions to accede to Pakistan, approached the Government of India for political relationship, but was refused. Certain

unofficial overtures were made from another State, Bahawalpur, and they were similarly discouraged." It is obvious this declaration at Lake Success also created the impression that Kalat sought to accede to the Indian Union. If it did not, the quotation from Mountbatten loses its point. Moreover, Lord Mountbatten had stated at the Press Conference that the British Government did not contemplate independent relations with any Indian State.

But the blame for the error was put on the A.I.R., which, being a Government Department, had to swallow it. We understand the question of the desirability or otherwise of allowing Departmental Secretaries to hold Press Conferences is also engaging the attention of the Government. All of which reminds us of the posters during World War I which announced the day's news thus: "News of German Ships Sunk, together with official denials". We should not sink to that old German level.

I have justly been accused by Sri Bharata Rao of oscillating between praising Nehru this week and laughing him to ridicule the next. My difficulty is that I find in the uncrowned King of India both kinds of qualities. Not being a Communist, there are for me more than two colours, white and black. As *Swatantra* editorial for March 13 said: "The most important of these (assumptions) is the assumption that the good and bad in the world today are sharply divided into two regional camps. . . . Actually, the human beings that populate the world are not so simple."

Each individual on this planet is a world unto himself. An excellent individual like Jawaharlal Nehru is bound therefore to be full of contradictions. If we do not give all praise to him or all blame, it is out of deference to the principle of Truth, which is neglected a great deal too much at the present time.

Short Story

The Immoral Woman

by S. Roberts

SHAMANNA was a man of the soil, like all his ancestors. His father had left him extensive acres of productive land. Shamanna acquired the property at the age of 22, and had no brothers to share it with. He was comfortably off and there was no need for him to do any manual work; he could afford to relax like a landlord and leave the labour to the men he employed. But Shamanna loved the soil and was a conscientious farmer. From morning to evening, he toiled in his land, as though he were no more than a mere farm hand. It was for him a labour of love.

There were many in the village who despised this youth who was blessed with ample means to take life easy, yet sweated on the fields in the sweltering heat, like the bullocks he drove. People said that the same miserly streak which had enabled his father to earn so much ran in his son too, and that Shamanna calculated upon the saving of one man's wages accruing from going to work himself; some said he saved two men's wages by doing the work of two. They would have laughed outright if Shamanna had told them that he worked for love of it. Their own condition was too poor to enable them to take even a day's rest and it seemed absurd to them, who never had the means to enjoy leisure, that anyone should voluntarily prefer a life of back-breaking work to a life of ease and plenty.

But Shamanna was not unpopular in the village. He was good-natured and considerate towards his workers, though he never spared himself; and on the few occasions he cared to draw out of his shell and mix with the villagers, he carried himself well though he was rather taciturn. But such occasions were few and far between, for there was in Shamanna a streak of the Puritan. He was of an ascetic temperament. His work was taxing and at the end of the day's work, he would be too exhausted to indulge in social evenings.

Shamanna liked to fag himself out; he derived an exquisite satisfaction out of hard work and looked forward to the delirious joy of washing himself in the cold, refreshing well-water, sitting down to a rich early supper and stretching his tired limbs on his comfortable charpoy. There was a tremendous joy

to be had in complete repose. There he would lie, every muscle and nerve at rest in his body, his mind delightfully tranquil, waltzing on the happy borderlands of sleep. And sleep would come over him in waves of softness, and the serenity of his senses would merge into the calm of sleep.

At dawn, he would awake, completely rested, all his faculties wonderfully alive, clamouring for work. After a wash and breakfast, he would go out into the fields and toil till midday. An hour's luncheon break and then back to the fields, to the rich red earth, strengthened by the meal and the short rest. That was his daily routine: tame and unexciting, terribly prosaic, but that was how he liked it.

His father's death altered little in his life except that it gave him a greater sense of responsibility. In some subtle way, it bound him closer to the soil; there was something paternal in his love for the land. And of course it became his responsibility to look after his mother, and the girl he had married at the age of 17 and the two children she had borne him.

When working in the field, he would sometimes imagine his two sons grown-up and toiling beside him, returning with him at the end of the day; he and his sons, bound together not only by filial ties but by the brotherhood of the soil.

It was in his 28th year that the prosaic life of Shamanna led into the poetic paths of romance. Earlier that year, his young wife had died giving birth to his third child—a stillborn. Shamanna was deeply upset; it was like losing a goodly portion of his lands, like having a limb torn out of him. He felt a terrible void in his heart, and he knew he would have to marry again even before a respectful interval after her death. His work took him away from home most of the day and the house was empty without a wife to take care of his aged mother and small children.

Some time after his wife's death, Shamanna had occasion to go to the city, several hundred miles away, in connection with the disposal of his stocks of grain under some new Governmental scheme. When he came back about two weeks later than his expected re-

turn to the village, he brought back with him a new wife. She was a gay young metropolitan belle, exceedingly modern, scornful of the villagers, haughty and, in the phrase of the village folk, "quite unwomanlike." There had been a terrible scene on his return home at this unorthodox behaviour on his part. His mother had been scandalised beyond measure at his outrageous conduct. He had married her under God knew what rites without the knowledge of his aged mother, a woman of unknown origin and parentage.

The day after her arrival, the new wife was seen walking through the village in the company of her rustic husband, and the villagers slaked their curious eyes on the spectacle. Rumours about the nature of Shamanna's new wife had already been bruited through the mysterious agencies of village gossip. Probably the few villagers who had seen Shamanna return with his wife had disseminated the information. She was clad in a gay, butterfly-patterned saree of gauzy silk, feet shod in high-heeled shoes, blouse cut daringly low at the neck, hair neatly coiffeured, her face creamed and powdered, lips startlingly ruby against her fair complexion, walking jauntily along the dusty village streets with a plastic handbag swinging from one hand and the other arm linked with Shamanna's. Shamanna himself presented an unusual spectacle. He had dressed himself in a silk shirt and dhoti, wearing for the first time in village history a pair of gleaming black patent-leather shoes, his hair combed stiffly back. People looked at him with scandalized eyes as he passed with his bride. Women stood in doorways, arms akimbo, their faces depicting various degrees of horrified indignation. A murmur of shocked comment buzzed in the air.

People said to themselves: "Look at that shameless hussy, parading the streets of our moral village, flaunting her woman's body before our innocent children. Why that saree is so flimsy you can see her skirt through it and the curve of her hips! And that atrocious blouse! Why her breasts are almost peeping out of it! Naked and unashamed! And that man, Shamanna, born and bred in the unsophisticated, pure atmosphere of this village, walking unabashed with her, showing her off. What's our village come to that Evil should walk thus along our streets to tempt our children into the ways of sin and immorality. Something has got to be done to nip this in the bud, or else soon the whole village will be a cesspool of vice."

They discussed it among themselves indignantly. But having ventilated their outraged feelings so that the cloud of their disapproval hung like a fatal miasma over the village, the people seemed at a loss what to do. What had come over Shamanna, once so quiet and rustic, rather reserved and independent perhaps, but still well-behaved, living after the manner of his ancestors, a respectable villager? Every evening this immoral parade was repeated. It was rumoured that he did not work any more in his land, did not even turn in that direction; whereas formerly he used to spend almost all his waking hours in the fields, now he kept indoors in his wife's company, emerging only in the evenings for this ghastly promenade in the village. It was also rumoured that there were bitter scenes every day between Shamanna and his mother, between his mother and his wife; and it was said that Shamanna and his wife together bullied the old woman into silence and acquiescence in this state of affairs. Altogether too scandalous and disruptive of village morality, this. What would be the effect on pure homes? Wouldn't their sons begin to flout the authority of their parents and their wives, start abusing their mothers-in-law? And this strange freedom the woman enjoyed with her husband—wouldn't it shake the foundations of marital relations in due course? Wasn't it a blight on the village that this woman and man should thus be allowed to violate all established canons of decency?

Some said the woman was a sorceress who had bewitched Shamanna; others said she was a city street-walker who had a hold over him and had married him for his money; yet others said that Shamanna had become half-demented as a result of his wife's recent death; but on one thing all were agreed: that this had to be ended.

At length the older heads in the village decided to make a deputation to Shamanna's mother. Gangadhar, the village patriarch, was selected to head a delegation of four of the oldest villagers; and one afternoon the small party wended its way to Shamanna's house. Gangadhar knocked at the door, half-regretting his acceptance of the responsibility. After all, Shamanna was one of the wealthiest of the villagers and as such, a force to be reckoned with. And he was hardly likely to give them a welcome. His apprehensions were increased when the door opened and Shamanna's wife stood in the doorway with an enquiring look on her charming face. The deputation noticed that even indoors, she was as extrava-

gantly dressed as she was on her excursions with her husband into the village. The sight of her steady, questioning gaze unnerved the old man. He wished he had not hazarded on this mission; after all, it was Shamanna's own house and Shamanna was a big man in the village; and though the village was sullen and opposed to him because of this matter, it was doubtful if they would openly uphold him. But the presence of his companions emboldened him and he said: "We came to see Shamanna's mother."

Shamanna's wife said: "She's too sick to receive visitors."

"No wonder," the delegation thought. "What with this iniquitous goings-on."

Gangadhar was also inclined to feel relieved in a way because he now had an excuse to back out of his mission. But one of the others put a spoke in his reversing wheel by saying: "Why bother Shamanna's mother? Tell her." The others murmured assent.

Gangadhar stammered: "It's about you we wanted to see her. Your coming has occasioned much disquiet in this village. This is only a small village," self-deprecatingly, "and we are rather conservative in our ways. Please don't misunderstand me. You are accustomed to a different life. The city's different. But here—er—we feel that—er—it would not be desirable to—er—introduce these city customs into the village. —er—er—"

She helped him out, smiling disarmingly: "In short, I am corrupting your people with my city ways. I should get out of this village."

Gangadhar had a queer feeling that she was being sarcastic and that under her flippancy, was a cold animosity. He interposed awkwardly: "Not at all, not at all. We've no objection to your doing what you like within your home. But—but—outside....."

Shamanna came from the fields, his hands grimy with soil, his feet caked with rich red earth. He was bare waist upwards. Gangadhar suddenly recollected having heard that Shamanna did not work in the fields since bringing home this fashionable wife.

Shamanna's wife said to her husband: "These gentlemen just dropped in to pay a social call. And while they were about it they thought it as well to warn us that we should keep out of the village streets. It appears I am having an undesirable effect on them."

Gangadhar quailed uneasily at the way she had put it. He tried to soften the effect of her words. Within him, he thought: "The shameless hussy.

Damned street-walker. Hardly married a week and standing four square before her husband and talking freely to him!"

Shamanna said coldly: "The village streets are not anyone's private property. If you think that by making use of them, my wife and I are in any way corrupting your children and your wives, tell them to keep indoors when we pass." As an afterthought he added: "But remember, this ground you are standing on is my personal property."

The summary treatment accorded to the deputation increased the animosity of the villagers. Shamanna and his wife continued to go for their evening strolls and it seemed to the villagers that there was an added jauntiness in their gait. They glowered darkly at the couple. They had tacitly ostracised Shamanna and his family but the rub of it lay in the fact that neither Shamanna nor his people sought their association. The balked villagers grew more intolerant and their gossip became more malicious. It began to be bruited that Shamanna was not married to her at all but was only keeping her as his mistress. People soon lost their respect for, and fear of, the mighty Shamanna. Louder and louder grew the angry, derisive buzz from their lips as the man and the woman passed.

And one evening things came to a head. As Shamanna and his wife were passing, someone whistled loudly and a voice cried distinctly: "There goes the prostitute." Shamanna's blood boiled within him. For a long time, he had put up with this loafishness on the part of the villagers. All this for no stronger reason than that he dared to conduct his own family life in an unorthodox way and to live on a more enlightened level.

In the city, by conspiracy of events, he had met and fallen in love with the girl. Subconsciously he had been afraid that this strange and ill-paired wedlock would end in unhappy incompatibility and mutual disillusionment, but for once, love's foolish dreams had come true. He found his life was singularly happy. At the end of a day's labour of love, he had an additional joy to look forward to. What wrong was there in taking an evening stroll in the company of his wife? It was something the village was not used to, it was true, but it was a harmless innovation, indeed an exemplary one. To the villagers, their wives were no more than chattels—someone to attend to their household work and bear their children. The despicable narrow-mindedness of the villagers aroused his inner fury and made him all the more determined to never yield to the force of social dis-

approval which they sought to bring to bear upon him. Even if they were not prepared to profit by his example, surely they could leave him in peace.

Shamanna remembered the difficulties he had had with his own mother. He had given up hope of persuading her to view his modern wife without prejudice. It was only when she had fallen ill and his wife had proved the goodness of her heart by her tender and unremitting ministrations that his mother had realised what a fine woman her daughter-in-law was. She had felt a change of heart. She had realised that between her and her daughter-in-law was only a wall of prejudice and preconceived notions. Now she who had bitterly railed against his wife had not only accepted her as her daughter-in-law but had come to harbour her in her bosom.

Now Shamanna flared up with uncontrollable anger at the unjust and foul indictment. His wife sought to restrain him by a tightening of her grip on his arm, and whispered to him to ignore them. But Shamanna was too angry to quiet down. He stopped, despite the persuasive onward tug of his wife. People were lounging in groups all around and it was not possible to say who had uttered those vile words.

Shamanna asked furiously: "Who said that?"

The clustered groups ignored his query and went on with their low gossip. An insane wrath surged over Shamanna. His long-trying patience had broken down under the strain. Tearing himself free from his wife's grip, he walked to the nearest of the groups with long, determined steps. He seized the foremost of the men by his shirt-front and shook him violently. He hissed sibilantly:

"Now tell me who said that. Come on, tell me or by God, I'll break every bone in your body."

The group broke up and gathered round Shamanna. The other groups converged on the scene. One of them said: "Hey, you can't do that."

"Someone passed an atrocious remark just now," said Shamanna. "And all of you know who it was who said it. Tell me who it is."

Angry voices filled the air; the crowd moved menacingly towards Shamanna. Suddenly a woman's scream dominated the sounds of chaos. Recognizing the voice of his wife's, Shamanna released the man he held and pushed in that direction. His wife lay on the street and blood streamed out of a wound in her temple where a stone thrown by one of the mob had struck her. All emotions gave place in Shamanna's

mind to an access of violent fear for his wife's safety. He sank beside her and lifted her blood-stained head on to his lap. Relief dominated his mind as he saw her eyes open and she said: "It's nothing. Someone threw a stone. I am afraid I yielded to a moment's dizziness." Gently Shamanna levered her on to her feet, the blood dripping down her face and staining her clothes. Thus he led her home and the remorseful crowd, shocked by their own evil, made way for them in numbed silence.

Late that night, a party of villagers called on Shamanna who himself opened the door; and seeing them he asked: "What more do you want? Aren't you satisfied with your evil-doing?"

One of the party—it was old Ganga-dhar—stepped forward and said: "We want nothing. We have come to deliver to you the man who threw the stone at your wife. And all of us would like to say how sorry we are that this happened. We had all our grievances against you but none of us associate ourselves with that evil deed. We trust your wife has not suffered any serious injury. Please accept our apologies."

As Shamanna remained mute, the party pushed a young man to the forefront, saying: "Here's the man who threw the stone."

Shamanna's wife had joined her husband in the meantime. Her head was bandaged and the stain of blood showed through it. Her face had become unusually pallid due to the loss of blood. As Shamanna moved furiously and ominously towards the culprit, she held him back and asked:

"What use is that man to us? He threw the stone; but the events that led to the deed were the joint doing of all you villagers, and all of you are equally responsible. Punishing that poor misguided fool who threw the stone would only be to make a scapegoat of him. Take him away with you. And remember that he who sows the wind reaps the whirlwind. Neither my husband nor I have done any harm to any of you but you nursed a sullen animosity in your hearts towards us. Violence is only the child of your ill-will.... Let them go, Shamanna."

Shamanna and his wife still go for their evening walks—but they are not the only couple in the village who do it now.

As Shamanna and his fashionable bride walk through the village a hundred friendly voices greet them, now. "The Immoral Woman" is held up as the model wife. She is on her way to becoming a legendary character in the archives of the village....

RAMAPADA SAGAR PROJECT

by M. SIVARAMAKRISHNAYYA

ANDHRAS have been expecting with hope that the actual work on the Ramapada Sagar project would be commenced at an early date and they have been dreaming of the metamorphosis of the districts of Vizagapatam, East and West Godavari, Kistna and Guntur on the completion of this project. The bringing under wet cultivation of 26,00,000 acres or about 4,062 square miles of land and the availability of cheap electricity of several thousands of kilowatts is a prospect which most people are not able to correctly and fully visualise.

The idea of this project originated in 1941. It gained momentum in 1944 when, after the Bengal famine, it was brought home to Government and people that this so-called 'land of milk and honey' is hopelessly deficient in the production of food needed for its people. Regular investigation was undertaken and since then staff was appointed, experts were invited from abroad, our local engineers have undertaken trips to England and America. A special circle with a superintending engineer, three executive engineers, 13 assistant engineers and 37 supervisors has been created and has been working since then.

What has been done till now? What is the programme of work fixed for the year 1947-48? How much of it has been achieved? These are matters that have to be made known to the people. We have a Minister for Public Information and a Director of Publicity and the Minister for Public Works is also in charge of the Department of Information. Yet it is unfortunate that these details are not made available to the public.

What is to be the cost of this scheme? Why are the estimates varying from time to time—going higher and higher? What is the estimated income after the scheme is completed? Is it or is it not true that a reputed American engineering firm "The River Tamers" has undertaken to con-

struct the Dam for Rs. 45 crores? Is it true that an estimate of the revenue prepared by an official specially deputed has shown that the scheme will yield more than 3 per cent on the estimated outlay and that the Chief Engineer in charge of the scheme is not pleased with this estimate and wants it to be checked?

As the Government have not chosen so far to place all the facts relating to this scheme before the public to allay all doubts and fears, it is apprehended that the scheme is going to be abandoned eventually. A feeling is gaining ground that the authorities want to smother the scheme by stepping up the estimated cost and stepping down the estimated income. It is learnt that after the recent meeting in New Delhi attended by the Chief Engineer, Sir S. V. Ramamurti, Mr. N. V. Gadgil and others, the Madras Government and the Chief Engineer have been asked by the Union Government to revise the estimates in a radical manner.

Another aspect of this scheme which is intriguing the minds of the public is: Why is it that several acknowledged experts, retired engineers of the Madras Government who have taken a hand in the execution of other important schemes, are not being consulted? There need be no secrecy about this scheme. The experience gained by these distinguished public servants must be tapped and used.

It is learnt that the term of contract with the Chief Engineer expires next June and that a fresh engagement is to be entered into. If the scheming and designing part of the work is now complete Government will do well to advertise before renewing any contract with the present Chief Engineer. Entering into any long term contract on the eve of the formation of separate linguistic provinces and fettering the freedom of action of the future Government may not be fair.

This scheme is estimated to cost about Rs. 120 crores. There are

many other schemes. The total cost of the big schemes of the Madras Government is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 200 crores and this sum is to be spent in a space of ten years, at the rate of about Rs. 20 crores per year. This in itself is enough work for a separate Minister. Burdening an overworked Minister administering the routine Public Works Department who is also in

charge of Public Information will not conduce to the bestowing of enough time and attention on these schemes potent with much good to the land if worked well and fraught with incalculable harm if abandoned or smothered.

Will our legislators bestow due attention on this matter and that very soon?

BLOOD AND TEARS

by K. K. MURTHY

*"... 't is to see the tyrant crew
Riding over your wives and you
Blood is on the grass like dew".*

—Shelley.

IT was one of those bleak December nights when everyone lay huddled up in their houses—some shivering with cold under ragged cotton sheets and some blissfully oblivious of the cold under warm luxurious blankets and quilts. Old Fatima Bibi lay doubled up on an old bamboo cot under a blanket that made no secret of its having seen better days. The distant municipal clock struck twelve. The old lady lying awake counted each stroke with the naivete of a child. It was on such a night as this and at the very same hour that the police had come and spirited her Azad away. That was about a year ago and from that moment Fatima had ceased to take any interest in life. Old, bent and stricken with the agony of an only son in prison, she lived in a perpetual state of lethargy. She still wondered what made the police clap her harmless son in gaol, while her neighbour's son, a goonda and a thief was going about with impunity and even fraternised with the police officials. When Azad's friends explained that Azad had gone to prison to pay the price of his intense patriotism, Fatima could see no light. She could never realize why any one should be thrown into prison for this.

"Gaol is only for criminals and my son committed no crime. Why have they torn my darling away from me....?" Tears would flow in profusion and her frail body would

be convulsed with grief. Little could she understand, that what Azad had done was construed as a crime in this country, that heroes in this land were hung and patriots shoved into prisons.

Tonight as she lay shivering with cold, she began seeing visions of her beloved son—visions painful, yet dear to the eye and heart. Azad was indeed an exemplary youth. Clever, courageous and good natured, he was one of the outstanding political workers of his town. Leaving school he plunged into the vortex of political activities and at the age of twenty was called to gaol. He was a hero of a hundred lathi charges, leader of the youth, live wire of his party and the shining sun of his mother's world. Coming out of school, he soon dashed his mother's hopes to the ground, when, instead of looking for a job, he went about looking for trouble, leading processions and facing the onslaught of policemen's bullets and batons.

Old Fatima drew the ends of her blanket closer, as the vision of Azad being carried on a stretcher to the hospital with a battered head, passed before her eyes. She clenched her teeth and closed her eyes tightly to suppress the emotion that assailed her inside and raked up a queer sensation in the pit of her stomach. She could clearly see the blood dripping from the stretcher and leaving a bloody trail on the road....

Some one was knocking at the door. Who could come to see her at this part of the night? Was it

the police again? They had taken everything from her...everything... The knocking continued. Fatima struggled to her feet, pulled the blanket round her shoulders and went to the door.

"Who is there?"

"Mother! Open the door!"

Azad! The next moment the door flew open and the tall shabby form of a youth tumbled into the old lady's arms.

"Close the door, mother" he said hoarsely, shivering with cold, and pulling a dirty chaddar tightly around him. "The police will soon be after me. I have just escaped from the gaol".

Fatima hurriedly closed and bolted the old rickety door that was hardly any barrier. The dim light that the lantern shed over Azad revealed a face that was once youthful and genial, now haggard and grim through suffering in prison. The eyes gleamed out of their hollow sockets with a strange light of fear and ferocity—the look of a hunted animal.

"Give me something to eat, mother. I am hungry" he said. Oh God! was this cruel apparition really her handsome laughing Azad who had tickled the hearts of many a maiden in the street? He looked more like a famished wild beast than a human being! Those monsters in the gaol had mutilated her boy beyond recognition. She hurried into the kitchen and quickly returned with a plate of chappaties and curry she had preserved for her morning meal.

Azad fell to eating with gluttonous greed and haste, while his mother stood in front of him watching devoutly every movement of his and shedding tears that silently ran down her sunken cheeks.

"What will happen now, my son", she said at last breaking the silence and unable to bear the anxiety that was choking her. "How long will you live like this, hiding from the police?"

"God knows, mother. I must get out of this place as soon as possible and reach some place of safety, after which I can think about the future. There are lots of my colleagues in the same condition working underground amongst the people. I must join them... For God's sake, don't cry, mother" said Azad pleadingly, looking at his mother's agonised, tear-stained face. "Some day I will come back to you safely with freedom.... I must be going now, mother. The police will be here anytime".

He gulped the last morsel of food, drank some water and got up to go. As he rose from his seat, booted steps were heard outside. The police! Azad acted like lightning. He shot through the rear passage and made for the back door, while his mother followed him with equal swiftness. The feeble front door flew open with a faint protest and armed policemen rushed after their quarry. Azad, crossing the back yard, had just time to reach the back door and disappear safely in the darkness outside, while shots rang out from behind and rent the silence of the night. Fatima running closely behind to see her son safely out, fell with a heartrending cry near the back door. One of the shots had got her.

"Azad, my son, my son...." she gasped with her last breath, her hands pitifully outstretched and life's blood ebbing away in a hot triumphant stream. The policemen's boots trampled her body in hot pursuit of her son.... All was silent again. An owl flew away screeching joyously into the wintry night.

Life, moral or physical, is not a completed fact, but is a continual process, depending for its movement upon two contrary forces, the force of resistance and that of expression.—
RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

S. S. VASAN

PROFILE OF A SELF-MADE MAN

TO bet and seldom lose is, hardly, to gamble. Vasan, the Gemini boss, resents being called a gambler. He would rather be styled an adventurer. One who watches him closely can willingly grant his claim.

In what average men term 'chance', Vasan discovers an intricate but clear pattern of causes and effects. He delights in deflecting the course of events, according to his design, by handling the causes intelligently and cautiously. All the thrill of the game he enjoys fully and he wants nothing more out of life. And, of course, as a veteran sportsman in his own field, he is proudly conscious of his admiring millions and anxious rivals.

Vasan is a short, brown, firm-set young man of 44, with bearing and gait which always suggest that everything about him is under perfect control. He is admirably simple in

his ways of living and quite often he seems deliberately to forget that he is a millionaire. Of late Vasan has turned a confirmed smoker; but his ego won't let him admit that smoking has become a habit with him. He will still keep away from cigarettes for any length of time, if only somebody throws the challenge.

Taking up all challenges, big and small, that come his way, and fighting hard with a stern determination to triumph completely has been Vasan's high-road to success. The most threatening among the more pressing problems usually gets his first attention and, having tamed it, he tackles the lesser ones with thorough self assurance and soon finds himself a master of the situation. This practice of fighting the battle where it is hardest has won for him an enormous store of self-confidence.

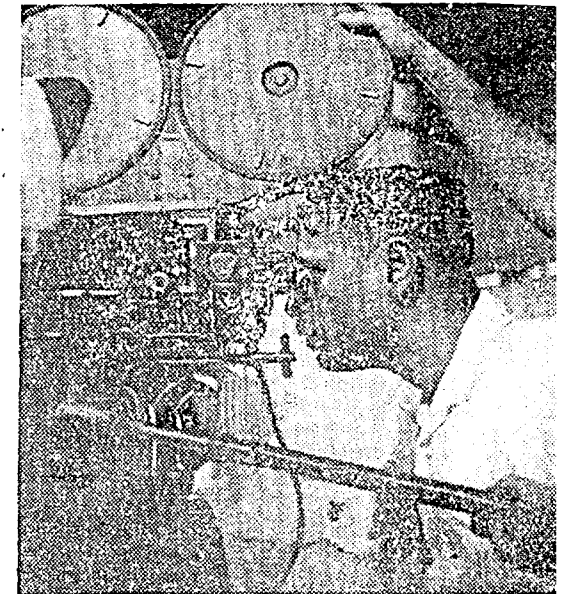
Earnest and passionately keen about reaching his objectives, Vasan honestly recognises the inescapable need for self-control. If Vasan has often a look of grim seriousness that seems discourteous and tends to repel, it only indicates that, within, he is being severe to himself. There is no end to the hard tests of endurance he puts himself to. Sometimes one wonders whether success or self-conquest is his real aim.

Concerning himself only with reason and result Vasan is a cool logician. The entire edifice of Vasan's attractive personality is built on the solid foundation of sheer logic. In spite of keen alertness and watchfulness, if, in playing his game, he sometimes loses a point, Vasan is not upset; as a clearheaded logician he looks back and discovers his own oversight of certain circumstances which have brought about the inevitable, unfavourable result. This robust rationalism leaves absolutely no room for despondency in him

under any circumstances. Again, as a logician, he sees no reason why a past mistake should be repeated and so goes ahead, with a firm faith that it would not be. He also hugs the faith that his future is going to be a continuation of only his successful past.

An optimist himself, Vasan steadily seeks to inspire hopefulness and self-trust in every one of his employees. He wants none of his subordinates to worry about any mistake committed in the past. By encouraging appreciation of their worth, he creates in them a feeling of self-importance, which keeps them entirely happy, working for him with all their heart and soul in their respective jobs. As a clever and reasonable businessman, Vasan believes in paying his employees decently, sometimes more even than they expect. As sure as he used to pick the right horse in the races, he chooses the right man for the right job always. Talents and genius which would have withered away elsewhere, blossom out fully in Vasan's institutions, thanks to his delicate and almost reverent treatment. The creative worker in Vasan's employ gets what he wants primarily—an atmosphere of luxury and leisure.

Vasan's approach to work is always straight. No job is too small for him to be unmindful of his success in it. Vasan's ability to isolate the job on hand for his total attention, is tremendous. It might almost seem that he looks upon concentration on the small job of the moment, as a sort of refuge from the immensity of problems elsewhere. His wise sense of economy of time dictates that other jobs will have their time, and so can't have any claim over his energies now. Though always a relentless pursuer of perfection in everything that he does, sometimes, intelligent awareness of the limitations of time and facilities makes him compromise readily with the second best, and he never again looks back on the imperfection allowed. In times of pressure, when huge tasks have to be performed in a desperately short time, Vasan paints an exaggeratedly dark picture of his position to him-



Vasan at the Camera.

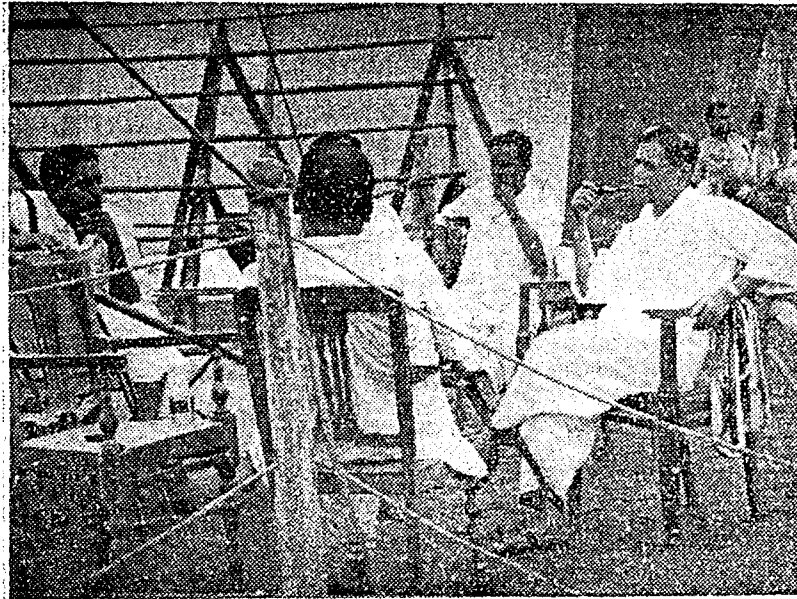
self and still, without losing equipoise, he whips himself up to extraordinary gigantic efficiency and gets the task done, well before time. When necessary, he puts off sleep indefinitely with surprising ease and with his real companion the friendly cigarette, works his way through to triumphant conclusion of his hard undertakings.

Vasan would not allow altruism or idealism have a hold on him. He does not pretend that in whatever he does, even his ultimate motive is public service. He does not claim that he seeks to enlighten the masses through his journal and films. He knows clearly and frankly admits that only sometimes he derives satisfaction from his work as a potential means of mass education. What he always really wants is to be a good, clever, successful performer, and there ends his objective. He never aims at anything higher or lower. Also he is careful to see that no vain idealism creeps into his work—idealism that does not pay; for it is his favourite dictum that "existence is prerequisite to achievement."

His rules of business are flexible only within a limited region,—they are so for practical purposes; but



S. S. Vasan with Kasturi Srinivasan, Editor, "The Hindu".



Vasan (extreme Right) with representatives of a circus company. He is discussing a business deal for circus scenes in "Chandralekha".

he never changes his major policies in any way that will affect the interests of parties who have deals with him. His reliability has created for him a solid fund of respect and goodwill among his employees, and generally in the business world. Temperamentally Vasan cannot let down consciously anybody that trusts him.

Time cannot wear out a friendship with Vasan. Once a friend, one is always his friend. Vasan would not call anyone his enemy, but he is shrewd enough to know what some people imagining themselves to be his enemies are up to. He is pleasantly courteous to the understanding. But when he has to be left alone with his work, he does not pretend courtesy.

Vasan takes normal interest in life, and he reacts naturally to the

delights of sight and sound. He can't give time for books or the radio. Vasan is essentially a lonely man; he rarely appears in public. He has no club life. Among political figures he has a strange admiration for Churchill and Jinnah for the furious tenacity with which they pursue their causes.

Occasionally he still gives himself to building castles in the air but he always feels sure that some day he will lay real bricks for his castles—nay marble—for does he not always do things only in a big way?

Vasan gets bored sometimes. He then asks himself "What is all this?" But will he stop? He just can't. As long as he has an ounce of energy left in him, he will go on playing the game.—'CRAYON'.

The history of man has been a continual struggle between the ideal of a moral community and the immoral forces of greed, stupidity and violence, individual and corporate. We must refine the spirit of patriotism so as to make it a pathway from man to mankind.—DR. RADHAKRISHNAN.

IMPRESSIONS OF MADURA SOCIALIST CONVENTION

by 'SWATANTRA' REPORTER

THE phrases had a familiar ring. "Government acting as agents of the capitalists....out to crush trade unions....attack on civil liberties....." They have been heard so often from Communist platforms.

But at Madura, on March 28 and 29, such vigorous phrases were used in criticism of the present Congress administration for the first time in South India at a non-Communist gathering. The occasion was the first provincial conference of Tamil Nad Socialists. The conference, significantly, was as sharply critical of the Communists as it was of the Congress Ministers. After the end of the war and until recently, the only considerable and active opposition to the Congress from the Left had come from the Communist Party of India. But when the Socialists decided at their all-India conference at Nasik last month to leave the Congress and function as an independent party, the pattern of political life in the country was basically altered. The Madura Socialist Convention, which met just a week after the Nasik Conference, reflected this change and the challenge which it involves to the position of the older parties.

Something of the self-conscious and distinctive atmosphere of the Madura convention was to be felt already in the train which carried Jayaprakash Narayan and party from Madras. At various stations en route, kisan and trade union delegates joined up. I kept talking to many of them. They were hopelessly enthusiastic about their new status as members of the youngest, but already powerful, Indian party. The Socialists would capture at least a third of the seats in Tamil Nad during the next elections, they estimated.

If the consciousness of separate identity was evident, equally evident was the ideological confusion that



K. B. Menon (extreme Left), Jaya Prakash Narayan and party.

is perhaps inevitable after the long period of the Socialists' whole-hearted, as distinct from the Communists' tactical, association with the Congress. The Socialist Party has yet to clarify its social philosophy and concretise its economic programme.

The lack of a unified outlook was illustrated in an interesting way during the journey. When the Socialist delegates from Pondicherry got into our compartment, the conversation gradually turned to the subject of Sri Aurobindo's ashram. Two of these Pondicherry delegates

are also members of the working committee of the local Congress unit—the Socialist Party has not yet separated itself from the Congress organisation in the foreign-owned territories. They were both emphatically of the opinion that Sri Aurobindo's ashram is not a purely spiritual centre, and that it takes part in local politics, on the side of French imperialism. They said the French Government of Pondicherry has always had the benefit of advice and co-operation from the ashram in suppressing the movement for democratic self-government. What the Socialists from Pondicherry had to say about the non-political and non-spiritual aspects of ashram life, I would rather not repeat.

I asked them how, if they thought so poorly of the ashram, they could square their scepticism with the belief of Jayaprakash that Indian spiritual leaders, among them Sri Aurobindo, can and should help in purifying national life. The Pondicherry delegates suggested that, perhaps, Jayaprakash was not aware of the truth about Sri Aurobindo's ashram. Others attempted to explain Jayaprakash's appeal as meaning that Sri Aurobindo and other rishis should cease peddling their spiritual wares to their present clientele drawn from the rich, exploiting class and turn their attention to the poor! With that, however, the embarrassing subject of spiritual uplift was dropped.

Psychological hang-overs from the Congress were there, too. To admire Sardar Patel or not to? One delegate, a journalist, was expressing unqualified gratification at the speed with which the Sardar had roped the States into the Indian Union and made many of them merge with the provinces. A more self-aware delegate quickly retorted that merger and the like did not represent much of an advance since princely autocracy had been left largely untouched. A Socialist Home Minister, he said, would have devoted as much effort to secure internal democracy in the States as to bring about their accession.

But the question on which the delegates seemed to be least clear in their minds was: What to do about the Communists. There were bitter complaints of their rivals' ways, especially of the use of physical violence, with which they charged the Communists. There was no doubt that a blanket ban on the Communist Party or wholesale arrests of its leaders would be welcome—except that the Socialists themselves expect to receive shortly their own share of attention at the hands of the Government.

This question of Socialist-Communist relations was discussed by Jayaprakash Narayan when he opened the conference at Madura with an address to the assembled delegates. After dealing with the reasons which had impelled the Socialist Party to withdraw from the Congress, he spoke at some length on 'Left unity'. The Left parties in India other than the Socialist Party, said Jayaprakash, might be divided into two sections. The first section comprises the Communists and the second consists of the small, variously styled splinter groups numbering nearly twenty. Both these sections met recently at Patna and arrived at a provisional agreement on common action for agreed objectives. The Socialists had kept themselves aloof from this 'unity conference.'

Explaining why, Jayaprakash said that as far as the Communists are concerned, the Socialist Party is opposed in principle to co-operation with them. The Socialist Party's aim is to achieve democratic Socialism while the Communist Party's aim is to impose Fascist Communism through its own one-party dictatorship. The Socialist Party is pledged to act within the law of the land, as a constructive opposition, always remaining loyal to the State. If, on the other hand, the Communists grow in strength, Jayaprakash said they will be a danger to our freedom, to the very existence of the State, because they are 'fifth columnists' and 'agents of a foreign power' with no loyalty to their country and no scruples about the means they employ. It is perhaps not

correct to speak of the Communist Party as a Left party at all, said Jayaprakash Narayan, since it will support imperialism, fascism or American capitalism according as the needs of Russian foreign policy might demand. There can be no question of cooperation with such a party.

As for the smaller Left groups, Jayaprakash said that their denominational dogmas and international affiliations were so cumbersome and mutually conflicting that the various groups would do well to disband themselves. Their members could then accept the aims and rules, and seek membership, of the Socialist Party.

As Jayaprakash proceeded with this analysis, it became clear that what he wanted the Socialist Party to become was the Indian edition of the Third Force—the idea of which is being so keenly canvassed at present all over the world.

Many of the points made by the Socialist leader will find general acceptance. The various Leftist sects must, surely, discard their special dogmas and ritual and join the main current of the Leftist movement, if they are to play any significant part in shaping the country's future. And all those who wish to see social justice and swift economic development in India, and who are at the same time profoundly distrustful of the narrow fanaticism, mercurial shifts and undemocratic methods of the Communists, will undoubtedly be glad to see the emergence of a Third Force. The question is whether the Indian Socialist Party is fitted, by its programme and leadership, to grow to be an effective and successful Third Force. My own impression was that the enormous potential sympathy for the Socialists arising from the people's growing dissatisfaction with the Congress and distrust of the Communists, can be fully harnessed only when the Socialist leaders make the economic programme of their party more clear and more relevant to the actual problems than it is at present.

The Madura conference, for instance, met during a period of

acute economic distress part of which is due to the Government's policy of decontrol that has enabled the prices of several commodities to be steeply pushed up. And yet, curiously, the conference had not a word to say about the policy of decontrol.

In one resolution after another, the Government was attacked for its appeasement of the vested interests, for letting production stop in Coimbatore while talking of increased production, and for arresting kisan and trade union organisers. But there was no criticism of the Government for having let prices rise to levels altogether beyond the reach of the common people. It might seem amazing that a Socialist conference should thus keep silent on an issue which one would normally expect them to seize upon. But it is perfectly understandable. The Socialist Party had itself asked for decontrol.

It is not known whether the Socialist Party's policy in this regard was due to ignorance of the elementary realities of modern economics or to the influence of the subjective and moral criticism of controls by Gandhiji. Anyway, Socialist leaders—most prominent among them Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia—took up the cudgels against controls. The Communists were vehemently protesting that decontrol would only benefit the capitalist speculators and would spell increased economic strain for the people. At that time, when decontrol was being demanded by a motley group including some capitalists, the Socialists and Gandhiji, and opposed by an equally strange assortment of some other capitalists and the Communists, the question was rather academic and hypothetical. Now, the question has become very uncomfortably real. But the Socialist Party would have to pay a heavy price in terms of prestige if it had to reverse its judgment as a result of wisdom gained after the event. And so control and decontrol did not exist, so far as the Madura conference was concerned.

I questioned many leading delegates to the conference on this

matter. The feeling of awkwardness was noticeable. Some said frankly that they were committed by Dr. Lohia's campaign for decontrol; some said that the people should become 'self-reliant' even at the cost of higher prices; some others said like Finance Minister Shanmukham Chetti, that while controls were good theoretically during a period of scarcity, the administration was too susceptible to corruption to be capable of administering controls efficiently, and therefore decontrol was to be preferred. Jayaprakash Narayan himself belongs to this last category. When I talked to him about this question, he advanced the above argument of inefficient administration and proceeded to draw my attention to the resolution adopted at Nasik which asked for total decontrol, and for price regulation by Government through control over some 25 per cent of

the commodity concerned. I asked Jayaprakash how he expected the Government to be successful in partial control and regulation of market prices when, according to him, the administration was fundamentally incapable of administering controls.

Further, under the same inefficient and corrupt administration, prices of many essential commodities were much less when controls existed than they are now. Jayaprakash said in answer that he was not sure that the increase in prices was necessarily due to decontrol. Maldistribution of goods resulting from transport difficulties might well explain the steep rise in prices in some deficit areas and the relative stability in regions where stocks accumulated due to transport bottlenecks. "But I haven't studied this question personally in any detail," said Jayaprakash.

Manliness consists in daring to do the right and facing consequences, whether it is in matters social, political or other.
—MAHATMA GANDHI.

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FIRST MEETINGS OF GREAT MEN

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

IT is always a problem what to say when we meet new people introduced or unIntroduced. Some begin by talking about the weather and others about each other's health. Even Romeo and Juliet, that immortal pair, must have begun as Wodehouse points out by asking about each other's friends, relatives, far and near, thus slowly leading the conversation on to themselves. The truth is that first meetings are always embarrassing and first impressions, though lasting, are not generally correct or profound. Even great men cannot appraise or measure each other in a first meeting, and it is only time that makes for life-long companionship. Only in certain exceptional cases, men have impressed each other profoundly, and have become since then life-long colleagues or friends.

Chandragupta as a poor inn-keeper was profoundly impressed by the sight of a poor Brahmin, Chanakya, who stumbling over a cluster of grass, burnt it up and drank it, to quench his rage. The immense will power of the Brahmin so deeply affected Chandragupta that immediately he made him his confidant and thus was built up one of the most fruitful friendships of history, responsible for the great Maurya Empire. Boswell, when he first met Johnson, was thoroughly embarrassed by the Doctor's devastating retort that coming from Scotland was what most Scotsmen could not help. But the apparently rude Doctor had little of the bear in him except its skin, and this embarrassing beginning ripened into one of the world's famous friendships, resulting in the finest biography in English literature. But for brevity and crispness, however, we have an example in how Stanley met Dr. Livingstone. Stanley was deputed by an American newspaper to find out Dr. Livingstone, lost in the wilds of Central Africa and when he found an English doctor

after months of search in a village in Uganda, he simply smiled, extending his hand and said "Dr. Livingstone, I presume". The doctor must have been certainly struck by the characteristic self-assurance, forthrightness and unembarrassed firmness of the man and his manners. Stanley acquired as much reputation as an African explorer as the doctor and also as a reporter.

In our own time, the first meetings of important personages with Mahatma Gandhi form an interesting study in the interaction of personalities on each other. Babu Rajendra Prasad who, even as a graduate, wanted to join the Servants of India Society, was impressed more by the saintliness of the Mahatma than anything else. When Gandhiji chided the famous lawyer for not cleaning a vessel properly, Rajen Babu cleaned it again without a murmur. Gandhiji triumphantly remarked that he had made rich High Court advocates clean vessels properly. But even the astute Mahatma was not aware that he had discovered his real counterpart, a man in whose uprightness even his worst enemies believed. In the case of Patel, it was Mahatma's supreme self-assurance and invincible optimism that attracted the 'iron man'. When the unimpressive barrister from South Africa was expounding his principles in the club, Patel not only kept aloof but prevented others like Mavlankar from going to him. The Mahatma had to prove his mettle as an undaunted captain to attract Patel. Ever since, Patel's concern with the Mahatma was mainly on the plane of politics, while he had little interest in him as a prophet or as the author of the constructive programme. He characteristically called Mahatma's ashram a regular menagerie. Jawaharlal, typically, was attracted by the nobility and self-possession of the Mahatma.

while doubting the efficiency or advisability of mixing religion and politics as the Mahatma did. Subash Bose, though attracted by the saintliness and moral courage of the Mahatma, saw the holes in the giant's armour, and pointed them out with ruthless frankness, quite early. He frankly confessed that he used sometimes to avoid the Mahatma's company because he dreaded that the power of his personal magnetism may change his determination. This is the highest tribute to the Mahatma's magnetism, coming as it does from another superman, who was the Mahatma's equal in personal magnetism and in making heroes out of clay, though in a different way. The Maulana, a determined enemy of British rule long before Mahatma became so, was attracted by the Mahatma's unswerving love of truth as exhibited in his speeches and writings. Maulana Sahib has shown how it is possible to combine a heartfelt veneration for the Mahatma, while opposing with determination and dignity some of his impracticable proposals.

If Gandhiji had impressed others profoundly at first sight, it was Rajaji who impressed him most at the first meeting. When the Mahatma was Rajaji's guest in Madras in 1920, Mahadev Desai told the Mahatma about the rare intellectual qualities of their shy odd host. Later when the Madras notables came to question the Mahatma on his plans and principles, it was C. R. who fully and clearly answered all the questions. Surprised, Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari asked Gandhiji whether he had written or instructed Rajaji on his plans and principles. Gandhiji replied in the negative and added that Rajaji seemed to grasp and explain his plans and principles much better than he himself. Since then, Rajaji became the Mahatma's official interpreter and remained so till Pakistan resolution.

For sheer dramatic interest, the first meeting of Gandhiji with Dr. Rajan and Bharathi are important. When Dr. Rajan was in London, studying medicine, Indian

students and residents decided to have an Indian style dinner at their gathering and were going about to get a suitable man to preside over the occasion. As other Indian notables could not accept the invitation, they invited Gandhiji who was in London then (with his South African record alone), on somebody's suggestion. Dr. Rajan had not seen Gandhiji and when supervising the cooking arrangements he saw an unimpressive little man helping others whom he began instructing in the correct way of doing things. Soon he came to know that the man he had been instructing was their guest of honour, Gandhiji.

Bharathi met Gandhiji during the last years of his life. Gandhiji was in Madras in 1920, conferring with Rajaji, A. Rangasamy Iyengar and Satyamurthi who were standing while Va. Ra. stood guard at the entrance with strict instructions not to admit anybody in. Bharathi, however, broke in and much to the dismay of all inside sat before Gandhiji and asked him in clear English whether Gandhiji could preside over a meeting he was going to address next day. Gandhiji, after consulting his secretary Desai, found that he had an engagement and asked Bharathi whether the day after would not suit him. Bharathi replied that it was not worthwhile and added that his heartfelt blessings were with Gandhiji for his non-co-operation campaign which he considered a Dharma Yuddha and went out as suddenly as he came in. The Mahatma impressed by the man's supreme presence of mind, asked others who he was. Satyamurthi was fuming in speechless rage over Bharathi's supposed impudence while A. Rangasamy Iyengar stood embarrassed and shy. C. R. alone promptly replied that he was the Poet of Tamil Nad. Gandhiji asked, further, whether there was none to take proper care of him, which question nobody answered. Bharathi however did not live much longer thereafter for any human agency to take serious and good care of him.

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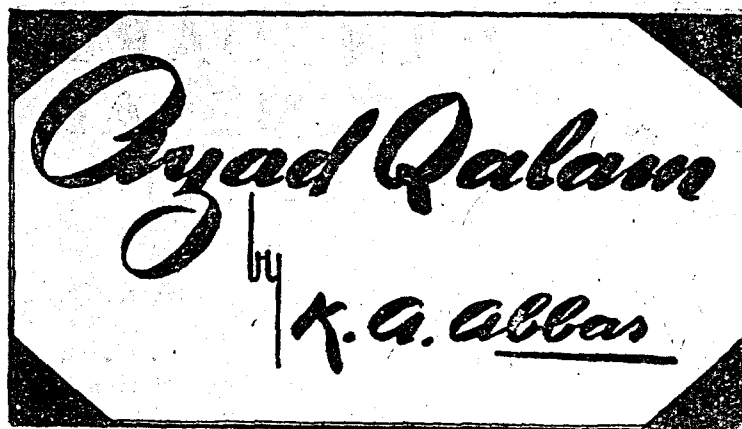
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THE new era of Freedom fulfils itself in many small ways—as, for instance, in a History question paper which some intelligent and politically alive teacher set for the Fourth (Primary) standard in a Bombay girls school. Here is an English rendering of the questions which were in Hindustani:—

1. India had no connection with the Great World War. Then how were Indians dragged into it?
2. What was the Rowalatt Act and why was it passed?
3. Describe in detail the circumstances in which the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre took place?
4. What was "Civil Disobedience" and when did it start?
5. Who were the leaders who transformed the Congress into a revolutionary organisation?
6. Explain why industrial advancement is essential for winning a war.
7. What were the powers that took part in the Great World War?

One can imagine—and feel inspired by—the degree of intelligence and political and social awareness presupposed by this question paper. Two years ago it would have been unthinkable to include such "subversive" teaching in the curriculum of any Government school. Today such a question paper is possible—because we are free!

LEADERS NEED NOT BE LITERATE *

To be a leader one need not necessarily possess any educational quali-

fications, much less political insight or historical perspective. The cultural and literary attainments of some of our Honourable Ministers are just above zero. One of them (whose mother-tongue is Urdu) declared he had never heard of Krishenchander, the leading Urdu Short-story writer, another wanted to know who was Mulk Raj Anand! We are aware of the sorry figure that some of our leaders cut when they presume to make pontifical pronouncements on art.

One can perhaps forgive a politician for being ignorant about the paintings of Jamini Roy, or the verses of Josh, or the terpsichorean skill of Uday Shankar. But surely one expects them to possess a rudimentary knowledge of the political and economic history of the country they are supposed to govern. How many of them, I wonder, would be able to answer correctly the question paper (reproduced above) which was set for Primary school children?

POSERS FOR POLITICIANS

I think it would not be a bad idea if all leaders, politicians, Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors and Delegates to International Conferences were occasionally subjected to an examination—slightly above the intelligence of the Primary standard! Here is a model History and Politics question paper which may help them to have a self-examination:—

EACH QUESTION CARRIES

TEN MARKS:

1. Trace the history of British rule in India—from Clive to Mount-

batten (Clive is dead, so it does not matter if you are candid about him, but take elaborate care not to offend our beloved Lord Louis).

2. Describe in detail the disastrous economic consequences of the Ottawa Pact. (Ten marks will be deducted if you dare to mention in this connection the name of the present Finance Minister of the "National" Government).

3. Describe the heroic world-wide exploits of the "patriotic" Royal Indian Army in support of British imperialism in Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, Flanders, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, etc., and in dealing with internal "disorders", with special reference to Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, and Qissa-khahi Bazar, Peshawar, and contrast them with the anti-Imperialist activities of Subhas Bose's Indian National Army (without causing offence either to General Cariappa or General Mohan Singh),

OR

write an essay in gushing praise of Netaji Bose and the Indian National Army, their heroic exploits and patriotic spirit, and then prove that such patriots cannot be re-admitted to the Indian Army.

4. Explain the declaration of Independence of 1930 and the QUIT INDIA resolution of August 8, 1942, in terms of continued membership of the British Commonwealth. (Answer this question without using any exclamation marks, inverted commas or any other ironical expressions or signs).

5. Write an essay on Gandhian Non-violence and try to reconcile it with an up-to-date Army, Navy and Air Force, atom bomb research, and jingoistic speeches. (Try very hard).

6. What is meant by 'Nationalisation of Key industries'? How best can it be achieved without interfering with Tata Steel, Birla mills, Dalmia Cement, Podar textiles, Seksaria Investments, Singhania (J.K.) Industries, and Scindia's steamships? (Extra marks will be given for appropriate quotations from M. R. Masani's thesis on "Mixed Economy").

7. Denounce communalist organisations like the R.S.S. and show how they can be liquidated by banning the Communist Party. (Ten additional marks if you can spell "Communalists" without "al").

8. Write an essay on the Freedom of the Press—and get it passed by the Home Department's censors before submitting it.

9. Compare and contrast the trouble-making Socialists with well-meaning Communalists and show how the Congress will be democratically strengthened by replacing the out-going Socialists with incoming Mahasabhis, Muslim Leaguers and Akalis.

10. Merge ten states and create a Raj Pramukh with an allowance of a million a year. (Use simple arithmetic and not algebraic formulae).

11. If you were to be sent abroad, whom would you take along at Government expense: your wife or your lady stenographer? Discuss relative advantages and disadvantages, in complete confidence, and without fearing your wife.

Ten marks will be given for illegibility which is a sign of administrative genius.

MEN BEHIND MARSHALL

For an understanding of the present anti-Soviet hysteria now sweeping across America, the plans for conscription and war, the atom race, the consolidation (with the help of dollars) of the Anti-Russian bloc, one must know some basic facts about the architect of America's present foreign policy—General George C. Marshall—and the men around and BEHIND him.

Marshall is the first non-civilian to be appointed Secretary of State (Foreign Minister) in U.S.A. Inevitably he has given a militarist tone to his foreign policy—"opposing Russian power with an exhibition of even greater American power". But the fundamental motivations of his policy are not concerned with military ambitions but economic interests.

According to the non-Communist, pro-Wallace *New Republic*, "the

most disturbing fact about Marshall's regime is that during it the investment bankers, who already dominate the rest of the Truman administration, have been able to move in to State Department Already the Wall Street influence has become obvious in the struggle over Ruhr coal production, in discussions of German industrial revival and in negotiations over Britain's economic difficulties."

Since the appointment of Marshall, the progressives of Roosevelt's Brain-trust have been swept out of the State Department as also out of other branches of the administration. In their places have come nominees of the Wall Street monopolists, such as:

Robert A. Lovett, partner in "Brown Brothers, Harriman" banking firm, as Under-Secretary of State;

Charles Saltzman, former vice-president of the New York Stock Exchange and wartime brigadier-general, as Assistant Secretary in charge of Occupied Territories;

Lewis Douglas, Chairman of the Mutual Life Insurance Company, as Ambassador to London.

Allied to Marshall are also Defence Secretary James V. Forrestal, head of the Wall Street firm of Dillon, Read; Commerce Secretary W. Averell Harriman, partner in "Brown Brothers, Harriman"; Treasury Secretary John Snyder, another prominent banker; Admiral Leahy, ex-Ambassador to Vichy France and Truman's Chief of Staff; Major-General William Draper, former executive of the Dillon, Read.

THE REASON WHY

Why does the U.S. administration fear Russian influence in Western Europe? Why does the U.S. government favour restoration of German industry, even earlier than in pro-allied countries? Because, in 1943, 171 U.S. corporations owned controlling interest worth 420 million dollars in 278 German corporations. U.S. corporations had invested 259 million dollars in German manufacturing enterprises alone, mainly automotive and

machinery manufacturing. General Motors, General Electric, International Tel. and Tel. of New York, Standard Oil, Ford Motor Co.—all wielding considerable political influence—are some of the U.S. firms with economic interests in Germany.

Similar economic interests in other European countries have created a big U.S. stake in preservation of a capitalist Europe. Next time you read of Truman or Marshall eloquently talking of Democracy remember the billion U.S. dollars involved!

MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Re: Your Statement in Parliament that the ex-personnel of the Indian National Army would not be reinstated in the Indian army because 'there had been a long break in their service and they had been out of touch with the army', and because 'it would affect psychologically the present army at a time when it has been exposed to considerable stress and strain': "They are a fine body of young men, fine officers and fine rank and file, and their dominating motive was love for India's freedom . . . any punishment given to them would in effect be a punishment on all India and all Indians and a deep wound would be created in millions of hearts." (Your press statement issued on August 20, 1945).

Re: The recent bans on Communist Party and arrests of Communist leaders of Trade Unions: "In the boom years all went well for industry, though the workers carried on as before and profited little. But when the boom passed and it was not so easy to make large profits, the burden, of course, fell on the workers. The old profits were forgotten; they had been consumed. . . . And so there was industrial unrest and labour troubles and the gigantic strike in Bombay which impressed everybody and frightened both the employers and Government. The Labour Movement was becoming class-conscious, militant and dangerous, both in ideology and in organisation . . . the Government could not contemplate the future with any satisfaction

the Government struck suddenly at organised labour by arresting some of its most prominent workers from advanced groups My own sympathies were with the advanced group" (Your Autobiography, page 188).

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The publication of "POEMS FROM IQBAL" (translated from the Urdu by W. G. Kiernan, Kutub Publishers, Bombay 1, Price Rs. 7-8) is an event of great significance. There were thousands in India and abroad who wanted to get acquainted with the works of Iqbal but could not, because of their ignorance of Urdu and Persian. (The only long poem of his available in English translation was *Asrar-i-khudi—Secrets Of Self*—which was not representative of Iqbal's many-sided genius). A window is now

opened to them to glimpse—if not to fully appreciate—the beauty and the power of Iqbal's stirring poetry which was only the outer garment of his philosophic thought.

Nearly a hundred and thirty short and long pieces are included in Kiernan's translation, including the best specimens of Iqbal's lyrical, metaphysical and philosophical poetry and one can study the evolution of the poet from the delicate imagery of "Beauty's Essence" and "Candle And Moth" to the revolutionary "God's Command To His Angels" ("Rise, and from their slumber wake the poor ones of My World!") and the profound irony of "Leagues of Nations" ("She's been at her last gasp for days, poor wretch") or of "Indian Reforms" ("Now he drops withered flowers into our cage").

It is a pity, however, that Kiernan has been able to draw only on three volumes of Iqbal's verses in Urdu, because some of his finest poems are in Persian. Maybe some other enterprising soul, with sufficient command over both the languages, will one day fill this gap.

The metric verse (with variations of metre to avoid monotony) which Kiernan has used for his translation is, of course, better suited to the purpose than blank or free verse would have been, and he has no doubt done his best to bring "some faint glow at least of Iqbal's fire and colour" into his translation. If he fails at times to recapture the resonant rhythms and phonetical power of the original, it is not his fault but, rather, the fault of the alien medium.

It is a strange irony that it should have been left to an Englishman and a Communist to render Iqbal into English. The translation is by no means perfect. Many an Indian might have done more justice to this task but Walter Kiernan has one advantage over them—he has done it!

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"BOMBAY: Mr. Morarji Desai (Home Minister) revealed that he had received a letter threatening him with dire consequences

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ces if he "touched the R.S.S." The letter was from a person who had been acquitted by the High Court after detention by the Government.

"Certain extracts which were read out by Mr. Desai said: 'Morarjibhai, the High Court has set us free, it has slapped your face and cut your nose. We spit on your face. Do not touch our grants; if you do, you are doomed. We will make a Gandhi out of you, take care of your life. Godse was truth; so he was successful.'"

"ALLAHABAD: The R.S.S. men are again active in the U.P. in certain district. They have been holding private conferences and under the garb of physical culture at private places they have been carrying on the propaganda

for the R.S.S. They have organised volley-ball clubs and other indoor games where they preach hatred against the present government, and the Congress leaders. It has also been noted that the attitude of the authorities has been relaxing and the R.S.S. men have been taking full advantage of it."

—News items published on same day in a Bombay paper.

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"A tragic sidelight on the acute shortage of housing accommodation in the city was provided when it was reported to the Coroner that a girl of three (Gangabai) who was sleeping on a footpath at Parel was kicked to death by a cow on Sunday. Incidentally cows are still at large on Bombay Streets".—Bombay paper.

RELIGION AND THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT

by Dr. C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN

ABOUT two months ago, it was reported in the papers that the Government of Madras had amended the Madras Educational Rules by adding an additional clause under Rule 154 to the effect that "the expression of views which are calculated to bring into hatred, ridicule or contempt the beliefs or practices of any religion within the precincts of the school or outside will be taken as bad conduct for the purposes of the above rule". Under Rule 2 of the Grants-in-Aid Code, the Director of Public Instruction was empowered to refuse grants to any institution which directly or indirectly encourages such propaganda against any religion.

As an educationist, I felt shocked and outraged by this piece of news and it was a matter for surprise and disappointment to me that it passed without comment or notice by the press or the public or even by teachers' associations or organisations. Apparently teachers in South India are ready to organise and agitate for their material needs but do not seem to mind their souls being stifled or their personalities suppressed! I wondered what the provocation was for such an obscurantist amendment to the rules. Some light has been thrown on the matter by the Minister for Education in his answer to an interpellation in the Legislative Assembly two weeks ago. He said that complaints had been received by the Government that anti-religious propaganda was being carried on by some teachers in schools and that the Government had amended the rule in order to deal with such complaints. In answer to a supplementary question the Minister replied that no teachers' certificate had been cancelled under this rule but some teachers against whom complaints had been received were warned. So far, so good. The Minister seemed more liberal and more

modern in his outlook than some of the members who interpellated him. The public are not in possession of all the facts regarding the nature of the complaints received by the Government or the character, extent and seriousness of the anti-religious propaganda that was carried on and they are therefore not in a position to express a definite opinion as to how far such a drastic amendment of the rule is justified or called for by the circumstances. While readily making this reservation I must say that *prima facie* the amendment is not only educationally unsound and objectionable but detrimental to national progress and reconstruction.

Let us first consider the educational aspect. It is a well-known and commonplace but nevertheless cardinal principle of the educational process that a teacher should have *reasonable* freedom to teach in his own way, to express his convictions and to put his personality into his work. If he is unduly gagged, if he is "crabbed, cribbed and confined", his teaching becomes mechanical and loses its vitality and its power to shape the mind, character and outlook of his pupil. The new rule of the Madras Government, if rigidly and strictly enforced, will reduce him to a hypocrite or a drudge. For fear of losing his certificate and for the sake of his bread and butter, he will, if he is a first-rate teacher, become a hypocrite, suppressing his convictions and personality and paying lip-service to ideas which at heart he may strongly disapprove. If he is a third-rate teacher, he will become a drudge and a bore. Look at the matter from another angle. How on earth is it possible to teach a subject, for instance, like Indian history, without making comments or reflections on the *beliefs* or *practices* of any religion? During the course of Indian history, there

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have been a hundred revolts and attempts to reform Hinduism from Buddha downwards to Mahatma Gandhi. The text-books which the pupils use contain comments, pro or contra, on such movements. How is the poor teacher to deal with them? What is he to say if his pupils ask him questions? Does the new rule mean that the teacher can say nothing against Kali worship and animal sacrifice in the temples, the Devadasi system, the tyranny and other anti-social aspects of caste and untouchability? Is he not allowed to say in class or outside what our great national leaders, Gandhiji, Nehru and others have been saying or writing? Swami Vivekananda characterised orthodox Hinduism as "the religion of the cooking-pot". Some years ago, when one of the States of the U.S.A. banned the teaching of the biological principle of evolution in the schools, the world laughed it out. I am anxious that the world should not laugh at Madras. Surely this new rule of the Madras Government is far too comprehensive and sweeping if it is to be strictly enforced. It throws away the baby with the bath water. By all means let us ban all propaganda in our schools, anti-religious or otherwise. But we should respect as a sacred educational principle the personality and freedom of the teacher and the value of the work he is doing for the nation.

Let us now consider the matter from the broader national aspect. It has been well said, "Never-ending are the discussions as to what India ought to learn and how that knowledge should be imparted to her". But it is much more vital to ascertain what India will consent to *unlearn*. Upon the answer to that question her future depends. That question has not yet been frankly and fearlessly faced much less answered by the Congress or the Government of India or the provincial Governments. The constituent Assembly laid down certain objectives—national unity, a secular democratic State, social and economic justice and equality of opportunity. If India really and seriously means to realise these

objectives, if they are not to be mere stunts and slogans, she must shape her educational policy and plan her educational programme in consonance with them. Our boys and girls in the schools, our young men and women in the universities and our vast population of illiterate adults have to be educated and trained for citizenship in a secular and socialistic democracy. But you cannot put new wine into old bottles. National unity, democracy and socialism are incompatible with caste, communalism, untouchability and segregation and subjection of women. Hence education in India should be both a destructive and constructive process—destroying caste and communal consciousness and building up a national and democratic and socialistic outlook. But religious orthodoxy—be it Hindu or Muslim—is the most formidable obstacle to any such educational process. This should be obvious to the meanest intelligence and need not be elaborated. It is necessary and inevitable, therefore, that education should wage ruthless war against orthodox and traditional religion, against such religious beliefs, superstitions, customs, ceremonies and practices as are manifestly anti-social and undemocratic and have made India a patch of the Middle Ages in the modern world. If this reasoning is sound the Government of India and the provincial Governments should put their heads together and take the lead in an organised drive through education for the purification and transformation of the religions of India and for the spiritual and cultural regeneration of its people. Unlike most other countries "religiosity" has so completely governed and dominated the life and outlook of the people of India that we cannot build up a secular democratic State unless by means of an uncompromising and far-reaching educational programme, we develop in the present and future generations a modern rational and scientific outlook. In this context, does not the attitude of the Madras Government appear obscurantist?

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'ONE WORLD' THROUGH ART

by **SANTHA RUNGACHARY**

EVER since the second world war began the desire for peace has grown from a vague and indifferent acceptance of an ideal set by wise men into a fervent, burning personal longing in the breast of every individual in the world. Indeed, man's longing for peace has become so intense that he is prepared to fight for it, so that if not he, at least his children could enjoy the bliss of an existence untroubled by threat of violence.

Lately, however, this ideal has slowly been turning into a negative concept. People no longer say 'we want peace'. They say instead 'we do not want war'. It has become more or less impossible for the peoples of the world to love each other like good neighbours. And they have also realised that the only thing left for them to do is to make the best of a bad job and decide not to kill each other.

Where diplomats have failed and ambassadors had to fight sullen and inimical nations, where foreign ministers have risen from their conferences feeling slightly less friendly towards each other than when they had sat down, where interpreters have beaten their foreheads and thrown up their hands, where threats and appeals by parties and the press have been of no avail, there now appears on the horizon a new organisation which has dedicated itself to the task of establishing the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man. They call it in America the World Fellowship of Artists.

Theirs is a fantastic ideal. They believe that there is one universal language which people all over the world can speak and in which they can express their innermost thoughts: Art. Their ultimate goal is the realisation of one world in Art through the interchange of the artistic and cultural excellences of different peoples. Art is to be the meeting ground on which men and women of all colours, castes, creeds and habits could come together in peace and harmony. For,

after all, all artistic expression has the same spiritual basis anywhere under the sun.

Their argument is simple enough. But we must go to the fundamental and ask: What is Art? Art is the expression of the best in the mind and heart and soul of the human race. It is the language of man's inner consciousness. Next to bodily needs such as food, clothing and shelter the need for such self-expression is one of the most powerful of all human instincts. Such a need is present in every man. We are told by Indian mystics that the universe is the fruit of God's attempt at self-expression. He flung from Him a whirling Atom and on that Atom grown now into mighty proportions we live, and move and have our being and try to express the beautiful through the imagination.

This desire to create beauty, which is the essential man, reveals itself in form, colour, rhythm and sound. These outward symbols differ with the climate, nature and condition of peoples. But at bottom its features are the same. The modifications, the little differences are entirely superficial. The World Fellowship of Artists believes that the conflict now present in the world is due to these dissimilarities, to these disparities of rank, wealth and colour. And once an appeal is made to this inner Man, and he is made to realize that in spirit and soul men and women all over the world are alike, made of the same basic pattern, the rest is plain sailing.

Mahatma Gandhi, in his address to the Inter-Asian Conference held last March, referred to this ideal of one world and said, "I would not like to live if it was not one world. I would certainly like to see that dream realised in my life time. If all of you.....go away with one mind and with the fixed determination to carry your will through, there is no doubt that in your own

generation you will succeed and see that dream realised". That perhaps is too much to hope. The most that may be expected is that the starting of an organisation like the Fellowship will make the people think along these lines, even if with a puzzled wonder. Our children may understand and perhaps people two generations later will accept this ideal.

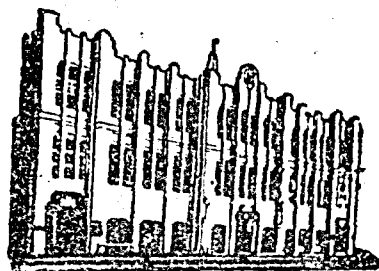
The work which the Fellowship hopes to do has already been started. Three of the One World Artists, a singer, a dancer and a pianist-composer are at present on a tour of the East to preach this gospel of one Man. How they will be received by Indians is unpredictable. No doubt there will be some scepticism and even a little jeering. But thinking people might begin to wonder and ask themselves, "Is this possible?"

One cannot naturally commit oneself to the statement that this approach is a solution to all the problems facing mankind. It is novel and exciting in theory but whether it will suffice to fuse nations in anything like a permanent unity is open to doubt. For when one talks of unity through Art, one is at once tempted to ask "What of science? Can that be denied?" Which of the two is more powerful? Will the realisation that Russian classical ballet and Bharata Natya are in essence similar and that the folk-dances of people all over the world, America to Australia, express the same simple feelings in almost the same simple way, make our scientists stop their research in atomic energy? And the people who possess the secret of this terrible force, will it make them decide to forget it, or better still, to tell it to the others?



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N. GOPALA IYER,
Secretary

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.

Saidapet

If you get down at the Saidapet railway station and venture into the interior, one look at its streets, one whiff at the aroma, will make you run back to the station and ask for a ticket by the earliest train to the farthest station!

The town of Saidapet (now one of the divisions of the Madras Corporation) has a population of well over 50,000 and is a busy centre for weaving and other crafts besides being the home of Teachers' College.

The Administration Report of the Madras Corporation (1946-47) says: "The areas adjoining the City which were contributing not a little to the spread of epidemics into the city have been brought under effective control with regard to their sanitation and health." But whatever improvements might have been made since the Corporation took over are not perceptible. The streets continue to be dirty—half-paved or imperfectly paved. The town never boasted of any gutters but every house is provided with a cess-pool, the invention of a bygone age which is now a disease-breeder. Not being deep, the cess-pools freely overflow. Each morning a leaky cart with creaky iron wheels drawn by a bullock comes round to collect the accumulated water, pail by pail, finally to be emptied on the outskirts of the town. An early morning walk will reveal the caravan of carts leaving a trail of filthy water throughout the streets.

It may incidentally be mentioned that the people allow their children to use the streets as a latrine. Public latrines are conspicuous by their absence.

There are a few scattered cans as an apology for dust bins. And the people never bother to take notice of their distant presence, but empty the refuse in front of their houses, on which the children play. Besides it the street hawker sits and sells his cooked delicacies.

Water supply which is insufficient compels many to crowd for long hours at the street tap, which is surrounded by stagnant water.

The little stream of water that flows in the adjoining River Adyar, is enriched by little rivulets of cess-pool liquid finding their way into it, thus providing sufficient water for the washermen to wash their customers' clothes

with glee, thanking God and man for the ready supply.

Thus we have the bulk of the residents of Saidapet afflicted with diseases such as filariasis (well water in Saidapet is declared filarial), elephantiasis and other lymphatic ailments.

The blame for all this, although partly the citizens' own, falls also on the heads of our City Fathers headed by the First Citizen who is a doctor. If further deterioration in the health and morale of the populace is to be prevented, the Local Administration Department of the Government should bestir themselves at once.

K. T. CHARY.

Who Should Publish Text-Books?

'Vigneshwara' and 'Groundling' have both condemned, in almost identical terms, the proposal of Government publishing school text-books. 'Standardisation', 'Robot civilization', totalitarianism, brutalised indoctrinated mass' are some of the horrors visualised by them. I think, however, that it is a step in the right direction. School education up to the secondary stage is now controlled, supervised and directed by the Government. The Government prescribe the syllabuses, conduct the examinations and issue certificates. A logical sequel to this system is that Government themselves publish school text-books. Even at present, schools are not free (and rightly so) to prescribe any books they like, but their choice is limited to those which are 'approved' by text-book committees appointed by Government which prepare lists of approved books in all subjects in the curriculum. The so-called educational publishers prepare text-books to suit their own convenience and resources, solicit the patronage of the Education Department, canvass members of the text-book committees, influence the heads of local bodies or pester the headmasters to get their books prescribed in schools. Instead of this tedious process (in which the best books often get eliminated), the straight method of Government publishing school text-books may be commended. Even at present, text-books in the languages for the S.S.L.C. are published by the Government and serious opposition to this has not been heard. Text-book writing

has become a mere commercial proposition. The book produced by one firm is as good or as bad as another, as they all conform to a pattern; and the choice offered by the 'approved' list is not a real choice.

Not only in the languages, but in the other subjects of the curriculum also, it is desirable that Government should publish text-books. The syllabuses prescribed, say, in history, geography, civics or the sciences are often vague and do not define the scope of the subjects. The text-books on the 'approved' list vary in the treatment, content and elaboration of detail. So the pupils ever in pursuit of a short-cut to a 'pass', run after 'notes' which promise a hundred per cent success. Instead of prescribing a vague syllabus, say, in geography, if the Education Department publish a text-book defining the scope of the subject, the evil of 'notes' may be greatly minimised.

In competing for the favour of text-book committees and other bodies, there is a great deal of wastage of publishing effort. Moreover, a good number of educational publishers limit their activity to producing a few text-books and 'notes' with the confidence that they can get the books prescribed in the schools in their spheres of influence and make a good bargain. Text-book writing ought to be the least part of publishing activity. If text-book production is taken over by Government, educational publishers will have before them the vast field of books for extensive reading, reference books, picture and prize books and juvenile literature. The shelves in school libraries in provincial languages are almost empty (except for the discarded text-books of previous years and 'specimen copies') to the utter despair of young pupils who are developing a taste for reading.

As we expect to function under a democratic constitution based on universal adult franchise, the fear of regimentation or party propaganda on the score of departmental publication of text-books is groundless, and is a result of confusing text-books with education itself. After all pupils do not fall in love with their text-books, so that the fear of their 'influence' need not be exaggerated. There are other ways of regimentation such as ordering the school children to sing the songs of particular composers or enjoining on the school authorities to display or not to display the portraits of certain of 'leaders'.

As to Government making a small margin of 'profit', interested persons need not pretend to be horrified. The profit, it is presumed, will surely go to swell the education budget. Moreover,

publication of text-books by Government will facilitate standardisation of 'tests', adult literacy drive, educational conscription, etc., and the opposition seems to be from persons interested in the book trade and not based on any fundamental educational principles.

W. BHARATA RAO,
Head Master, City High School,
Berhampore (Ganjam).

"Distortion" Charge

I regret very much that your journal should publish comments which are a misrepresentation and distortion of facts. Such comments, which are besides ill-informed, should not appear in a journal of any responsibility. I invite your attention to the comments published on page 16 column (2) of the issue of 3rd April 1948 relating to the public meeting held at the Gokhale Hall on the 30th ultimo.

It is utterly wrong to say that the meeting was held by Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim Leaguers had nothing to do with the meeting. It was a public meeting of the citizens of Madras. There were more Hindus than Muslims who attended the meeting. The meeting itself was held under the auspices of the Muslim Educational Association of Southern India, Madras, which is a non-political educational and cultural organisation. Several of the speakers were also non-Muslim Leaguers. Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddy who presided over the meeting could not be called a 'Muslim Leaguer'. I have not been a Muslim Leaguer for the last two years and more. Some of the other speakers, viz., Mrs. Nazir Hussain has always been an ante-Muslim Leaguer; Mr. Hamid Khan ceased to be a Muslim Leaguer quite recently. Dr. Tirumurthy and Mrs. Hensman who were also scheduled to speak, but who could not attend the meeting on account of unavoidable reasons do not belong to the Muslim League.

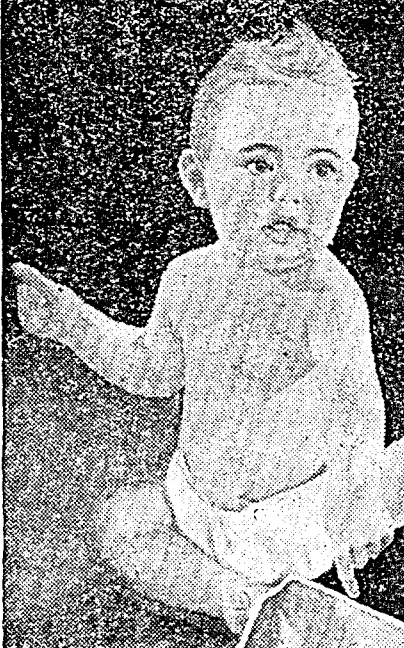
The comment to the effect that "WHAT IS DEMANDED IS A SYMBOL TO ASSUAGE THE VANITY OF ONE COMMUNITY" is rank nonsense. No question of symbol or vanity arises in the demand of the Muslim community for continuing the facilities for the education of that community as an integral part of the people of this province and which has remained nearly 50 years behind the rest of the sections of the people inhabiting this land in the matter of education. The demand in fact was for the continuation of the college intended primarily for Muslims, but which actually was catering very largely to the non-Muslim sections of the Indian community. The institution is sought to be abolished be-

cause it is a denominational one besides being uneconomic. Both these grounds have been proved to be utterly baseless from the actual state of things. The institution supplies in the first place the need for more colleges in the city of Madras, which need has been stressed upon by the University authorities and the public of Madras. The college has been financed during the last two years by the Government of India which has paid a sum of Rs. 1,07,000 till now for the maintenance of the college. Further, the buildings in which the college is located belong to the Hobart Secondary and Training School which itself was established out of subscriptions raised by the Muslim public to perpetuate the memory of Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras in the eighties or nineties of the last century and the Government is only acting as trustees for this institution and its properties. The contention of the Muslim community is that the Government is not competent to transfer the buildings belonging to such an institution of which they are trustees, to a private individual.

Muslims demand facilities for unrestricted admission for a small number of men and women students who seek admission in Government and other colleges for University education. The Muslims want facilities for the study of Urdu, Persian and Arabic. The Muslims want that the atmosphere in the colleges should be friendly and favourable to them, which can be secured by a proper proportion of the staff being Muslims. The Muslims further want that provision should be made available for the study of special subjects relating to Islamic history, culture and so forth. It is the absence of these facilities that impressed the Government and necessitated the establishment of a separate college for Muslim women. This cannot be characterised as a symbol to assuage the vanity of the community. These are hard things which the community is entitled to even under the constitution that is in the making. It is also wrong to characterise this legitimate demand and duty of the Government of the day as an importunity of a community for special privilege. I would in this connection invite your attention to the latest resolution in the Dominion Assembly on the abolition of communal political organisations and the speech of the Prime Minister of India wherein he has reiterated that the minority and backward communities are entitled to special protection in the matter of education, culture, language, etc.

You will realise in the light of what I have stated above, how irresponsible

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and mischievous is the comment that has appeared in your journal. Such things do not help to promote communal harmony or nationalism in the true sense. I hope you will make suitable amends in the matter.

BASHEER AHMED SAYEED.

Madras.

Lay Economics

A long term economic policy aiming at complete socialisation of the country through a number of short-term (say, five year) plans seems to be the only way to make this country grow prosperous and strong.

India is on the threshold of a new life that is going to be her own. It is imperative, then, that she should plan and conduct her affairs in such a way that the foundations laid now might be strong enough to stand her in good stead in the coming years. We should think more than once before adopting the traditional and time-honoured means of development. The United Nations Sub-Commission on under-developed economics has laid much stress on international assistance for the backward countries to come up. But, it has not omitted to warn that it must be free from 'political or economic strings being attached to such assistance'.

One need hardly point out what these assistances ultimately turn out to be. "It will make Western Europe a dependency of American capitalism. I do not see any prospect of building a socialist economy in Europe on these terms. It seems to be a safeguard against that effort. In the short run it may offer the much needed dollars. In the long run it would split Europe permanently, and for the unity of socialist and democratic freedom at which Mr. Bevin aims, it would substitute an American Empire, not the less real because indirect....." That is what Laski has to say of the Truman Plan.

It is needless to point out that if we go the way of economic nationalism and the traditional economics with its capitalistic base, it will only drag us into the vicious trade cycles and not infrequently into major international conflicts. For a country like ours with all its still unexploited resources of wealth and man-power, is not the ultimate achievement of self-sufficiency, even at the risk of Communism, the best means to lasting prosperity?

M. PADMANABHAN.

Tuticorin.

Communal Hatred

In these days when communal animosity is rising to such dangerous heights as was exhibited the other day

at the leadership election it is the primary duty of the Government to put a stop to its growth by severe and deterrent action against the communalists even by special legislation if need be. It will not serve any useful purpose if the Home Minister rests content with a stray statement to the press like the one issued on March 27. Condemning provincialism on the one hand he concludes "I strongly believe in the need for the protection and development of Tamil culture and Tamil interests—I would fight for our rights as a province and what our boundary should be, but I would beg of all my Tamilian compatriots not to be carried away by mere slogans either communal or provincial but to work for the good of Tamilnad." Dr. Subbarayan has advantageously forgotten that the persons who raised the communal slogans at the Rajaji Hall were motivated by such spirit only and that the result of the election is the effect of that spirit. It is necessary that a ban should be imposed on the use of communal terms like Brahmin, Kshatriya, etc., on hotel signboards and railway refreshment rooms. Will the Government realize the grave danger and act up to the occasion?

P. H. RAO.

Ellore.

Merger Of States

The Britishers were never tired of saying that the princes will never agree to subordination to an All-India Government manned by representatives of the common people as contrasted with the supermen of the ruling white race. This was probably the reason for their insisting on the unwanted and trouble-making statement that with the lapse of Paramountcy, the States resumed their original independence. The hollowness of this pretence is the first thing that Sardar Patel exposed by his meritorious success in enabling the princes to merge. This shows how eager the princes and their people were in reality to grow in strength with India. It also shows how the Britishers were forestalling them by their propaganda—without consulting the princes—about the repugnance of Indian self-government to the Princely order. It is most creditable to the princes and peoples of the States and inspiring to all the people of India, that such a willingness to unite should have been expressed and implemented, even before the new constitution of India has taken legal authority.

R. S. SAKARIER.

Ootacamund.

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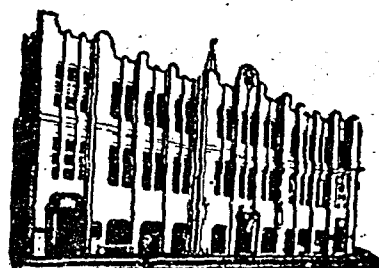
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SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1948

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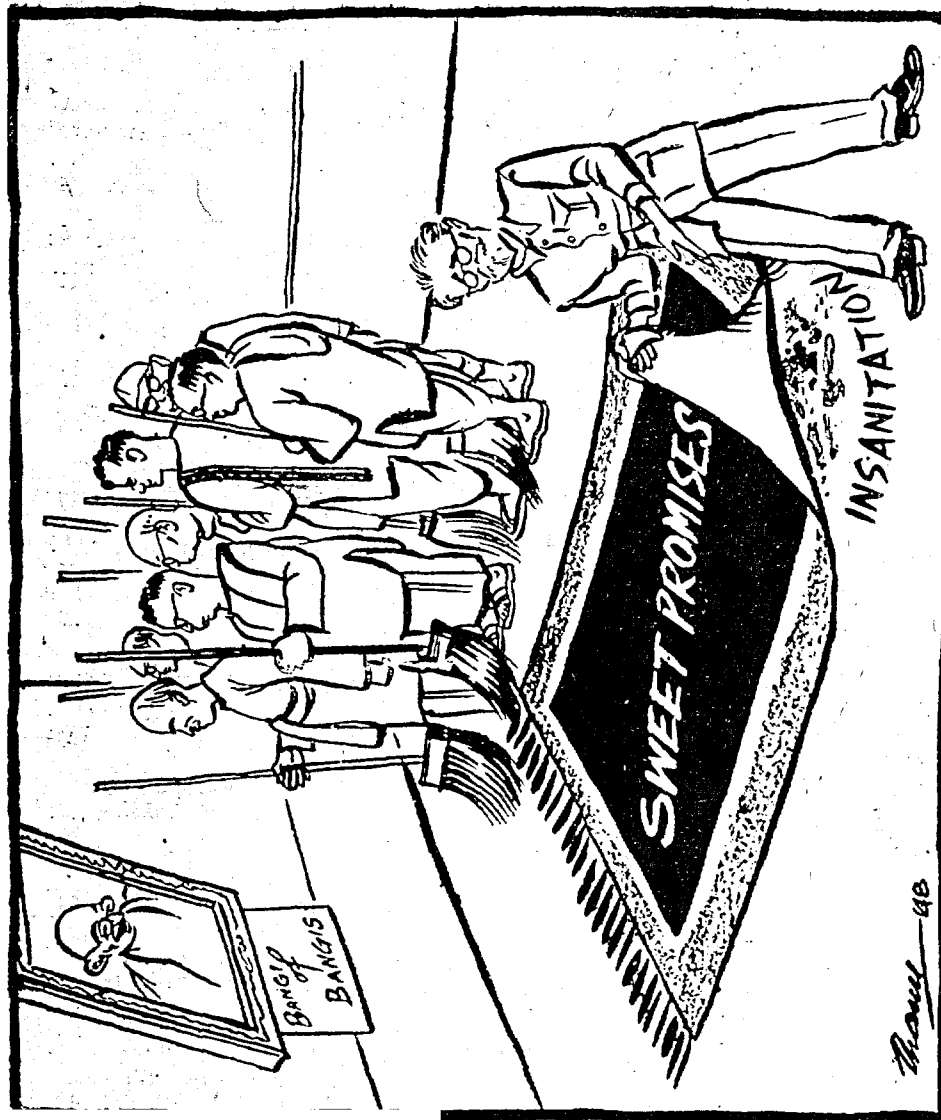
ISSUED
WEEKLY

WHITHER, INFLATION?

MOSCOW announced last week a further series of cuts in the prices of luxury goods. Mr. Attlee has appealed to British producers to bring down prices or keep prices stable in the interests as much of British consumers as of the export trade. In the United States, President Truman coupled his appeal for Marshall aid to Europe with the demand for rigorous price controls to prevent a runaway boom in prices. But here in India there is a blissful indifference to the menace of inflation. Much is said about production and against strikes and lock-outs, but little is done to keep prices from spiralling upwards unchecked. "Debauch the currency of capitalism", said Lenin, "and you will destroy capitalism". Uncontrolled inflation has been the prelude to revolution in Germany, in Russia and elsewhere. The discontent in India which has today spread to the widest ranks of the people and the public services is at bottom due to the mounting inflation, which, gathering momentum during the war years, has been galloping since the war ended. The Communist is not the demiurge of this discontent. On the contrary he thrives on it for it is a confirmation of his thesis that there is no capitalist way out of the crisis created by capitalism. It may be regrettable that the Communist should cash in on the mass discontent by strengthening his political hold over the masses and creating difficulties for the Government. But the way out is not certainly the

"liquidation" of the Communists by methods which they themselves might not perhaps disdain to use against their opponents. As the history of every persecuted party shows, repression ultimately serves only to strengthen the moral hold of the repressed organisation over the people.

Ruling classes everywhere delude themselves into the belief that if you remove a few trouble makers out of the scene, all will be well. They refuse to admit that they and their policies are the real causes of the trouble. It would be a tragedy if the Congress Governments in India make the same mistake. The nationwide rounding up of Communists and labour leaders, the manner of which is strongly reminiscent of Britain's periodic drives against the Congress in the pre-August days, is no substitute for a positive economic policy aimed at improving the life of the masses. It is true that the dawn of independence confronted the Government with overwhelming problems raised by the communal holocausts. Kashmir and Hyderabad still remain grave questionmarks. There could obviously be no spectacular solution of our economic difficulties. But what has been lacking so far is a positive direction in economic policy. We have not had so far even an assurance that we are moving in the right direction, that if we have not overcome all our difficulties, we are at least on the way to doing so.



—Courtesy Peoples' Health.

The fact is the Government have done utterly nothing to stop the continued rise in prices of goods which, in the context of more or less rigid wages, means a steady deterioration in the living conditions of the people. The Economic Adviser's indices of prices show that prices of almost all groups are higher today than they were a year ago. A few samples will indicate the magnitude of this increase, although it should be remembered that prices in the "black market" hardly get into the reckonings of the Economic Adviser:

Index of wholesale prices (Base=Year ended August 1939=100).

Commodity groups	Index as on 6-3-48.	Index as on 8-3-47.
I. Food articles:	.. 341.7	286.8
Cereals	.. 397	306
Pulses	.. 361.8	393.9
Others	.. 257.6	236.6
II. Industrial raw materials:	.. 400.1	357.8
Fibres	.. 408.3	344.9
Oilseeds	.. 437.0	424.2
Minerals	.. 300	251.1
III. Semi-manufactures:	.. 283.6	243.1
IV. Manufactured articles:	.. 325.2	270.6
Textile products	.. 376.9	308.4
Metal products	.. 239.5	204.6

The above list shows that except for pulses, all other groups have gone up in prices during the past twelve months and the fall of about 8 per cent in pulses is more than counter-balanced by the 30 per cent increase in cereals.

The supreme task before the Government today is to check the drift to catastrophe. For if the present trend continues, and there is no orderly transition to lower prices, the crash will come not with a whimper but with a bang. It is obvious today that the high level of prices, far from acting as a spur to higher production, has become a fetter on production. Employers are haunted by uncertainties as to how long present high prices can be expected to continue. They

prefer to mark time and make the most money while the going is good. The workers, for their part, find little incentive to put their best effort when the real value of their wages is continually diminishing.

There can be no incentive to produce more when your wages will buy less next month than in the previous month. The universal listlessness that is to be noticed among all ranks of employees, the general disinclination to do one's best—a phenomenon which is not confined to India but is discernible in every country in the grip of inflation—is directly traceable to the loss of faith in the value of money. In an economy where, as Marx said, "the cash nexus" is the primary factor, a progressive diminution in the real value of "the cash" is bound to destroy faith in all values. And that is the ideal breeding ground for revolution.

What, then, should the Government do? The first step is to adopt something on the lines of the freezing of prices announced by Mr. Attlee last month. It must be made clear that the Government will not countenance any increase in prices anywhere. Whether this should be coupled with the simultaneous freezing of wages and profits, as in Britain, is a matter for argument. In regard to wages, conditions here are not on all fours with the situation in Britain where well-organised labour unions have been able to wrest from employers wage increases commensurate with the rise in the cost of living and the growth of profits. That is not the case in India and it would be unfair to labour to freeze wages at present levels except possibly in the limited cases of industries where industrial tribunals have made wage awards in recent months. In all other industries labour must not be precluded from claiming wage increases to compensate for the rise in prices, but with due regard to the capacity of the industry. The in-

creases, of course, are to be effected by mutual agreement or by adjudication. For a basic aim of State policy should be to eliminate all stoppages in production for whatever reason and to step up output to the maximum capacity of industry.

So far as profits are concerned, the least the Government should do is to prohibit any increase in dividends over the previous years. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his last budget speech told British industrialists that if they did not voluntarily limit dividends the Labour Government might not hesitate to bring in legislation for the purpose. The Indian Finance Minister has given a rebate in tax for undistributed profits and has urged businessmen to "plough back" profits in industry. What is needed is to "plough back" profits to the consumer by lowering prices.

A determined attempt must be made to cut prices wherever possible. And a beginning obviously must be made in those industries which have made the highest profits during the war. It is rather unfortunate that one of the first acts of the free Government of India was to dissolve the Commodities Prices Board and merge its functions with the Tariff Board. The C.P.B., despite all its limitations, was rendering a great service in warning Government about the trend of prices in the country and the need to keep inflation in check. It is not an accident that the textile and sugar interests greeted with ill-concealed glee the abolition of the C.P.B. There is today as great a need as ever in the past for an independent body to keep continuous watch on the trend of prices and to suggest to the Government appropriate measures for controlling undesirable tendencies. Nor will the proposed establishment of a National Planning Commission obviate the need for a Price Board.

There can be no planning without reference to prices and, as recent experience has shown, planning of any kind becomes impossible when an inflationary boom is on. It is not surprising that we hear today so little of the Bombay Plan, which at the time of its birth was hailed as a great contribution to constructive thinking. Its influential authors seem today to be desperately anxious to forget their misbegotten offspring and to talk less about the promises of a higher standard of living to the Indian people which it held forth. There are few today who believe in the miraculous powers of "created money". For the simple truth is, it is not money but work that creates wealth and men will not do their best unless they have the assurance that they will have a fair share in the fruits of their labours. What inflation does, above all, is to destroy the will to work (and largely also the will to save) by making wages an uncertain quantity. There is in fact an element of fraud in the transaction. Rising prices frustrate all domestic budgetary calculations and destroy faith in the stability of all values. Restoration of stability to the value of the currency is therefore the first duty of the Government. It is the only way to obviate the demand for increase in wages. It is no answer to the workers' demands to say that the shortages of goods are real and that there is not enough to go round. The proper course in such a situation is to ensure fair distribution of essential goods in short supply at reasonable prices by rationing and not leave it to the hazards of the price mechanism to equate supply and demand. Nor should the inadequacies of the State control machinery be made a pretext for abandoning all controls. The leap in the price of sugar immediately after decontrol is a clear warning against precipitate decontrol. That the Govern-

ments, central and provincial, get a small share of the benefit of higher prices is no valid reason for tolerating a fifty per cent increase in the price of sugar over its pre-de-control rate. This does not mean that controls should be retained for all time. But it must be urged that removal of controls can be undertaken only when there is a reasonable prospect of free trade leading to lower prices. Where the prospects are otherwise, there is grave danger in lifting controls prematurely. Above all, the Government cannot afford to relax their vigilance on prices. There can be no assurance of peace in industry or of increased production so long as inflationary conditions persist unabated.

Industrial Impolicy

THE cataclysmic changes which followed the partition of India and the inhuman suffering which it brought in its wake would seem to have had a very bad effect on India's veteran leader, Pandit Nehru. His speech in the Dominion Parliament supporting the industrial policy of the Government of India savours of a mental conflict that has not been resolved. One wonders if Pandit Nehru is the same revolutionary that spat fire against our erstwhile rulers. The main points of the resolution are: The Government propose to set up a National Planning Commission to formulate a programme and secure its execution. Not having adequate resources to take over the whole field, the industries have been divided into three categories—those in which the State will have exclusive monopoly, those over which the State will exercise control and those which have been left to private enterprise. The manufacture of arms and ammunition, production and control of atomic energy and railway transport will remain the sole preserve of the State. The

next class of industries whose future development would be controlled and owned by the State include coal, iron and steel, aircraft manufacture, ship-building, manufacture of telephones and mineral oils. It is not the intention of the Government to take over the existing units of these industries. The rest of the industries are open to private enterprise.

In regard to capital and labour co-operation, the Government have accepted the resolution adopted by the Industries Conference in December last urging suitable taxation to ensure fair prices to the consumer, fair wages to the labourers and a fair return to the capital employed. They propose to establish a machinery to implement the resolution.

The statement begins with what is seemingly a pompous platitude. But on careful scrutiny one finds that it is worse than a platitude; it is positively misleading. One only hopes that it is not deliberately intended to mislead. We refer to the statement, "any improvement in the economic conditions of the country postulates an increase in national wealth. A mere redistribution of existing wealth would make no essential difference to the people and would merely mean the distribution of poverty". What is the suggestion in this statement? Whoever has suggested "a mere redistribution of existing wealth" as a solution of the problem of poverty in India? Have the Communists said this? Have the Socialists recommended this? Would it not be equally absurd to imagine that a mere increase in production would help to raise the living standards of the bulk of the people? And further, is not an equitable redistribution of existing wealth a means, small and indirect though it may be, of stimulating the production of more wealth? After all, are the super-rich in India to be compared only with snakes in Iceland?

Did not Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetti himself admit, as Professor K. T. Shah so appositely reminded us, that in India "415 people between them earned about Rs. 20 crores".

The resolution on the Government of India's industrial policy further proceeds to say that "there can be no doubt that the State must play a proportionately active role in the development of industries, but ability to achieve the main objectives should determine the immediate extent of State responsibility and the limits to private enterprise. Under present conditions, the mechanism and the resources of the State may not permit it to function forthwith in industry as widely as may be desirable". We wonder whether it is doctrinaire addiction to mere theory which makes us see in these words a perilous resemblance to what was then hailed as the famous Declaration of August 20, 1917, by Mr. E. S. Montague. He referred to "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration" and to "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire". Imperialist Britain talked of "gradual development" and "progressive realisation", as long as they had the wherewithal to keep on "holding what they had". But when the I. N. A. and the naval ratings' strike came on top of their own military and economic enfeeblement, they were in a mighty hurry to go. It now looks as though the Indian vested interests, entrenched in the present Government, would like "to hold on", and speak of playing a progressively active role in the development of industries", till the have-nots swamp them by their own organised effort.

It is depressing to read in the resolution the usual clap-trap about "the mechanism and the resources

of the State not permitting it to function forthwith in industry as widely as may be desirable". What is wrong with the resources and mechanism? It is often assumed that when an industry or a business is taken over by the State, its personnel, especially the technical personnel, must necessarily change. There is not the slightest warrant for this belief. When the Indian railways were taken over by the State, did the personnel leave? In fact it happens the other way—they welcome service under the State. Just as the British Treasury employs men from the City of London, and British banks engage the services of ex-Treasury officials, just as the Tatas in India have frequently employed, in their top-most ranks, ex-Government servants, transfers of service from private to public employment and vice versa are found all over the world.

In the list of industries reserved as the exclusive monopoly of the Central Government there is one notable exception. While the ownership and management of railway transport is included in this list, for the obvious reason that it is already such, road transport, both passenger and coaching, is left for private enterprise. It has been laid down that the inherent right of the State to acquire any existing industrial undertaking will always remain, and will be exercised whenever public interest requires it. Can there be any doubt that public interest requires the State taking over road transport? In most places the vehicles are in a very bad state of disrepair, the services are very irregular, and the owners have been making enormous profits. It is no argument to say that nationalisation has, in a few isolated cases, failed to improve matters in this respect. For, while a State service is under a constant fire of public criticism and can be improved when public opinion proves vigilant, the main motive of

the private owner is the acquisition of profit and he knows more ways than one of evading State regulations. Again there is so much official talk about "regulation and control" of private enterprise. But one may well ask what kind of "regulation and control" there have actually been so far? Has a ceiling on profits been laid down for cement or paper or coal or ship-building or any other industry? Have the Government fixed a minimum wage in all these? Have our Government put a stop to the fantastic and misleading claims that are made for the drugs and pharmaceuticals, of the soaps and cosmetics and other industries in their advertisements?

It is amazing that such vital business like banking and insurance should find no mention at all in the Government resolution. Is it because of the technical and legalistic view that they are services and not industries and need therefore no mention in a resolution on industrial policy? But then why has transport been referred to? Is it because it is both a service and an industry? It is scarcely necessary to point out that banking and insurance are spheres of economic activity where Indian big business has been shown up in its ugliest forms. The Cowasji Jehangir Committee and other bodies have referred to the inter-locking of funds, the buying up of insurance companies at scandalously high prices with a view to getting control over the life funds, and to other grave abuses in the field of insurance.

It is a pity that the resolution has done nothing more than using some pious and high-sounding phrases about the *objectives* and prescribing the respective spheres of State and private enterprise in industry in India. It has done absolutely nothing to clearly outline the lines on which private enterprise will be controlled and regulated so as to subserve the public interest.

The resolution has given a measure of joy to the Indian capitalists because they have obtained a ten year lease to continue as they have been doing under the old regime, which had no aim other than maintaining law and order within and preventing invasion from abroad. Under Nehru's Government will the consumer of cement, paper, sugar, matches, steel, petrol, kerosene, etc. (all of which will continue to be under their present owners) have better quality and lower prices than those that prevailed during the British period? Of what avail is it to declare in the resolution that "the system of remuneration to capital as well as labour must be so devised that while in the interests of the consumers and the primary producers excessive profits should be prevented, both will share the produce of their common effort, after making provision for payment of fair wages for labour, a fair return on capital employed in the industry and reasonable reserves for the maintenance and expansion of the undertaking?" How many adjectives, like *excessive* profits, *fair* wages, *fair* returns and *reasonable* returns! Who will translate these adjectives into realities? Not the representatives of the submerged nine-tenths of our country, if past experience is any guide. If the Finance Minister has to be chosen, it is Shanmukham Chetti that is chosen and not K. T. Shah or Acharya Narendra Dev. If Government departments are found to be unwieldy, it is Sheth Kasturbhai Lalbhai who is chosen to preside over the Retrenchment Committee!

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru speaking on this resolution in the Dominion Parliament said, almost pathetically, "May be, I have been affected by recent events. But more and more I have felt that it is wrong to destroy something that is producing or doing good". One wonders why he chose the word "*Destruction*". When, "something that is produc-

ing or doing good" is taken over by the State, what is *destroyed*? It does not stop producing or doing good when it is nationalised.

It is a thousand pities that the Prime Minister, while admitting that "we have arrived at a stage when a sensitive person today cannot put up easily with the vast gap between human beings, the distance and the difference between them, between the lack of opportunity on the one side and waste on the other" has lent his weighty support to a statement of industrial policy which does absolutely nothing to bridge this gap. It is all right to eloquently lament over the situation and do nothing else when you are not in power. But to do that when you are in the Government is disappointing.

If England, where the inequalities in the distribution of income and property are not at all as grievous as they are in India, where the general level of living of the com-

mon man is ever so much higher than in India, has found it necessary to limit private enterprise further and further and to choke the profit motive more and more, and that in spite of her recent loss of foreign investments and past capital, how much more compelling, how much more urgent is the need for courageous and big steps towards socialism in India? There is some irony in the coincidence that on the day the daily papers carried the Government of India's resolution on industrial impolicy, they also published a news item on Lady Mountbatten's tax payments. Giving that news, the Globe Agency said that the London *Evening Standard* cites it to illustrate that "the days of great incomes and investments are over." They may be 'over' there; but they are not over here, and may we say, will not be over till India's Prime Minister asserts himself and learns to govern like a Socialist besides talking like one.

Sotto Voce

Saul The Prophet



FEW of the transformations effected by the magic of freedom (or office) are more imposing than that of Dr. Ambedkar. For long years he played to perfection the part of Moses leading the chosen people out of the captivity. Hinduism was his hated Egypt and the poor Mahatma, however much he might disown it, was the Pharaoh who sacrificed the Harijans to his own insatiable vanity. The very name Harijan was, to our good Doctor, the brand of the helot. He gave dark hints of auctioning his followers' faith to the highest bid-

der. If he was not very successful as the Fat Boy it was because, for one thing, there were no bidders, for another, Egypt refused to take the latter-day Moses seriously.

All that is changed now (at any rate for the time being). The rebel sits in the seat of authority and wields the sceptre as to the manner born. But the crusader can never lay aside his helmet and cuirass. If he cannot find a Saladin to plunge his dagger into, why, a stuffed pillow will serve as well.

And here is the carcass of his old enemy Hinduism come in handy. Only, he prefers to look upon it now not as dead but as desperately sick. And the Doctor of Laws, turning doctor of physic for the nonce, proposes a little blood-letting before it is too late. Quackery, did you say? Maybe; but luckily Government is the one sphere where a man can live by his wits and not be hauled up before the law by interfering busybodies.

Dr. Ambedkar is Law Member of the Government of India. He is also the chief draftsman of the new Constitution. And see how admirably these activities dovetail into one another. He has drawn up a chapter of Fundamental Rights which will be unique in the history of written constitutions. For it effectively safeguards the State against the tyranny of the subject. And in the Bill for the reform of Hindu Law which he has persuaded Parliament to refer to a select committee he gives a foretaste of what excellent use the State will make of the powers that it has wrested from the citizens.

"The Bill," he said, "is hardly a question which we can decide by counting heads." That was not very tactful, seeing that Parliament lives only by counting heads. But our patriotic legislators may have been flattered to see themselves as the vanguard of a new civilisation. For Dr. Ambedkar artfully added, "In a transitory stage, leaving the past and going to the future, there are bound to be opposing considerations, one pulling towards the past and the other towards the future". Needless to say, he and his Congress votes represent the progressive pull. They are, as he modestly put it, "the enlightened conscience of the community".

"How does he know?", you may ask. The answer is perfectly simple. "I know because I say so. Anyway, as my brother Humpty-Dumpty said, the only question is who is master here?" In fact Dr. Ambedkar goes

a step further than Humpty-Dumpty. He has no hesitation in conceding that "it may be as a matter of fact that the large majority of our countrymen do not accept" the Bill. By the same token Dr. Ambedkar is assured that it must be good. Who can say after this that Dr. Ambedkar is no democrat?

Dr. Ambedkar might be surprised but would be hardly unnerved to hear that Ravana spoke in the same vein when addressing a council of war summoned to discuss the aftermath of Hanuman's visit. He too appealed to the 'enlightened conscience'. Only he put it in an idiom which would have sounded strange to the ears of our legislators. He said that he deliberates best who takes counsel with ministers who know their business and then acts, putting his trust in God. And Ravana was no doubt firmly persuaded that that was just what he himself was doing at the moment. Unfortunately, Ravana practised Coveism even as Dr. Ambedkar does. His ministers, instead of seeing "with the eye of Sastra" and achieving unanimity, merely said, whatever came into their heads, as our modern legislators do; they were more concerned to tickle his vanity than to get at the truth.

Providence is not mocked; as Vena, that old time rationalist, found when he rebuked the *rishis* for daring to talk of what was due to God when he, Caesar, was the only God that they need bother about. Mrs. Hamsa Mehta will merely smile a superior smile if you argue that adoption, to the pious issueless Hindu, is a matter that closely concerns his soul. She will not have that proud achievement, a secular State, compromise itself by recognising adoption for purposes of inheritance. But she has no objection to parents adopting a child if they are "anxious to have a child". The argument has long been fashionable in the West and covers many sins—from artificial insemination to chartered sadism.

VIGNESWARA

CURE FOR COMMUNALISM

by S. PARTHASARATHY

I SEE often in these pages vigorous denunciations against communalism, especially from the editorial chair. Communalism is like one of those weeds, the seeds of which get disseminated by the attempt to pull it out. It takes root wherever the human mind remains uncultivated. It cannot therefore be eradicated by the simple expedient of removing persons who are professed communalists from places of power. It is a safe bet that in nine cases out of ten, the new persons are also communalists. Again it is not the non-Brahmin who is alone the communalist. There are innumerable Brahmins who are also communalists. It can be said in favour of the Brahmins that being a minority community, they are less aggressive. There is no merit in trying to adjudge the measure of guilt between the communities. We should also remember that there is as much, if not more, of sectarian feeling among the people of this province. There is a fair amount of fellow feeling between the Kammas, the Reddys, the Padayachis, the Mukkulathars, the Christians, the Ayyars and the Ayyangars. It is not going to be disputed that sectarian solidarity does not make for national solidarity.

I strongly believe that the educated men of this province have been responsible for the injection of communal poison into the people generally. And among the educated men, the politicians and officials are the principal participants in this nefarious crime against society. In the business world, where competitive ability and the size of the bank balance are the factors that make for success one rarely hears affairs being discussed in terms of communalism. But in political and official circles, the eternal topic of conversation is the communal leanings of those who for the time being fill the horizon.

I do not agree with those who say that the Rule of Merit should be

strictly applied to those who seek entry into the portals of higher education and public services. We have not inherited the philosophies of the Spartans and the Nazis which denied the weak a place in communal life. We cannot ignore the fact that though caste system still persists, the differentiation of caste functions has lost its sanction. The application of the Rule of Merit will mean a denial of those opportunities to persons who by the traditions of their caste are ill equipped to be able to share in the competitive prizes. It is hypocritical for the Brahmins to advocate the Rule of Merit when it is certain that the limited opportunities that are open in these fields would be largely monopolised by men of their community.

Apart from the background of our caste system, I doubt if the Rule of Merit can be regarded as unexceptionable in the sense in which we mean it. We mean by 'merit', intellectual superiority and a further translation gives the meaning 'holding high academic qualifications'. Let us see how 'merit' was judged for purposes of selecting entrants into colleges and offices in the pre-communal days. The selecting or appointing authority chose from among the applicants, some for their sheer intellectual brilliance, some because they exhibited signs of a remarkably healthy mind, some for their achievements in the field of sports and some on account of their high family traditions. The men who chose knew that the reputation of their colleges and offices depended upon the manner in which they exercised their choice. There was no question of communalism and still men from all communities found places. The introduction of competitive selection has resulted in adulterating the services with men of poor character.

We are no better when we invoke communal justice in defence of the communal ratio. The communal ratio has the added demerit of being

the enemy of good government. Instead of inspiring confidence in those whom it was intended to benefit, it breeds a sense of inferiority complex. I can derive no satisfaction in the reflection that I have been chosen for some office, not for my ability but from the accident of my birth in a particular community. The communal ratio has resulted in the devaluation of those qualities which make the people and a nation great. In fact, it has assigned the fate of our province into the hands of mediocrities and introverts.

The proper course, in my opinion, is to abrogate the communal ratio and also give up advocating the Rule of Merit. The selecting and appointing authority must be decentralised. The professorial staff of colleges and heads of departments in public offices should be entrusted with powers of selection. Every job calls for special qualities from the entrant. There are jobs where financial integrity is essential, there are scientific and technical jobs where the highest attainments are desirable and personal character is of minor concern. Administrative appointments require considerable tact and efficiency. The teaching profession calls for a high standard of morals. There are again jobs where over-brilliance is a disadvantage and the steady plodding type is wanted. In selecting entrants into colleges, the professors will bear the need for these types in mind. Similarly, heads of departments will choose men according to their fitness for particular types of work. The selec-

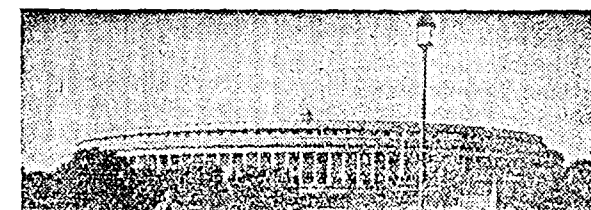
tion will be by personal appraisal. It is what is being done daily in well managed business houses and that is the reason why they are infinitely superior in efficiency to Government departments.

But before such a course can be adopted with safety, it is essential that the minds of our politicians and high officials are cultivated to remove the weeds of communalism. Our Ministers and officials are as insular as our previous British administrators. Beyond the company of their secretaries, their P. As., the M.L.As., and sycophants, they see little of other men. They are as receptive to new ideas from outside their closed ranks, as the gate post. We rank the best business executive as one who gets his work done efficiently and expeditiously by others and finds ample leisure to study, think and plan and also to take part in social activities. Similarly our Ministers must learn to mix with men of all shades of opinion, of varying degrees of intelligence and from various communities, for pure social pleasure. In short they must become clubbable. They must do some foreign travel to widen their vision. They must add to their knowledge by instruction from experts and by study. They must learn to listen and to think without the obtrusion of politics. If this process of self-cleansing and self-education is taken up seriously by our politicians and officials and completed, there will be no occasion for any one to revert to the detestable subject of communalism in the pages of this journal.

To hear people talk, you would think that in their free time, i.e., when not engaged either in action or directed thinking, they were concerned with nothing but sex, prestige and money.

But the very readiness with which we frankly discuss such matters with each other is a sign that they are not our serious concern. Underneath them our serious day-dream carries on its repetitious querulous life, and it too has its manifest and latent content. What it actually says over and over again is: "Why doesn't my neighbour love me for myself?" but this is a code message which, decoded, reads: "I do not love my neighbour as myself and may God have mercy on my soul." About this, just because it is a serious matter, we quite rightly keep silent in public.—W. H. AUDEN.

NEW DELHI DIARY



by V. V. PRASAD

PHENOMENAL growth is being registered by the Socialist Party of India, especially in the United Provinces. It is possible that if general elections are held only after 1950, as indications are that they will, the Socialists would find themselves in a position to run the Government both at the Centre and in some of the Provinces.

Intense dissatisfaction has been expressed at the Congress regimes in most of the Provinces, and the public had its hopes dashed to pieces even at the Centre. Acharya Narendra Deva, who is as good a friend of Pandit Nehru as he may wish for, stated at a Press Conference in Benares recently: "Nehru is himself a Socialist, but he is surrounded by people who are not allowing him to do anything. Nehru is not pleased with Chetty and Bhabha. Those people are there against Nehru's wishes."

Another good friend of Pandit Nehru is Prof. K. T. Shah, ideologically speaking. Prof. Shah had this to say about Panditji: "I am utterly disappointed that the National Planning Committee's list of industries which ought to be exclusively under State management had been most grievously curtailed. I regret that the head of our Government, who was also Chairman of our Planning Committee, should have subscribed to it. I think that if everyone is asked to vote according to his conscience in the House and in the country, this policy will be condemned."

Hitherto it was believed that the strong point of the Nehru Government is its foreign policy. But even this foreign policy has been rudely criticised by the Socialists as well as by that strange and mysterious per-

sonality who figured in revolutions all over the world—M. N. Roy. I consider the estimate of Roy to be the more acute, for nobody can deny that he is one of the clearest of analytical thinkers in the world today. During the last few years of political hibernation, his mind has come to appreciate the essential soundness of the Mahatma's humanist approach to all problems of life. But for the enforced exile in Dehra Dun during the last few years it is doubtful whether Mr. Roy would have had the time to reflect on the philosophy of humanism. Had he been able to capture power five or six years ago, it is quite certain that the subjects of his Government would have been none too happy. Fortunately for India, Mr. M. N. Roy has not been saddled in power before he fully appreciated the virtues of a humanist and humanitarian approach to life. Those who understand the concept of power will have little need to fear the prospect of M. N. Roy controlling a Government because at last he has cast off all ideas of dictatorship even of the proletariat. He has plumped for pacifism at a time when there is far too much confused thinking. I believe M. N. Roy's statement on the banning of C.P.I. has not been fully published in the Indian Press: so I am giving a summary of the statement.

He expressed fear that India is heading for war on the side of America against Russia. He said that Government policy proved that India was "neither neutral nor pacific" and that it shows "which side the Government of India has chosen."

M. N. subjected the Communist Party of India to ridicule by describing them as "infantile

Communists bombarding the citadel of law and order with pompous resolutions" and by observing that "none need shed a tear for the Communists who must thank themselves for what they have brought on their silly heads."

He sounded a grave warning against getting dragged into costly and ruinous military ventures. Roy declares: "To build up a strong army at the cost of starving people is not the way to a neutral and pacific foreign policy. To ride roughshod on the democratic right of political association, to suppress freedom of holding and propagating divergent political opinions are ominous practices which cannot be condoned."

"India has absolutely no reason", he declared, "to take sides in the coming titanic struggle between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. for world domination".

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's arguments at a Press Conference in the Capital were not so lofty as M. N.'s, but his opposition to the India Government's foreign policy was equally logical and forthright. The Socialists have in Dr. Lohia a vigorous spokesman who speaks with cocksureness. Dr. Lohia differed from Mr. Roy in that he considered

—in reply to a question put by this Diarist—that a heavy military programme need not necessarily mean preparation for war. While Mr. Roy thought that Pandit Nehru had already decided that India would fight on the side of America during the next war, Dr. Lohia believed that the Government had erred in not taking a definite stand against any future war. One Correspondent suggested that the majority of Pressmen present at the Conference of Dr. Lohia were in favour of the Government of India not declaring beforehand what they proposed to do in the event of a war. To make a declaration in favour of peace and neutrality for India would, he thought, spoil India's bargaining chances in world affairs. The suggestion that a majority of Pressmen were of this view was contested by other Correspondents. No vote was, of course, taken. Dr. Lohia replied that India's declaration would help the movement for world peace, and those Governments that were trying to work for peace would be able to build up a peace front together with India.

The Socialists have begun extremely well: and their task seems to have been therefore more than half done. Actually, it has been just half done.



HEROIC DOCTOR :

Because he deliberately sacrificed his own health to advance medical research, Dr. Claude H. Barlow recently was awarded the Medal of Merit by President Truman. Dr. Barlow is now in Egypt where he is an expert in the Ministry of Public Health.

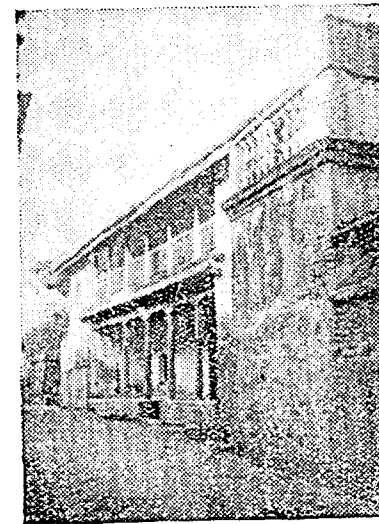
He first went to Egypt in 1929 to study bilharziasis, a bladder disease which is caused by tiny parasites carried by the snails in that country. During the war, when American soldiers stationed there were contracting the disease, Dr. Barlow offered himself as the subject of a lengthy laboratory investigation in the United States. Twice he expressed himself to the parasites to make certain of infection. In spite of the fact that his formerly robust health was shattered, he refused to accept treatment until his value as a host to bilharziasis provided sufficient information to make the control of the disease much easier. A native of New York state, Dr. Barlow in 1945 returned to Egypt to carry on his work despite ill health.—U.S.I.S.

VIRESALINGAM

by Dr. C. R. REDDY

Vice-chancellor, Andhra University.

TAKEN all in all Viresalingam is the greatest Andhra of modern times. He sums up in his personal history the evolution of an epoch. Born and trained as an orthodox Brahmin he travelled the steep and thorny road of reform through



The ancestral house at Rajahmundry. Viresalingam was born here.

successive stages as a reformer until he died a theistic Indian, pure and simple, whose life towered above the distinction of Brahmin and Non-Brahmin and all the differences of caste and status pertaining to the Hindus as we see them today. In literature he commenced by writing in the Pandit style and ended as the finest and grandest exponent of a clear, simple prose, instinct with beauty and reason. He commenced by writing Prabandhas bristling with *slesha*, *Chitrakavita* and the entire gamut of ugly artificialities, and ended as the creator of the Telugu novel, the Telugu social satire, the Telugu drama, especially of the social type, and of science and scientific biography and autobiography in Telugu. His last moments were

devoted to a revision of his monumental *Lives of the Telugu Poets*.

He had vision, imagination, sympathy for the wronged, the down-fallen and the suffering, the rationalistic temperament that will not brook nonsense, sham and pretence, however ancient or authoritative, and above all that rarest of Indian gifts, courage. Nothing could move more than the anecdotes I have heard him tell of the persecutions that he suffered at the hands of intolerant, malignant orthodoxy. He was stoned many a time, literally stoned. Often he was in danger of being lynched, but young India in the shape of students formed his bodyguard and gave him protection. Attempts were made to burn down his house; students guarded that too. The boys whose appreciation of sincerity, courage and venturesome devotion to ideals is innate and spontaneous, defended their leader and hero against the machinations of his enemies. The generation of today which enjoys the comparative calm and toleration, which are in no small measure due to the influence of Viresalingam himself, cannot realise what he had to put up with, what he had to go through in the days when reaction was stronger and less ashamed of showing itself in the public. He had complete confidence in the "boys"; all the boys stood by him; not a few followed him into his larger more liberal life. Most people live without illustrating the epoch in which they live. They neither give nor catch the light. The hero is he who both catches and generates the new spirit, that fecund principle of change and advancement, without which life were a stagnation and nuisance. Viresalingam reflected the new age because he was one of its potent makers. If he was its creator, it was partly because he was its creature, for they only create who allow themselves to be impregnated by the Time-Spirit.

What a wonderful man was he and how much an enigma and paradox to those that do not understand the imperial sway of undaunted genius! A pandit with hardly any knowledge of English, yet modern to the core and modern in conduct; a Brahmin who transcended the prejudices and limitations of his birth by his own soul-force without the aid of college education and university degrees; a poor man dependent on others for his life and the prospects that count for so much in our calculations, yet brave as a lion, daring as the lightning flash, defiant like a giant; born with no advantage, living a humble life far removed from the lofty if ineffectual levels in which nobles and high officials lead their pampered and picturesque existence, yet powerful as a thunderbolt, vivifying like the spring, and bounteous like the beneficent flow of his own Godavari. The social harmony and liberalism of the Andhra country is his gift and creation; if the Andhras are nearer nationhood in the real sense of the term than the other races of South India, lift ye up your hands in pious thanks-offering to the immortal shade of Viresalingam.

No metamorphosis recorded on Ovid is half so wonderful as the metamorphosis of Viresalingam, from an antiquated pedant into the greatest of moderns, the most virile of the living and moving forces of the present day. He found Telugu literature an exercise in pedantry and left it a power in the land. He found out life dismal in its abysmal superstitions and intolerance; he left it what it ought to be, a thing of beauty and harmony and a sacred, stirring call for the strenuous and unflinching promotion of social justice and social equality as between the sexes and between the different castes of the Hindu community. He demonstrated the invincible power of ideals, the triumph of human personality over every disadvantage of birth, circumstance and poverty. He is great by reason of his achievements, greater still by reason of what he was in himself.

No account of Viresalingam Pantulu would be complete without a reference to his wife who shared with him his joys and sorrows, his trials and triumphs and bravely seconded him in his revolutionary efforts. Rajyalakshamma was a simple, unsophisticated lady who wisely looked after the very large adopted household of the reformer and quietly spurred him on to bolder, yet bolder schemes. Ignorant she was, though not wholly, in the bookish sense of the term, but unenlightened she was not; in her case



The "Kalyan Mantap" in Ananda Gardens, Rajahmundry.

the seed of knowledge was sown in the field of courage and there was plentiful harvest of action and achievement. She is an illustrious refutation of the charge that Indian women are inimical to social reform and are the chief obstacles in the path of social progress. Indian women are more often the excuse rather than the cause of conservatism; they are the safe and respectable shelter for cowardly husbands and timid sons. The Hindu wife evidently does not stand in the way of her husband going to England to better his official prospects. She is an instigator and abettor in all the social and other manoeuvres by which the husband exalts himself officially or financially, but we are

asked to believe that the moment he embarks on a disinterested social reform for the sake of justice and patriotism, she lies prostrate before the Juggernaut of his courage and brings his car to a stand-still. When the ocean of the husband's career foams and rages for selfish ends and beats on strange shores and round strange feet, she plays the part of an encouraging breeze; but the moment it advances towards social reform, she is supposed to transform herself into a feminine Canute, and with the domestic sceptre, the broom-stick uplifted, cry out "Thus far, no further" and subdue the fury of the billows. Poor Hindu wife! She is obliged to appear not as the inspiration which it is in her nature to be, but as a standing apology for the husband. Rajyalakshamma's life has shown us the hypocrisy of men and revealed the heroism inherent in Hindu women.

The lives of Viresalingam and Rajyalakshamma are a splendid chapter in the history of Indian liberalism. Its distinguishing features are, firstly, its reality. Like the speeches of our intellectuals their efforts were not confined to platform, to theory and all manner of vapidness. Secondly, it touched and quickened the masses which the platform intellectuals will never succeed in doing. This result must be attributed to the personality of Viresalingam Pantulu and the medium of vernacular through which he sent forth his scathing criticisms of our social abuses and stirring appeal for a better life. Thirdly, it was non-political, a field in which it is never easy to raise voluminous dust and acquire speedy celebrity. Viresalingam attacked the problem at its hardest, where it is most unpopular. He not only won the particular causes he championed but produced a permanent transformation and psychology of a whole people. He did this single-handed because he was single-minded. The Telugu country can never be as though Viresalingam had not been.

I knew Viresalingam from my student days. I first met him in 1907 and found him even greater than my anticipations. Literature

and social reform bound me to him in unalterable veneration and friendship. I attended at Purasawakam one of his widow-remarriages, performed according to Shastric rites with sacred fire, libations of ghee and Vedic chants. After the ceremony which was attended by a good number of reformers, all belonging to the intelligentsia of Madras, was over, he invited the guests to stay to dinner. I then noticed to my dismay and disillusionment the rapidity with which most of them decamped under one pretext or another. It was a fast day with one, another Hindu reformer was too much of a Hindu to eat anything except Prasadam from the Triplicane temple; a third had stomach-ache; and I felt that a good many of them would have had diarrhoea if they had stayed on. He had often related to me pitiful and amusing incidents which showed how the lives of our intellectuals were nothing more than sound and fury signifying nothing. Mr. N..... was a fine colleague till his niece, a widow, took refuge with Viresalingam and married again. Then there was bitter quarrel between the leader and the colleague which was never completely healed. Another reformer believed in intercaste marriages but found no horoscope would tally with that of his daughter except that of a fellow caste-man. Among the younger men he found one staunch and sincere worker, Bapayya, a graduate, who gave up his prospects and joined the Master in his propaganda. But those whom the Gods love die young, and Bapayya passed away too soon, leaving behind the imperishable memory of a noble and chivalrous life.

In 1909, Viresalingam visited Bangalore for his usual summer holiday, he who was always busy with his pen. It is with a lively pleasure that I recall his enduring friendship with the late Mr. Bayanna of Malleswaram. My late lamented friend Mr. M. G. Varadachari and his wife met him at my house and spoke of it as one of the events of their life. Viresalingam stopped with me as my guest at Mysore in 1912 and was quite taken up with

that stalwart pioneer of women's education and advancement, Mr. Narasimha Iyengar. I remember his indignant repudiation of being an old man. He claimed to be a "boy" for, said he, "I can enjoy a game of chess and I am very fond of sweetmeats". Chess is not exactly a boyish pastime and the association of sweetmeats with castor-oil had always had a deplorable effect on my partiality for them. Every evening after dinner he fell into the mood of reminiscence and regaled me with the history of his early career and struggles. He suffered from an inveterate illusion that he could sing, and after his first essay in that line I carefully avoided the subject of music. We had a friendly dispute over the merits of the poet Nachana Somanadha whom he rated too high. A certain book of mine, "Kavithva-thatva Vicharanamu", received the compliments of his praise and admiration; and so taken up was he with it that he sent me back his own copy with all the printer's errors corrected—he was the best proof-reader in Telugu—and with not a few valuable notes and suggestions. Our latest conversations centred round his "Lives of Telugu Poets", a work which he worked hard even at his advanced age to make as perfect and complete as possible. It is a monument of industry and research marked by too great a readiness to accept malicious gossip as historic truth as in the case of the Lingayat poet, Dhurjati. I suppose reformers lack somewhat in the saving grace of charity. I refrain from entering on the large and fascinating field of his career as author. He is one of the greatest writers in Telugu, and the only man who ever made a living from the

sale of his books. His works embrace a bewildering variety of literary forms and themes. He comes nearest to the universality of Voltaire with whom he also shared the provoking gift of sardonic humour without any trace of his cynicism. He imitated and adopted to perfection the biting sarcasm of Gulliver in his "Travels of Satyaraja". He is the founder of Telugu satire for which his keen sense of humour fitted him admirably. Since the day when he realised his mission, literature with him became a sword with which he battled for the right: it was his action and not merely art. Lord Morley would have it that the highest literature is action. Certainly Heine desired that a sword should be placed on his grave, not a pen. Even so the most appropriate decoration for Viresalingam's grave will be a sword. He once told me that he was essentially a man of faith, who took no thought of the morrow, and who indeed would never have had the nerve to take up the causes which he did, if he had the thought of the morrow and calculated the chances of success. Desperate causes depend upon desperate faith, and Viresalingam had profound faith in his countrymen and especially his countrywomen.

It will be a bad day for India when true Gods of the Viresalingam type are forgotten and forsaken in favour of the flashy idols of the cave-market and the theatre, when such as he fail to inspire us, not merely with gratitude and other passive forms of appreciation but courage, active and aggressive, to action which is the only test of sincerity and the only form of appreciation worthy of a manly people.

In so far as the sense of humour is a recognition of incongruity, it is more profound than any philosophy which seeks to devour incongruity in reason. But the sense of humour remains healthy only when it deals with immediate issues and faces the obvious and surface irrationalities. It must move toward faith or sink into despair when the ultimate issues are raised.

That is why there is laughter in the vestibule of the temple, the echo of laughter in the temple itself, but only faith and prayer, and no laughter, in the holy of holies.—REINHOLD NIEBUHR.

PIONEER OF MODERNISM IN ANDHRA

by K. ISWARA DUTT

IN one of his speeches on Viresalingam, Dr. C. R. Reddy mentioned the sword as the right symbol on the reformer's tomb, while in his "May Memories" the late Dr. V. Ramakrishna Rao spoke of "jungle-clearance" as Viresalingam's work and way of doing things. "For, he said, to fell down stifling upas-trees, to burn up rank brushwood, to hunt down ravenous beasts, to destroy venomous reptiles, to bore impassable hills, to weed out pricking thorns"—were among Viresalingam's tasks. Dr. Ramakrishna Rao's figurative description of Viresalingam's work only tended to emphasise the appropriateness, and heighten the effect, of Dr. Reddy's suggestion. Swimming against Time's current Viresalingam changed the current of life in Andhra, with no predecessor in his line and no successor of equal stature.

Viresalingam's life was one long and unending battle against hide-bound conservatism and social reactionism. Single-handed he battled against tremendous odds and gigantic forces, allowing nothing to deter his high purpose, whether it was the heavy apathy of friends or the concealed opposition of detractors or the open hostility of opponents. The taunts of the malicious and the mean, the threats of the vulgar and the vicious, and the tortures of popular opprobrium and social excommunication—all he overcame with an unflagging energy and unbending will that had no parallel in Andhra annals.

Viresalingam found himself confronted with abnormal conditions. To him they were indefensible despite orthodox claims of scriptural authority. The coin weighed with officials in meting out justice (it does so in some measure even now); the concubine lent dignity to one's status in society. In mercilessly exposing the delinquents and debauchees to his fearless exposure

and flaming satire, Viresalingam was encountered by wild detractors and vile calumniators on all sides. Though he was deserted by friends and disowned by relatives, he had not swerved by a hair's breadth from his line of action. Opposition made him firmer in his conviction and more fierce in his attacks, and his name became at once a terror to the perpetrators of evil and a trumpet call to those interested in social regeneration.

At a time when people were sunk in "dogmatic Oriental slumber" he raised the banner of revolt against existing social evils. An idol worshipper in his youth and a pilgrim from temple to temple, he developed into an iconoclast and a sworn foe to clogging symbolism and degrading superstition. He rebelled against the restrictions and rigours of caste. To him, man, whether he was down-trodden pariah or the distant non-Hindu, was but brother man. In his view, it is but one power that 'sleeps in the rock and the mineral, lives in the plant, walks in the animal, and thinks in man', and it is but one spirit that permeates the whole of mankind.

The crucial test of a man's character, as the late Mr. W. T. Stead once observed, is, as a rule, his relation to the opposite sex, and it is in this respect that Viresalingam revealed himself as the greatest Andhra of the age. Finding women steeped in ignorance and reduced to slavery, he used his magic pen in awakening in them a supreme consciousness of their function in life. More taxing and tormenting to him was the problem of the widow. The hot tears and excruciating sufferings of the child widow in particular rent his heart. To rescue her out of social perdition, to give her a sweet home, and to make her a respected member of society, Viresalingam staked his all. The day on which he inaugurated

the Widow-Remarriage movement was a red-letter day in the history of Andhradesa. He believed in the righteousness of the cause, and continued till the end of his life, with tenacity what he commenced with zeal. If in the process of his purifying mission he had to be hard on those near and dear to him, he never allowed personal relations to override his public duties. Nor had he shed or wasted a tear over sundered ties and broken friendships. Converts to his cult increased appreciably, mostly springing up from the ranks of youth. With their unstinted co-operation, he started at Rajahmundry, the place of his birth and the scene of his activities, a permanent home to those "living tragedies of infinite pathos". In this work it was his great fortune to have the collaboration of his devoted partner who experienced a mother's joy in relieving young widows from distress and a mother's sorrow at their separation.

If in the field of social reform trodden by his "bleeding feet", Viresalingam broke the ground where others could not trace a furrow, in the field of letters he was no less the pioneer. The pen he wielded as a man of letters became a weapon in his hands as a reformer. Literature to him was the means to an end; he exploited its medium for the ennoblement of life by assailing its follies and frailties. Incidentally, he enriched our tongue. He was practically the first literary man in Telugu to have employed every variety of literary form—novel, poem, drama, satire, pamphlet, magazine and autobiography. As a controversialist he employed his pen so powerfully for journalistic encounters and dialectical victories that his victims withered under his scorching satire and pulverising wit. He had none of the arts of speech-making. He was, for the pulpit, not for platform. Like Goldsmith, he talked like poor Poll and wrote like an angel. There was not one branch of letters which he did not touch and there was nothing he touched

but adorned it. His versatility was hardly surpassed while as a writer of prose he was unequalled. Later-day trends and developments in Telugu literature have failed to dislodge him from the peaks on which he stood, as a class apart.

A humble Telugu pundit by profession and a very feeble man physically, he had to his lasting credit a record of work which in quality and magnitude alike bore the stamp of a Titan. The Prarthana Samaj, the Theistic library, the High School (called after his name) the Widow's Home, the Ananda Gardens, the volumes of his amazing literary output, the beaming faces of restored widows and their growing families, and, above all, the creation of a higher standard of public opinion in Andhradesa, heralded a new era in Andhradesa.

What was the secret of Viresalingam's sway over the mind of succeeding generations? A man of flaming sincerity and unflinching courage, he cleared all hurdles from a petty evil to a howl of obloquy, neither minded an enemy nor spared a friend, and survived scandal, wrath, and persecution which had assailed him at every step. He was, indeed a martyr, and as every other martyr he was born in times dark and dismal to recover the title deeds of his countrymen. The causes for which Viresalingam paid so heavy a price have at last triumphed and deepened our reverence for him. Was it not Disraeli who said that "the man who anticipates his time is persecuted when living and pilfered when dead". It was so with our Viresalingam. There was nothing like Nationalism in the days when he began his work, and yet he proved to be a Nationalist, prophetic in spirit and precocious in manner. In his own day, he was recognised as a giant in the line of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar; and to day, on the historic occasion of the Centenary of his birth, we revere him as the Pioneer of Modernism in Andhra.

CENTENARY TRIBUTES

His Excellency Sri C. Rajagopalachari :

"Andhradesh and Andhra people could not be what they are if Viresalingam had not arrived to vitalise them. He was one of the great men of India, of keen insight, great courage and dynamic energy. He fought against untruth and championed the cause of progress with Herculean vigour. Andhra is legitimately proud of him; so should all people in South India who know his work very well. His greatness rests on its own strength and not on any memorials we can raise or maintain."

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan :

"If the political freedom is to be transferred into a social reality, the disabilities from which our women, especially widows suffer require to be removed. Sri Viresalingam Pantulu was one of the earliest pioneers in South India to demand and work for radical changes in our society. Like all pioneers, who are ahead of their time, he suffered misunderstanding and persecution. We owe it to his memory to work for social regeneration even as he did, braving all ridicule and danger."

Sri V. V. Giri :

"I wish the first Centenary celebrations of Sri Viresalingam Pantulu every success. He was one of the stalwart leaders of the Andhra country who raised the status of the Andhras. By his great social work he was an inspiration not only to Andhras but to India as a whole."

Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya :

"Memorials to great men are more conspicuous in our country by their absence than by their presence. It is a great pity that posterity so easily forgets its obligations to its benefactors. It is also difficult for the contemporary world to appraise aright the magnitude as well as the magnificence of the services rendered to it by its heroes, saints and martyrs, by its patriots, reformers and its scholars. Sri Viresalingam Pantulu's great services to India in general and to Andhra in particular deserve recognition even at this late hour and your labours in this behalf not merely deserve but claim all possible sympathy and support from every quarter."

Sri Bulusu Sambamurti :

"Sri Viresalingam has dedicated his life for Women's Education and Social Reform. I wish the celebrations splendid success."

Maharajah Sri R. V. K. M. Surya Rao Bahadur of Pithapuram :

"He was one of the greatest sons of our beloved motherland, India. Undoubtedly he was one of the twin stars of the first magnitude that shone in the modern Andhradesa. Tremendous were the meritorious services he rendered to our Andhras. Our Andhradesa is very fortunate in being blessed with a hero of this supreme type. We are rightly proud of this profoundly great personage. Here is a hero of whom any country in the world can very well be proud. Let us remember him with reverence and gratitude, and try to walk in the foot-steps of this noble soul! I offer him my humble homage in all sincerity, gratitude and reverence."

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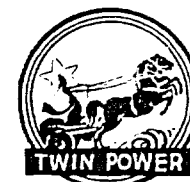
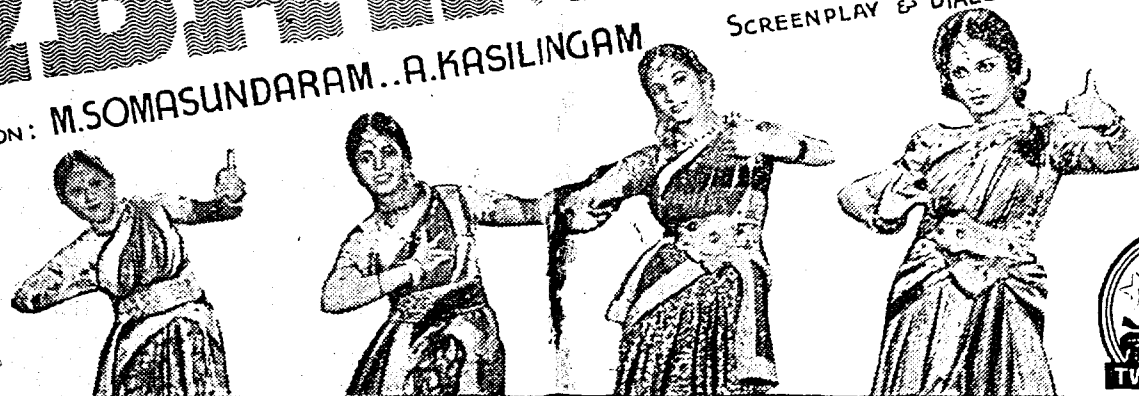
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This Advertisement is to appear in Dailies and Magazines which will reach a total of more than Ten lakhs readers

ONE OF THE GREAT MEN OF INDIA

On December 11, 1881, in Rajahmundry, the local authorities apprehended breach of peace. A revolutionary event was timed to take place on that day and the bulk of the public were opposed to it. The mood of the people was angry, sullen. Angry mobs collected at street corners and cried for the blood of the sponsors of the event. Elaborate police precautions were taken.

Amidst all this tumult, there gathered in a small dilapidated house in a dark narrow street, a group of friends. Their leader was a short, thinly built person, by no means handsome, but with a pair of burning eyes that looked straight into your heart. A common ideal bound them together.

The occasion was the remarriage of a widow. The first of its kind in South India. The short, thinly built person was Kandukuri Viresalingam. He, a Telugu pandit in a local school, of limited resources, had brought the bride and bridegroom to his humble home, in the teeth of powerful opposition, equipped only with the courage of his conviction and belief in the righteousness of his cause, and joined them in wedlock. Contemporary social reformers anxiously watched the experiment and when it went off successfully, showered praise on the fearless pioneer.

We of the present generation cannot fully understand the significance of the event. What a fuss over such a small common-place event, we think.

In the pursuit of smug, humdrum lives, few of us realise the strength of tradition's hold on society in the past; we pride ourselves on our progressive outlook and if we chanced upon any fragments of past religious superstition or social tyranny, we are prompted to fashionably exclaim how emancipated our present society is.

In every age, passionate questioning voices have stood up and protested against false conceptions and formalities of propriety. As long as widespread misery and unhappiness exists amidst our society, the truly honest man must stand up and question the established order and seek to change it for the better.

Kandukuri Viresalingam was one such pioneer who stood up and questioned the established order, and having found it wanting, tried in his own way to change it for nearly half-a-century.

He was born on April 16, 1848, in Rajahmundry. His father, a middle class Brahmin of modest means, died when Viresalingam was four. He and his widowed mother came under the guardianship of his uncle.

Those were the days when the administration of Northern Circars had just passed from the East India Company to the Crown. Many administrative reforms were introduced, English schools started and the ambitious sections of society encouraged their children to study English. Viresalingam received such primary education in English as was possible then for one of his means. His student career was marked by brilliance.

Society during the early years of Viresalingam's life was fundamentally feudal; the vast mass of people were ignorant, illiterate, slaves to superstition and rigid laws of custom; life was placid. But there was a slight stir and anxiety at the top layers. To them was vaguely visible a glimmer of a new mode of life. They felt the impact of Western civilisation as represented by the steamship, the telegraph, the printing press, and the British Indian pattern of administration. Some, in numbers very small, already took to learning English and entered Government service. And this class, by some perversion in the logic of events, set up new social standards.

Bribery among Government servants was not only condoned, but actively encouraged both by the people and the authorities. To accept bribes was the privilege and prerogative of all Government employees. They were looked upon as children of the Gods. Then came the fashionable tradition of every lawyer, doctor or employee of Government keeping a song-and-dance girl as his mistress.

Nautch parties were frequent. A local tin-god would organise a performance by his favourite mistress, invite officials, tradesmen, lawyers, teachers and other men of consequence in the locality. Not to accept the invitation and contribute to the nautch girl's purse, spelt disaster to many a man whose livelihood depended on official favours.

Viresalingam's first job was that of a pleader's scribe. He gave it up almost immediately because the pleader his master had the embarrassing habit of flirting with his song-and-dance girl mistress right under the nose of his young scribe! Viresalingam next became a Telugu pandit in the local Government school, a job in which he continued till retirement.

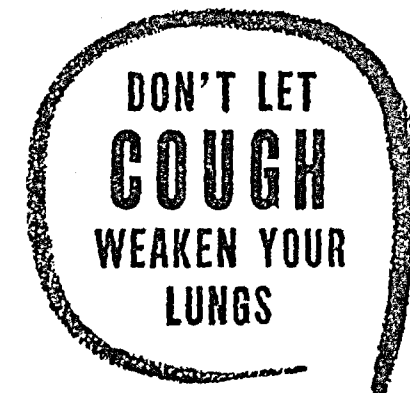
It was at this period of his life that he chanced upon a book, a collection of lectures by Keshab Chandra Sen, the great Brahmo leader and social reformer of Bengal. After reading the book, new vistas of thought opened up before his mind; he felt thrilled by the new interpretations given there to the values of life. Egged on by curiosity and the joy of discovering a kindred soul, he made a thorough study of the Brahmo Samaj movement.

Widespread corruption in all branches of administration; the unhealthy atmosphere created by the devadasi institution; the abject subordination of women to the tyrannical male authority; the brutal opposition by orthodox sections to the idea of female education; the plight of Hindu widows denied the right of remarriage; these and similar social maladies

whipped the conscience of Viresalingam.

He foresaw the potential power of the press as a weapon for moulding public opinion. In 1874 he established a printing press and started a Telugu weekly, *Vivekavardhani*. It was a terror to the local chieftains and none could escape its scathing attack by reason of influence or wealth. Master of satire, Viresalingam with his inimitable pen exposed to public light many a social enemy masquerading as angel.

"Right under your iron heels are trampled down many an innocent heart. Your caste-ridden society, with its superstitions, outmoded traditions, and above all, with its supreme lack of human fellow-feeling, has banished sanity from our lives. Open your eyes and let



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the underdogs and unfortunates amidst us also have a chance to live. They have a right to it". Thus ran the teaching of his life's mission.

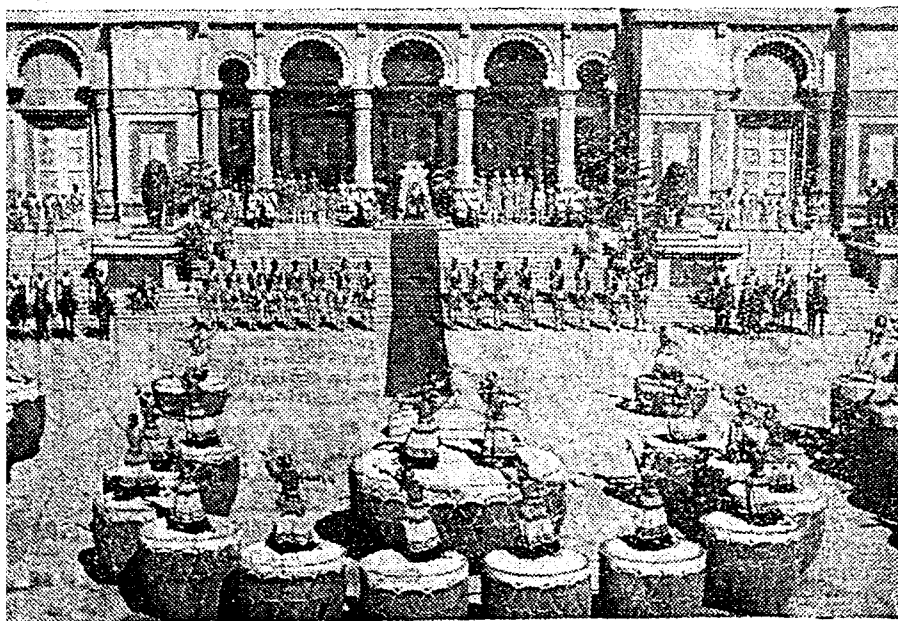
Essentially a creative artist, he came to the rescue of Telugu Literature which by that time the pandits had succeeded in dehydrating, what with their rigid rules of grammar and the sadistic glee with which they tried to take it more and more beyond the reach of the common man. He started a new style in Telugu prose-writing, simple yet powerful and not beyond the ken of the non-pandit. He gave the Andhras the first novel, and the first autobiography in their language. Literary criticism, farce, burlesque—there was not one branch of literature which he did not experiment in, with success.

His voluminous production, "The Lives of Telugu Poets" is a precious legacy to Telugu literature. From the work of the first poet Nannaya down to those of his contemporaries, Viresalingam conducted extensive research into the history

of Telugu literature, sifted fact from fable, history from legend and compiled an authentic document.

A contemporary of such towering giants as Keshab Chandra Sen, Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar and Mahadev Govind Ranade, Viresalingam can rightly be called an eminent Victorian. Forerunner of whatever is worthwhile in modern Andhra, he gave his life to the betterment of the unhappy child-widow, the shunned untouchable and the orphaned child.

Today, a hundred years after his birth, the institutions he founded in his hometown, the widows' home, the high school, and the Hitakarini Samaj, are languishing for want of funds. He incessantly strove towards building a casteless society, and today we find communalism being given a fresh lease of life by our so-called leaders. Before the Indian National Congress was born, Viresalingam fought for the abolition of untouchability. He fought with crusading zeal against corruption and bribery, but today they are again stalking the land, backed by powerful forces.—G. R. S.



The Drum Dance. A Scene from Gemini's "Chandralekha."

SPOTLIGHT ON THE



ONE of the most decisive engagements of the Cold War is approaching resolution. Normally it would be queer to ask who will win the Italian elections—the Russians or the Americans? But not now. For, if the outcome of the elections should be victory for the Left, it will mark the first advance made by Russia since the set-back which she suffered as a result of the Marshall Plan. If the outcome should be victory for the Right, it will mark the superiority of America's political and economic strategy over that of Russia.

It is possible to speak of the Right and the Left as the only significant forces in Italian political life because there exists in Italy no Third Force of any considerable strength. It is otherwise in France, where the idea of the Third Force took its birth. In Italy there are numerous parties—indeed far too many—due to the prevailing method of proportional representation. But the last general elections, held in June 1946, showed that while a few seats were secured by many of the small parties, only three parties gained votes on a mass scale. These were the Christian Democratic (Catholic) Party, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party.

Of the total number of 22,952,890 votes cast (for 556 seats) the Christian Democrats secured 8,083,208 votes (207 seats), the Socialists 4,744,749 votes (115 seats) and the Communists 4,342,722 votes (104 seats). These figures would suggest that the Socialists were strong enough to play an independent role, if they so desired. But the Socialists and Communists of Italy carried into the post-war period the unity of action which they developed before and during the war in anti-

Fascist resistance. An attempt was made in January 1947, at the Socialist Congress, to withdraw the party from close collaboration with the Communists and to bring it more in line with the general current of West European Socialist thought. Prominent among those Socialists who desired such a Westward orientation was Giuseppe Saragat, leader of the moderate Right-wing. The move was opposed by Pietro Nenni, head of the Socialist Party. Unable to win over the majority to their view, Saragat and his followers broke away from the party and formed an organisation of their own. This cleavage, however, did not basically alter the political pattern, since Saragat continued to have the support of only a minority of the Socialists.

The other Italian parties include the middle-road Action Party and Republican Party, the conservative National Democratic Union and the neo-Fascist Uomo Qualunque (Common Man Party). It is believed that the electorate will vote this month, as two years ago, for the mass parties in preference to the small ones. In that event, both the extreme Right and the Liberal-yet-anti-Communist forces may be expected to rally behind the Christian Democratic Party in order to strengthen it as against the Communist-Socialist combination. On the other hand, it is possible that the Christian Democratic Party might lose its votes to the more reactionary and violently anti-Communist parties of the Right. There has lately been a resurgence of what is prudently emphasised to be Neo-Fascism, whose exponents recall the achievements of Mussolini to a people whose economic distress is nonetheless acute because they now enjoy democracy.

The strongest argument from the Right is the benefit that the Italian people derive from American aid. The strength of this argument may be judged from the statement of Randolph Pacciardi, an anti-Fascist of long standing and head of the Republican Party: "We are completely dependent on America (for economic survival and recovery). And if the Left should win next spring's elections, all of us believe America would cut off her supplies. Then the resulting economic crisis would break us, and drive the Left as hunted guerillas into the hills. So, despite everything, the Left must wait until Italy can afford to be free." Pacciardi said this in November 1947 and America has since, as he expected, made it clear that if the Italians elect the Communists to power, there will be no further American aid.

But the Italian Communist leader, Palmiro Togliatti, does not think that Italy will collapse without American aid: "The answer to Pacciardi's dilemma is not to enslave Italians, but to educate Americans Before the war Central and Eastern Europe were Italy's great markets until Germany drove us out. Germany no longer exists, and yet our trade there is unimportant because America opposes it. We need American supplies, and we oppose only the conditions on which they are granted. But we shall develop far more trade with Eastern Europe. And America should support us, for then the relief burden on America will be reduced."

Socialist leader Pietro Nenni has grimly commented on the situation: "Without America we starve, and with America we are still starving." The implied criticism of the administration and of its handling of Italy's economic problems, tallies with Pacciardi's account: "At war's end everything cried out for social revolution. Outwardly we accomplished our revolution when we overthrew the monarchy and established the Republic. Inwardly, nothing has changed. A mere handful own our land and our resources. The Fascists are still at their posts. Only the top layer of war criminals have

gone. The rest were never moved or have returned. They run our great newspapers. They fill Government posts. They work to regain in the third war what they lost in the second."

The difference between Saragat and Nenni is worth noticing. "Against Fascism, the struggle was clear," says Saragat, "against Communism, it is harder because Communism has a basis of justice. There are two kinds of opposition to Communism. Intelligent opposition, which means vigorous pressure for social reform. And hysterical anti-Communism, which leads to Fascism. Long before we form a progressive government, we must achieve unity of the non-Communist Left. That means, first, unity among the Socialists, then partnership between Socialists and Republicans." But Nenni says: "The strength of the Church in Italy compels the alliance of Communists and Socialists. Without it, the Church would rule undisputed for 50 years. Of course the Communists are attached to the U.S.S.R. But they are a national party, and will remain so unless the struggle between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. reaches a state of war." The formation of Cominform last year made no difference to Nenni's attitude. He considered the step "an act of defence" on the part of the Communists of Europe. Nor apparently has Nenni been perturbed by this year's developments in Czechoslovakia. Asked once whether he was not, by cooperating with the Communists, preparing the way for a one-party dictatorship, Nenni answered: "We are a mass party with roots and we are not afraid."

Since the signing of the armistice in September 1943, Italy has had several changes of government. Pietro Badoglio, Ivanoe Bonomi and Ferruccio Parri successively formed coalition Cabinets that fell due to lack of inter-party agreement. Alcide De Gasperi, the present Prime Minister, formed his first Government in December 1945. In successive reorganisations of the Cabinet, he has dropped the Communists and the Socialists. The ascendancy of the Christian Democratic Party, represented by the relatively long

tenure of De Gasperi's Prime Ministership, has been rendered possible only by the support of the many small Right-wing groups, who together with the Christian Democratic Party enjoy a narrow majority over the opposition in the present Parliament. Any adverse shift in the balance of forces, even if it be slight in itself, will mean the exit of De Gasperi. And Anglo-America—not to speak of the Vatican—can ill afford to lose De Gasperi.

If the Left should win, a good portion of the not yet very solid Western Bloc will get chipped off; the whole basis of the Marshall Plan will have to be altered; there will be repercussions in France, Germany and Austria. This will upset the military, economic and political alignments underlying present plans for the containment of Communism in Europe. Ideology apart, De Gasperi has planned to grant oil concessions in the Po River Valley to an Italian subsidiary of the U.S. Standard Oil Company. Such being the stakes involved, it is not surprising that America and Britain should have taken some extraordinary steps to influence the Italian elections. One was the American threat to cut off supplies if De Gasperi should lose. The other and more sensational step was the joint Anglo-French-American announcement on March 20 regarding Trieste.

The Italo-Yugoslav frontier region, sometimes called Venezia Giulia or the Julian Region, has for centuries been a zone of contention between adjoining States. In spite of the poverty of its material resources, the region has been extremely important due to its geographical conditions and its character as a land of passage. Historic and ethnic claims clashing with commercial interests have made the region a source of tortuous political problems.

"There can be no doubt that the Slovenes are the principal occupants of the Julian Region. Only in the cities, and in their neighbourhoods, of Gorizia, Trieste and Fiume, are there any considerable majorities of non-Slav peoples, so that ethnically the Region is to be regarded as a Slovene land." This is the

opinion of A. E. Moodie, author of an expert study of the Italo-Yugoslav boundary question. Yugoslavs have for long been claiming that the whole of Venezia Giulia (which was included within Italian territory under the peace settlement of 1919) should be allocated to Yugoslavia. The national demand fitted conveniently into the Pan-Slav movement that Russia started encouraging during the last war.

The Italians, on the other hand, admit that the population of the Istrian peninsula is predominantly Slav, but urge the Italian character and population of the coastal towns on the west, and especially of Trieste and their close association with Italy in the past.

Trieste was liberated from the Germans in May 1945 by Marshall Tito's forces. After considerable negotiations, the peninsula was divided into two zones of occupation one under joint Anglo-American administration and the other under Yugoslavia. The question of Trieste was specially dealt with by the creation of a Free Territory of Trieste. The prolonged and unsuccessful attempts to agree on the choice of a Governor for Trieste is among the more amusing chapters of the history of the Security Council.

"The latest proposal from the West that Trieste should be handed back to Italy is an admirably smart move. It has put Russia in a most awkward position. If she opposes the proposal, Italian national sentiment will be alienated, Togliatti will lose votes. If Russia should agree, then it will be a repudiation of the firm support which she has so far given to Yugoslavia's claims and will reduce the prestige of Marshall Tito. Russian silence on the question is understandable—Molotov has been outwitted by the West. Kingsley Martin's comment on the Trieste move: "As a move in a diplomatic game in which the Communists never stick to the rules, this latest Allied move is justifiable. As a French commentator gleefully remarked: 'For once the Democracies have got a foul blow in first.' Fair enough. But why pretend we are not interfering?"

A LETTER FROM EUROPE

by MELLY ZOLLINGER & W. LAKSHMANA RAO

VIENNA: A mass of ruins—pinched and haggard faces—wan countenances—shabby clothes—shoes gaping at the toes and down at the heels—that's Vienna today. Poverty, misery and squalor—an indescribable pall of gloom hangs over the city. We are staying as paying guests with a working class family in the 3rd district in the British sector. The man works as an assistant in an engineering firm, and the daughter is working in a shop. The boy is still at school. With a total income of about 900 shillings (=Rs. 360) a month, the family finds it almost impossible to make both ends meet. They do not get any milk or fat coupons as the children are grown-ups. A little bit of margarine or lard is more than a luxury which could be bought only in the black-market, not to mention butter or cheese which couldn't be had either for love or money. Frau K. told us that she spends all her time in the house, thinking out how best she could cook something tasty and nourishing out of the daily ration of 1500 calories per head. She has to depend entirely on American food stuffs—horse-meat and fish paste bread and potatoes. She told us that sometimes the tinned stuff was bad and made them ill. For hours she sits in her kitchen mending threadbare clothes and darning the holes in the stockings. Clothes are rationed, a man's shirt costs anything from 80 to 100 shillings, a pair of workmen's shoes about 90 shillings. Compared with the pre-war figures, the official index for the overall cost of living has gone up five times, clothing and shoes six times, tobacco and spirit ten times, writing material six times, heating and lighting four times. Wages have increased by only three times. Towards the end of last year, the Austrian Government, a coalition of the Catholics and Social-democrats, in a vain attempt to stop the price spiral devalued the shilling. The Communists opposed devaluation but were out-voted. Devaluation resulted in

credit-shrinkage and was followed by retrenchment and unemployment. Owing to the money-scarcity many small businesses have closed down and shops and stores are without customers. And worse than all, workers have found that their savings of a life-time had been suddenly wiped out. The bigger shops and stores catering for the luxuries of the rich are doing good business, the customers buying their wines, fashion goods and furs with American dollars and Swiss francs!

"Austria, today has a planned economy—planned by America!"—that was the remark made by a radio-manufacturer at the Prater-Messe Spring Exhibition. He explained the paradox to us: "Under the Marshall Plan, Austria is to export goods to U.S.A. to the value of 39 million dollars, and only 12 million to other countries. The exports to U.S.A. would comprise chiefly of raw material, e.g., magnesite, wood and timber and other raw-material in which U.S.A. is mostly interested. For the first ten months of 1947, our exports to U.S.A. and the Bi-zone amounted to a little over 3 million dollars. And now thirteen times this amount would mean the utter starvation of our own manufactures. Our imports for the 15 months of the Marshall Plan are to amount to 235 million dollars, out of which 182 million, i.e. 80%, are to be covered by American credits, for goods exported from America. We badly require rolling stock and scrap. But we are compelled to buy manufactured goods, which we ourselves can produce, and cigarettes and tobacco, of which we have plenty, at least up to the end of 1948." After a little pause, he continued: "That's not the whole story. Firms and businesses requiring dollar credits have to furnish to the U.S.A. Export-Import Bank full details of their business transactions and trade secrets, without any guarantee that the credits asked would be accommodated. The advances have to be paid back in four years' time and

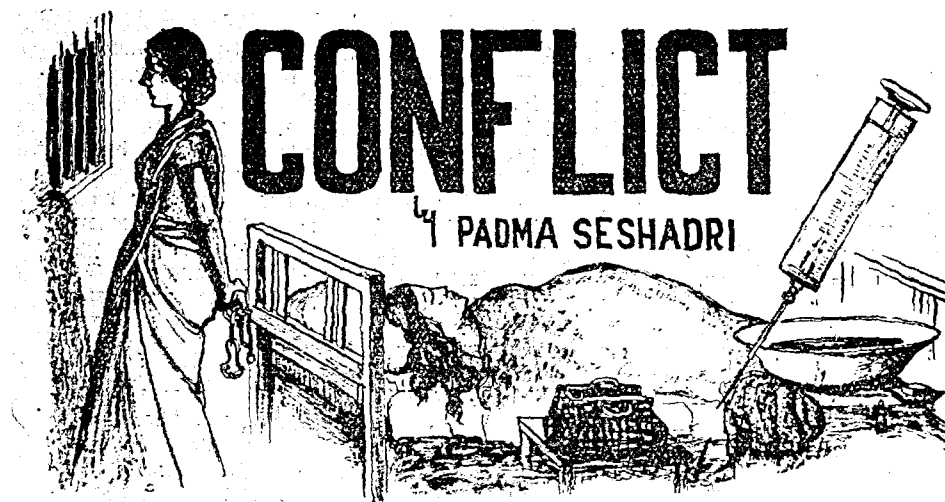
carry an interest of 4%, and the whole business is to be given as security. The machinery is to be bought exclusively in U.S.A. and is to be transported in U.S.A. ships and is to be insured with U.S.A. underwriters. Any default in repayment would be followed by the taking over of the business by the U.S.A. bank through its agents in Austria." He showed us an article in the January number of the magazine "Weg und Ziel", according to which the big Austrian concerns like, Bohler, Scholler-Bleckmann, Ranshofer Aluminium Works, the Automobile factories of the Diamler-Steyer-Puch combine, and several others have already "received" dollar credits to the extent of 13 million dollars and are in danger of passing into American hands.

We were at the Art Gallery (Kunsthistorisches Museum) in Burgring yesterday, which was re-opened only a few days ago after being closed for over three years. The Gallery possesses one of the finest collections in Europe of old masters. We noticed many gaps in the collection and on enquiry were told that about 160 paintings including the complete collection of Titian, Velasquez, Rembrandt, Vermeer, Reubens, and Breughel, valued at over 80 million dollars have been taken out of the country last March on a sort of roving exhibition to Zurich, Brussels, Amsterdam and Paris. The pictures are now to be shipped to U.S.A. where they are supposed to remain until the end of 1950. The most disquieting part of the whole transaction seems to be that the U.S.A. has not offered any guarantee that this priceless collection should be returned to Vienna in good condition, nor have they undertaken to make good any loss or damage that might be caused during transport and stay in that country, and that even Lloyds, the international underwriters, refused to insure the pictures against loss and deterioration. The art circles in Vienna seem to entertain grave doubts whether the paintings would

find their way back to their original home after their wanderings.

We heard a very amusing story. The ration cards distributed by the Austrian Federal Government have these words printed on their back: "60% of your rations represents America's gift to Austria (60 Prozent Deiner Rationen sind ein Geschenk der Amerikahilfe fur Oesterreich)". When these cards were sent from Vienna to the provincial Government in Burgenland and Lower Austria (in the Soviet zone) these Governments had the following words added and then distributed to the people. "This does not correspond with facts." As counter-propaganda, these Governments published figures showing that as far as these provinces were concerned, they receive only 2% and 4% from the "American gift to Austria".

Many Austrians, while thankful for the American help, hate such crude propaganda. Many are wondering why the final preparation of an Austrian treaty should be so long delayed. Many are genuinely worried whether Austria is also to be divided and Western Austria tacked on to the German Trizonia "as a bulwark against Communism". The "Economist" of 6th December, last, had rather a revealing article on this subject. The industrialising of Tirol, which is under Allied occupation, which is predominantly agricultural, has already begun. According to the "Tiroler Volksbote", nearly 200 new factories are to be established in that province for the manufacture of steel tubes, electric bulbs, penicillin, sugar, textiles, glass, chemicals and rifle-cartridges, in spite of the fact that many of these industries exist in Eastern Austria and are suffering from under-production owing to scarcity of raw materials. No wonder that our fellow-diner at the "Roter Hahn" said: "We Austrians have five masters, the Americans, the British, the French, the Russians—and our own Government!"



DR. SUMITRA was suddenly roused from sleep by the loud pealing of the door-bell. She had had a hard day and was dog-tired. Sitting up rather impatiently, she switched on the bed-light and saw that the time was just past midnight. As far as she knew, she had no urgent cases needing her attention at this hour of the night. Another peal, loud and jarring, cut across her thoughts. Throwing her saree loosely round herself, she descended the stairs and opened the door.

A boy, not more than thirteen, stood on the door-step. His face was tense with fear and anxiety. He panted for breath and it looked as if he had run all the way to the doctor's house. His face had a beseeching look as he addressed her. From his remarks, she gathered that his sister was in labour before her time, that his brother-in-law would only be back by morning and that there was none at home to help. He added, artlessly, that he had heard of her as one who never refused to see a patient, whatever the hour of the night or the circumstances might be. She was inclined to smile at the boy's naivete, but his quivering lips and wild eye told of the tumult in his heart.

Sumitra was nothing if not conscientious. Resigning herself to the inevitable, she packed her bag. Waking up her old mother, she told

her that she was going out on an urgent summons. Soon, she was at the wheel, the boy beside her, driving to the home of her unknown patient.

As she stood looking down at the pale, beautiful face of the girl on the bed, a pang of pity shot through her. The girl's eyes looked at her pitifully, pleadingly, like the eyes of a wounded stag, as if mute-ly beseeching Sumitra to put her out of this agony. Her frail hands picked nervously at the coverlet. Sumitra felt a stab of cold anger towards the man who had let this child—she was little more than a child, not yet sixteen—suffer at an age when she ought to have been a joyous, care-free, sprite. She inwardly cursed the customs that permitted such things to happen as she bent down to examine the girl.

When she finished her examination, her face was grave, but there was a curious, exultant light in her eyes. This was going to be a very difficult case, she realised. But this realisation, which would have sobered anyone else in her place, merely made her exultant. Sumitra was queer in more ways than one, as those who knew her often averred. She did not like any case to be too easy and straightforward. She was venturesome and full of fight. Consequently she enjoyed a tussle with the unknown; she enjoyed the exhilaration of the con-

flict. Above everything else, she revelled in the proud moment, when, undaunted by hopeless odds, she brought forth a tiny life with her own hands. Hence, as she realised that the present case presented many difficulties, she grew alert and her senses tingled with delight at the coming struggle.

However, she could do nothing at once, as the girl would have to suffer for nearly a couple of hours more before anything could be done. After giving suitable directions to the brother, she sat on by the bed. Occasionally when a spasm of pain grew too much to bear, the face on the pillow contorted with agony, and the hand that lay on the coverlet, gripped Sumitra's with a grip of pain. The girl had plenty of pluck, Sumitra saw; not a moan escaped her lips, even at the worst moments.

As they stayed thus, a clock struck five somewhere downstairs. Immediately following, came the sound of the front door opening. Evidently the husband had returned from his night duty. The front door shut, and there floated up to her, quite distinctly, the sound of a man's voice, calling in loud accents, "Ramoo! Ramoo!" That voice! Sumitra trembled as she heard again the voice that she had not heard for more than ten years. Every nerve in her tingled painfully; she was aware of a mist before her eyes and a constriction in her throat. To make doubly sure, she gently disengaged her hand and stole to the top of the stairs and from there she looked down into the lighted hall. She had been right! It was he! The same handsome, debonair rascal who had captured her heart, married her, wasted her money and left her, destitute, all during the course of one short year.

As she stole back quietly to the bedside, scenes of her past life flashed before her in quick succession. She saw herself as a happy bride, a radiant wife, and soon, alas, too soon, a bitter disillusioned woman. As she turned towards the patient, sudden realisation came to her, with a pang of bitter pain, that

this girl was her husband's wife—this girl was to deliver a child that ought by right to have been hers! As this knowledge came to her, she knew a sudden gust of fierce anger, such as she had never known in her life before. This slip of a girl, bearing his child within her, was happier than she was. A stab of jealousy tore her heart as she realised the full extent of her loss. She was married and yet the dear joys of married life were denied her, she could not marry again, even if she wanted to, for the Hindu law did not permit divorce. She was a woman, after all, with a woman's ache for children and a happy home! Now, as it was, she could never hope to be a mother, never nurse tenderly a child of her flesh, never feel clinging little arms round her!

She had not visualised all this before; content to lead a comparatively peaceful life, she had striven to thrust the image of her husband into the dark recesses of her mind. But this girl lying in labour, this girl with the appealing eyes and plucky heart, showed her all that she had missed in life. She felt tears of self-pity rise to her eyes. She wondered at the callousness of the man, who must be more than forty, in marrying this child of fifteen.

From the chaos in her mind, one cunning and insidious thought emerged. She was a woman outraged, misused, thrown on the dust-heap, from where she had risen by her own stupendous efforts. She wanted to revenge herself on the man for all the suffering she had borne; wanted to see him lose his pretty young wife as she had lost him, her husband. In an instant, she saw how quick and easy it would be. The case was difficult and needed all her skill. If she made but one slip, one careless little slip, the girl on the bed, the girl who had usurped her place, would die and none would be any the wiser. The temptation was too strong to be resisted.

Hearing a sound at the door, she went and opened it and looked out. Ramoo, the brother, stood there. His eyes were red with weeping. As

soon as he saw her, he started off, "Oh, doctor, how is Sumitra? I am so frightened, I have no one else left in the whole world!" Sumitra! So she was another Sumitra, was she? She said, "Hush! Not so loud, please. Your sister is dozing. I shall do my best". She was strangely moved by the lad's supplication and her determination faltered. As she turned away after giving this non-committal reply, she saw, half-way up the stairs, vaguely outlined in the half-darkness, the figure of her husband, Rathnam. At sight of her husband, the temptation returned with renewed force, and she went into the room, fully resolved to yield to the fierce temptation. She had nothing to do; mere passivity would obtain her desire. Now and again the brother's passionate words rang in her ears. A conflict was raging in her heart, a conflict between the natural goodness of her and the evil impulses of the moment. With confused thoughts, she stood at the window, her back to the cot.

A weak, little voice called her from the cot and despite herself she turned and went near the bed. The girl, Sumitra, her namesake, looked up at her. There was a mute question in the eyes that were clouded with pain. "Doctor" she called; it was a very faint whisper. Sumitra bent down to hear the whispered words. "I feel I cannot survive this agony, doctor. I want to tell you this while I am strong enough to do so. If it is a case of my life or the child's, do not hesitate. Save the child at all cost. My husband has set his heart on a boy". The effort exhausted her and she sank back on the pillows.

The life of man, viewed outwardly, is but a small thing in comparison with the forces of nature. The slave is doomed to worship Time and Fate and Death, because they are greater than anything he finds in himself, and because all his thoughts are of things which they devour. But, great as they are, to think of them greatly, to feel their passionless splendour, is greater still. And such thought makes us free men; we no longer bow before the inevitable in oriental subjection, but we absorb it, and make it part of ourselves. To abandon the struggle for private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things—this is emancipation, and this is the free man's worship. And this liberation is effected by a contemplation of Fate; for Fate itself is subdued by the mind which leaves nothing to be purged by the purifying fire of Time.—BERTRAND RUSSELL.

Sumitra choked as she heard the pathetic request. The old, fighting spirit rose up in her, and she determined, fiercely, that she would save both mother and child. In one illuminating instant, she saw the littleness and unworthiness of her revenge. In her heart was a fervent prayer that she had been preserved in time from committing a grievous sin.

An hour later, a tiny baby cried lustily in the house and the young mother lay, spent, weary and radiant, ever and anon casting passionately grateful looks at Sumitra. As Sumitra held the little infant in her arms, she was aware of an ache so poignant that it seemed to tear at her very soul.

When Sumitra at length came downstairs, her husband was waiting in the hall with her fees. She trembled lest he should recognise her. But far, indeed was the cry from the shy, gawky, impulsive girl of ten years ago to the cultured, polite, self-possessed woman who stood before him. Not the faintest shadow of recognition dawned in his face. With a renewed pain at her heart, she realised that, with all his faults, she loved him still. There he stood, his form grown a little fuller, his hair getting gray near the temples, little furrows of anxiety creasing his forehead. She had an instant longing to cry out to him, to feel his arms round her. Stifling it, she replied mechanically to his queries. As she drove back home, tired but victorious, there was a great peace in her heart and a half-forgotten line she had read somewhere kept coming into her head! "Better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all".



Travel in Comfort
on

DUNLOP



DCX 2

37

DANGEROUS COMMUNAL FASCISM IN HYDERABAD

by "VISVAMITRA"

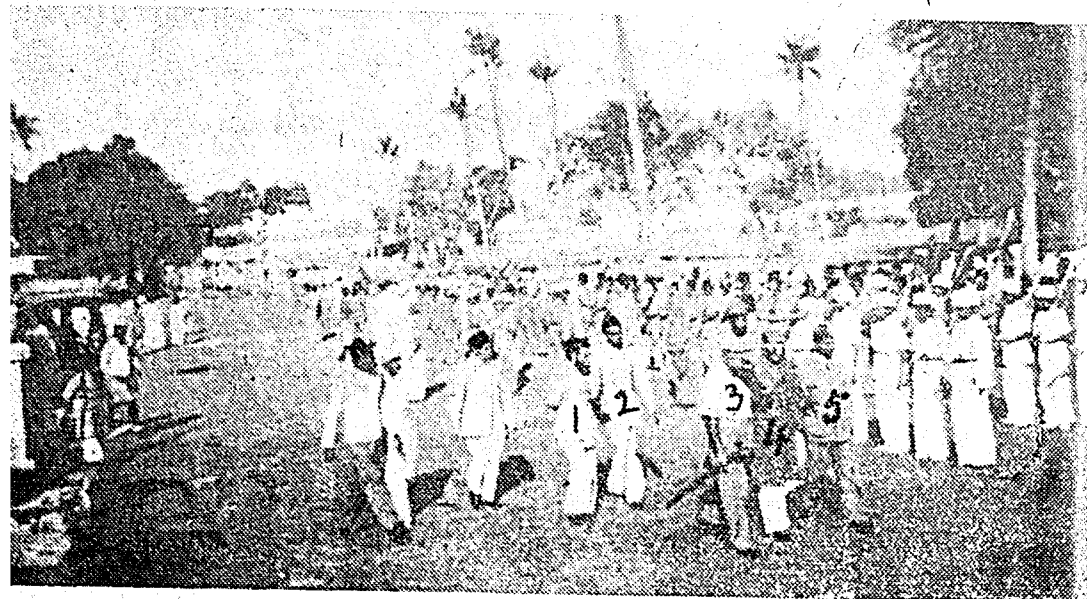
THERE was a crisis in Hyderabad affairs last November when Kasim Razvi and his followers prevented the Hyderabad delegation from going to Delhi. It was then hoped that this would lead to the collapse of his Fascist organisation and pave the way for a desirable settlement. But what actually happened was the enthronement of the Ittehad in the Government after the most unexpected signing of the Stand-Still Agreement on November 28, 1947. Razvi who had called to arms his storm-troopers called Razakars (volunteers) and thrown out a challenge to the Indian Union, suddenly made his appearance in Delhi on the eve of the Agreement, and came back with a feather in his cap. He created the impression that where Chattari and his colleagues had failed, he had succeeded by his bluff. A few weeks

later a Ministry was formed under the *de facto* though not *de jure* leadership of Razvi. While the States Ministry seems to have put faith in the bona fides of the Hyderabad Government, and expected that the period of the Stand-Still Agreement would sincerely be utilized for settling the outstanding problems, all who knew Hyderabad intimately were keenly disappointed and were convinced that one year's *carte blanche* had been given to Fascist Hyderabad to get entrenched in its senseless opposition to accession and responsible government. The months that have passed have proved that these critics were right and that the States Ministry woefully miscalculated the future course of events.

It is true that the Ittehad's Razakars are not a new institution. But the fact remains that the 500



Another view of the Guard of Honour ceremony. Photo shows (1) Kasim Razvi, the Mazlis President (2) Yamin Zuberi, Hyderabad's Labour Minister, (3) Captain Malik Htekaruddin of the Indian Army, now training the Razakars in Hyderabad, (4) Gulam Mohammad, and (5) Hissaruddin Ghori, Officer Commanding of the Razakars.



Mr. Gulam Mohammad, Pakistan's Finance Minister, taking the salute when a Guard of Honour was presented to him at Hyderabad by the Razakars, on the occasion of his 'courtesy' visit in December '47.

and odd ordinary volunteers grew into a formidable army of one lakh, and then when their Fuehrer called for five lakhs, the number increased to about two lakhs. The Razakars began to call themselves Janbazes—"those who play with their lives", and later Mujahids—"Crusaders". The number of Razakars in Hyderabad and Secunderabad alone is about 50,000 of whom nearly 15,000 are armed with different types of guns, rifles and pistols. After November there was a regular campaign of disarming all non-Muslims throughout the State and it is estimated that about 15,000 muzzle-loaders were recovered from Warangal Suba alone which covers four districts. These were later distributed among the Razakars some of whom are recruited into the so-called Civic Guards maintained at State expense in all district and taluk headquarters and other towns on a remuneration of Rs. 2 per diem plus other allow-

ances. Military training camps were established in different centres like Hyderabad, Gulbarga, Bidar, Aurangabad and Warangal and the number of volunteers trained in these camps is reported to be about 6,000. Two officers of the Pakistan Army were brought over for supervising the military training given to the volunteers by local military and police officers. The fact that Mr. Gulam Mohammad, the Pakistan Finance Minister who negotiated the loan of Rs. 20 crores during his visit to Hyderabad in December last, attended different rallies of Razakars and took the salute is of significant interest, especially in view of the fact that he avoided other public contacts though he is very well known in Hyderabad. In spite of the much complained of economic blockade of Hyderabad by the neighbouring provinces, materials for manufacture of arms and ammunition have been smuggled into the State and sufficiently large

quantities of them are being manufactured under the supervision of experts brought from outside, especially Muslim ex-army and ordnance employees from Jubbalpore, etc. These facts are open secrets in Hyderabad and nobody in the State believes the disclaimers issued by the Government.

In their reply to the Union Government, the Hyderabad Government indirectly admitted that the Razakars are an auxiliary force which became necessary, and is being used to combat the Communist activities and the other so-called "border incidents." This admission proves that the Government has let loose on the country armed gangs of fanatic Muslims fed and daily nurtured on the venom of communal and political hatred. Apart from the patent absurdity of the excuse, not a single report has ever been received of any raid of the Razakars where they have been able to capture Communist workers or their resistance squads or to kill them. On the other hand, all reports, and hundreds of statements by witnesses and victims, prove that their raids involving arson, loot, murder and rape, were sheer acts of naked vandalism perpetrated on the common villagers. It is true that sometimes they have selected their victims by limiting their atrocities to the persons and properties of those whom they suspected, rightly or wrongly, of Communist or Congress sympathies; but in a large majority of cases, they raided and looted villages indiscriminately. According to a fortnightly report, between March 1 and March 15, accompanied by the armed police and also military personnel sometimes,

they looted property estimated at Rs. 92,20,500, set fire to 2,406 houses, killed 214 persons and raped 8 women. Making all allowances for exaggeration or inaccuracy, I am sure even the Government of Hyderabad cannot deny the substance of truth in these reports. Can any civilized Government tolerate and justify this method of counteracting of suppressing Communist or Congress subversive activities? Is Communist activity which is sporadic and limited, to be suppressed by letting loose communalist vandalism of such a wholesale character, on an entirely disarmed people? Where is the security of life and property and how far can it be said that the Hyderabad Government has been performing its elementary duty? Hundreds of burnt villages and human victims of arson and loot speak for themselves. There is no Government worth the name in Hyderabad and certainly none that has any right to the allegiance of the people of the State.

In view of all this, and the highly vituperative and bellicose utterances of Razvi, the unofficial exponent of Hyderabad's militant ambitions, another crisis has arisen which needs to be handled firmly and with promptness. Any delay in putting down this dangerous communal Fascism in Hyderabad with its definite Pakistani alignments and with its ambition of getting "the feet of the Nizam washed by the waves of the Bay of Bengal," will spell ruin for the peace of the whole of India. Will the Central Government give up their present attitude of hesitancy, and take appropriate action?

Three American physicians have found a way to preserve flowers in their natural form, color and texture—but without fragrance—virtually forever. The process, based on a secret formula discovered accidentally, requires dipping the flower in three solutions. They can be used also to preserve microscopic tissue and specimens ordinarily kept in alcohol solutions.

In the three-step process, which makes flowers impervious to heat, cold, or time, the first solution dehydrates the flower; the second fixes the cells and prevents bacterial decay; the third gives the flower a permanent chemical balance. The flowers which they have preserved—including a few 19 years old—were displayed at the 32nd International Flower Show in New York City recently. The solutions have been placed on sale in department stores.—U.S.I.S.

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FUTURE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA

by "VISVAM"

THE importance of scientific and industrial research in Free India is continuously stressed by our Ministers, and others responsible for the development of science and technology, but one really wonders whether any serious attempt is being made to remove some of the glaring defects in our system of scientific as well as technological education and research. We are told day in and day out that the real bottleneck in our rapid progress of industrialisation is the lack of trained technical personnel. But how can we have suitable personnel, with the necessary initiative and drive to carry on fruitful research and planned development of industries, so long as brilliant science graduates drift to administrative and other non-scientific careers which are more attractive as far as emoluments and security of service are concerned?

It is a well known fact that many first class science graduates, just out of the universities, prefer the All-India competitive examination to entering a research laboratory or a post-graduate technical institution. Even those who take up scientific research out of interest in science, give up the line in one or two years when they get the first opportunity to do so. The reason for this is simple economics; by passing a competitive examination a young man of twenty-five starts his life on a decent pay of about Rs. 300, whereas a scientist with five or six years of post-graduate research experience will be lucky indeed if he gets a job on Rs. 200. The tragic plight of some research workers in Indian universities and big post-graduate institutions carrying on their research work with a pitifully low stipend of 50 or 60 rupees is almost unnoticed by the responsible men who direct research in these institutions.

Till now in India only those young men who could not get into the All-India Government Services have taken to scientific careers, and the result has been that, on the whole only mediocre work is being turned out by our laboratories, of course with a few exceptions. Research needs men with brain and energy, and these men cannot be expected to sacrifice material benefits for all time. Hopes have been held out that in free India men with training in research and technology will have a fair deal, but it is still to be seen whether our leaders really mean what they say; and if they really mean so, whether they are determined to carry out their plans.

If science and technology are to progress in our country let scientific and technical careers be made as decent as other Government services; let not scientists depend only on capitalists and industrialists for an honourable living. Then it will surely happen that a scientist will give out his best to the nation. In foreign countries, especially U.S.A., England and Germany, brilliant men enter the scientific profession, not only out of interest and love for science, not only because they feel proud they are doing a great service to their country, but also because the Government as well as the public give them proper encouragement and see to it that the status of a scientist or an engineer is in no way inferior to that of an administrative or other Government officer.

One other aspect that needs emphasis is the standard of technical education in our country. During World War II and after that, a number of engineering colleges, technological institutes and polytechnics have been started all over India, in many cases without proper buildings, without qualified teachers and without even the minimum equipment necessary for

practical work. Men who have been and are now behind these plans of expansion, seem to think that they have done a grand service by opening these institutions, whereas in reality they have not been fair to the students, to the profession and to Indian industries in doing so. In Madras Province, the Ministry has gone a step further, restricting the admission of talented young men to these institutions by introducing communal considerations in the selection of candidates. Instructors in professional colleges are appointed, not on the basis of their ability and merit but on other considerations. All these will eventually result in turning out every

year technical graduates who will be of little use for the important and onerous task they are expected to carry out.

Communalism, favouritism and provincialism in scientific education and research have already lowered the level of thinking of our scientists. If India is to make rapid headway in science and technology, the standard of education in technical institutions should be raised, the ban on talent in the matter of admission to professional colleges and institutions should be removed forthwith, and finally the Government must raise the status and dignity of the profession of science.

THE MEN OF CHEPAUK

by N.S.R.

IT is a matter for surprise that no student of humanity has so far so much as attempted a study of the humours and prejudices of that portion of mankind which frequents Chepauk. Among the many definitions of the human being that have been delivered from ancient times, his capacity and willingness to watch cricket matches and thereby express himself have not received proper attention. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating theme. As the recent fixture in which Holkar trounced Madras afforded little that was of technical interest, I was enabled to observe closely the numerous spectators who had braved the sun in the expectation of entertainment.

A scholar will perhaps divide cricket spectators in Madras into four sections. No attention need be paid to the least interesting of them, composed of those who, by an instinct of gregariousness, assemble where a crowd collects. Their ignorance of the rules of the game is equalled only by the effrontery with which they presume to lay down the law in spheres where Chester and Hardstaff will hesitate before committing themselves. I once heard two wretched beings of this species argue with fanaticism

in their eyes and battle in their minds whether or not a batsman can be rendered run out from a no-ball!

It cannot be laid to the charge of the second group that they know nothing of the game. But they, who form by far the largest section of most audiences, frankly crave for excitement. They are not satisfied until a batsman hits boundaries or until wickets tumble; they are in ecstasies of delight when a sixer climbs the sky. This feverishness precludes them from enjoyment of the finer aspects of the game, which indeed is not a tournament of excitement. Cricket perhaps more than any other outdoor game needs a scholarly and disciplined mind for it to be enjoyed. It is the most aesthetic of all pastimes. To seek to introduce into it irrelevant violence, is to cause grave injury to it. Its periods of emotion are few and far between. Consequently, it appears that spectators of this bent of mind are out of place in a cricket match.

The third species of spectators is to be found in men who have the instinct of cricket in them. They like the game because, like it, they themselves are quiet and reserved, with an innate capacity to rise to

heights when required. They do not seek to relieve their feelings by raucous exhortations to "hit out or get out"; they realise that there is as much art in a single as in most fours. They have an eye as much for the quiet beauty of the setting as for the players. They realise that as cricket is a manifestation of man, much more than a mere contest of skill can be perceived in a match. They are aware that it is its humanity which endears it to them. As can be easily believed, they bulk but little in any representative crowd.

But the most interesting group of all consists of the boys. There is little need here to go into sentimental raptures over the possible existence of a Gopalan or a Rangachari among them. It is possible that they enjoy the games most. Everyone must have met at least one urchin, who was a walking encyclopaedia of facts and figures. One finds him with pencil gravely poised over a ragged sheet of paper, meticulously working out the score of the match for all the world as if he were Ferguson himself. He looks important, as many of the Philistines nearby depend on him for their instruction. How sarcastically he corrects the mistakes of these! With what a squeal of delight does he add a four to the score of his favourite batsman! To watch him is to recover one's faith in humanity.

There is an obverse to this. Nothing can be more sorrowful in a cricket ground than the large

collection of boys left outside because of their inability to pay the admission fees. It appears cruel to restrict the pleasures of the game only to those who can pay their way. Some indeed attempt to circumvent their poverty by clambering up trees to obtain a view of the game. This, however, is an uneasy existence, what with mounted policemen hovering round and the unfortunate tendency of branches to break down. There can be little doubt that almost all crowds sympathise with those ragamuffins; there is always a cheer of delight as a boy contrives to scale the red walls and attain the paradise. The eagerness with which they protect the technical intruder from the clutches of the unnecessary policeman demonstrates much more than the most frenzied dialectics of philosophers the innate goodness of man.

Over a decade of assiduous attendance at Chepauk, I have found many of these boys infallible on all points of the game, technical, biographical, or even scandalous.

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REDISCOVERY OF LOST LITERATURE

by V. SUBRAMANIAN

LITERARY fame like honour is of three kinds. Some books are famous for the instant and forgotten thereafter. Some are forgotten for the instant, but secure immortality later. Others enjoy both instantaneous popularity and immortality as well. But there is a fourth kind of phenomenon, where literature which is famous and well read for a time is forgotten completely for various reasons, to be rediscovered later and read with greater avidity. This rediscovery of lost literature generally takes place during a period of renaissance. The history of such rediscoveries makes interesting reading.

The renaissance and reformation in Europe after the dark ages was due to and heralded by the rediscovery of Greek literature and science. That it was not a sudden phenomenon beginning with the fall of Constantinople, is now well-known. In fact Greek scholars had been slowly going from the Eastern Roman Empire into European countries, spreading the knowledge of Greek literature and science. The despotic power of the Church had been slowly crumbling after the 'schism' and men's minds were prepared for a renaissance. Even during the dark ages, men like Copernicus with free minds and new ideas had been expressing themselves in hidden language or concealed their books. The period of renaissance is one of the brightest periods in European history, and the number of illustrious figures it produced in art, literature and religion, like Michael Angelo, Leonardo Vinci, Erasmus, etc., is still unmatched even today. It also marks the beginning of European dominance in the world, in all spheres.

Sanskrit classical literature has been twice rediscovered in Indian history. After the conquests and

depredations of barbarian Turks, Sanskrit was forgotten for long. The famous universities and libraries of Nalanda, Taxila, and the Vihars of Bihar had been burnt and pillaged by the Central Asian hordes, who outdid the Arabs who burnt down only the library of Alexandria. Under the cruel regimes of the Ghoris, Khiljis and Tuglaqs, all learning languished. But the benign rule of Akbar gave a fillip to Sanskrit learning and literature. The Mahabharatha and Ramayana were translated into Persian. Sanskrit poets like Jagannatha Pandit became famous. Darashukoh made the first translation of the Upanishads into Persian. All this was reversed under Aurangazeb, who by his campaign of temple destruction, destroyed the very roots of his empire. But the Hindu renaissance, which began under Durgadas, Chatrasal, Guru Gobind Singh and Chatrapati Shivaji, was a military renaissance mainly and it had little time, after breaking down the Muslim power, to consolidate and reconstruct. It was thus left to the foreigners who came by then into India, to rediscover the treasures of Sanskrit. The work which began under Warren Hastings has been continued unabated by a host of scholars like Jones, Keith, Schopenhauer, Max Muller and Goethe, to mention only a few. This discovery of our priceless treasures by foreigners has been among the most glorious chapters in literary history. The great sympathy felt for India in Europe and America is mainly due not so much to political propaganda as to the propagation of our literary wealth by these foreign scholars as also Indian savants like Vivekananda, Ananda Coomaraswamy and Radhakrishnan.

The stories of the rediscovery of individual works like Thirumantharam, Thevaram or Divya Pra-

bhandam, are also very interesting. When Gnanasambanda was visiting Thiruvaduthurai, he was attracted by a strange fragrance which he traced to the roots of a pipal tree under which he found buried the famous Thirumantharam of Tirumular, the great work on Saivite philosophy. Thevaram, that is, the poems sung by the Nayanars, was also forgotten and almost lost, when it was rediscovered and collected patiently and painstakingly by Nambiandar Nambi. The Divyaprabhandam was also forgotten for a time. When Nathamuni was visiting the shrine of Sarangapani in Kumbakonam, he was attracted by the enthralling beauty of some poems, recited by some pilgrims, and came to know from them that they were composed by Nammalwar. He immediately set about collecting all the poems of the Alvars, from various persons, by ceaseless travel and enquiry, and we have the fruit of his labours in the consolidated composition called Divyaprabhandam, the equal of which in devotional poetry does not exist in the world.

Our own age has also witnessed the rediscovery of Swati Tirunal, of Thyagaraja, and ancient Tamil literature. Initiated by Sir C.P. and carried out by the ceaseless endeavour of Semmangudi and the late Muthia Bhagavathar, the rediscovery of Swati Tirunal has added richly to our musical wealth. Thyagaraja kritis of course have been in continuous vogue for a century, but still, due to various reasons, a large number of his forgotten compositions had been brought to light only recently. Thyagaraja never wrote down his songs, but his students used to be always around him, jotting down,

notationally, all his songs, as he sang them out fresh, in moments of inspiration. They used to compare notes in the evening and thus add to their repertoire. Many of his famous chelas did not have worthy students to transmit the kritis to. Also some students had migrated to the north, carrying away with them certain compositions. For example, the famous kriti "Evvari mata" was one such, brought to light recently. Also some new kritis have been discovered in the house of Venkataramana Bhagavathar in Walajapet recently. The work of collecting and editing them is not yet over.

As in the case of Sanskrit literature, ancient Tamil literature also was first rediscovered by foreign scholars like Father Beschi, Bishop Caldwell and Rev. G. W. Pope. The work was continued ceaselessly by Tamil scholars later, like Sundaram Pillai, Kanakasabai Pillai and M. Raghaviengar, etc. But the greatest work in the field has been done by that tireless scholar U. V. Swaminathier who never counted cost or trouble in his task of rediscovering Tamil works. We owe to him the discovery of such ancient classics as Jeevaka Chintamani, Silappadikaram, etc., works as old as 2,500 years and more. There are few similar examples in the literary history of any country, where one man has turned out such a tremendous volume of literary work, single-handed.

Literary rediscovery is not a simple post-mortem operation. It is as interesting and engrossing to the pursuer as scientific research. It is as fruitful in moral regeneration as science in material regeneration, for a nation that has forgotten its past literature has lost its soul.



A new machine which not only prints but dries, finishes and cuts photo reproductions has been developed by the Eastman Kodak Company of Rochester New York. It is the first machine to do all reproduction processes automatically, and it works at a speed of 2,400 prints per hour.—U.S.I.S.

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.

Great, But Not The Greatest

Dr. Kunhan Raja's comments on my contribution to your paper are unfair—not to use a stronger expression. I never denied the greatness of Sanskrit literature. I stated in so many words that it takes high rank among the literatures of the world and that its output is rich and varied. I only questioned the statement that it is the greatest literature of the world. His contribution to the issue of your paper dated 10th April attempts to make out that I denied the greatness of Sanskrit literature! Similarly, with reference to my article "Culture be damned" his comments imply that I condemned the entire past which is obviously untrue. In fact he misses the whole point of my article.

It has been well said that "two classes of persons entertain the most exalted notions of the Vedas; those who know nothing of them and those who know nothing else". Apparently, Dr. Kunhan Raja belongs to the latter category and is living in cloud-cuckoo land. How else are we to account for his fantastic views on "Religious instruction in schools and colleges" in the issue of Swatantra dated 6th March? In his latest outburst, he quotes with gusto the views of Governors and Vice-Chancellors who have advocated Sanskrit as the common language for India! If Governors and Vice-Chancellors happen occasionally to talk nonsense it does not become sense. And Dr. Kunhan Raja claims to be modern! Well, well, he should stick to his Sanskrit and let the world move on.

C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN.

Madras Harbour Extension

The question whether the extension of the Madras Harbour should take place towards the North or towards the South has assumed great importance. The public of Madras, the Madras Corporation and the Madras Government have good reason to support the extension to the North. Already the Madras Port Trust got hold of a large area of the shore under pretence of building goods sheds and ware-houses for incoming and outgoing traffic, and the moment they got possession of the land they built palatial quarters for their officers. It would be most

unwise for any more land on the fore-shore to be transferred to the Port Trust. The cost of digging a ship channel is certainly much more where there is an accretion of sand in the South, than in the North where there is a sheet of water. It passes one's comprehension why the technical experts should consider extension to the North more expensive. The citizens of Madras cannot lose the benefit of the beach as it is most essential for their health. Neither is it advisable to spoil the view from the historic Fort and the Government Offices.

It is not at all clear why the Madras Port Trust authorities should be so anxious to spend money on extension. There is no appearance of improvement of trade. There is bound to be a remarkable decline in the traffic handled at Madras. It would be a waste of public money if any schemes of extension are taken up now. After increasing the Port charges by 50 per cent during the last two years, it is very ungraceful for the Port Trust authorities to incur more debts for a scheme to deal with the expansion of trade. The erosion to the north of the harbour was due to the building of the harbour and it has become a great problem to keep the land safe. It is therefore the duty of the Harbour authorities to prevent further erosion by extension of the harbour to the north.

C. RANGANAYECULU CHETTY.

Ministers' Tours

There is not a day on which one cannot read in the papers about the "tours" of the Ministers. One wonders whether they have not work at the headquarters. The presumable reason for the tours can be that the Ministers, having the good of the people at heart, and being particularly interested in the welfare of "masses", want to study the situation personally, and be in contact with the people. But then, why are there representatives of the people from different constituencies? In a true system of democracy, it is the constituency representative who should understand the needs of the people of the locality and should represent them to the Ministry through Parliament. Then there are the permanent officials and inspectors to make local inquiries and to inform the

Ministers of the actual facts and the true situation. The Ministers, through such tours, comparable to the procession of the imperial Moghuls, are taking upon themselves the duties of the peoples' representatives from the constituencies and of the permanent officials. The constituency representative must represent the needs of the constituency and the Ministers should remain at the headquarters and study the problems and think out policies. The present arrangement is a denial of the true principles of democracy and a reversion to the old days when the rulers heard petitions from the people, who had no accredited representative in the Government.

SARASWATI.

(ii)

Why is it that none of our Tamilian Ministers tour the Andhra districts, unlike the Telugu Ministers who are very fond of visiting Tamilnad?

K. L. N. RAO.

Ongole.

Dissolution—The Only Remedy

Dr. P. Subbaroyan's resignation from the Omandur Cabinet is just like the relinquishment of titles by those who were in league with the British in the days of struggle for freedom. The Premier's interference with his portfolios was not the main reason that led to his resignation; his resignation is only the price he had to pay for the game he played at the time of the election of the leader of the Congress Legislature Party.

Unless the present legislature is dissolved we cannot expect a change in the character of our Government. We cannot have decent standards of administration. Leadership will continue to be conferred on communal and provincial considerations rather than on considerations of character, ability and culture.

K. S. SUBRAHMANYAM.
Rajahmundry.

Premier's Assurance To Services

It is very refreshing to read the official communique issued during this week by the Hon. Sri O. P. Ramaswamy Reddiar, Premier of Madras, giving an assurance to the officers of the Madras Government that their interests will be protected if they acted in good faith and with honesty despite local political influence. The officials of the Province will certainly take it with a sigh of great relief. This bold statement of the Premier bespeaks his sagacity for

honest and orderly administration and capacity to be bold under trying and nauseating circumstances. The public expects him to put his own colleagues and their close adherents in the districts to the practice of this wholesome precept.

B. RAMACHANDRA REDDI, C.B.E.,
President, Madras Chamber of
Agriculture.

A Tale Of Two Processions

Nowadays to keep the employed men in employment is becoming more difficult than solving the unemployment problem. Recently in Mount Road it was an amusing sight to see a procession of workers—strike-cum-locked-out labour—with Red banners of sickle and hammer, going in a direction opposite that of another procession of unemployed ex-servicemen returning in vain from the Employment Exchange. On enquiry the members of the latter procession said they would be satisfied if only they get half as much as the strikers were getting!

T. S. RAO, B.Sc.

Belated Wisdom

In a recent broadcast Mr. Jinnah exhorts his co-religionists not to become victims of a narrow provincial spirit in the interests of the greater glory and advancement of their newly-established homeland lest Pakistan should disintegrate thereby.

What an unique role would the Governor-General of Pakistan have played in Indian public life and how well and effectively would he have contributed to the development of India as a powerful and prosperous nation if he had adopted the attitude which he now enjoins on his followers before the partition!

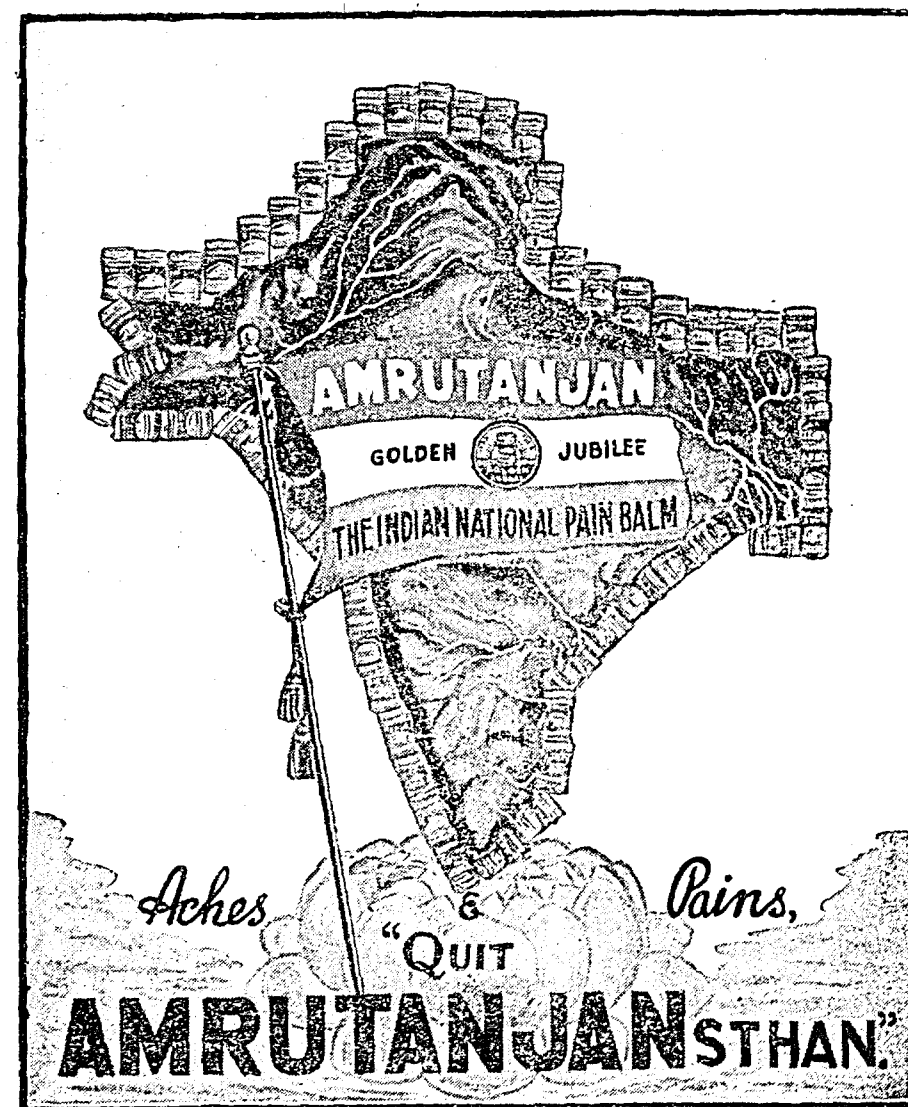
K. SATYANANDA RAO.
Amalapuram.

Triumph For Vested Interests

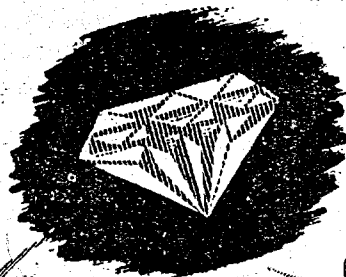
Your candid comments on the Madras Ministry are highly commendable. The defeat of Mr. T. Prakasam in the Madras Legislature Congress Party election is a defeat for the common man and a success to certain vested interests. It is revealed by the statement of Mr. Vaidyanatha Iyer that Mr. Kamaraj Nadar is all in all a Premier-maker. It is high time that Congressmen deviated from power politics and diverted their attention to carrying out the lofty ideals of the Congress.

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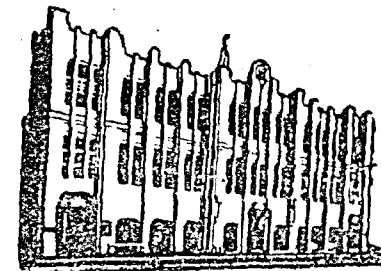
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SWATANTRA

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SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 1948.

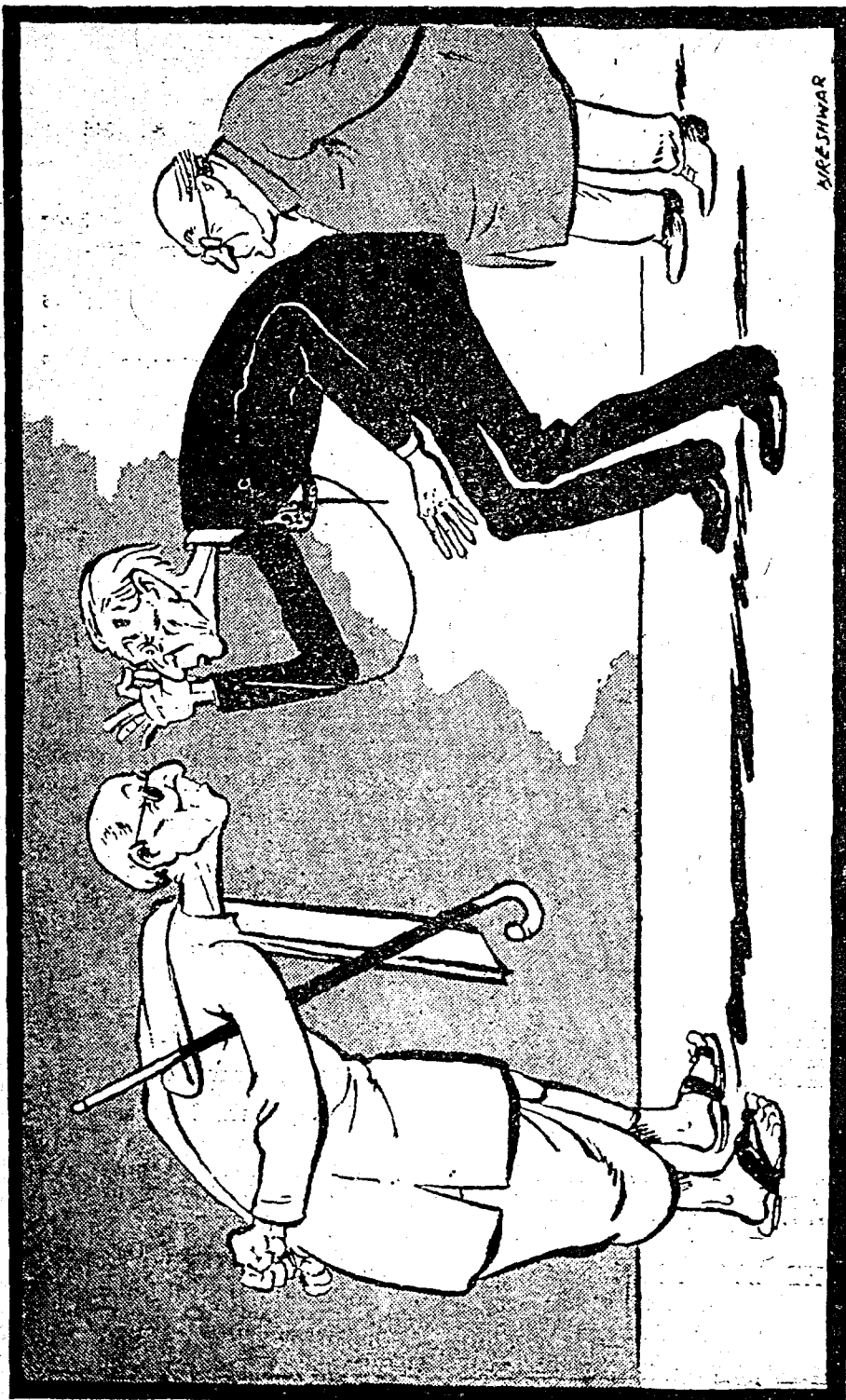
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—Courtesy National Herald.
It is reported that Mr. C. Rajagopalachari may succeed Lord Mountbatten.

SWATANTRA

VOL. III.
No. 11

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 1948

ISSUED
WEEKLY

CIVIL LIBERTIES

A CORRESPONDENT whose letter we publish in this issue wants to know what *Swatantra* thinks of Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan's indictment of the Communist Party as a party of unpatriotic fifth columnists. Our view is that inter-party judgments are not to be taken too seriously. They are generally coloured by other considerations than regard for objective truth. Socialists and Communists happen both to be competitors for the goodwill and support of the working class. In this competition the Communists have achieved more gratifying results than the Socialists. Of all the political parties in India, the Communist Party has proved itself most capable in winning the confidence of the working class. This is because Communist workers were not content to make their espousal of labour a mere matter of decorative advertisement with platform oratory. They threw themselves heart and soul into a study of the problems of the workers, lived with them and gave continual toil towards improvement of their economic condition and organisational strength. With adult suffrage in the offing, the Communists bid fair to become potentially the most powerful political party in the country. Their nervous rivals have taken to damning them with strong condemnatory denunciation so as to prejudice their prospects at the next elections. The Socialists have for the Communists all the ill-will of a new aspirant to power towards a more securely established rival.

Congress leaders likewise find it hard to forgive the Communists because they find in them a formidable party which they fear might supplant them sooner or later in popular favour and in the administration.

The charge of fifth column activity levelled against the Communists has to be examined in the general perspective of world affairs. Every Communist party outside Russia is nowadays charged with being a fifth column of the Russian Government. But the accusers are not apostles of absolute, self-contained cent per cent national sovereignty for the countries concerned, for this type of sovereignty obtains (outside U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.) nowhere in the modern world. Some form of dependence on an external source of supply is admitted to be inevitable in the conditions left by the war by the most vigorous of the anti-Communist critics. It is not to dependence as such that they object, but to dependence on Russia. They would like to see Russia replaced by U.S.A. as the source and centre of influence and support. They have no objection to a fifth column of the U.S.A. being set up in other countries. Their charge against the Communist parties boils down to displeasure at their refusing to be used as tools for expansion of U.S. power and influence.

It cannot of course be denied that Russian influence has on several occasions in the recent past pitch-

forked the Communist Party of India into overnight shifts of policy that have left the public puzzled and confused. Such shifts of policy have gravely hurt the leadership of the party and invested it with a certain unsteady character. But it is not the Communist Party alone that is to be blamed for this sort of unsteadiness. In the matter of impairing national sovereignty with totally unnecessary tributes to external authorities, the record of the Congress has been, for example, a singularly dismal one. We are elated if the world outside pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi, and in the case of Communist attachment to Russia, there is at least the inspiration of a comparable figure, Lenin, to explain and justify it. But what is there to account for the reluctance of Congress leaders to get out of Britain's leading strings, their still continuing dependence on a British Governor-General? Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan might not have been far wrong if, along with denouncing the Communists as a fifth column of Russia, he had charged Congress leaders also with having converted themselves into a fifth column of Britain after Mahatma Gandhi had won freedom for the country by getting the British to quit.

Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan's indictment of the Communist Party as unpatriotic raises the need for some intelligent examination of the content of patriotism. It is very obvious that there is no fixed code of conduct definable as patriotic for all time. The programmes of patriots have to change as circumstances change. In the pre-freedom days, the test of patriotism was anti-imperialist action with all the grit and sacrifice and daring that it entailed. The Communist Party has no reason to be ashamed of its contribution to the success of the anti-imperialist struggle in India. After the advent of freedom, the utilisation of the opportunities of

freedom so as to make them accessible to all, eliminating none, has become the national objective. With the new objective a new standard of patriotism is called for.

In dependent India, supporters of imperial power were the real enemies of the country. In free India some of these enemies have blossomed into power and importance wearing the badges of the Congress. Attainment of power is not therefore any axiomatic test of leadership entitled to respect and loyalty in the new dispensation. Real guardianship of freedom lies in ensuring equality of citizenship for all. The right of citizenship includes civil liberties and protection against discrimination in all matters lying within the purview of State guidance and control. Whoever interferes with civil liberties and violates equality of citizenship rights with discriminatory devices like communalism is, in the present context of affairs, unpatriotic, and the fact that he is Minister or head of a province does not invest him with a different character.

In Madras, at any rate, State power has gone into wrong hands. Our present set of rulers have shown themselves bankrupt in promoting public welfare. Mass starvation is on the increase. No effective plans have been put forward to tackle unemployment. Textile production has virtually collapsed, as the result of a three-month-old strike involving some 40 thousand workers that threatens to go on indefinitely. Even the elementary duty of providing drinking water has been shirked. Corruption and blackmarketing are rampant everywhere. The freedom that is supposed to have come has brought no buoyancy of spirit to the famished and hard-stricken people. They are being driven to desperation with disillusionment and frustrated hopes. Our administrators have

miserably failed to justify themselves in power, though there has been no lack of modern descendants of *Vandi Magadhis* to see imaginary lustre in their regime and sing its glories in resounding plaudits.

Having failed in the primary function of a free Government, that of feeding, clothing and housing the people, the present leadership has been seeking to cover the shame of its bankruptcy under a screen of communal passion. Instead of seeking to unite the people, it has divided them most efficiently. It has become a disintegrating force applying common State assets to sectarian ends. A regime like this does not deserve to survive and it is the duty of patriotic citizens to strive for its replacement by a worthier one. The Communists were in the vanguard of a necessary Opposition to achieve

such a replacement. We regret their suppression for the gap it creates in the ranks of the critical forces bent on forcing the Government into some comprehension of its elementary duties to the people. Also because the Communists are as much entitled to civil liberties as those that have denied them such liberties. The judiciary is the proper authority for awarding punishments to wrong-doers. The executive can no doubt arm itself with special powers on emergencies, but the executive will itself become a wrong-doer if it proceeds to make use of such powers for party or other selfish ends. Animus and party passion have greatly spoiled the present offensive against Communists. In such a case the pendulum of public sympathy is bound to swing indubitably to the side of the persecuted party.

Sotto Voce

Dragon's Teeth



YOUNGER sons of the British ruling class have traditionally looked to one of three professions for a career—diplomacy, the army and the church. It often happens that the man who begins with a preference for the last discovers before he is half way through his preparation for that career that he is not cut out for it. More rarely, a man whom his parents would like to see in the army discovers a marked vocation for the church. But as a rule young men from well to do families are regarded as equally eligible for the practice of all the three professions. Whether colonels on half-pay and retired ambassadors make good preachers and pastors is more

than doubtful. But history teems with examples of fighting prelates and ruling ecclesiastics.

It is not therefore surprising that a Church of England Commission set up to define the Church's attitude towards the atom bomb has come to very statesman-like conclusions on the subject. The commission points out that "if a nation begins hostilities against another by launching an attack with atomic weapons the only hope of effective defence would be in bringing overwhelming force to bear upon the enemy immediately". Therefore, it adds with engaging ingenuousness, "it seems that the use of atomic weapons

would be genuinely necessary". And then, obviously gaining confidence from this preliminary canter, it goes on at a gallop to assert that "whatever damage and casualties were inflicted in so doing could be rightly regarded as incidental to self-defence". So that is that.

The problem of determining the aggressor is thus disposed of with the happy casualness of men whose eyes are ever fixed on the distant peak. Aggression would arise "if one nation began hostilities against another by launching an attack with atomic weapons". Apparently an attack begun with meaner weapons would not constitute an attack at all, to justify reprisals with atomic missiles. It seems a sound enough rule—till one remembers that judged by it America in the first instance and her allies at one remove would be declared guilty of aggression in dropping atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

But, of course, the Japanese do not count. Very probably, their innate politeness, combined with the intensive conditioning General MacArthur has been subjecting them to in the sacred cause of democracy might predispose them to enthusiastic agreement with the proposition that the destruction of their cities was not aggression but divine retribution. In any case, as the churchmen may reasonably point out, they are concerned not with the past but with the future. They take their stand on self-defence, a fundamental right. Has not Manu said that it is lawful to kill a cow that threatens to kill you?

The logic of that last proposition might not appeal to the cow. But supposing that that normally placid beast should protest, "Why, that blackguard wanted to hale me to the butcher and I stuck out in self-defence", the unreasonableness of

its attitude becomes at once manifest. The cow is (one sort of) man's predestined food; and it would be simply preposterous for it to claim any natural rights. Similarly the backward races have, by the Providence that has entry to the chancelleries of the West, been allotted to the civilisers as raw material to be fabricated for the greater glory of Mammon.

The pernicky pacifist might object, "But self-protection or no self-protection, atomic defence cannot be organised in an hour. And if every nation must be prepared to employ overwhelming force at a moment's notice it must begin right now building up its pile. It will become a race against time and whoever has the men and the money to build up the largest atomic pile in the shortest time will win in the end". But that is surely nothing new. The church has always safeguarded the prestige of Providence by declaring that God is on the side of the big battalions. It will not let Him down now.

There is only one flaw in the ecclesiastical argument. In any future war the big battalions will be much more evenly balanced. The atom bomb like death is a great leveller. If Colombia should happen to get hold of a score or two of A calibre bombs and plant them fair and square on the dozen principal cities of, say, Britain or even America before you can say bo to a goose, that might be the end, if not of the countries attacked, at any rate of their capacity for the nonce to organise "overwhelming force". Midget powers, it is true, may not be able to build up their own atomic piles. But there will be always obliging big brothers who would love to do good by stealth. The one force that may overwhelm everybody in the end, the churches not excluded, is the wrath of God.

VIGNESWARA

"As a Marxist, Mr. Shinwell . . . has probably more affinities with Groucho than with Karl. His dialogue is more arresting than his dialectics."—News Chronicle.

SIDELIGHTS:

Heaven and earth fight in vain against a dunce.—Schiller.

AFTER collecting several lakhs of share money from the public, buying a fine building, installing machinery, laying by a good stock of newsprint, and paying, over a period of a year, several thousands monthly by way of salaries for an elaborate staff, the directors of an Andhra company have abandoned the idea of starting an English daily newspaper which was the object with which the company was formed, and decided, it would appear, to hand over the building, plant, stock and all the property to a rich zamindar to be used by him for the running of a job press! For an example of so much labour ending in such little achievement, one might search the whole world in vain.

Here was everything needed for the promised undertaking—men, material, goodwill, a public avid with expectation and a ready market in the heightened atmosphere of regionalism capable, in the present instance, of being put to very profitable commercial use. For it had been widely advertised that the company had no tinsel aim of merely making money; that its intentions were in the highest degree patriotic; that it would not rest until the sore need of the Andhras for an English daily newspaper of their own was fully met. On this card of giving the Andhras "an English daily newspaper of their own," the promoters of the company obtained their permit from the Government—for, when they started, which was three years ago, a permit was necessary for the starting of a paper. On it they collected their share capital. On it they looked forward to build a good circulation to start with.

It is a doubtful proposition whether the public that buys newspapers spends any thought on the community of the proprietor at the time of its paying for them. The

best paper is bought by the largest number of people irrespective of communal considerations. But the prospects of initial encouragement for any new Madras English daily would seem to be less bright in the Tamil area than in the rest of the Presidency. The bulk of the English newspaper-reading public of Tamil Nadu is traditionally devoted to *The Hindu*. Tamil people do not change their loyalties lightly. Other dailies can only hope for a secondary position with Tamil readers whose primary attachment would appear to be unshakably pledged to *The Hindu*, with no prospect of disturbance in the near future. The Andhras, on the contrary, have an unflagging sense of grievance with the established conditions of the newspaper world. The smart of a deep discontent over being mulcted of their proper share of publicity as also of other good things of life by the manoeuvres of efficient outsiders, makes them hospitable to new enterprises without too much insistence on quality. Andhra indulgence is capable of rising in tidal waves to help out of the tough struggles of competition any paper likely at the moment to give full ventilation to the prevailing mood of resentful, rebellious regionalism.

With so many propitious factors, with men, material, equipment all ready, above all with a veteran editor, a reputed all-rounder in his profession, laid under long contract, it looked as if only a button had to be pressed for the work to get started and the paper to come out. That a different, unexpected result has been produced is due solely to the fact that the wrong people were at the helm. The directors could not agree among themselves over any matter. Each was more concerned about his own share of power than the welfare of the institution. The office became a field of warfare between belligerents. I trace all the trouble that has ensued to the initial blunder of allowing a printer with no knowledge of journalism licensed

entry under State permit into a profession for which he was not in the least qualified. The one official who had more to do with this blunder than any other was Sir S. V. Ramamurthi who at the time was one of the Advisers of the Government.

Along with the painter in question I too was then an applicant for a permit to start an English daily. In an interview with Sir S. V. I said that, being an applicant, I could not ask him to decide in my favour against other applicants. But I was entitled to demand that none less familiar with journalism should be preferred. I said that over a period of twenty years I had been, in this province, the editor of practically every English daily of acceptable views of which the editorship was open to a non-proprietor. Government, I argued, could give their permit to anyone with a larger experience, but not to a painter or carpenter or any other adventurer from another field.

Sir S. V. Ramamurthi did not use his power properly. In those days a permit provided a valuable momentum for the starting of a newspaper. Two permits for the starting of English dailies were given in Madras, and both of them went to wrong persons that have proved

totally unequal to the task undertaken by them. The public suffer and are deprived of their money for nothing by adepts in sharp practice when officials in high position act irresponsibly.

"Chandralekha" brings on the screen the greatest common multiple of appeal to all tastes by way of entertainment—that is why there is so much of gate-crashing by huge crowds day after day to see the picture. A little of original primitiveness survives in all of us through all later-day sophistications. It is exemplified in the universal responsiveness of people to such things as dance, song, the circus and a good fight. These things constitute the secret of mass appeal. Sri Vasani has taken them on hand and strung them into a great picture. There is expert mastery of mass psychology in the eschewal of the subtle and the refined in favour of the elemental. Refinement is brought into play, however, in technique, in thoroughness of attention to detail and in lavish spending over gorgeous settings. No expense has been spared in the attainment of technical perfection. The excellence of the picture consists in its combination of universality of appeal in subject matter with artistic execution of high quality so as to satisfy the most fastidious tastes.—**SAKA.**

"On one occasion Dr. Butler (former Master of Trinity) wrote to Sir Robert Scott, addressing his envelope to The Master, St. John's College, next door to Trinity College, Cambridge. Sir Robert was unperturbed. He wrote his reply to The Master, Trinity College, opposite Matthew's the grocers, Cambridge."—G. W. in the Spectator.

"The revealing trivialities which stud its pages are beyond the invention of the novelist; the forger would have eschewed its frequent naiveties as destructive of credibility. No one could have written it but the ass who did."—Edward Shanks on "Ciano's Diary."

"I am sure the army would never succeed in choosing a tank . . . until somebody invented tanks that ate hay and thereafter made noises like a horse."—Sir Arthur Harris in "Bomber Offensive."

"Personally, I dislike everybody who holds Conservative views. I do not like their faces."—Mrs. Braddock, M.P.

"I do not agree with Mrs. Braddock's aesthetic outburst the other day . . . I have always thought that the faces of the Tories were the best things about them."—Robert Lynd in the News Chronicle.

OH FOR A DRAUGHT OF SANITY!

by S. PARTHASARATHY

THOUGH we shudder at the idea of a totalitarian State for India, we are attempting in an increasing degree to regulate the ordinary life of the citizen. What he should read in the schools and colleges; what he should eat and drink; what he should hear through the radio or see in the cinema houses; what he can earn, acquire and hold, how much or how little he should work; what political opinions he should profess and what beliefs he should cherish; are all matters which are being planned for him by the State. No one will be found to say that, in the world of today, the functions of a Government should be confined to the mere exercise of policing powers. There is, for instance, in England today more of totalitarianism than is to be found in any of the other European countries barring Russia. Even the political opponents of the party now in power will be willing to concede that, without such concentration of power in the State, England's chances of economic and moral recovery would be impossible. There is therefore no inherent vice in a totalitarian State and, as things stand in India today, such a State would even seem to be eminently desirable. But there is real and great danger in a totalitarian State should the political power be held by a dictator or by the military or by political cliques or, shortly, by undemocratic organisations.

Can we say that we are having real democracy in the provinces, let alone the Centre? Are our voters capable of intelligently choosing their representatives in the Government? It was easy enough for them to choose the Congressman as against any other party's man: because the Congressman alone stood for freedom. But that distinction no longer exists and the voter has to exercise his choice in the future on some other

basis. I was talking only the other day with a very prominent politician of our province about some of the shortcomings of our Government. He wholeheartedly agreed with me: but, at the next moment, he said in a voice of cool confidence: "Whatever mistakes we make, the Congress is sure to win in the next elections." He was only stating that the cry of 'Gandhi-ki-jai' will retain its magic potency with the masses until then.

The real electorate are therefore not the masses, but the upper four-hundred (perhaps their number is a little more) who constitute the members of the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Provincial Congress Committees. On the rare occasion when there is an election to the legislature, they resort to the use of the magic charm on the masses to see that the candidate of their choice is returned by them. The legislators of their choice form the lower two-hundred and are, again, divided into two main groups, the Tamil Nadu and Andhra. These two groups are in a state of perpetual conflict with each other, and make no attempt to conceal their hostility from the public. The Kerala and Karnataka representatives are a small minority, and they do not have even the tilting value possessed by the now dissolved Rajaji group. Had you an opportunity to play the part of a silent listener to the talk that goes on in our political circles, you will be amazed. The two main groups are again divided into smaller groups under individual leaderships. The worth of a leader is rated according to the number of legislators under his command. Is it impertinent to ask, in the circumstances, whether we are having a democratic Government on party lines or a Government by an uneasy combination of cliques, all trading in the name of the Congress? I know nothing about conditions in other provinces

to say whether they are better or worse. The intelligentsia of the province have no place or voice, being drowned in the masses. The masses themselves lack the discriminatory sense, being uneducated. And, yet, we call ours a popular Government. And, what is more, we propose to introduce the adult franchise. Elections would then be contested on new slogans like 'Vannian vottu anniyanukku kedayathu'. The new Government after the elections, with all their rediscovered love and ardour for the Tamil language (which is only a pose to bar existing and available talent from public services) may decree that medical science should be taught in Tamil. We may then hear the professor tell his students 'Kathi eduthu, vayathai keeri, anavasyathai (appendix) vetti eduthu, noyaliali chigitchai chaiyavum.' The contemplation of what is to come will make even the atheist exclaim 'Oh God, when shall we see sanity in this land!'

Should we, at this juncture, when we are shortly to finalise our constitution, be carried away by high sounding political theories and by looking at the world stage. Any type of Government, which we fancy, cannot be fitted into a nation. The nation has to grow and fit into it. The masses in India

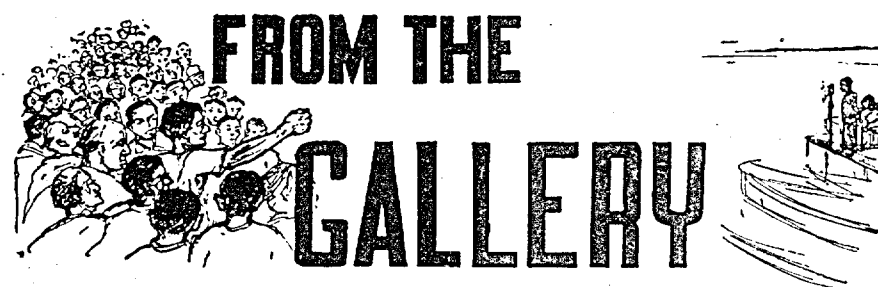
do not want to take part in Government. We know what they have been wanting very badly for a long time. And, it is not the vote. We also know that there is no use asking for their views on the finer points of nationalisation or on the desirability of an alliance with China. On what matters, then, do we propose to seek their vote? If you ask them whether they would prefer to be under the tyranny of the uneducated or the tyranny of the educated, they would prefer the latter. The masses have been exploited for centuries by landlords, corrupt officials, moneylenders, the village rowdy, quacks and confidence tricksters. Do we want to add the politician to the list? Why not leave them in peace until they have attained relief from poverty and ignorance? We must hammer into our politicians' heads, that there is no safety in undiluted democracy in a country where the majority of the people are sunk in ignorance. We run the risk of displacing the intelligentsia of the country from the administration and replacing them by the uneducated and half-educated political adventurers. It is fruitless ambition to seek a proud place among the nations of the world without first tearing off from the faces of our people the veil of ignorance.



"It would be hard to match the egregiousness of the novel 'Forever Amber' in any medium more elevated than Port Said postcards, but the movies have made the try. The film, which has the same name, is tawdry, colourful, and gamy . . . offering us a back-fence interpretation of the Restoration, when, apparently, all males were so feeble-minded that a sudden glance from a female reduced them to gibbering lust. As the heroine of 'Forever Amber,' Linda Darnell is gracefully rounded and doesn't trouble her pretty head about trying to act."—John McCarten in the New Yorker.



"As for the clowns at the Circus, they displayed the same good intentions, the same fleeting pugnacity, the same self-importance, the same inability to see each other's point of view, the same anxiety to help combined with the urge to obstruct as delegates to the assembly of the United Nations"—Peter Fleming in The Spectator.



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

A happier choice than that of Dr. C. R. Reddy could not have been hit upon to argue a poor case, to set up straws only to knock them down in fine style or to make the worse appear the better reason. Dr. Reddy knows how to balance himself with unruffled ease on the edge of a razor. Assuredly politics lost one of its rare Ruperts when it drove him into the insipid security of an academic cloister instead of allowing him to write down the history of his time in political action.

Unveiling the portrait of our Premier, Dr. Reddy had no difficulty in proving him to be a *non-pareil*. Actually however, he unveiled himself much more fascinatingly than he unveiled either democracy as he claimed,—or our Omandur Reddiar as he professed. For Democracy is the Helen-Cleopatra of politics, and nobody can exhaust her glamour. There was so little of the Premier to unveil that, what he did was an act of supererogation.

He romanced about the British Cabinet system, for he made no reference to the principle of collective responsibility which is its sheet-anchor. He reduced it to a dictatorship in practice which of course it is the last thing on earth. He avoided all reference to the tyranny of the party machine which is the logical development of party government. He asserted that Premiers were never unseated by the other ministers or by groups among them without remembering the sad fate of Asquith at the hands of Lloyd George, and of Chamberlain at the hands of Churchill and Co. in the two world wars. He played off the

M. L. A's against the public—tarring both eventually with the same brush as shifty, ignorant and undependable! He deprecated the tours of ministers as superfluous and denounced speeches as an insult to the intelligence of a (mythical) cultured and refined public. All this he had to do because otherwise there would have been no grist to his mill.

It was another instance of talking without the book to claim that British democracy was aristocratic in choice of leadership. It is once aristocratic in label, but now plutocratic in fact and popular through opportunism in effect. The same families have been running the British empire off and on during the last two hundred years. It has been the case too with America since the War of Independence, with this difference that leading political figures in America are associated with its great business and banking houses. At the beginning of this century, Churchill began as a demagogue spouting about the rights of the people. Now he is at the other end of the scale. The fact is that we are new-comers in the field, and so show up the sordidness of the game of politics more nakedly on account of our *inexperience*. In due course, we too are bound to graduate in this art with honours—that is, of course, provided nothing happens to upset the democratic apple-cart throughout the world.

As for the compliments showered on the Premier, most of them are found on analysis to be left-handed. Dr. Reddy was scrupulous in giving the impression of speaking

on the strength of hearsay, for he remarked: "He is by all accounts of a saintly character." It is not a virtue to claim for one's hero that he is silent because he has nothing to say. A reputation for wisdom based on such a claim will not wear for long. To stick to one's opinion is not always a virtue; only the crank and the fanatic stick to theirs for irrelevant reasons of personal prestige. To exalt one minister's character above that of his colleagues is the height of tactlessness, for it implies the others' susceptibility to temptations from which your hero is immune. In which case, the interesting question arises as to how far such incompatibles can work in harmony.

Further still, Dr. Reddy gave the whole show away when he brought in C. R. by way of contrast. The brunt of the charge against Mr. Reddiar is that he is creating new problems for the ministry, both in its internal confidential working and in its relation to the public at large. Democracy is government by discussion, by persuasion, by propaganda and by publicity. Dr. Reddy would sooner give all these basic desiderata the go-bye than admit the inadequacy of Mr. Reddiar to work the cabinet system with competence and understanding and prestige.

The *coup de grace* he delivered was devastating. He said that he must leave the evaluation of the work of Mr. Reddiar as Premier to the Congress High Command. But Mr. Reddiar is the Prime Minister of the province as a whole, and the self-denying ordinance of Dr. Reddy is incomprehensible, except on the basis that he was unwilling to pronounce his verdict because he knew it to be adverse!

The report that the Government of India was getting back control of the old Cantonment portion of Bangalore for security reasons is an indication that the Union Government is beginning to realise the gravity of the Hyderabad question. The Mysore border is contiguous to that of Hyderabad in certain important areas, and it is desirable that these should be sealed off

against future-emergencies. There is also the long-standing rumour that the Hyderabad State is harbouring a pretender to the throne of Mysore on the tortuous ground of a putative succession in the direct line from that original pretender Hyder Ali. If, as reported, the States Department has delivered its ultimatum—a take it or leave it in relation to accession—the Hyderabad question may be deemed on the high road to a satisfactory solution.

The proceedings of the Security Council on Kashmir are also not so damaging to us as was feared at one time. At least our honour is vindicated with the directive to Pakistan that she must take steps to prevent the overflow of the tribesmen into Kashmir territory. All other proposals and recommendations are subsidiary. The Union Government may now withdraw from the Kashmir tangle with grace. But Hyderabad must be sealed up more effectively for that very reason.

The new rule about retired Government servants being prohibited from securing high-paid employment in commercial houses except with the previous consent of the Government is most timely and salutary. The practice is one of the bad, old vestiges of the bad old time; indeed it is still the rule rather than the exception in Britain and America. The corruption of the best, it has been well said, is the worst; and Government servants retire with an amount of experience and prestige which is very great. It is desirable that they should serve the community in honorary capacities; instead they go into business houses to whom they sell their specialised and often confidential information and knowledge for a mess of pottage. So long as the system of government is still largely individualistic, such experiments tend to weaken the State itself, and expose it to the anti-social activities of influential groups. The sooner such a state of things is ended, the better for the country.

GROUNDLING

TOWARDS A GENUINE INDIAN DEMOCRACY

by K. S. VENKATARAMANI

A BRIEF survey of democracy, its achievements and failures, is really necessary to assess at its precise worth the draft constitution of India now before us. Further, the proper appraisal of the primary values on which we have based our political life in the past, in short an estimate of the Indian genius in politics, is even more necessary. Then only we shall be paving the path with insight and vision for the building up of a strong, free, united and progressive India.

The beginnings of Government are almost coeval with the emergence of man from the jungle. The possessive instinct which eventually led to marriage and property was responsible for social order and mutual forbearance in the conflicts of life. Among the varied types of Government that were experimented upon, Democracy gained a clear victory after the French Revolution with its inspiring gospel of justice and equality.

Democracy functions through an elaborate mechanism. The vote is the most potent weapon and vehicle of Democracy. On a proper impersonal and selfless exercise of the vote conceived as a trust, Democracy's achievements depend. Next to the vote, the party system is the dominant feature and it is inevitable because of the tumultuous quantity in votes which Democracy implies and the essential differences in our viewpoints and temperaments. Therefore, the party system exalted discipline of the group, suppressed individuality and promoted greed, corruption and dishonesty. The party system equally vitiated the selection of proper candidates based on character and ability.

Democracy's inspiring ideal, equality and justice, released in flood the imprisoned mind-energy of the masses. This intensive and renaissance process led to the great advance of science which produced the machine age, which in turn with its plenty and chaos side-tracked Democracy into a selfish groove bringing about the unholy union between political and economic power. In this atmosphere, Government by consultation which is of the essence of Democracy became impossible, and dictatorship in Cabinets secretly allied with commerce became the rule. Democracy which vastly

increased, with the help of the machine the virility and productive power of man failed to acquire the ethical, the just and honest mind to distribute this production on an equitable basis to all. This gross maldistribution of wealth led to wholesale corruption and lowered the character of average citizenship. It broke up our life into groups and coteries and vastly excited Nationalism to an unhealthy and predatory extent. So much so, no wonder Democracy bred innumerable wars in the past centuries and two global wars in the present with the prospect of another giant in the active making. Once this kind of deterioration began to set in, Democracy failed to attract the best elements for governance. Greed and self-interest geometrically progressed.

MAKING DEMOCRACY EVIL-PROOF

These failures of Democracy are mainly traceable to (1) the unlimited power and absolute equality given to the vote, (2) the vice and tyranny inherent in the party system, (3) the usual delimitation of constituencies on a territorial basis with one or two seats, which ensured the return to the legislature of the local goonda or the rich man. Further, there is no test for candidates, the equality theory prohibiting the natural law of selection of the best and fittest. Commerce found all these perversions of Democracy beneficial to its growth and exploitation.

For humanity to realise the grand ideals of Democracy, a new type of Government and electoral honesty should be evolved. Indian culture and civilisation based on Dharma and the impersonal idealism of ages is pre-eminently fit to work out this new type. The salient features of this new type are: (1) The party system should go. Good Government requires only one party which comprehends all, and every ideal has only one authentic mode of implementing it. There must be complete freedom in the Assembly to discuss and vote according to each member's conviction. (2) Adult franchise is the correct basis for primary voting but it must not be used directly on a provincial or national scale except for a plebiscite on a definite issue. Adult franchise is by its very nature and quality relevant only for the election of the local or

rural panchayat—say at the rate of one member for every one thousand of the population. Thus we would create an electoral college or constituency of a thousand representative, real voters for every million, who shall intelligently bear the entire national and provincial burden of governance. (3) The Assembly should be based on 2/3 territorial and 1/3 functional constituencies. The territorial constituencies should be plural with not less than five seats. (4) A proper test for candidates should be on the basis of social service, character and ability and non-ownership of property and sanyasin outlook on life.

These vital amendments to the mechanism of Democracy are bound to eliminate the strangle-hold which economic power has gained over the political machine. The selfish tyrannies of the party system must be replaced by the grand conception of Dharma as the basis of politics and Advaita Manobhava should regain its old sovereignty over politics, ushering in Rama Rajya.

INDIAN GENIUS IN POLITICS.

The Indian genius in politics is like the perfume of certain of our own rare flowers. Champak fills the air with cascades of fragrance but the flowers are in modest retirement, one with the leaves in colour and shape.

Before British Raj came, politics in India, like the fence in an orchard, took its modest place as a sentinel on duty and carried out its main function of protecting the soul of Indian culture and civilisation. A true fence is two-dimensional, takes up no lateral space—it is vertical and steel framed and ever vigilant. So politics should levy the least from the honest toil of its citizens. But alas today Democracy involves the sacrifice often in mere negative waste of 20 to 25 per cent at least of our active man-hours. What a state of affairs under the inspiration of the West!

The Indian genius in politics is just the reverse—minimum space for the fence and the maximum for the fruit garden. Our ideals of governance are erected and exalted on the twin bases of plain living and high thinking—consume the minimum, produce the maximum. Work and leisure make for one united symphony of life—work intensely pursued as nishkama karma on selected lines of Dharma and leisure creatively used in meditation as a mode of widening the range of consciousness, self-realisation. The working out of these fundamental ideals of our culture

and philosophy necessarily involves the lightest political scaffolding. Therefore decentralised politics and economics are the breath of our life. Such decentralisation means no weakness either at the top or at the bottom but is vital to carrying out in peace the major objectives of life.

This decentralisation involves the basic recognition of villages or groups of villages as the autonomous immortal base-brick for all superstructure. Politics in India always derived its inspiration from the villages, from the life of the toiling masses.

No constitution of India which fails to recognise this secret of our longevity as a nation can serve India well for a long time. It was the broken and agonised voice of the Indian village after the ruthless second global war that made the proud British "Quit India" with a hand wave of hypocritical generosity.

Gandhiji had an intuitive grasp of the significance of our Indian village in the preservation of the soul of India. At least for his great name's sake to which we pay plenty of verbal homage, we should evolve and adopt a constitution which ennoble the village and makes it the base of the political and economic structure of nascent India. Vivekananda, Dr. Besant and Gandhiji will bless only a constitution of this type which reflects the genius and tradition of India.

THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION.

The draft constitution is a conscientious, scholarly, well-balanced and thoughtful political document which shows a careful study of current democratic language and idiom, India's and the world's political temper and experience for the last 50 years, and attempts to embody such experience as far as possible to the benefit of India. So there is a complete mastery of details, of legal and technical principles, though without a corresponding grasp of the ideals and vital impulses and urges that nourish our life and institutions and ensure their growth in their indigenous mould.

The draft constitution fails signally in translating into political terms the genius of India mirrored in our renaissance struggle through Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Aurobindo-Tilak and Malaviyaji-Dr. Besant-Gandhiji. A true Swaraj constitution of India has not been presented to us in the draft.

The drafting committee is not to be blamed. The real reason is the nature of the Constituent Assembly itself, a Cripps product of infinite imperial

strategy, which lacks the climate, the atmosphere and the basic representative vitalism and inspiration required for great creative work.

As esteemed friend now occupying one of the foremost places in our All-India public life, whom I consider to be the greatest living Indian, writes to me thus with a clarity, insight and candour few can equal: "The draft constitution is based largely on constitutions of other countries....I do not know to what extent the Constituent Assembly would be able to change the draft to bring it in line with Gandhiji's ideas. It is so difficult to go against the current and what is even more difficult to resist, against the accumulating prepossessions and prejudices born out of familiarity with and study of existing systems".

These lines are worth their weight in gold. But the subdued note of tragedy and helplessness therein made me sad the whole day.

As to the draft constitution, its merits are from my point of view:

(1) The courageous emphasis on a provision for the expression of the unitary impulse that underlies the draft constitution. The centre is kept strong and not made helpless, especially at a time when world conditions are so fluid.

I have long been advocating a constitution for India, federal in character or structure but unitary in impulse and achievement. The draft constitution well provides for this.

(2) The residuary power is retained in the centre or the Union Parliament. It is a healthy reservation for unified progress.

(3) The independence of the judiciary is kept up with elaborate safeguards. These chapters are the best both for mastery of details and principles.

(4) The Fundamental rights are enumerated, though more could and should be added based on our Dharma, both justiciable and non-justiciable.

(5) Safeguards for minorities for only ten years. Only reservations and no separate electorates for minorities. I am against all political safeguards for minorities on principle as they spoil the child. But after the partition of India we may give ten years' time for all to assimilate into one body for all civic and political purposes and neutralise the effects of the communal propaganda of 30 years.

(6) Recognition of and provision for States on linguistic and cultural basis.

The demerits or the controversial points in the draft are:

(1) The Union Executive: The provisions, though clear, will not, I fear, work without clash or deadlock. A Central Executive always functions well only through either a powerful President as in U.S.A. or through a Prime Minister as in U.K. A dynamic Prime Minister and a decorous Rajah is our ideal. Here the Union Executive is a cross-fertilisation between U.S.A. and U.K. with naturally more of U.K. into it.

For Indian conditions, I conceive the President or Governor as a moral force and the Prime Minister as the dynamo in action. I read the draft carefully but I am unable to decide the clear orbits of work, power and influence between the President and the Prime Minister. If you wish to make the President all-powerful, go for the U.S.A. model wholesale. If you wish to make the Prime Minister powerful, follow U.K. and make the President a decorated nullity as in France.

But a close copy or blend of either U.S.A. or U.K. will not help us. India requires a daring innovation on the highest levels of political statesmanship taking into account Indian citizenship and its qualities. I firmly believe that an executive irremovable for a term, whose head (Prime Minister) is elected by the whole legislature without party affiliations will be a blessing to India both at the Centre and in the States. Responsible Government will work inefficiently in India benefitting only capitalists, vested interests and audacious and predatory talents.

(2) The scheme of the draft and the order and the mode of evolution of power. The draft begins with the Union. I would reverse the order and begin from the villages, then the State, then the Union as the basic division of political life.

(3) Duration or period of the President and House of People should I think, be three years instead of five.

(4) I plead for a fixed executive and no responsible Government for Indian conditions.

(5) I prefer the alternative proposed by the drafting committee for the Governorship—a panel of four and the President making the selection.

(6) No upper house in the States. It only shallows the flowing stream of life into a swamp which helps Big Business to breed the malarial, anti-social germs. These are devices which defeat Democracy.

One house will do—The House of People or the Legislative Assembly, on the following basis: 60% territorial constituencies, 25% functional constituencies, 15% nominations to rectify the vagaries of election. Territorial constituencies generally return a type different from the functional. Their mutual contact in one floor leads to a healthy cross-fertilisation. Territorial constituencies generally support vested interests and functional constituencies supply the material for high class leadership. But Big Business has striven to cut down functional constituencies in the working of Democracy for obvious reasons.

(7) **Elections and Franchise:** For the unity, safety and progress of India, the distributive system should be adopted throughout India without any option to a State or local body. This must be incorporated in the constitution and not left for subsequent or local legislation. Cumulative voting and proportional representation divide a nation into groups, communities and coteries and give an artificial power to a single vote, entrenching self-interest.

(8) Territorial constituencies should be plural in number, not less than five seats, so that the local goonda or rich man may not lord it over so completely as in the case of the single member constituency.

(9) **Freedom of Religion:** What is given by the left hand is taken away by the right. Section 19(2) really nullifies this freedom. It must go.

(10) Sec. 22 should go. Religious instruction should be included among Fundamental Rights.

(11) For Indian conditions I favour 18 years of age as the basis for adult franchise as against 21 suggested in the draft.

(12) Sec. 83.—Disqualification for membership of Legislature, Union or State: I would add another clause (f) "if he has not already been elected to a panel of suitable candidates for Legislature on the basis of (1) non-ownership of property beyond an optimum minimum, (2) record of constructive work (3) a sanyasin outlook on life with samyabudhi (i.e.) one who can look upon all evenly, which this selection itself by a complete body shall be deemed to recognise and certify".

(13) Distribution of legislative powers: (The Seventh Schedule). It provides for three lists, the Union, the State and concurrent lists. A compact, well-disciplined and progressive federal Government requires only two lists, the Union and the State lists. In the

State list the primary initiative and responsibility shall vest with the State in those subjects. But when the State has totally failed to discharge that responsibility, even if there be no national interest or emergency, the Union must have the power to move and redress the stagnation or chaos. So the State list automatically also becomes the concurrent list.

The provisions of the new Section 226 are courageous and salutary and sound in principle in the interest of good Government. I seek to extend this spirit and power further and fuller till it covers the rational principle that the autonomy of a State can be respected by the federal Centre only so long as the State discharges its duty properly both in the legislative and executive spheres, irrespective of national interest, importance or emergency. The world is slowly moving towards a higher conception of Government, federal in character but unitary in impulse, power and achievement. So a State list is primarily that of the State but the Union shall have a concurrent jurisdiction which emerges on the failure of a State regarding any one item of the list. Executive power always follows in the wake of legislative power.

(14) I prefer India to be described as a "Commonwealth" and not as a "Union" or "Federation". Further, the name "Union"—a Cripps legacy—which the drafting committee approves is wholly untrue either tested by our immediate political past, or by the present, as the committee themselves feel that the proposed "constitution may be federal in structure". The word "Union" psychologically weakens unity by implying a lost sovereignty and puts a premium on State revolt.

BEGIN WITH THE VILLAGE

To sum up I will reverse the main order of the draft constitution. Instead of beginning with the Union let us begin from the villages as the base and provide for them in the constitution of India. It is folly and unwisdom to treat this as a matter of minor detail and leave it wholly to the State (Province) to pass suitable legislation, the Centre not even indicating the essential features of the foundations on which we are going to build. So let us begin from the village.

(1) The basic step is the creation of rural units made up of contiguous and homogeneous groups of villages with a population of not less than ten thousand and not more than twenty-five thousand for each unit.

Every adult not less than 18 years of age shall be entitled to vote for the panchayat election and there shall be one member to be so elected for every thousand population as per last census.

(2) The panchayat so elected for the rural unit shall be responsible for the peace and welfare of the unit and shall be in charge of a rural list of subjects, and work under a Panchayat Act to be passed by the State legislature.

(3) Every Panchayat and rural unit shall be controlled, guided and governed by a Rural Officer specially recruited and trained from a service devoted to this branch of administration. Under Indian conditions this rural officer is a necessity and no panchayat by itself would function healthily till Indian citizenship rises to a far higher level.

(4) The rural list of subjects should be comprehensive and include education, sanitation, health, law and order, agriculture, cottage industries, minor judicial work, civil and criminal, tax collection, multi purpose co-operative societies, minor forests, minor irrigation, tree-planting, silt-clearing, roads, house-building, local survey, etc. The primary initiative and responsibility for the welfare of the unit shall be on the rural officer and the panchayat. I contemplate practically dictatorial powers to the rural officer with power to over-ride for stated reasons the decisions of the panchayat.

(5) Every Panchayatdar so elected shall form an electoral college in his district, and the district shall be the unit of a constituency with plurality of members. This electoral college for the district shall elect the members of the State legislature on the basis of one member for every one lakh of the population.

(6) This district electoral college shall also elect the Commonwealth (Union) legislature at the rate of one member per million of the population.

(7) This electoral college shall also elect the Governor or the President, if so provided for, and it shall be the real electoral machinery in all the district, State and Commonwealth matters.

Adult franchise shall be directly utilised only for the paramount local needs of the rural unit, the election of the panchayat and the creation of a sound and scientific electoral college.

It is my firm conviction that till this drastic electoral reform is made confining the scope and extent of adult franchise, democracy would fail of its main purpose and ideal and become a victim of Big Business.

(8) All elections from the panchayat to the President shall be for three years.

(9) The distributive system of voting shall prevail. Cumulative voting or proportional representation must be prohibited in the interest of national unity and progress.

(10) The district heads in all departments shall be recruited by a State Public Service Commission and the services must be open to all Indian citizens, even from outside the State.

(11) Both in the State and in the Commonwealth, the head of the Executive (Cabinet) that is, the Prime Minister shall be elected for a fixed period of three years by all the members of the Legislature without any party affiliations. The Prime Minister is fixed for the term and he is not removable by the vote of the House except on grounds of impeachment for treason, fraud, corruption, etc., as in the case of a Supreme Court Judge.

It is my firm conviction that an irremovable executive for a term subject to the constant scrutiny of an elected Legislature is the first panacea for all the ills of the political and economic and even social life of India today.

The Prime Minister so elected shall select his own Ministers with a view to justice, harmonious work and the general confidence of the House.

(12) The President or Governor shall have definite powers for safeguarding the constitution but in general he shall be more a moral influence and a grand source of Satvic energy and idealism than an interfering and militant politician. I rely upon the Prime Minister, State as well as Commonwealth, to be the dynamic head and instrument of work and policy.

I contemplate one day the elimination of the party system in Democracy because it suppresses freedom of speech and vote in the Legislature and breeds greed and corruption.

(13) The constitution of a Legislature, State or Commonwealth, shall be 60 per cent territorial plural constituencies, 25 per cent functional constituencies, (professors, doctors, lawyers, traders, Big Business and Labour, etc.) and 15 per cent nomination by the President or Governor on the principles enumerated in Sec. 67, Cl. (2) of the draft, with a view to remedying the vagaries of election.

(14) No minority or community rights and preferential treatment shall be recognised in political life.

(15) The production of paper currency which is now the nationalised

key industry of many of our modern Governments should be statutorily based on some rational, scientific and healthy principles related to the labour hour and work of man, after immobilising the anti-social, speculative and predatory surplus of money, floating or hidden and not related to or used for production.

Many of the distempers and ills are definitely traceable to the manipulation of currency resorted to by Governments in the name of an anticipated crisis.

The highest salary shall not be above Rs. 1,000 and the lowest shall not be below Rs. 50. The purchasing power of a rupee will be excellent when the currency is regulated on some scientific, human and healthy principles.

OUR GRAND OPPORTUNITY

Some of the items in the above list of suggestions may seem trivial details not worthy of incorporation in the constitution of India. They may seem so to the casual mind lightly fed on current politics but these trifles go to the root of the matter and involve principles of the highest value to evolving society. They deserve to be embodied in the draft constitution as real mandates which the State and the Commonwealth will not be able to ignore.

Decentralisation does not mean lack of organisation and strength. It is not incompatible with a strong, unifying and directing centre. Properly worked out it gives strength in geometric progression to the teamwork of men. Provided the sphere of activity and primary initiative and responsibility are clearly defined in a series of concentric circles, the village is an asset to the town and the town to the district, the district to the State and the State to the Commonwealth and vice versa.

A stable world Government and federation of man could be achieved only on some such arrangement, call it by any name you like. The highest statesmanship and courage are required to overhaul the Indian political machine with all the dislocations which the global wars and our own freedom fight have meant. For, the entanglements of an alien rule have dented every tooth of every wheel in our body politic. Nay, in some cases even the flow of life has been reversed in the wrong direction.

The Constituent Assembly is bound to give plenty of time for public opinion to declare itself in clear terms for the guidance of the Constituent Assembly members. The consideration

of the draft constitution should be put off to September or October. Mid-summer in Delhi, the month of May, is hardly suited for a calm consideration of this momentous issue.

Here is a grand opportunity for India to produce a new constitution which would embody the ideals inherent in our ancient culture and civilisation and make a valuable contribution to the vitalising of a disintegrating Democracy both in the West and in the East.

Let our supreme way of life be reflected in full in the constitution of India as a beacon light to the world; satvic yet steady and dynamic—a way of life that secured continuity and growth of Indian civilisation for over three thousand years through all the trials and perils of our history. Let us prove once again the final supremacy of the advaita manobhava in politics, showing that diversity and variety are not meant for war but for mutual enrichment.

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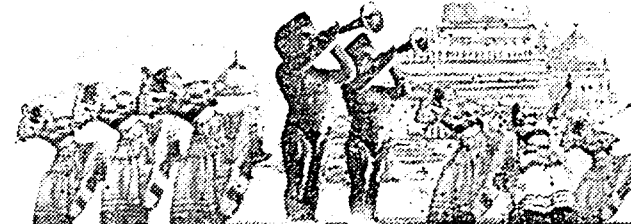
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INDIA'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY

by C. L. NARASIMHAN

THE character of industrial development of backward economies under present conditions will have to be different from that of Europe in the nineteenth century. It is only recently that the true nature of the European development has been clearly understood. Economists had taught for well nigh a generation that saving and frugality were the basis of all prosperity. They explained the industrial revolution of England by arguing that a high inequality in the distribution of wealth made a rapid accumulation of capital possible. Recent trends in economic thought have swerved away from this explanation. Modern economists point out that what made the European development possible was not so much frugality or saving, as the fact that the vastly increased output could be consumed by overseas markets. One national group produced and another national group consumed. One grew rich at the expense of the other. The emphasis in this latter analysis is on consumption.

It is clear that in the case of backward economies, this European development cannot be repeated. We do not have ready to hand the markets to absorb any increased production. Our competitive power is very little in the overseas markets with such rivals as America and Britain who produce under more favourable conditions. Our home markets are under-developed because of the maldistribution of wealth. A redistribution of the existing wealth will certainly lead to increased consumption in the home market. We have therefore to develop the home market by increasing its consumption power. The obvious method is of course the fiscal one of redistributing income and property. The tax method, however, has its limitations. Nationalisation is a more effective step since it avoids inequalities in income that arise from the private ownership of means of production.

Dr. S. P. Mukherjee argued the other day in his speech to the Dominion Parliament that an equal distribution of wealth at this stage would only mean the equal distribution of our poverty. He would give priority to the problems of production. Yet, the fact cannot be ignored that to make increased production possible, a better distribution is necessary. This is one of the strongest arguments for the nationalisation of industries in a backward economy like ours. The entrepreneur is a moribund institution in such an economy.

Explaining the industrial policy of India, Dr. Mukherjee divided Indian industries into three categories according to the amount of control that the State would exercise over each of them, varying from nationalisation to legislative control. In order to restore business confidence and promote private investment the question of nationalisation of a particular category of industries like textiles, iron and steel, leather, paper, etc., has been waived for a period of ten years, after which the matter will be taken up for reconsideration. The reason for treating this group of industries in this peculiar way is not clear. They are the only Indian industries worth any mention.

Pandit Nehru has claimed that because the technique of production is changing rapidly, nationalisation might involve the State ownership of outmoded means of production and consequent loss. The theoretician of Harrow and Oxford has certainly not raised a very profound objection. For, the danger of our technique of production being outmoded is considerably less if we appreciate the fact that neither America nor Britain is able to supply our capital needs at the moment. Britain is more bent on earning dollars than supplying the needs of her sterling creditors. Even assuming that we had the necessary dollars, the feverish pace at which the U.S.

Congressional appropriation committees have been voting additional demands for defence expenditure makes it evident that the American economy will be geared to the supply of war needs sooner or later. Our technique is bound to remain outmoded for some considerable time.

Further, the technique of production does not always change for the better, independently of the markets. In the same industry various firms adopting different techniques of production co-exist. The relatively advanced type of firm employs a better technique and gets a higher share of the profits, if its superiority is not so decisive as to drive its rivals out of the field. The smaller firm might be content with a lower share of the profits. Besides, the objection will lose much of its weight if the State should take over control and become the sole monopolist. It is better that the technique of production should bear some relation to the state of employment in the country. It is lamentable that our leaders should talk of production and not of employment, for, under certain circumstances, the two can be incompatible. More or better production does not always lead to more employment. It is not always wise to employ the best technique of production. Professors Hicks and Pigou have demonstrated that a majority of modern inventions have a labour-saving bias (the proportion of capital to labour becoming greater than before the use of the invention). If we decide to have the advantage of production at lower cost by employing a better technique, there will be two adverse effects on employment. The wage bill would decrease and there will be retrenchment of labour. The most indirect effect would be that the share of profits in the national income might increase, giving rise to a higher inequality of income and reducing the consumption power of the community. This latter influence would serve to decrease the capital of the country through its adverse effect on demand for consumers' goods and the secondary effect on the demand for producers' goods.

Recently textile industrialists in Coimbatore have voiced the complaint that their firms are overmanned and have demanded that they should be allowed to retrench some of their employees. Retrenchment of employees and using a better technique of production mean the same thing in their effect on employment. Is their demand legitimate?

The case for increasing the efficiency (meaning thereby a better technique or higher workload per man) in the export industries is very clear. We are now about to embark on an era of capital intensification. As our capital increases, home prices and costs begin to increase in relation to world prices and costs. Exports begin to decrease because at high prices, world demand for industrial products, which is very elastic, falls off. Imports increase because it will be profitable to purchase from outside, what was formerly produced at home. The country is finally faced with a fundamental disequilibrium in the balance of payments. If we are to avoid this problem, the export industries should be allowed to produce in the most efficient manner using the best available technique of production. But we have reasoned earlier that in the case of backward economies, a better technique will lead inevitably to unemployment. The solution again is to nationalise the export industries. This would avoid any adverse effects on employment since industrial profits, the one great factor in fostering inequality, would now be taken up by the State.

An additional argument for the nationalisation of export industries is provided by the modern trade cycle analysis which has shown that fluctuations in employment and prices attendant on the trade cycle spread themselves from nation to nation through their export industries. As world demand falls off, profits decline in the export industries, giving rise to unemployment. This spreads to the home industries before the country is finally drawn into the world depression. If the export industries were owned by the State, retrenchment

of labour as also its cumulative effect on the home economy could be avoided in times of depression. The State can draw on the profits built up during times of prosperity to finance the losses that it incurs during a depression. This method would insulate the home economy from the violent fluctuations of trade and employment of the outside world. The industrial policy now envisaged, wherein the old industries are to be retained by private owners and the new industries are marked out for State enterprise, is entirely arbitrary. A more rational plan would have been to nationalise all industries, or, if private enterprise is to get some concessions, it might have been left to manage the home industries. It is clear that the home industries cannot employ the best technique of production. These industries will have of necessity to be overmanned since they must afford employment to labour retrenched in the interest of the efficiency of the export industries.

The foregoing analysis assumes an insulation of the home market from foreign competition. The competitive power of our less efficient home industries will be very low and State intervention to secure better employment might be defeated by a glut of foreign imports. A corollary of the development of backward economies is therefore the cessation of free trade. A relatively advanced industrial country, France, has had to indulge in serious depreciation of her currency to restore her competitive position in the world. India will have to revoke her obligations both to the International Monetary Fund and the International Trade Organisation, depreciate her currency, and build up a tariff wall, if she is to retain her home market. Development of the home market might be possible within the framework of concessions to be given by the I.T.O. to the backward economies, but the chances are that it might not be possible. The only course seems to be a frankly nationalistic policy.



WORKING UPHILL

by SANTHA RUNGACHARY

JAYA PRAKASH Narayan thinks that we are all, so to speak, going to the devil very fast. Of that we are sadly aware. Other leaders have hinted of it too. But, intriguingly enough, each of them thinks we are going to a different kind of devil. Here is J.P.'s version of the satanic spirit which is luring us to our destruction, and what I think of it.

"If we don't tackle the individual in India and try to improve his character and create a moral consciousness in him, we are doomed" said Jaya Prakash Narayan.

His words were followed by an awed silence.

He leaned forward, rested his elbows on his knees, looked thoughtfully at us as we sat huddled on the faded carpet before him and then shot a bolt which made us all see stars, so to speak.

"Mahatma Gandhi's assassination", he said, "was not a mere political event. Its roots go deeper. It is proof of a moral deterioration in the individual's attitude towards life."

Which was hitting the nail fairly violently and squarely on the head. Other leaders have hummed and hawed and come out with inane platitudes or spoken with calculated bitterness about the "communal virus" or about the Muslim League being at the bottom of the whole unhappy mess. Those in power have gone about banning parties and organisations, raiding offices, seizing documents and whispering in hush-hush tones of secret and awful conspiracies. But no one till now has had the courage to look down into the depths below and see the muddy, turbid waters of decayed social consciences.

The burning down of temples and mosques, the stabbings in cold blood, the ghastly debris of the dead and dying on the streets, the lacerated bodies and the blighted hopes are only the outcome of this

decay. It is not, I think, any one cause which has led to this moral deterioration of the masses. It is not a process which began yesterday or the day before. It is the culmination of popular resentment against decades of hunger, poverty, oppression, inequalities and overpopulation. The sudden flare-up of bitter animosity between the Hindus and Muslims may be explained, I feel certain, at least to some extent, by looking at the statistics of our population during the last fifteen years. We have grown and grown almost out of proportion to the food that our land can give us and the money that can be paid us for work. The poorer millions had been taught to consider *Swarajya* as the solution of all their ills. With independence, they were advised, would come prosperity, health. With it would come food. And in their own one-track way they had concentrated all their hopes on this illusive, precious gift of freedom just as the Muslims in more recent times had deluded themselves that Pakistan would be their Utopia. Those who stood in the way of these two peoples achieving their respective goals were to go, no matter how. And thus began the orgy of blood-letting. Once it had started, of course, it developed into mass hysteria and there was no stopping it.

Forty years ago, even the Britishers, Gandhiji's worst enemies, did not ever consider killing him to get rid of him. They locked him up whenever he became too unbearable or was positively a menace. Now, of course, killing is the first means considered. Life has lost its sanctity. Not in India alone. Look at Burma. Look at Czechoslovakia. Look at the dozens of suspected or proved attempts at murder among political circles of nations all over the world which the newspapers reveal from time to time.

I do not know how many of us have thought along these lines, but

I do believe that the very conditions of living which made it possible for Communism to gain a foothold in this country, were also at the root of communalism which has reaped such a gorgeous harvest in the past five years and more. Religion, in its absoluteness, has played a very minor part though, unable to give their motives a name, people have hung on to it and called the misguided, irresponsible murders they committed, a religious war.

Jaya Prakash Narayan said that nothing but a moral decadence could account for hundreds of people—not goondas, not paid assassins but people like you and I and the man next door—rushing into the streets and either themselves committing the most horrible atrocities or standing by without batting an eyelid or lifting a little finger to help, watching infants in arms being thrown into the fire or cut into bits and women so brutally assaulted some of them collapsed where they lay.

It seems a very dismal prospect, reforming the individual. Where is it to begin and how? You can't teach a man to be good by giving him a written list of 'dos' and 'dents' or asking him to attend special lectures (after work hours, of course) on justice, peace, honesty, goodness and so forth delivered by eminent professors and judges. You can't teach a man about character by putting him on a starvation diet every time he does wrong or by threatening him with hell-fire if he continues in his career downhill.

I do not think it can even be done by Ramana Maharshi and Aurobindo giving spiritual messages to the multitude. Such messages can help only the converted. They are inadequate where the ordinary man is concerned. The people are too far gone for all that. Only one thing, I think, can save the situation now and that is a strong, honest, incorruptible Government.

Jaya Prakash said there was corruption everywhere, from the ministerial level downwards. In fact,

the whole Governmental machine stark with it. That had to go, he asserted. Perhaps no one had told him about the anti-corruption drives organised under the auspices of the Madras Government.

It was all very well to say corruption must go and goodness must come and all that sort of thing. What Jaya Prakash Narayan failed to tell us was how. It is fear, prejudice, self-interest and the all-powerful love of money which make corruption possible in any country. I suppose something can be achieved by acting upon the socialist leader's suggestion that an example should be made of the corrupt in high circles. But who is going to bell the cat? I am reminded of the popular verse:

"The law locks up the man or woman
who steals a goose from off the common;
but leaves the greater villain loose
who steals the common from the goose."

Somehow the people higher up seem so unapproachable. They flaunt their corrupt practices almost in the face of a gaping populace, and yet one is helpless to deal with them.

The first rumbles of opposition to the Gandhian tenet of non-violence which, while the Mahatma was alive, was kept strictly in check, could be heard in J. P. Narayan's assertion that a misinterpretation of this doctrine had led to demoralisation in the country. He, however, fenced it with the admission that he would follow the tenet of non-violence if he had the moral courage of a Gandhi, but that not having such courage, he firmly believes in facing an enemy and fighting him.

Of course, if rule by the sword becomes the maxim of the day, it will be only another step forward in that rapid descent downhill which we have managed to achieve so far. But one might very well ask: What else is there to do? It is a funny thing but whatever problem one takes up these days—whether it is corruption or non-

violence or communism, one ends up in a blind alley. Should it be this or should it be that? The men at the helm of affairs are faced with questions they themselves find it difficult to answer. But we have to answer them sooner or later. If India is to be a "socialist republic" as Pandit Nehru himself has asserted, why has Jaya Prakash severed his party from the Congress?

The present Government was not doing any good, said Jaya Prakash Narayan. Why not reform it? That, I suppose, is the first feeler of public opinion, extended by the Socialist Party of India, now only a month old as an independent political organisation. I don't suppose anyone can honestly dispute the fact that, as far at least as some of the Provincial Governments are concerned, the people want—and want as soon as possible—new and able men at the top. But one can do nothing except wait patiently for the first elections under the new Constitution. I, for one, would be very happy to see the Socialists, win. That they are not going to achieve miracles is certain. But their ideals, if worked properly, seem conducive to the happiness and well-being of the largest number. The Congress as a party has become an arena of clashes and quarrels. Its ideas and standards seem no longer suited to present needs.

When Jaya Prakash referred to the desire on the part of his party to follow democratic methods in poli-

tics and to capture power, one was tempted to ask what exactly "democratic" meant. I thought I knew what Socialism, Communism, Democracy and such catch-words meant, but now I am not so sure. Stalin has said: "To every man according to his needs—that is Communism; to every man according to the value of his work—that is Socialism." A Socialist is a bit of a Communist and vice versa. A democrat is a bit of both and something else. It is all very confusing now that these terms have become very elastic.

"Would you resort to non-violence?" somebody persisted.

"I am not prepared to answer hypothetical questions" answered Jaya Prakash Narayan, almost losing his temper.

It could only mean, of course, that he was not prepared to let some carelessly-made statement of his be splashed on the front pages of newspapers. To stand in judgment is easy. But to lead a party in a country whose political life is yet unsettled and fluid, whose people's thoughts have not crystallised, whose masses sway in the passing breezes of ideologies like reeds on the wind, is not so easy. But this tall, handsome man with the level eyes and the sensitive, capable hands will be able to do something.

He may not be brilliant like Nehru but he has begun to think and come to conclusions, begun to work towards a state of living which will be least harmful to the masses.

WHITHER MAN?

Once upon a time a man's work was conditioned by sunrise and sunset, by the direction of the wind or the state of the sea or the turn of the seasons. He was continuously in communication with them. He thought of his life, and of his love, in terms of their power or mercy. Now, more and more, machines are the condition of his life. As yet he is not born mechanically but he is nourished, transported, given news, killed and buried mechanically. In so far as Nature has a share in these processes, that share is elaborately concealed from him. I am not drawing the familiar moral that men are the slaves of their machines. What troubles me is the opposite aspect of the matter. Is mankind transferring its allegiance? Is it becoming, in its mind, one with the non-natural things, and losing altogether its ancient sense of being one with the sea and the earth?—Charles Morgan.

66 Here's Anand Misra ...

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



THE FIVE SIMPLE RULES

1. Use only freshly drawn and freshly boiled water. 2. Warm the pot before use. 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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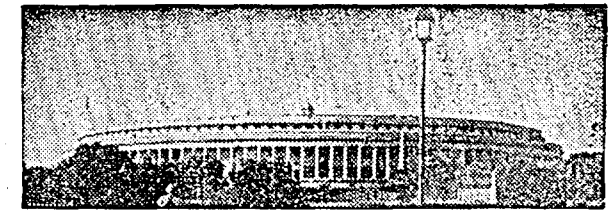


NOTHING SO GOOD AS

WELL-MADE

Tea

NEW DELHI DIARY



by V. V. PRASAD

THE Law Minister, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, has created a veritable hornet's nest over the issue of Independence vs. Dominion Status. As Chairman of the Drafting Committee of India's Constituent Assembly, he has suggested the change of the term "Independent Sovereign Republic" to "Democratic Sovereign State" in the Objectives Resolution. There were some at least in the present Government who favoured along with Dr. Ambedkar the retention of the Commonwealth tie by India. But it is doubtful whether they will come out in the open in support of Dr. Ambedkar's stand.

Those who advocated that the present relations between India and the Commonwealth should not be disturbed were a very influential section of the Congress leadership. These seem to have held the view that it was only by aligning herself with U.K. that India would be able to maintain an independent stand without joining either the American or the Soviet bloc, because they believe that Britain alone of all the Big Powers would be able to steer clear of the next War. Those who oppose India's remaining within the Commonwealth do so on the ground that Britain is bound to join the American bloc and drag India along with her.

Apart from considerations of foreign policy and the prospects of India getting involved or not in the next War, there are other considerations which the exponents and the opponents of the British connection adduce. India's internal progress would be best secured by continuing in the British Commonwealth because the Labour Party is

in power, say the people in the first camp. The Labour Government, they point out, is perhaps the best Government in the world today. India would have a good lot to benefit by frequent consultation with the British Government. Their administrative knowledge would be easily available to the Government of India whenever they ask for it. This school of thought also thinks that India would be able to steer clear both of Capitalism and Communism by benefiting from the British genius for the golden mean, which is also India's own genius.

The second school of thought is opposed to the British connection since the memories of British atrocities in India, although not remembered at present, are not yet forgotten. The Indian sentiment is against it. If a vote is taken there is no doubt the people will unhesitatingly express themselves in favour of severance from the Commonwealth. Pakistan was bound to be in the Commonwealth of nations, and if India is also inside, Britain will once again appear in the role of the arbitrator. That would be a rather unhappy experience. This kind of thing would amount, in the words of Dr. Pattabhi, to asking Britain to grip India when she quit India voluntarily.

Even the advocates of the Commonwealth idea knew very well that the public would not approve of any specific declaration that India would remain within the Commonwealth Club. They merely wanted things to be left as they are without either severing the British connection or affirming it. You could maintain, like de Valera, that India was a Republic. It might also

be a member of the Commonwealth. One constitutional expert pointed out that the words Commonwealth and Republic mean one and the same thing. The only difference is that Republic comes from Latin. Res means concerning, therefore Republic means concerning the public. Commonwealth is defined in the Dictionary as an independent community, especially a Republic. They are really Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

Under the circumstances, Dr. Ambedkar has definitely harmed the cause which he sought to champion. Official and constitutional opinion, as far as one could gather, was in favour of letting things slide gradually. They were especially worried about Pakistan, which, they believed, would remain within the Commonwealth. In that case, Britain would openly support Pakistan as against India everywhere. Mr. Kingsley Martin recently wrote in an outspoken article that Britishers everywhere seemed to be definitely against India in favour of Pakistan. Could India afford such a state of affairs? Already she is friendless in the

international sphere. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia pointed out the other day at a Press Conference in New Delhi that India had not brought up before the United Nations even one single issue which involved high international principles. India therefore did not command the respect in the outside world which she would have if she did. This is the Socialist view, and the Socialists definitely have opposed the maintenance of the Commonwealth connection.

It is believed in New Delhi that if India comes out of the Commonwealth, Britain would like Pakistan to do likewise. Otherwise, they fear, world opinion would suspect that there is some British game behind the creation of the Pakistan State. Britain wants to get rid of the stigma which was attached to her fair name on account of the past hundred and fifty years and more of her history. It was this that led Einstein to remark that trouble-making was a British enterprise. The British seem to be trying hard to disprove the contention of the propounder of the theory of Relativity.

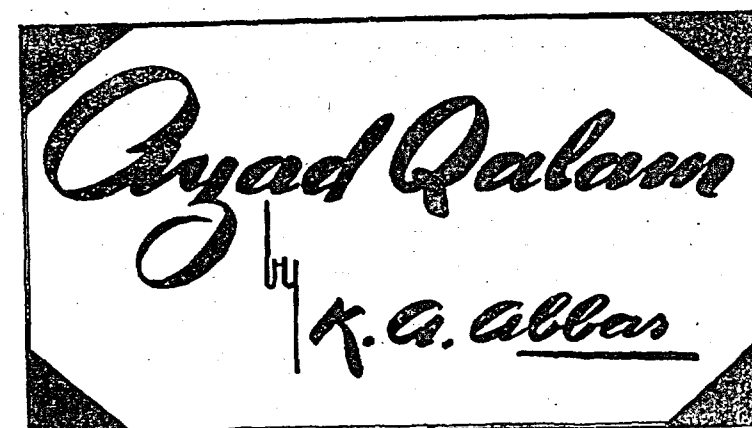
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THE memory is inspiring, immortal. But there is nothing inspiring about the hallowed spot where the mortal remains of Mahatma Gandhi were cremated. Rajghat (to which I duly made my pilgrimage one morning during my recent visit to Delhi) provides a disillusioning, disheartening spectacle.

A flat, monotonous, unrelieved, dusty landscape. A squat, low, square cement platform—and, at a little distance around it, barbed-wire fencing. Barbed wire—the symbol of jails, concentration camps and detention camps, the symbol of tyranny and oppression—strung round the *samadhi* of the great liberator!

On the steps of the platform are two cheap gaudy, inartistic little coloured photos of the Mahatma, garlanded with faded strings of flowers. Other flower offerings are strewn about the place, scattered by the wind. A few copper coins lie in the dust—“*chadhava*” left by some devotee, despite the chalked-up exhortation on a little black-board inviting contributions for the Harijan Fund to be dropped in the ugly wooden box kept there for the purpose.

HUMILIATING SCENE

A few devotees walk round the platform, as in a religious shrine, muttering prayers. A half-wit, his hideous nudity only partially covered with a filthy, odorous blanket lies sprawled on the ground. Two old women come and prostrate

themselves on the ground—as in a temple—first before the *samadhi* and then, horror of horrors, before the lunatic. (He appears to be a permanent fixture here—on the way to becoming a self-appointed *mahant* of the Gandhi Temple!) I feel outraged, humiliated.

Then a sad-eyed khadi-clad middle-aged man—obviously a Congress worker from some small town—comes. He stands, with his head bowed, at the foot of the *samadhi*—full of silence and reverence and no one knows what memories and what emotions. Only a sigh and three words escape his lips: “*Azadi ka devata*!” Then he is gone. And I am left with the fantasy notion that he was, perhaps, the one solitary true follower of Gandhiji—one among all the three hundred millions who claim allegiance to the Mahatma who is no more!

With him gone, the haunting atmosphere of desolation and frustration returned to the place. The wind rose from the river-bed yonder and brought with it a cloud of dust and sand. Far, far away the whistle hooted in one of Birla's mills—calling the workers to their spindles and their looms. The city was waking to work. Gandhiji was gone but the wheels of trade and industry must turn on, unceasingly, relentlessly.

May be one day on this spot will rise a memorial worthy of the great Mahatma. But as it is, at Rajghat there is neither dignity nor austere simplicity, neither a touch of idealism nor of spiritual serenity. Only

an atmosphere of banality and ignorance, ugliness and superstition!

IN MAHATMA'S NAME!

I, too, came away—wondering if Rajghat is a memorial to the Mahatma or a memorial to our betrayal of the Mahatma! It seemed to me that not only did we kill him, we also killed his message—perverting it to suit our own base ends. Verily has the Era of Gandhi been followed by the Era of the Exploitation of Gandhi's Name.

On this very day, as the summer wind will blow desolately over the physical and spiritual wilderness of Rajghat, all over India profiteers will continue to make their millions out of the sweat and tears and blood of the people; bureaucrats will order policemen to fire at recalcitrant workers and to muzzle civil liberties in general; arsenals will continue to pour out arms and ammunition; vast amounts will be spent for the Army, Navy and Air Force; jingoism will spread the gospel of fear and hatred; communalists will poison the air with their vicious propaganda; champagne will be sipped by the gallons in our Embassies abroad; lies will be printed and truth suppressed for petty party purposes. And all this in the name of the Mahatma, the apostle of Truth and Non-violence, the Prophet of Peace, the upholder of Prohibition, the friend of the poor and the champion of the down-trodden!

To our eternal shame, we shall crucify the Mahatma over and over again!

A PROPHECY COMES TRUE

I cannot vouch for the absolute, hundred per cent authenticity of the story—because it has reached me third-hand by a devious route—but it is worth telling all the same.

It appears that some thirty years ago, a young Bombay barrister was present at a dinner party in a North-Indian town, along with a rising poetess and feminist leader. Among the guests was also a young Anglo-Indian lady who was credited with a clairvoyant foresight. She had one look at the young barrister and

confided to the poetess who sat next to her, "That young man is going to be the ruler of a State".

"But how can that be?" exclaimed the poetess who was sceptical of the other woman's alleged psychical powers. "He does not belong to a State nor to a ruling family. He is a plain citizen of British India though a brilliant lawyer."

"I don't know how but I can say that he will be the ruler of a State", the clairvoyant insisted.

The prophecy, which was later related to the barrister concerned, was treated as a casual after-dinner joke and soon forgotten. Three decades later it came true—when Mohamed Ali Jinnah assumed the supreme authority in Pakistan. He did become a ruler—even if a brand new State had to be created for him. Very much like Napoleon, whose rise to kingship had been foretold years earlier by a gypsy woman. As soon as he mounted the throne of the Bourbons, the former "Petit Corporal" ordered that the fortune-teller be found and rewarded. And likewise, I hear, agents of the Pakistan Governor-General have been making discreet enquiries about the whereabouts of the Anglo-Indian lady.

One need not believe in clairvoyance or miracles to accept this story. The will-power of able and ambitious men like Napoleon and Jinnah achieve greater miracles than all the professional sky-pilots—and, in either case, the fortune-teller, by her prophecy, may have set in motion the mysterious mechanism of a dynamic will to power and glory.

A MAHARAJA COMES TO BREAKFAST

I can fully vouch for the following little drama to which I, along with half a dozen Delhi journalists, was an eye-witness.

Scene: India Coffee House in Connaught Place, New Delhi, the rendezvous of journalists, students, intellectuals, progressive writers, long-haired poets and artists, couples in love, gossips and busy-bodies with nothing to do.

Dramatis Personae: The 77-year old, tall, immaculate, white-haired, white-moustached Maharaja of Kapurthala; a young French blonde, and a Private Secretary.

Action: At seven in the morning the Maharaja's cooks arrived in the kitchen of the Coffee House. At eight, the Maharaja's butlers arrived with crockery, cutlery, cruets—all embossed with the Prince's insignia—, bottles of sauce and vinegar, linen table-cloths and napkins. A corner was reserved and got ready for the Maharaja who arrived at a little past nine. Coffee, toast and eggs were served—all prepared under the personal supervision of the Maharaja's own staff. In low tones, His Highness conversed with the blonde in French, and departed at about ten in his long, sleek limousine, leaving the inquisitive reporters to do some arithmetical research work. Bill: Rs. 4-9. Tip to waiters: Rs. 5.

Theme: Mass contact of Maharajas. Democracy marches on!

(curtain)

THEIR HIGHNESSES OF HINDUSTAN

Talking about Maharajas and other such species, here are a few juicy stories I picked up in Delhi:

The Nawab of Rampur or, to give him his full name and titles, Major His Highness *Farzand-e-dilpazir daulat-e-Inglishiya* (Beloved son of the British Empire) *Mukhlis-ud-daulah Nasir-ul-Mulk Amir-ul-Umara Nawab Sir Syed Mohamed Raza Ali Khan Bahadur, Mustaid Jung*, Knight Commander of the Star of India, LL.D., D.Litt. (Honorary), has composed an elegy to mourn the death of Gandhiji, and posted the printed text to the press, public leaders and all the Ministers—including, of course, the States Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel! The Prince-poet's pseudonym is "Raza piya" and he has written this elegy, like his other verses, in colloquial Hindi.

Many princes have quietly started the process of transferring liquid assets—money, jewels and securities—to foreign capitals, specially

in South America. Some are even packing their wardrobes and their trunks!

A minor prince of U.P. recently sent his A.D.C. to Bombay BY AIR—to purchase three electric irons. His travelling expenses were five times the price of the irons.

The chieftains of one of the microscopic Simla Hills States sent his minor sons to Sardar Patel to tearfully plead for "dear father's throne"—which, in this case, was only a broken-down chair!

A minor functionary in a State wished to entertain the ruler to dinner. The request was granted. As the loyal servant could not get the feast worthy of a Prince prepared in his own humble home, the Prince condescended to allow the royal kitchen to take a contract for the dinner. A sumptuous repast—thirty-eight courses only—was prepared for the hundred and odd guests. When the Palace Comptroller sent the bill, it came to a few thousands. The salary of the poor host: less than Rs. 300 p.m.

MEMO TO PREMIER NEHRU

Re: The Executive Councillors, bureaucrats and Government officials who were responsible for country-wide repression in 1942, blackmarketeers and hoarders who caused thousands of deaths, and other anti-national criminals who still continue to flourish unscathed in your regime: "The officers responsible for the cold-blooded torture of the people should be brought to book not out of revenge but to demonstrate to the world how bureaucracy behaved during those memorable days.....I charge the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council of filling their pockets..... The prevalence of corruption here is unprecedented in the world. Remembering the victims of the Bengal famine, India will never compromise with traitors of the country, the anti-national criminals. The time will come when India's list of criminals would be prepared—of those officials of bureaucracy and blackmarketeers who tyrannized over the people during the last five years". (YOUR

speeches in U.P., 1945). Has the time come, Panditji—or has it passed?

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Originally it appeared eleven years ago, but many in India will read Irving Stone's *LUST FOR LIFE* only now that it is available in the Pocket Book edition for Rs. 1-8—"the price of a couple of candy bars or a ticket of admission to a third-run movie house." In his preface to this cheap edition, Author Irving Stone says: "This is the revolution in book publishing for which I have waited all my writing years." So have we in India—and are still waiting—for mass sales and low prices of Indian publications!

"Lust For Life" is a novel based on the life of the Dutch impressionist painter, Vincent Van Gogh (technically correct Dutch pronunciation is "Van Hchuuuchch" but "Van Go" will do). It might well be the story of all artists and their struggle—the long, desperate, painful and pathetic struggle—for the realization of their creative genius. It tells of how Vincent Van Gogh struggled for fifteen years to master the medium of painting, how his art flowered out of his own sufferings and his intimate contacts with the suffering of humble human beings. Not out of a perfumed boudoir but out of the sordid stench of the miserable hovels of a mining town bloomed the Sun-flowers of Van Gogh's art. It is a book at once illuminating and inspiring in its essentially humanistic content, and terrifying in the vividness with which it describes the tortures that a sensitive soul must suffer before art can acquire profound and undying significance.

Some other important titles available in the Pocket Book edition which the discriminating book-buyer of small income must grab at the first opportunity are: *FREE-DOM ROAD* (one of the world's greatest novels) by Howard Fast, *LOST HORIZON* by James Hilton, *THE GOOD EARTH* by Pearl Buck, *SOMERSET MAUGHAM POCKET BOOK*, *THE HUMAN COMEDY* by William Saroyan, *NANA* by Emile Zola.

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"BOMBAY: Mr. N. V. Gadgil, Minister for Works, Mines and Power, Government of India, warned Socialists, Communists and "other disruptive forces," that if they acted in a detrimental way to the well-being of the nation, "the Government will not indulge in moral platitudes, but will strangle and liquidate those who were out to create disorder."—Press report of Mr. Gadgil's speech.

"There can be no freedom of thought or individual liberty in a Socialist State."—Pandit Pant, Premier of U.P.

"MADRAS: In defiance of the prevailing ban on the R.S.S. in the province, three persons stated to be R.S.S. organisers recently arrived in Madras to reorganise the Sangh secretly. They were arrested last night at Vysarapadi, in the out-skirts of the city."—News item.

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"BOMBAY: Because she happened to be a Maharastrian, one Kamalabai who was seriously injured in an accident at Parthana Samaj, was refused admission into a hospital in the city. Kamalabai who was aged about 21 was run over by a tram and sustained fracture of the leg, was refused admission at the Harkisondas Hospital (a Gujarati institution) on sectarian grounds. She had to be then taken to the J. J. Hospital where she died. A jury said, at an inquest held over the dead body, that it wished to 'express our strong disapproval of the conduct of the authorities of the Harkisondas Hospital in refusing to admit the deceased into the Hospital on a sectarian plea.'"

"BOMBAY: Dawod Rajmohamed was arrested by the Palton Road Police for refusing to serve tea to three Harijan sweepers. The Accused who is charged for breach of the Harijan Removal of Disabilities Act, 1947 was released on bail at the Esplanade Police Court."—Local news items in Bombay papers.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE



LATIN America is noted for its tradition of political violence. But Colombia used to be somewhat of an exception. After the revolution of 1903 the country remained tranquil and enjoyed the benefits of an orderly democratic government. The violent and sensational events of the last two weeks therefore mark an interruption of the peaceful development for which Colombia had begun to acquire reputation.

Even the far-reaching change from Conservative to Liberal ascendancy in 1930 was neither brought about nor obstructed by force. The Conservatives, strongly pro-Catholic in Colombia as elsewhere in Latin America, had been in power from 1886 to 1930. The victory of the Liberals proved to be nothing so long-lived. But during their relatively brief period of power, the Liberals (who are anti-clerical) passed a considerable body of progressive legislation. They separated church from state, expanded modern educational facilities, encouraged the emancipation of women from segregation and oppressive family rule, and secured to the workers the eight-hour day and the right of collective bargaining.

Most of these reforms were put through during 1934-38, when Dr. Alfonso Lopez (now familiar to Indians via the Security Council) was President of Colombia. Dr. Lopez has had a varied career. He was by turns a newspaper owner, bank manager, coffee merchant and ambassador, before he became President. He is said to represent the Left-wing of the liberal movement and his rule has been compared to Roosevelt's New Deal. Another outstanding figure among

the liberals is Dr. Eduardo Santos. Formerly President of Colombia, and now Vice-President, Dr. Santos stands politically to the Right of Dr. Lopez.

Dr. Laureano Gomez has been the leader of the Conservatives. A politician of the extreme Right, Gomez made no secret of his dislike for the U.S.A., for Roosevelt and for all Liberals. He once called President Santos, who is generally considered 'an apostle of moderation', a "murderer who sits in pools of conservative blood." According to a Colombian radio report, Gomez was killed during the recent disturbances.

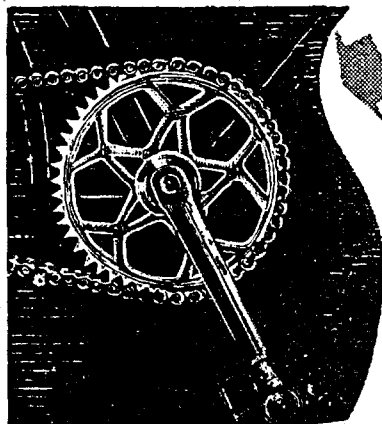
The recovery of power by the Conservatives was conclusively established by the Presidential election in May 1946. Conservative candidate Dr. Mariano Ospina Perez was elected President by 478,000 votes as against the 351,000 and 29,000 votes secured by the other two candidates. It was Dr. Jorge Gaitan who got those 29,000 votes. His assassination on April 9 was the immediate provocation for the uprising in Bogota, capital of Colombia.

Since Dr. Gaitan has been described both as a "Liberal dark horse" and a "Leftist Liberal", it is difficult to guess the political complexion of his killer—if it was at all a political murder. The Liberals appear to have thought that the Conservatives were responsible for the murder and some at least of the Liberal elements staged rebellious demonstrations. The Communists promptly joined up. The Liberal leaders, with no taste for Communist aid, abruptly changed sides. They joined the Conservatives to form a coalition Government, which has since been effectively suppressing the rebellion.

The Pan-American Conference at Bogota has not only given the uprising international publicity, it has encouraged politicians to import exaggerated significance into the events. From the U.S. Secretary of State down to newspaper correspondents, American commentators have been saying that the Bogota incidents were planned and executed by the Communists in order to smash the Hemisphere Conference and discredit the U.S. leadership. This analysis ignores the fact that the revolt in its origins was a spontaneous protest action by Liberals who demanded the resignation of President Perez. The Communists seem to have jumped into the fray only after it had broken out.

It is not known how many Liberals, along with the Communists, are attempting to continue the revolt even after the formation of a coalition cabinet. Nor do the confused and censored reports indicate whether the Liberals have come to believe the Conservatives' theory that the Communists were responsible for Dr. Gaitan's death. The cabinet is reported to have already split on many questions. The widow of the murdered Liberal leader has created an embarrassing situation by refusing to permit Dr. Gaitan's body to be buried until the resignation of President Perez. It does not therefore look as if the trouble is over in Colombia.

"Little record exists that Bricker has ever said anything worth more than thirty-seconds' consideration by anybody. Intellectually he is like interstellar space—a vast vacuum occasionally crossed by homeless, wandering clichés."—John Gunther on Senator Bricker, in "Inside U.S.A."



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NAGASWARAM RAJARATNAM PILLAY

by E. KRISHNA IYER

IN art as in literature, that which makes a work noteworthy and enjoyable is, among other things, the presence of a distinct style of arresting quality, which is mostly inborn. Among the fast growing multitude of present day platform musicians, only a few can boast of having individual styles of their own. Of these few again, it is not all who combine a style with appreciable imagery and classical purity. If we were to search, with an open mind, for musicians who have a combination of these essential qualities of high art, we would be surprised to find no vocalists but only two instrumentalists of that type. They are no other than Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer in *Veena* and Thiruvaduthurai Rajaratnam Pillay in *Nagaswaram*.

Traditionally used for the decoration of large masses of people in open air processions and big temple halls, the average sound of Nagaswaram is rather loud and sometimes ear-splitting. Thirumarugal Natesan, the famous maternal uncle of Rajaratnam, who was considered as the best of an earlier generation and one or two others like Chidambaram Vaidyanathan, were credited with having mellowed down, to an agreeable extent, the sound of their pipes. Rajaratnam has outdone even his renowned uncle in this respect; and the Nagaswaram tone of the illustrious nephew, as that of his compeer, Thiruvengadu Subramania Pillai, almost resembles that of the North Indian *shenoi*, in its softness and sweetness. The more remarkable thing about Rajaratnam is that he is able to control and sustain this exquisite quality of tone effortlessly, all through his performances, without the slightest lapse, even in his most elaborate displays.

On this warp of entrancing mellifluousness of sound, Rajaratnam weaves his web of unalloyed classical melodies, with sure mastery of

technique and transcending art, embroidering it with amazingly rich and varied imagery, and giving the whole and every bit of it the finish of a highly polished and refined style.

Like most pipers, he is at his best in his ragas. But he stands out from among the rest, in his clear, correct and aesthetically superior conception of raga forms and in unfolding them, stage by stage, with admirable sense of proportion, symmetry and balance, both in the choice of musical phrases and fancy designs and in grouping and embellishing them. His ragas are such clear, impressive and soulful pictures of melody, that once you hear them, you can neither forget them nor mistake one for another. This capacity of his enables him to render successively even seemingly allied ragas with a difference of only one swara, in their unmistakably distinct forms, without mixing them up. His *Todi* and *Bhavapriya*, *Nata Bhairavi* and *Shanmukhapriya*, are only a few among many ragas that bear ample testimony to it. The pallavis and the few kritis that he handles are saturated with *raga-bhava*.

There can be no two opinions about the uncommon richness and high artistry of his *kalpana* or extempore imaginative display of the most subtle type. Somehow, similar attempts, in many others, have come to be almost synonymous with unrelieved galloping speed, dry *birka* profusion or plenitude of *jantaivarisai sadaka* on the platform. Hence, much of what passes nowadays for high class *mano-dharma* art, happens to be too fast music, with mechanical finish and superficial trappings.

If Rajaratnam is an exception to the rule here again, it is because his art, both in its foundation and superstructure, is sound and substantial with its emphasis on un-failing melodic grace and is built

up with a judicious alternation of uncommonly kaleidoscopic and colourful designs of fancy in varying tempos on the one hand and soft pleasing decorations of all kinds, like thick and thin modulations of tone, glides, curves and quavers, on the other, each in its due place and proportion, without undue haste or overdoing of any element in dry hypertechanical gymnastics. Often, you can hear from him the whole gamut of a raga expounded leisurely with undulating curves and glides only all through. At times, he brings out the essence of a raga in one sweeping glide through relevant swaras and enthralls his listeners. It may be followed up by a vivacious cascade of fast rushing *vakra-sancharas* and *birka* profusion; and again right in the midst of them, by way of agreeable relief, he will sail off coolly with smooth sweeping glides or long restful *karvais* of enchanting melody. In fact, it is in his deft use of a rare kind of smooth glides and graces—particularly the *jar gamakas* (sweeping glides from one octave to another) and the mellifluous *karvais* (long straight tones), in between the most scintillating display of imaginative fireworks, that his genius comes out at its best and is inimitable. Such art produces wonderful and profound effects in contrasts, carrying the listeners off their feet in flights of fancy on the wings of colourful emotion.

About all, strange as it may seem, this exceptionally great and exquisite art of Rajaratnam does not depend upon any hybrid modernism or mechanical superficialities, for its appeal and popularity. It is innocent of any mixture of alien modes, Hindustani or otherwise. In its unalloyed classicism, it is a standing and shining proof, that Carnatic music, when expounded in all its classical purity has got its own special beauty, and abiding charm and appeal and can hold its own even in the midst of the present day glamour for mixed trends and mechanised art.

In short Rajaratnam's music is a rich feast not only to the intellect but also to the heart. If the true

test of really great art is its capacity to please both exacting *pandits* and uninitiated *pamars*, then Rajaratnam's Nagaswaram music amply satisfies that test; and that he succeeds in it without sacrificing classical purity and traditional technique, must be an eye-opener for doubting Thomases.

As the most gifted exponent of such superb art, it is no wonder he is the acknowledged doyen or leader of the Nagaswaram domain, compelling the unqualified respect of his contemporaries in the profession. He is the most beloved idol of music-loving crowds. He creates a flutter wherever he goes; and if from a village piper you hear an unusual musical phrase or embellishment and ask wherefrom he got it, you will invariably be told, that it is an attempted catch of a bit of Rajaratnam's style!

But alas! Such supreme art does not come out in all his performances. Perhaps only two out of five concerts of his happen to come up to that expected level. Not that this feature is due to his art being freakish or fitful, or his being an erratic or untrained genius, but it appears to be the result of his getting out of proper mood through what is said to be an unfortunate habit of his.

Born in 1898 as the scion of a family of four successive generations of Nagaswaram experts, he had his inherited talents in music developed very early in life and quickly won his way to easy recognition and popularity all around. Still in the prime of life and endowed with an engaging and winsome personality, he is only too conscious of his towering superiority over others in the field. As such, he holds his head high without any undue sense of humility and rather likes to treat his average audiences with a certain air of indifference or condescension! But he is extremely affable to those who understand the real worth of his art and when surrounded by them he rarely fails to reach superb heights in his art. Though he and his art require no boosting, he appears to delight in glorifying titles being appended to his name.

Short Story

Bitter Sweet

by J. Ekanath Pai

THE air was still. Not a leaf was stirring. Nature was having her afternoon nap. Far away a crow cawed miserably and fell silent hearing no response. Few were walking about and those who did glided by like ghosts as if they dared not wake Nature from her peaceful nap.

Prem was seated on the door-step of his home. He seldom sat there. But to-day, somehow, the atmosphere was different; it was "dreamy". He was thinking, almost day-dreaming. Old memories, some happy, some painful, some bitter, some sweet, were crowding on his mind. There was no sharp sound to cut the thread of thought. "Pa," came a voice from the inside and a beautiful boy stepped out. He stared at Prem with his dark, mischievous eyes and then sat on the step lower to the one on which his father was seated. Automatically Prem's hand went up to his son's small curly head and he played his hand on those curls.

To-day was a Sunday and so was a holiday to the office. Old memories were flocking in his mind. A picture came before his mind's eye. The day when he stood erect, haughty and defying before his father and said, "It is no use trying to persuade ME to marry, father—it is in vain. I won't marry. I will be a bachelor". His father's persuasions were powerless against Prem's firmness. "She's a beautiful girl, Prem—she knows cooking, stitching, and everything a wife should know. You are in luck to get such a girl as your wife. Forget your foolish idea of remaining a bachelor. Don't let this chance slip through," his father had said, but the words had fallen on deaf ears. Prem was adamant.

His father had then given it up putting the blame of his son's firmness on his wife but as to hard

words and a row there were none—he was too broad-minded for that. For two years Prem had been firm—extraordinarily firm. His father had never raised the subject again, for he knew that that would be unpleasant both to him and his son. And then Sukanya entered his life, imperceptibly at first. He remembered his first meeting with her. He had gone to a party given by a friend. She—Sukanya—was seated next to him. She was a perfect stranger to him and not a word passed between them. She made no impression on him.

At the tea-party of another friend he had met her again and—by an odd coincidence—she was seated next to him—again there was no exchange of words. But this second time his curiosity had been roused and he had asked his friend who she was. His friend had told him that she was the daughter of Raja Rama Rao, a wealthy merchant. Prem had asked his friend to be introduced and the introduction was done and that began the story. At first only smiles, then greetings, further short conversations and gradually intimate conversation—that was how friendship had grown between them. He remembered his first visit to her house. Everyone of them was polite. Her father had shaken hands with him and her brothers and sisters had done their best to entertain him. His very first impression of the family was good.

He recollected, somewhat faintly, that as soon as he entered his house that day his father had asked him angrily, to Prem's great surprise, where he had been. It was a year later that Prem learned that one of his father's 'friends' had hinted darkly of his going to her house to his father, but Prem was unaware of it then. He had replied truthfully and this had softened his father, though he still

seemed to be suspicious—even broad-minded people are apt to listen to 'friends' sometimes, you know.

She was beautiful, innocent and jolly. He liked her and she seemed to have a liking for him. Yet he did not feel he loved her. Well, she was charming and all that and he liked her, that was all.

The next scene he could recall was of one which happened a year later. He had passed his M.B., B.S. and was on his way to Sukanya's house to tell her the news. He had met that 'friend' of his father's. He—that friend—had cast a side glance at him in a manner he did not like. One wonders how such small incidents fix themselves in one's mind.

Prem had entered the house only to see disorder and confusion in the house—one of her brothers had died of typhoid that afternoon. Oh, that scene of disorder, confusion and mourning! It had made his mind whirl! People passing to and fro, silently gliding about with downcast eyes—Oh, it was horrible! That silent moaning! He had never seen a scene of death before. His mother had died when he was a mere toddling, and this scene had made him sick. Suddenly she had appeared like an angel in hell. She had brought him a chair and begged him to be seated. The scene had made a deep impression on him. Even now he saw himself looking silently at the corpse—and the corpse staring back at him. He had never known that death could be so horrible, before. The red eyes of Sukanya—her silent weeping...

The first time she came to his house—at his earnest request—she had made a good impression on her father by her refined manners. Although he had not noticed it then, now he could understand that merry gleam in his father's eyes. Now and then she visited him on some errand or other. It was then that he found out that he more than 'liked' her. As soon as the sound of carriage-wheels—that peculiar sound which Prem was quick at making out—was heard,

he would run down the steps whatever he might be doing. Even now he could recall the 'swish' of her saree, the thumping of his heart which he experienced at her entrance and then she would enter the hall gracefully with a sweet smile playing on her lips.

His father must have been watching all this, for a month later he had broken his decision of not trying to persuade his son to marry. He had asked him again. Prem had hesitated and said, "No" unwillingly, and his father had smiled. How sweet were those memories! The very next day his father had smilingly said to him, "Prem, everything's settled" and had walked away without explaining the meaning of those mysterious words but—Prem had understood them. How proud he had felt of his father who could understand his son so completely.

The only villain in his love story was that 'friend' of his father's—the last of him Prem saw was in the marriage pandal. A month after his marriage Prem had rented a house, small but without a single dark corner, and had settled there for private practice. He remembered distinctly her anxious face while she stood on the door-step to greet him when returning from the dispensary which was a little far from his home. Her cooking was excellent.

For one year he had lived a happy life with her—the year had flown swiftly. Then he had seen dark clouds gathering on the horizon. His father fell ill, became worse and within a week joined his forefathers—again that horrible scene of death in which he had to take leading part—as yet he was not quite accustomed to such scenes. That scene—mercifully—was quite faint in his mind.

Again a year of perfect bliss. It had seemed as if the dark clouds had melted away. The marriage—the love marriage—was such a great success!—both knew that. He was in the seventh heaven when Sukanya gave birth to a child. "A boy or a girl?" How anxiously he had waited little dreaming that the

dark clouds had gathered without his knowledge. He had seen the nurse come out of the room and say in her grave, steady, sympathetic voice "Sir, a boy, but—" she had hesitated to Prem's great alarm, "but—SHE WON'T LIVE". It was a blow from the blue. Even now the words rang in his ears—"SHE WON'T LIVE"

For the last time he had looked on that calm and smiling face—not ghastly as his father's had been. Again the scene was a blur.

A tear trickled down his cheek and fell on his son's head and was lost among the curly hair—he was

asleep. Since then he had lived all alone with his son—that perfect picture of his wife. He did not feel sorry of his marriage—that success which ended in a tragedy. He did not feel wretched—only a little sad, that was all. Oh, those memories! Those memories—sweet, with a touch of bitterness in them, even that bitterness was changing gradually to sweetness by the effect of time.

Suddenly he heard the bustle on the road; a cool breeze blew—Nature was waking from her sleep.

With his sleeping child over his shoulder Prem entered the house.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND DEMOCRACY

by "DISGUSTED CITIZEN"

FREEDOM of speech and of association is an accepted concept of democracy in the modern world.

British rule was a negation of democracy. To preserve and maintain a system of ruthless exploitation the British denied us all civil liberties. They tried to prevent the national movement from gathering strength and expressing itself, by disarming us, by banning our meetings, by passing measures like the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Under a barbarous Regulation of 1818 they frequently locked up for a lifetime the flower of our patriotic youth. They cast all democratic rights and procedure, even of the capitalist brand, to the winds, and ruled unashamedly in the Rowlatt tradition. They were not of us and were frankly exploiters from a foreign land. Their administrative machinery stood completely isolated from the people. In fact the British rulers were actually afraid of democratic criticism—and they tried to suppress it in every way. Rule by ordinance, detentions without trial, and a free use of the Malabar Special Police Force—these were the methods of an imperialism trying desperately to keep a people down.

But the national movement led by the Congress in those days was never cowed down by the restric-

tions. It waged a relentless fight against the hateful ordinance raj. The demand for full civil liberties became a vital issue in the fight of the Indian people against the British, for freedom and democracy. Congress leaders of the eminence of Pandit Nehru were in the forefront of the work of the Civil Liberties Union. Consequently, with the transfer of power to Indian hands one had a right to expect an enlargement of the democratic rights of the people and a repeal of all repressive legislation, as the first step of an Indian Government. That would really indicate that the British have actually quit and that we have made a complete break with the British tradition of ruling the people. But what is actually happening is exactly the opposite. This is a matter of acute concern to everyone who fought for freedom in the people's ranks in the past.

The penal enactments made by the British still remain with us. In fact such of them as were about to lapse have been given a new lease of life by our legislatures.

Recently the Criminal Law Amendment Act has been requisitioned to outlaw many organisations of workers and peasants.

In our own province, (as all over India now), a new enactment called the Maintenance of Public

Safety Act disfigures the statute book. It is only the hated Defence of India Act reborn under a new name with a hundred worse provisions. That it is being operated not by alien exploiters but by the elected representatives of a people underlines sharply a complete disavowal of all the pledges given to the people by the Congress leadership in the past. This 'Public Safety' Act provides for indefinite detentions without trial. The police and the magistracy are given the widest powers to cart away to jails whomsoever they want "to have put away" at the instance of local moneybags. The mass arrests of peaceful strikers under this abnormal piece of legislation—as has happened at Coimbatore, Madura, Tanjore, Negapatam, Pollachi and other places—have well nigh become a scandal. No longer need the police bother about a proper prosecution based on the necessary evidence to warrant an arrest. A more blatant usurpation of the powers of the judiciary by the executive can hardly be imagined.

Not content with this, a new and further measure of repressive legislation (aptly called by a member in the Legislative Assembly "the shoot-to-kill Act"), has been passed in our province recently. This gives extraordinary powers to the police force and empowers sub-inspectors to shoot at crowds at sight without the previous permission of a magistrate as was obligatory hitherto. It was speciously urged by a sponsor of the Act that it was intended solely as a safeguard against communal disturbances. But this can deceive none who knows the political set-up in the South. In actual practice these extraordinary powers have been used only to shoot or intimidate workers and peasants when they go on strike.

It is a very sad commentary on the administration of a Congress Ministry that it should find recourse to the ordinary law utterly inadequate and have to invoke daily ordinances and special legislation to maintain itself in office. Far from advancing on the road to de-

mocracy we seem to be going away from it.

Take again the right to hold public meetings. There has been a drastic curtailment of the right of the common man to express himself at meetings. Should speakers at public meetings transgress the limits of fair criticism the provisions of the ordinary law of the land are always there to bring delinquents to book. Should the public be misinformed on any particular issue by anyone it is open to a Ministry which claims to represent the people, to tell the public the truth and dispel all doubts. But our Ministry gave up such democratic methods of rallying the people, long ago. On the other hand public meetings are discouraged as much as possible and free expression of opinion stifled. A record of the last two years will indicate how Section 144 is clamped down on the people in district after district for months on end, on some pretext or other. When Section 144 is not in free use some other prohibitory order is always there. For instance, permission before meetings under the Police Act or under an ordinance is always enjoined but such permission is never conceded by the local authorities if they know it will mean a criticism of the Government or the expression of the grievances of the toiling people and a demand for the curtailment of the rights of the privileged few.

In recent months the trade union and the kisan movements have been the worst to suffer by the curtailment of this right of free speech and open criticism. In the Tanjore district, a continuing prohibitory order has banned all kisan sabha meetings for nearly two years now. In so important a place as Coimbatore, forty thousand strikers are completely disarmed for more than 3 months by the imposition of Section 144 and thus prevented from freely expressing their opinion and explaining the issues involved in the strike and rallying public opinion against the obdurate and anti-social millowners and a Government which is blindly backing them up. The millowners or those who urge workers to go back to work have alone been permitted to hold meetings.

We have really come to a stage when a Congress Government is actually growing afraid of criticism and is beginning to turn away from the masses. It is increasingly difficult to see Ministers of Government or Congress leaders of the province addressing mass rallies and seeking public opinion for their measures. They are usually content with radio talks, press conferences and innocuous social gatherings. The pattern of advice tendered to the public is by now familiar, namely, of the need to support Government and to realise its difficulties and extolling the merits of officials who are old hands at suppressing a people thirsting for democracy and freedom. The reliance on a rigid administrative bureaucracy rather than on the representations of the people in practice has tended to render all talk about the need for public support nothing but empty platitudes.

The latest moves of the Government have been specifically directed against the Communist Party. But failure to put up the arrested detenus to open trial, frequent raids on the offices of trade union and kisan organisations and the residences of Communists or their sympathisers at dead of night, again and again, reflect only the utterly panicky and hand-to-mouth existence which the Ministry is leading today. It is no longer deriving strength and sanction from the masses of the people who placed it in power but is choosing to rely more on executive fiat and the police bludgeon. A Communist daily from Calicut read by thousands of readers is banned with a stroke of the pen. Why was it not possible for Government to prosecute the editor for the commission of any specific offence in the publication of the paper? Demands for heavy security have invariably been made and insisted on in the case of such papers. In any other country this will be called the persecution of a political party by the party in power. Even such democratic rights as one has been accustomed to have been given such short shrift that the Communist movement has had no option except to go underground.

It is likely to be urged that the conferment of civil liberties should not mean unbridled licence to upset "law and order" and that the abnormal proceedings resorted to by the Government are warranted by the abnormal conditions of life today and by the activities of those against whom they are directed.

But one has only to see the sinister thread which characterises all these pieces of repressive legislation. One and all of them are directed against the common people and their movements for a better life. They are invoked to protect the vested interests against the rising anger of a dispossessed and hungry people. We have not come across any instance of a profiteer or a blackmarketeer being sent for detention without trial. On the other hand the famous phrase of Pandit Nehru uttered before the advent of Congress to office—"Hang the black-marketeers"—has become such a good joke that the people who use it most are the blackmarketeers themselves! But the Public Safety Act is promptly in evidence if an underpaid clerk or a toiling worker or a sweated kisan so much as thinks of his union meeting to express his grievances or to consider a strike. Not much scrutiny is needed to see that under the cover of suppressing the Communists and under the pretext of maintaining law and order and of putting down "violence", an attack on every democratic movement for bread and jobs is being rapidly mounted. Recent events have demonstrated beyond all doubt that all this talk of maintaining peace is only another name for maintaining intact the exploitation of the big mirasdars of Tanjore, the rapacious millowners of Coimbatore, the traditionally anti-national zamindars, the feudal jemmies and all their kind—at a time when millions of people all over the province are facing unemployment, wage-cuts, starvation or death.

Again, the right to form trade unions and the right to strike are recognised democratic rights. But the Government is actively pursuing a policy of championing the Indian National Trade Union Congress.

sponsored by the Indian capitalist class against unions of the workers' own choice. The non-gazetted officers of Government are threatened with loss of jobs if their union functions except within the limits permitted by the Government. Any and every industry is now and again declared a public utility—not for greater control over employers in the public interest—but to declare any contemplated strike therein an illegal strike in advance and to proceed to crush it with the repressive machinery of the State.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that not only are civil liberties not enlarged but that they are actually being suppressed.

This suppression of civil liberties is not an accident. It is a dangerous portent of the direction in which the Congress leadership and the Ministry in office are going. It is no accident that the current year's provincial budget provides for Rs. 6 crores and 40 lakhs as police expenses. The actual expenses during the

war years ranged from about Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 1½ crores and reached about Rs. 3 crores in 1945 after the end of the war. The Ministry has forsworn its pledges completely and become a handmaid of the vested interests. The Ministry is deliberately treading the path of suppressing with force the trade union and the kisan movements instead of seeking strength from them.

We are being led not to democracy but to a police State under which only exploiters can thrive and everybody else will be put down. The suppression of civil liberties is only the first shot in this direction. That the Communists alone are the immediate target of attack need deceive none. The Left forces in the country should rouse public opinion to demand a reversal of this policy of the Ministry before it is too late. With the present repressive measures continuing to exist, it is idle to talk of elections or a free vote.

Without full civil liberties Democracy becomes a sham.



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.

Gnanambika Mill Agents 'Startled'

We have had the opportunity of looking into your issue of 27th March 1948 and we are taken back by the false and misleading statements given under the heading "Textile Crisis in Coimbatore—Analysis of Facts and Motives" by Mr. G. N. Srinivasa Raghavan.

It is a well known fact that the Gnanambika Mills is the only one mill that is working successfully the interim work loads of the Standardisation Committee under the management of V. C. Velungiri Gounder & Brothers and we want to point out the incorrect and misleading statements your Mr. G. N. S. Raghavan has made in his article styled as "The Lone Exception." He writes that most of the workers in the said Mill are drawn from the families of the tenants of the Managing Agents which is not at all the fact. There are only 11 workers who come from the families of the tenants of the total number of 513 hands and they all come from 24 villages surrounding the Mill and are of different castes and creeds. The second false statement is that the unpleasantness of the retrenchment has been got over by finding employment on their lands for those retrenched. No worker who is retrenched has been employed on the land at all.

Third point with regard to the carding: Before the Standardisation scheme was introduced about 7 to 10 carding engines were looked after by one hand and now 14 have to be looked after. The fourth and most startling point is that the strength of our 20s. was from 55 to 60 lbs. breaking strength. We are not at all spinning 20s. count.

Under the circumstances will you please see that these false and misleading startling statements are withdrawn and the real facts as given by us are published.

MANAGING AGENTS,
The Gnanambika Mills, Limited.
Coimbatore.

G. N. Srinivasa Raghavan Writes:

Four points are made by the Gnanambika Mills management in the course of their attempted refutation of some of the statements in my article on the Coimbatore textile crisis.

First, it is claimed that only 11 out of the 513 workers come from the families of the tenants working on the Managing Agents' lands. Secondly, it

is claimed that no retrenched worker has been provided with employment on these lands.

Both these claims are totally at variance with the information that I gathered from some of the Gnanambika workers themselves, as well as from many citizens of Coimbatore.

The third point is about the carding section. The Managing Agents claim that "about 7 to 10" carding engines used to be looked after by a single worker, and they admit that "now 14 have to be looked after." It was stated in my article that "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." The facts will speak for themselves: before the interim scheme of standardisation was implemented 4 workers were employed to look after the 28 carding engines in the Gnanambika Mills; now the work is done by 2 men.

Finally, the Managing Agents say "We are not at all spinning 20s count." This statement is amazing. When I visited the Gnanambika Mills, the manager sent one of his men along with me to take me round and explain things. This guide told me that 20s count was among the different qualities of yarn produced in the Mills. I saw row after row of spinning machines producing yarn stated to be of that count. I saw, in the packing department, bundle after bundle of finished yarn stamped "20s". In the weighing room, a typed copy of the Government specification of yarn strength was pasted on a pillar. It read: "20s—70 lbs." The weighing clerk proceeded to demonstrate to me the strength of some 20s yarn produced in the Mills by straining it on the machine. When the yarn snapped, during the two demonstrations, at between 55 and 60 lbs., he did some awkward explaining about the machines "running on the light side" or something to that effect.

I can quite understand that the Managing Agents of the Gnanambika Mills should have found the portion of my article dealing with their Mills "startling". But their assertions do not render my statements "false and misleading." In these circumstances there is no question of withdrawing the statements.

J. P. And The Communists.

The views of the leader of the Socialist Party Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan, on the Communist Party of India were reported in "Swatantra" dated April 10th; Communists were described as "fifth columnists and agents of a foreign power with no loyalty to their country" J.P. is further reported to have said: "It is perhaps not correct to speak of the Communist Party as a leftist party at all; since it will support imperialism, Fascism, or American capitalism according as the needs of Russian foreign policy might demand."

Even the strongest indictment of Pandit Nehru of the Communists was only that they were engaged in efforts associated with acquisition of arms and violence to overthrow the existing Government.

Readers of "Swatantra" are aware that it never criticised the Communist Party as 'fifth columnists and agents of a foreign power and that they are anti-Indian'. On the other hand "Swatantra" has been paying tribute to the intelligence and the patriotic services of that party to the toiling masses of our country.

"Peoples Age" in its issue dated April 4 described J. P's condemnation as a type of propaganda characteristic of Goebbels and his friends, and of the British and American imperialists.

Well, it is up to disinterested journalism to lay bare the entire truth about the character of Communist leadership in India. Does "Swatantra" share and support the views given expression to by the leader of the Socialist Party of India? If it does, can "Swatantra" quote any evidence from the statements of Indian Communists or its press to substantiate J.P's charges against the Communist Party of India?

If "Swatantra" has no evidence and does not share the views of J.P., I feel it would do justice to the Communist Party by stating that J.P's views are his own.

The man-in-the-street believes that the Communist Party in India is organised to support the cause of the Indian masses—the peasants, the workers and the intellectuals who make their living by physical or mental strain. They know that the Communist Party fights against exploitation by wealthy landlords, princes and money magnates. The party that supports the toiling masses as against the wealthy landlords and capitalists naturally enjoys the confidence of the masses.

If what J.P. has said about the Communist Party is true, surely it is time that the press which has a duty

by the people enlightened the gullible public as to how they might be cheated by the Communists to be converted into camp-followers of the U.S.S.R. In all earnestness, I venture to appeal to "Swatantra"—for it has earned the reputation of being a fearless journal upholding whatever is just and right and condemning anything unbecoming and likely to disturb and distort truth—to inform its readers how much respect J. P's statement deserves; and if there is enough material to question the bonafides and patriotism of at least some of the important Communist leaders of India.

Dr. D. SUBBARAO.

Chicacole.

(See editorial)

An Aberration To Be Checked.

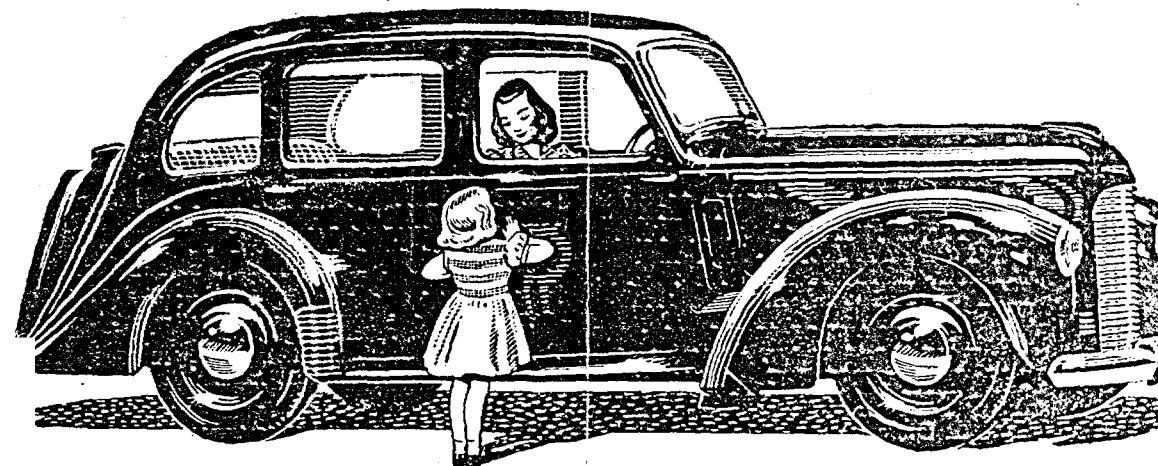
It is very surprising that from the pen of Mr. Khasa Subba Rau comes the editorial comment "Triumph of an aberration" published in "Swatantra" of 3rd April 1948. It may tend to disturb and weaken the already weakened race. Solidarity in thought, word and deed are highly essential throughout the country. When one believes that communal warfare is undesirable, one should cement differences between class and class. "Justicites" cannot be labelled as "Justicites" for ever. And so also the "Leaguers". If an erstwhile Leaguer joins the Congress and wins the confidence of a majority and becomes the leader, against an opposing Congress candidate, how can any Government interfere? To do so will be undemocratic. Under Mr. Churchill's leadership, the World War Number Two was won. England will want him as Premier again when the World War Number Three breaks out, but not during peace time. Similar is the case here.

It will be real statesmanship if thoughtful men like Subba Rau and Prakasam examine the causes of this class ill-will and seek to reconcile the differences. Have not both Brahmmins and Non-Brahmins contributed for the attainment of the otherwise unattainable Swaraj? Should both not again contribute to sustain it? Will Brahmin conferences and Non-Brahmin conferences help the country in this regard?

Mr. Prakasam's services are essential elsewhere now. Who else can tackle the Hyderabad question at this stage? Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali is about to plunge into the stormy ocean (of Hyderabad struggle) in the absence of other help to the sufferers. Mr. Prakasam should help her. He cannot give this help as Madras Premier.

SWAMI BALANANDA.

Rajahmunda



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