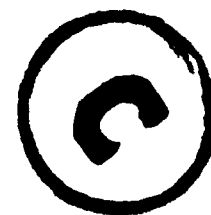


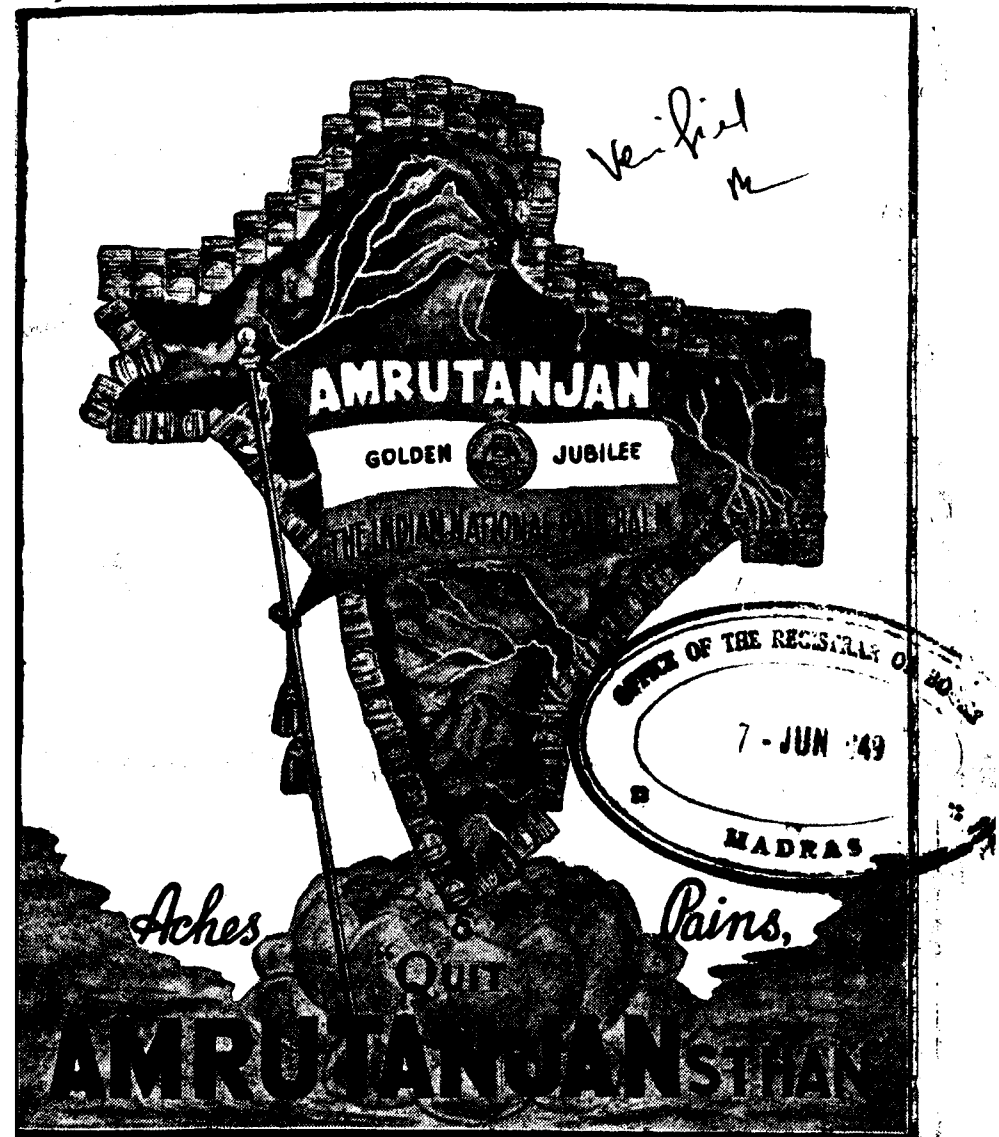
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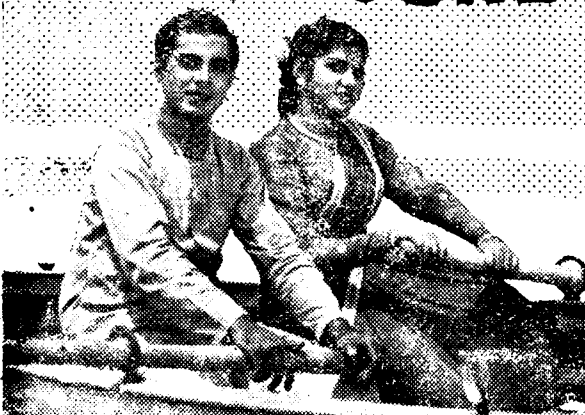


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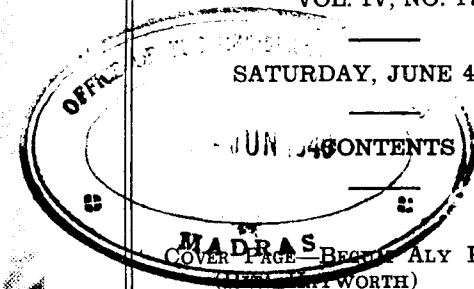
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SWATANTRA

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SWATANTRA

VOL. IV
No. 17

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1949

ISSUED
WEEKLY

ON OMISSION IN A MISSION

Rajaji our G.G. came

A thousand miles and more

To see and bless the spot at which

A Saint had sat of yore.

. . .

The Saint himself alive, though ill,

Was near for all mankind

To see, but he, our G.G.-ji

A visit to Him declined.

. . .

O, wise beyond the common run

Our politicians are....

The waxing, waning moon to them

Are more than sun or star.

—AJAX



AID TO BURMA

THE representatives at Rangoon of Britain, India and Pakistan are now engaged in drawing up a plan of material and financial aid to the Burmese Government. Ceylon is also associated with this move to help Burma, though, due to the absence of diplomatic relationship between the two countries, no Ceylonese representative has taken part in the consultations at Rangoon. A curious situation has thus emerged in which four Commonwealth nations are concerting measures in aid of a Government which only recently chose to sever all links with the Commonwealth.

An obvious feature of the proposed aid is that it has a political and not purely humanitarian significance. It will not be in the nature of help to a whole people suffering from some common misfortune like famine. On the contrary, the present Government of Burma is sought to be supported as against certain other Burmese groups which are in revolt against it. Such intervention in aid of the Government of a country torn by civil war is not without recent precedents. In Greece and in China, after the end of World War II, the respective Governments have received large-scale assistance, from the U. S., in their fight against Communist rebels. But the analogy, fortunately, does not extend far.

Due to a vital difference in the character of the parties at strife, there is no identity between the situation in Burma on the one hand, and Greece and China on the other. Experience has shown that the Governments of Greece and China are difficult to defend physically against

rebellion to the same degree that they are difficult to defend morally. The judgment of non-partisan critics is clear and unanimous that these Governments are the tools of narrow and selfish property interests, corrupt and hopelessly inefficient in administration. In China, particularly, the Kuomintang regime is daily proving itself moribund. Now, the Burmese Government has been called amateurish, immature and quixotic—but not wicked. Unlike Greece and KMT China, where much of the trouble is the result of their domination by politicians of the extreme Right-wing, Burma is ruled by sincere if inexperienced reformers and revolutionaries. A considerable part of the Burmese Government's difficulties is the result of its own excessive Left-wing political zeal. An example is the dislocation caused by the sudden and ill-prepared nationalisation of the foreign-owned Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. The Communists say, of course, that Thakin Nu and his supporters are merely self-styled Socialists; even so, it may be noted that Tsaldaris and Chiang Kai-shek have never even pretended to be Socialists!

A secondary point of difference is that the rebels in Burma are not all of them implacable Communists. Great as is the confusion created by the large number and variety of the rebel groups in Burma, the chances of settlement with some of them are considerable. The Burmese rebels are, in the long view, mutually disparate. It may prove possible for the three radical groups—the White Flag Communists, Red Flag Communists and White Band P.V.O.'s—to make a

lasting alliance. But these Left-wing groups have little in common with the politically less sophisticated insurgents like the Karens, Arakanese Muslims and Mon hillmen. With these latter, it should not be very difficult for the Government to reach a settlement, as was shown by the recent truce, unfortunately short-lived, with the Karens and by the reported success of the Government's peace mission in Arakan.

These factors suggest that, in comparison with the aid extended by the U. S. to Greece and China, the projected Commonwealth aid to Burma might prove practically more effective in ending the civil war. What is more important, this move to aid Thakin Nu's Government will not offend (whereas the aid to the Greek and Chinese Governments does offend) democratic and liberal opinion. This is a vital point in any consideration of Pandit Nehru's Burma policy. It may also be pointed out that India's collaboration with Britain in aiding Burma need not and does not signify a total and unqualified adherence to the Anglo-American bloc.

From Pandit Nehru's statements on the subject, it is clear that India's interest in Burma is not that of a combatant in the Cold War between the blocs. As a neighbouring nation, desiring peace on our borders, we are legitimately concerned at the prevailing lawlessness in Burma. It may spread across the border, especially into Assam where some of the local tribes are being incited to raise demands for autonomy similar to those of the tribal insurgents in Burma. The danger is also real of arms, and armed Communists, finding their way into India—and Bengal's fiery Communists will doubtless welcome such reinforcements. Pakistan is also motivated by much the same fears as India.

Britain's desire to see a stable non-Communist regime in Burma can be traced to her difficulties in Malaya. The majority of the Communist insurgents in Malaya are Chinese, and the

rapid south-ward advance of the Red armies in China threatens a link-up with the Malayan insurgents, via Burma, which Britain would much like to frustrate. Moreover, for Britain (but not for India), the move to aid the Burmese Government is part of an active global policy of resisting Communism.

These considerations which have impelled the Commonwealth powers to offer aid are familiar enough; what is remarkable is that the same Burmese Government which decided to break away from the Commonwealth has now sought and accepted aid from that quarter. This seeming anomaly is on a par with India's decision to remain in the Commonwealth. Both are explained by the remarkably quick disappearance of hostility and distrust between Britain and the countries from which she withdrew, at the end of the last war, with infinite prudence and grace. The psychological change is due, however, not only to the wise policy pursued by the Labour Government in respect of India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma. The change is equally the result of aggressive Communist action which now threatens the infant democracies of these countries as much as it threatens surviving British interests in South-East Asia. The common danger has served to hasten the process of reconciliation and friendship between Britain and the four countries which were until the other day under British rule. This association between countries of the East and West is rich in its possibilities of constructive co-operation. But these possibilities cannot be realised unless the nations avoid the wasteful and futile course of expending all their resources on military suppression of the Communists. Their co-operation will be fruitful only if, in addition to the use of the minimum necessary force against rebels, they organise a campaign to eradicate the mass poverty and backwardness which are now the most potent allies of Communism in Asia.

Sotto Voce

The Man Of Imagination



I'm no villain....I've got imagination, that's all," said Mr. Sydney Cotton in a mood of romantic self-pity, after having paid the modest fine imposed by the Bow Street magistrate for infringing the international air code. By his gun-running exploits in Hyderabad he did all that one man could to ruin the peace and prosperity of millions. The British public which can beat the moral big drum as loud as any other preserved a remarkably discreet silence while this Australian adventurer was so assiduously promoting war. Indeed the cheap press invested him with something of the mysterious halo of the Scarlet Pimpernel.

And now long after the Hyderabad incident has been forgotten by everybody except the Pakistan delegation at Lake Success, the British authorities have, with their proverbial regard for due process, prosecuted Cotton for a technical offence and obtained a conviction. The fact that he was assisted in his gun-running by a score of British airmen, mostly ex-R. A. F. personnel, was not even mentioned in court. Cotton has boasted, "If it was mere money I wanted I could have made much more on the Berlin air lift." It was pure philanthropy, it seems, that drove him to risk having four of his Lancasters impounded and his air licence cancelled. I should not be surprised if the countrymen of Drake and Hawkins should see in him, as they saw in General Dyer, a fit object for their generous admiration.

"Cotton is a man of exceptional character," said his counsel. And counsel for the prosecution admitted

that he was "a man of an adventurous nature, particularly so when it means bringing money into his and his company's pocket." Men like Cotton appeal to a standard of values which exalts success above everything else. If during his expeditions to Hyderabad his aircraft had been intercepted and shot down, I suppose nobody in the country where he has now been let off so lightly would have been anxious to make a fuss about it. The connection with the Nizam's gold would then have been painfully evident. But, after all, he managed to get away with it. What is more, he tweaked the nose, as it were, of India's Defence Department.

The principal difference between the days of Robin Hood and the era of the international adventurer is that the latter can have all the elbow-room he requires within the elastic bounds of the law. Far from regarding the State as the enemy, he often sets out to make himself its master. In the days when the State was but a subordinate agent of society the outlaw could not hope to dominate society by capturing the State machinery. He was therefore content to play the villain. That was the only intelligent relationship he could establish with it.

Senor Peron is notable even in a continent which is famous for its Fuehrer breed. In Argentina he and his worthy spouse have established a personal sway which is more absolute, because it is based on the power of cash, than that of any other practitioner of the art. He has made air time prohibitively costly to his political opponents. But his Government spent last year a hundred million

pesos for propaganda. Even more interesting in view of what happened in Calcutta the other day, it spent "fifty million on cider, cakes and small gifts to be bestowed upon the populace by the Senor and the Senora."

It is a great advantage to be able to create wealth, and a greater to destroy it. His critics, including the famous newspaper *La Prensa*, have discovered to their chagrin that the President has perfected the art of hitting a man through the belly, as we say in this country. Senor Peron is now taking an interest in India which to my old-fashioned mind is ominous. These dictators are apt to regard the existence of free communities anywhere as a reproach to themselves, even as the roue thinks the existence of chaste women a challenge to his skill in corruption. They are never more to be dreaded than when they set out to please.

Veritable lions at home, they can coo like the suckling dove abroad.

Senor Peron and his agents, being such convinced believers in the bread and circus idea, have tried it out here on a small scale. On Argentina's Independence Day her Consul in Calcutta planted himself in one of the city's poorest and most crowded quarters. His big car was filled with neat packages each containing a dhoti or a sari and in addition a portrait of Senor and Senora Peron. Within a few moments of its being known that they were to be distributed free and that there were cash presents too, he was being besieged by thousands whose hungry hands and cadaverous faces must hugely gratify the charitable Senor when he sees the photographs. But will Delhi be equally gratified?

VIGHNESWARA.

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SIDELIGHTS : :

O that estates, degrees and offices
were not derived corruptly, and that
clear honour were purchased by the
merit of the wearer.
—SHAKESPEARE.

AMERICAN observers have testified that the Chinese Communists are freer from corruption than any party that has yet come into power in China. They doubt however whether the Communists can maintain the same standards of party purity in the big cities as they have maintained in the villages where temptations are few and detection easy. The Government of Chiang Kai-Shek owed its decline no doubt to military defeat, but more than military defeat it was the moral decay of its leaders that led to its downfall. At one time Chiang was a national hero in China quite as much as our Pandit Nehru now is in India. It was the progressive effect of the corrupting influence of power on the leaders of the Chiang regime that alienated them from the people and made victory an easy walk-over for the Communists.

Observers have attributed the strength of the Chinese Communists to their tight system of mass organisation and regimentation. Individuals are made to feel that it is their duty to expose corrupt persons. The technique of it is illustrated in this anecdote from the Communist press: "A railway porter named Liu helped a passenger through a car window and then demanded 200 people's dollars before handing over the passenger's luggage. A staff member of the Military Control Commission saw the incident and pointed out Liu's selfishness. Liu was moved. He admitted his mistake. But other porters thought he should be laid off for a week of introspection and self-advancement. This incident led to a meeting of all porters in which they confessed their past faults under Kuomintang rule and pointed out the mistakes of other porters. Mutual criticism took place in a friendly atmosphere characteristic of the

class. Thus the political awakening of all red caps has been enhanced."

In their efforts to improve public morals the Chinese Communists rely on their system of mass organisation, but people in the big cities are not so susceptible to thought-control as the unsophisticated village folk, and as visualised by American prophets of doom, the problem of the Chinese Communists is to defeat corruption before their own moral standards are undermined.

The moral standards of the Chiang Government were undermined before they could defeat corruption. The Chiang Government contributed to the strength of the Communists with the revulsion of public feeling caused by the misgovernment due to their corruption. Had they been less corrupt they would have been better able to deal with the Communist attack on their power more effectively.

There is no Government so strong that it cannot be undermined by corruption. Not all the brilliant military talent of Chiang Kai-Shek and the guns and arms and dollars (thrown into its aid) of the mightiest of modern nations, could save the Kuomintang against the devitalising effects of its own corruption. The fate of the Congress in India hangs now in the same balance of history. The problem of the Congress is to defeat corruption before its own moral standards are completely undermined.

No impartial observer can help feeling that deterioration in the moral standards of Congress leaders, especially Ministers, has been progressing rapidly. In this province, at any rate, the periodical publication of lists of dismissed peons, constables and similar functionaries by way of punishment for corruption has failed to put up the credit of the prevailing

Government in the esteem of the public. They feel that the subordinates without power and influence are made an example of, while the worst offenders in superior positions are allowed to go scot-free—that the pilfering of a few rupees by the needy and the hard-pressed is made much of while the loot of lakhs by the affluent is winked at.

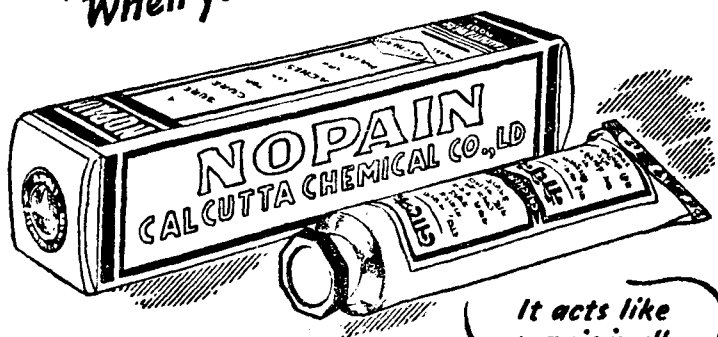
The changes of portfolios just announced among Madras Ministers do not seem to have been happily conceived. It is doubtful if the relegation of the Public Health portfolio to a doctor is sound in principle. Jealousies and rivalries abound profusely in a competitive profession like medicine, and there is grave danger of their being ploughed into the administration with an ex-doctor as

Minister. Education is an important subject that needs the entire devotion of a single Minister. The allocation of the portfolios of Education, Legal, Courts and Prisons to one Minister will mean that none can be properly attended to. The disposal of the Finance portfolio is the most deplorable part of the arrangements. Finance cannot be window-dressed. It is not a subject in which pose can suffice as a substitute for fitness. Special education is needed for grasp of the subject. It is not safe to allow dabblers to monkey with the finances of a province. I overheard the other day a pavement-walker saying that the Finance Minister was going to levy a tax on unmarried daughters. That seems to sum up the estimate of the man in the street about our financial future.—SAKA.

Lowell Thomas tells of one of his most embarrassing experiences, which occurred one day at a newsreel showing. Thomas had done the commentary on a scene in a Navy yard, and on another scene which showed a well-known society woman at the races.

Somehow the sound tracks got scrambled, and as the picture of the society matron appeared on the screen, Thomas was horrified to hear his own voice boom out: "This old battleship will soon be hauled into dry dock for repairs."

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COMPLAINTS OF CORRUPTION

By S. PARTHASARATHY

ONE can agree without any hesitation with Prime Minister Nehru in his statement that complaints of corruption against Ministers are as often exaggerated or without foundation as they are true. But this is true not only of complaints against Ministers but also of complaints against officials, merchants and businessmen. While it is good to caution people against accepting the truth of complaints against Ministers without calling for proofs, we must remember that we have not been equally circumspect when charges were made against merchants and businessmen. Our language of caution should not therefore be capable of being interpreted to mean that the public and the press should tread on the Ministers softly when complaints against them reach their ears. The Ministers are, to use a thread-worn phrase, the fountain-heads of administration; and the prevalence of corruption at the fountain-head is likely to pollute the stream.

One must also admit that no Government or Ministry can inspire confidence with the public so long as complaints of corruption against it are circulating with the public. And today, more than at any other time, it has become essential that our Governments and Ministers should retain the full confidence of the public. For the propagandist for Communism relies for his success in attracting members not so much on any inherent merits of the Communist form of government but in tearing away the veil of sanctity and respect attaching to organised government. We are not going to stop Communism by repression, political alliances and public speeches. We are not even going to stop it by bettering the economic conditions in the country, for poverty has been with us always. We are only going to stop it by winning back the confidence which the public gave to the Government wholeheartedly on 15th August 1947, and by continuing to retain it in the fullest measure. Let us take the case of Madras Ministers. We have given considerable publicity to the fact that complaints of corrup-

tion have been made against some of them and are pending with the Congress High Command uninvestigated for more than an year. The new Premier of Madras, Babu Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, Sri Prakasam and the newspapers have all referred to the existence of complaints. Can any Ministry retain public confidence under such circumstances, irrespective of the question whether the complaints are true or untrue? Does not the man in the street incline to believe in the adage: 'No smoke without a fire'? The veriest tyro in politics would have ordered an immediate investigation of the complaints in a confidential manner until the stage is reached when a prima facie case is established. Are we not entitled to say that these eminent politicians are propagandists for Communism because by their public references unaccompanied by any action, they are destroying the confidence of the people in the Ministry? The Ministry is equally to blame, for if the complaints are untrue, they should have demanded instant investigation so that they may stand cleared. As a protest against the neglect of the High Command to provide them with that opportunity, they should have resigned in a body.

The people who disseminate stories of corruption are few. The people who do not complain of corruption even where it exists are many. For instance, in any small town or village for a citizen to make a complaint against the local official is to court martyrdom. A retail shopkeeper would rather submit to a charge of blackmarketing than complain against his wholesale supplier for fear of his supplies being cut off. There are the bus and taxi drivers, street vendors, consignors by railway and others in similar positions who prefer to pay the mamool for the time being to those who permit them to do their business without hindrance. The measures imposed by wartime controls have as Nehru said resulted in the further spread of corruption. Here again, while complaints of high prices have been

made, complaints of corruption have not been given publicity. A manufacturer of yarn or an importer of fertilisers for instance has never bothered to complain against the Government though they may have ordered distribution of such commodities not through the usual trade channels but through favourites who have blossomed into ad hoc traders in such commodities. The establishment of Congress Ministries has also resulted in the creation of a new class of persons with considerable potentiality for corrupting public administration. They are the members of the Congress hierarchy of officials and are to be found in every small town. They have assumed an officio-political status and have arrogated to themselves authority to give directions to local officials. Where, as in Andhra, these men do not all represent the ministerial group but go under the label of being either A or B or C's men, they have succeeded in creating in the places where they live a situation whereby the people and the local officials are subjected to a kind of chaotic tyranny.

The few people who complain of corruption are the politicians and businessmen complaining against their opponents and rivals, the sour-minded men who always nurse a grouse against those placed more advantageously in life, the rare citizen who does it out of a high sense of civic duty and lastly the man who seeks an opportunity to rehabilitate a tarnished character. It is inevitable that complaints made out of motives resulting from political or business rivalry should contain a large admixture of exaggeration and falsity. The complaints that are being exploited by the Communists are those genuine complaints circulating in a whispered way in the small towns and villages and the exaggerated complaints of publicity-mad politicians against their own party-men.

Unless our high-ranking politicians are going to develop an almost fanatical zeal to rid the country's administration of not merely genuine corruption, but also of rumours of corruption, it will become increasingly difficult to enforce obedience and respect to governmental authority. The quietus to any rumour of corrup-

tion in high circles cannot be administered by merely ignoring it or by glossing over it but by thoroughly investigating it and exposing its falsity or otherwise.

At present, we are choosing the personnel of our Ministries much in the same way as an eccentric old man who did not believe in washing chose the clothes he had to wear every day. He used to pick out the least dirty of the clothes for the day's wear and when it became dirtier than the rest he would fold it carefully and keep it in the wardrobe to be used again when it appeared cleaner than the rest. Corruption on a large scale is not inevitable in public life nor is it inevitable even under the operation of war-time controls. Prime Minister Nehru has referred to United Kingdom as the sole exception. Should we not try to be another exception? If United Kingdom is an exception, it is because its public men and its press do not spare men suspected of corruption from facing a fair trial to clear their characters. More than the complaints of corruption voiced by politicians, it is the corruption in the wide countryside that has found no voice to complain in public, that should be tracked down and exterminated. And there again, one should not be content with merely punishing the last poor link. There is some justification for the popular complaint that the arm of the law spares the rich and influential criminal.

With the object lesson provided by the Chiang-Kai-Shek administration before us, it must be the constant and anxious vigil of our administrators to maintain the highest purity in administration at the present time. Whether in dispensing Government aid or in choosing applicants for posts in Government, our administrators cannot assume the complacency of the two Victorian statesmen of England, who are reported to have conversed as follows. One said: 'Qualifications being equal, I prefer my relations to others in the matter of appointment.' The other said: 'Qualifications being equal-be damned, I always prefer my relations.' Ministers unlike private individuals cannot be content merely with doing what they consider right; the people must also be convinced that they are doing things rightly.

PUBLIC ENQUIRIES

By S. RAJAGOPALAN

IT is difficult to commend the procedure which is proposed to be adopted to enquire into the allegations against some members of the Madras Ministry, and one feels that certain wholesome precedents and principles in that regard have not been strictly adhered to. Amongst Congressmen few can excel Sri Shankar Rao Deo in ability and integrity and no one can for a moment doubt that an enquiry held under his distinguished auspices will be anything but a just and fair one. But in democratic constitutions a wholly different procedure has been followed. In England there have been two enquiries, both when Labour was in power, which were both judicial and public. Even in our country, in 1938, Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee of the Calcutta High Court was deputed to enquire into the conduct of Mr. M. Y. Sheriff of the C. P. Cabinet for having remitted the sentence in what was known as the "Wardha Rape Case."

Enquiries are either judicial, public or administrative. A judicial enquiry differs essentially from a public enquiry, and both are very dissimilar to an administrative enquiry. In a judicial enquiry, the objective is to find out the truth, and everything is designed (or even sacrificed) to that end. The judge is, generally speaking, independent of the executive. The parties are afforded legal assistance. Witnesses are examined on oath and can be proceeded against for wilful abstention and perjury. The parties, their witnesses and their lawyers have a sort of immunity or privilege (which is absolute in England and very nearly so in India) against actions for libel or slander. The judge can compel production of necessary materials and punish wilful disobedience or contempt. Above all, the enquiry is public, that is to say, it is held in a public place to which, it has been laid down, the public should have access. Some years ago, a divorce action in which a Minister of State was involved, was tried by a High Court Judge in ALBERTA in his library chambers

wherein was affixed a signboard marked "PRIVATE." The proceedings were nullified by the Privy Council on the ground that they were not 'public'. The judges regarded publicity as the "authentic hallmark of justice" and declined to permit even "the slightest inroad" on it. Furthermore the decision in a judicial enquiry is subject to appeal and review by the higher tribunals. On the other hand, a public enquiry may not be strictly "judicial" in the sense that the decision arrived at therein might be appealed therefrom, but nevertheless it partakes (at any rate, in England) of the nature of a judicial enquiry. Thus, the two public enquiries against Mr. J. H. Thomas and Mr. John Belcher were conducted by a High Court Judge in office. The Crown was represented by the Attorney-General and the main contending parties were also represented by counsel. Witnesses were examined and cross-examined and the whole proceedings were open to the press and public. That this procedure enabled both the Government and the public to get at the truth is a solid fact. Indeed the utility of public enquiries in this regard can hardly be exaggerated. In India, it was due to the public nature of the Hunter Commission enquiry on the Amritsar tragedy and to the skilful cross-examination by one of its members, Mr. Justice Rankin, that the world at large came to know how Dyer "shot and shot till ammunition ran short." Recently, in Mysore, the B. N. Gopal Rao enquiry, (which is both a judicial and a public enquiry) has enabled a major financial catastrophe to be averted.

It must however be confessed that the trend in recent years in India is essentially towards a quasi-public or even an administrative proceeding, and that certainly bodes ill for the successful working of democracy. Publicity is the authentic hallmark not only of justice but of all governmental activities. In the M. Y. Sheriff enquiry as well as in the one against Mr. Justice Sinha of the Allahabad High Court, the proceed-

ings were held in camera, although the conclusions arrived at were published in extenso. This is not quite a satisfactory method; nevertheless it is much better than an administrative enquiry, which juristically speaking, occupies the lowest rung in the ladder. A typical example is the tribunal set up in Madras for the enquiry against corrupt departmental officers. It certainly resembles a judicial enquiry. The presiding officer is a retired District Judge of vast experience. The enquiry is assimilated to a normal criminal trial. The parties are examined and also their witnesses and in certain specified contingencies they can even engage lawyers. But the proceedings are not public at all. To such an extent has privacy been carried that one is left guessing as to who the delinquents are, what is the nature of the evidence appearing against them, whether they have been wrongfully punished or let off or punished leniently or harshly. Above all, there is no appeal against the decision of the special officer to an independent judicial tribunal. The

proper as also the cheaper method to protect the public against dishonest public servants, to protect public servants against false or cooked-up cases, is to charge-sheet them before the criminal courts of the land along with their confederates; and that perhaps may prove to be a more wholesome deterrent than "spreading compulsory retirements and stoppage of increments north, east, west and south."

Ministers of the Cabinet are of a category apart. Their ultimate masters are the legislature and the electorate. It would be unwise to subject every act of theirs to judicial enquiry, but circumstances may arise when their conduct may call for public enquiry. Obviously the safest and just method will be to delegate the enquiry to be made by a judicial tribunal rather than to a member of the party, however high or eminent. It is worth noticing that election offences are tried by a judicial tribunal; neither the President of the legislature nor the Government have any say in the matter.

ROUNDING UP OF COMMUNISTS IN HYDERABAD

(From A Correspondent)

THE Communist movement in the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal in the Hyderabad State which received a fillip after police action was conducted by a "Big Five."

Ravi Narayana Reddy, Thimma Seshayya, Nalla Narasimhalu, Badam Yella Reddy, and Mochi Veeriah, all born and bred in the Telengana soil are names very familiar to the people.

Ravi Narayana Reddy, father of the Communist movement in Deccan, is still at large, although his four other comrades were apprehended one by one and detained.

It appears that a second line of defence has been created. A few months ago, a woman Communist who was in possession of a bundle of Communist literature was arrested in Nalgonda. While being interrogated by the police, it is reported, she pointed to a neem tree nearby and asked "What will happen to this tree,

if it is cut?" The police officer remained silent. She herself furnished the answer: "You may cut this tree, but it will grow again. So is the case with our movement. You cannot uproot it."

But the present administration in Hyderabad under the stewardship of that charming, young, energetic and able Military Governor, Major-General Jayant Nath Choudhri, is determined to "uproot" the movement which is based on violence and terrorism.

The States Ministry which has got the fullest confidence in General Choudhri has given him a free hand. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel when he visited the State two months ago did not mince matters. Speaking from the grand-stand of the historic Fateh Maidan, he told the people of Hyderabad that he was pledged to "finish" off the Communists to whom violence was the only creed.

It is indeed a praise-worthy feature that the Military Governor having at his disposal the might of the entire Indian Army has not chosen to wipe out Communism through violence. He believes in the Gandhian ideology of progress, peace and prosperity through evolution and through constructive reforms. Instead of marching his troops into the heart of the Communist dominated districts, he preferred to win back the peasantry to his side by announcing, through pamphlets printed in the regional language (Telugu), the intention of his Government to usher in without delay radical agrarian reforms which commenced with the taking over of Serfikhas (private crown lands) from the Nizam.

This pamphlet warfare has to a large extent shaken the confidence of the masses in the Communist leaders. The Military Governor once told me: "I shall use force only to the extent to which it is necessary to maintain law and order!"

In the course of his extensive tours in the interior parts of the State, General Choudhri reiterated that he had come there not as a conqueror, but as a friend to deliver the people from the clutches of those who were planning to throw them into a big conflagration.

The establishment of police outposts in the villages was the first big nail struck on the coffin of Communism. The very presence of armed police and constant reconnoitering of the Union military troops in these areas have forced the Communists to withdraw to jungles and the hilly tracts. They are now trying to keep contact with the outside world through couriers—mainly boys between the ages of ten and eighteen.

The administration however does not claim to have crushed the Communists and the latest reports speak of their activity in the districts of Karimnagar and Atraf Balda on the borders of Hyderabad City.

The difficulties confronting the Military Governor in achieving appreciable progress in maintaining law and

order are indeed many, the chief of them being what might be called the "passive resistance" offered by the State police. The Razakar element in some of them still seems to be predominant. The native police who are familiar with the terrain are stated to be adopting a policy of non-cooperation with the Indian Union army and police. The authorities however do not desire to precipitate a crisis by complete demobilisation of the Nizam's police because the possibility of the demobbed personnel walking straight into the "enemy's" camp cannot altogether be ruled out.

The police officials from Madras Province, who are on special duty in these districts, are doing a wonderful piece of work. The arrest of Thimma Seshayya, the notorious Dalam leader of Mahbubabad taluk, by a Madras police officer is a remarkable feat in intelligence work. The police officer got scent of Thimma Seshayya's presence in his mother-in-law's house in a village in Mahbubabad taluk; but when the officer actually reached the spot, he found "the bird had flown." Thimma Seshayya dressed himself in perfect European style, got into a first class compartment and reached Madras. The alert policeman of Madras, not losing heart, managed to keep himself on the track of the Communist leader and ultimately succeeded in bagging him in a nursing home in Madras. The capture of this leader gave a sore blow to the morale of the Communists in Warangal district.

Yet another handicap experienced by the Indian police is that they are not able to identify the wanted persons even when they are face to face with them. Sometime ago, it is stated, the police, on getting information that Mrs. Thimma Seshayya was moving about in a particular village, rushed to the spot. But the villagers with one voice declared "Evaru lethandi ikkada" (No such person is here). The police had to return to their headquarters disappointed. According to a later report, the wanted woman was standing among those villagers.

ARIYAKUDI—THE MASTER

By 'RAJASREE'

Music should strike fire from the heart of man and bring tears from the eyes of woman.

—BEETHOVEN.

PERHAPS there is no musician in South India who has been so popular as Sri Ariyakudi T. Ramana Iyengar. He forms the connecting link between the old school of music and the present school.

He was born on 19th May 1890 at Ariyakudi near Karaikudi. His father, Sri Tiruvenkatachari, was a learned musician and a well-known astrologer. Ariyakudi's elder brother, Sri Appuswami adopted Ariyakudi as his son at the age of five.

Right from his boyhood days, Ariyakudi developed a love for music and he was always seen humming one tune or the other. This thirst for music in the young boy made his father consult his horoscope which predicted a great musical career for him.

Ariyakudi had his training in music under three Gurus of renown. From 1903 to 1906, he learnt the rudiments of music from Sri Malayappa Iyer of Pudukottah. The second stage was from 1906 to 1908 when he came under the tutelage of Sri Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar. By then, Ariyakudi had developed the art of detailed raga singing. The final stage came when he was eighteen years of age. Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar who was at the peak of his fame then became his Guru. Ariyakudi remained with him for five years.

His first big chance came soon. AR. AR. SM. Somasundaram Chettiyar, a leading banker of Devakottah, celebrated a marriage in his house and requested Poochi to permit his sishya to sing on the occasion. Before a distinguished gathering consisting of Konerirajapuram, Tirukodikaval, Krishna Iyer, Alaganambi and Dakshinamurthy, Ariyakudi made his first appearance on the platform. The performance was a tremendous success. Ariyakudi was twenty-four then. His next big chance came the following year when he sang at Tiruvayyar during the Thyagaraja festi-

val. From that time onwards, he has gone on from success to success. In 1932, the title of SANGEETHA RATNAKARA was conferred on him by the music-lovers of Vellore. In 1938, the Madras Music Academy honoured him by electing him as President and by conferring the title of SANGEETHAKALANIDHI on him. In 1941, he became the Asthana Vidwan of Mysore and two or three years later H. H. The Maharaja conferred on him the title of GAYAKASIKHAMANI.

Ariyakudi has just completed his 59th year and is entering his 60th year. But his music is as fresh as ever. For over thirty years he has held the platform of music in South India.

There is no such thing as a favourite raga with him. He can handle any raga with the greatest ease and elaborate it to any length. He has adhered to what is known as traditionalism in music. The elaborateness with which he manipulates the raga by bringing its full bhava, the manner in which he sings the kritis without sacrificing its meaning and the vast range of swaraprasthara showing his mastery over Laya at the same time have marked him out as a class by himself. People have been delighted to hear him sing "Endaro" and "Sadhinchine," "Sri Subrmhanyaya Namaste" in Kambodi, "Kolu-vai" in Bhairavi, "Nidhichala" in Kalyani and "Dasarathe" in Thodi times without number. His programme is invariably made up of compositions of the classical Trinity, Poochi Iyengar, Arunachala Kavirayar and Purandara Das. His music has, happily, maintained the same high standard and quality all these years and it is there intact unscathed by the ravages of time and uninfluenced by the fashions of the day.

Of a genial temperament, Ariyakudi is the idol of the music world and has pleasant manners. He is a very witty conversationalist. He is a living model to junior musicians. He is a master of Carnatic music in its simplest and purest form.

Short Story

THE HEART OF A WOMAN

By S. KRISHNIAH

YES, she was back again in my life like a recrudescence ulcer. Why?... why, I cried anticipating what would follow until the cry of my heart reverberated in my empty cranium. Why should she come? Why couldn't she let me be alone? Could she have forgotten all that happened two years ago? No. Impossible. Then why torture me?—torture herself? Couldn't my little family be left in peace without her coming and making a lunatic of its head?

Perhaps the reason lay in the fact that I was in Ootacamund in the month of May. But I could not help it. The Automobile Engineering firm which employed me had transferred me with a rise in salary to their branch-office at Ootacamund. I do admit that a few weeks in the hills at a time when Sirius snarls unkindly at our planet is a sore temptation to anybody. But Janaki ought to have known the heart-aches that would be in store for us both during such a holiday.

Since the time the letter arrived informing my wife that Janaki and her mother were coming with the baby, she was in raptures. Janaki's mother was her aunt and the cousins who had grown up in adjacent houses were thick friends. Their friendship had been strained a couple of years ago due to the suspicion that then lurked in my wife's mind that an unhealthy attraction was growing between Janaki and me.

Although my wife, Susheela, had at that time thrown many pointed hints at me, I had ignored them because I was confident that she had no positive proof concerning my disgraceful love affair with her cousin. Unfortunately it is true that I was then madly in love with Janaki. I have spent years wondering whether under the same circumstances I could have behaved differently. No, it couldn't have been otherwise. There was something in her which went right into and held

in leash my inner being. Call it sin. Call it madness. I plead guilty. But she held me in a thrall that was as sweet as it was inescapable. My God, how I've suffered those days until the curtain was rung on the final act of the tragedy. She was to be married...

My last clandestine meeting with her is seared in my brain. It took place three days before her wedding.

"I can't believe it, Janaki," I had said.

"There is no other way, Ram, is there? I suppose it is God's will."

It was a dark night and I wondered whether she would be able to discern the tears that welled up in my eyes.

"Somehow I can't believe it all—that you'll marry and go away. Perhaps I won't see you for a long time.... And then, who knows, what will happen? You may forget all about your Ram."

"No, Ram, never. How can I ever forget you?"

She had been standing close to me and I had taken her in my arms and pressed her close to me.

"I'll always love you, Ram," she had continued, "Whatever happens. And I know you'll always love me too."

My emotions had been keyed to a high pitch and I had not been able to talk. Further what was there to talk about? Had we not talked and talked in circles for hours on end to find a way out of the impossible situation? A million stars were twinkling in the nigrescent vault above us and shed their cold sickly light on us. For a long time we stood in close exhilarating physical contact without uttering a word to break the ghostly silence. And then came the time to bid farewell—yes, farewell.

"Does it matter much whether I marry or not? We'll be the same to each other... always. After all we'll never be able to marry and live together and we both know it. Don't you think, Ram, that my marriage will

make little difference when our hearts continue to be the same?"

"I suppose you are right, Janaki." There had been a discernible tremor in my voice although I had tried my best to suppress it.

Perhaps Janaki's marriage had made Susheela think that her suspicions had been unfounded and so she had resumed her friendly and cousinly relationship towards Janaki.

Two years is a long time to drown suspicions and I was sure that not a trace of them remained in Susheela's mind when with genuine joy she talked to me of the coming visit of her cousin.

Arun, my younger brother, who was living with me at the time, and Susheela were happy to have visitors since they expected their arrival to dispel the gloom of our humdrum routine. Of the pretext that I would not be able to get away from important work on hand, I did not go to the station to meet Janaki and her mother. In my heart of hearts, I knew that I was only finding excuses to postpone the inevitable moment when Janaki and I should meet. I purposefully returned late from the workshop that day and when I met Janaki I put on as cold and formal an exterior as I could possibly command with my heart fluttering in my breast. Janaki behaved normally and during the days that followed, all the time I was at home, she seemed to be engrossed in her baby. It suited me ideally and the only times we were close together were at breakfast and dinner. But I knew that all this was only outward show. Like me she was making the best of a bad bargain. I was thankful that Arun and Susheela were producing all the geniality that was necessary for a home.

But still it was evident to me that the tension between me and Janaki, created mutually of our own volition, could not last long. Our nerves were taut and supertensioned. Our hearts throbbed and ached. How long, I wondered, how long could we go on like this?

It happened on Sunday—late in the evening. Some friends of Arun had compelled him to go to 'pictures' with them. Susheela was in the kitchen making a special dish and Janaki's mother had one of her headaches. I

was reading the newspaper in the drawing room and Janaki, sitting a little away from me, was stroking her baby to sleep. The suppressed emotions of a week strained at the leash. I composed my face behind the newspaper and folding it with unnecessary care placed it by my side.

"Why did you come here, Janaki?" I blurted out my question.

"Why did I come here? Of course to see you, Ram," she said turning to me with a surprised smile. "As if you didn't know!"

Months of anguish when we first parted ways followed by a studied schooling of my thoughts into the channels of ordinary family life and then the last week's agony had made me incapable of entering easily into a flirtatious conversation. I was moody and depressed.

"You've upset me completely, Janaki. You've opened the old wound in my heart."

"Old wound? I thought you once said that you'd always love me."

"Yes, but I've tried my best to forget you."

"I never tried to forget you. I knew it'd be of no use. Further why should I forget perhaps the happiest moment of my life?"

"It's not that, Janaki. We know we've messed up our lives. Haven't you tried to make the best of the circumstances? Haven't you tried to make your home happy?"

"How can I try to be happy when I know that all my happiness is centered in you. Let's not talk about that all over again. Remember, Ram? We used to discuss this hours on end."

"Yes, but there are certain things now which....."

I heard the footsteps of my wife coming from the kitchen and I stopped.

That night I tossed about in my bed unable to rest. The mental wretchedness I suffered from was nothing strange to me—my consuming love for Janaki would pull me to one side and my loyalty to my wife would pull me to the other. Stretched out on the rack of my own thoughts I suffered untold misery. My past indiscretions stood out vivid as the noonday sun before me. My heart and body ached for Janaki. I wanted

to break the shackles of society and convention and elope with her. But in the midst of my overwhelming desire, the 'still, small voice' would whisper, "What about Susheela?"

Days passed but without abating my agony. Constantly seeing her in my house, sometimes indifferent, sometimes with a mocking inviting smile, sometimes with a look of loving tenderness suffusing her face, added to my torment. I was obsessed by the idea that something ought to be done. I was brought to the realisation of the incontrovertible fact that matters must come to a head. There can be no question of reverting to apathy. Something dynamic, something that would shake the very foundations of my life must happen. I thought of suicide as a means of escape but shook away that ugly thought before its fascinating morbidity could poison my mind. Slowly but surely I was arriving at the one conclusion most obvious. I must hereafter be with Janaki. Life without her would be hell. Perhaps Susheela would be the one to suffer most. But that could not be escaped. Loving, dutiful, and innocent though she was, she must pay for the tornado that was raging in the innermost depths of my heart. I might even have to sacrifice my love for my son. I was held pitilessly in the talons of my love for Janaki and nothing else seemed to matter.

Yes. It would be a surrender of everything I had held dear to me till then in bonds of blood and love, of everything I had made of my life. That day when I came to this decision I was like a lunatic. I behaved as one in the workshop and raved at the mechanics who were stupefied at my unreasonableness. They could not understand that I had made the momentous decision that I would sever my family ties—that I had decided to tell my wife in plain language that very evening that I did not want to live with her any more although I cared for her and would provide for her. My whole physical body was afire with primitive passions and my overwrought brain had lost its capacity for cogent thought. As I walked back home in the evening I was framing the sentences in which I would couch my farewell to my wife.

I reached home with almost a sense of relief. After all the day had come in which I was going to do something instead of enduring alone the excruciating torture of my thoughts. I knew Janaki would have no compunctions to fall in with my idea. She had never had many scruples and those which I had clung to I had dispersed to the winds.

I had my tea and went to my room to change my work-clothes. Then I would call Susheela and ring the death-knell of her happiness. I knew it was callous, brutal....but it had to be done. There was no other way.

Just as I was about to call Susheela, Arun walked in. There was a peculiar light twinkling in his eyes.

"Ram, I want to talk to you..."

"Now?"

"Yes."

"About what?"

"About something extremely important."

I did not like this intrusion and delay in the carrying out of my plan but it could not be helped.

"What is it, Arun?"

"Wait, Ram, I'll tell you. It's quite a long story. First let me ask you one thing. Have you noticed anything strange in this house since Janaki came here?"

I was startled. I had thought Arun knew nothing of our secret.

"No," I lied, "I don't think I've noticed anything out of the ordinary."

"Then you must be blind....But perhaps you never notice such things. There was a definite reason why Janaki came here."

I bit my lip and was silent.

"After all you are my brother, Ram, and I must confide in you. I'm not asking for your opinion because I've already taken matters into my own hands and made an irrevocable decision."

"You?" I managed to stammer in amazement, "You've made a decision?"

"Yes, but what's it that's getting you excited? I wonder whether you've guessed the truth."

"What truth?"

"Let me tell it to you, Ram, in my own way....For the last three years

Janaki and I have been in love with each other...."

"What? You and Janaki? Don't be silly!"

"No, I'm not. I'm dead serious. Since the time we got to know their family—that's when you married—since then I've been in love with her and she with me."

I was dumbfounded at this revelation. If this was true she had been in love with Arun and me at the same time!

"We wanted to get married," Arun continued, "But it was not possible since I was then at the Engineering College. She promised to marry me when I passed out but meanwhile she was coerced into this marriage. But I've been in correspondence with her. We've used your house here in Ooty to meet each other. She came here only with the object of seeing me. I know she does not love her husband. Her marriage can't last."

An instrument that automatically silences the radio when a person answers the telephone has been produced in the United States. As the telephone receiver is replaced at the end of the conversation, the device turns the radio on again.

Tomorrow I'm leaving for Bombay to take up my job at the Western Construction Co. Janaki is coming with me....for keeps."

I was only listening with my ears. My head was in a whirl. Slowly I woke up from my stupor.

"What did you say, Arun?"

"I said that I'm going to elope with Janaki tomorrow. Of course I know...."

"My God, Arun, you can't...."

"It's no use, Ram, trying to deviate me from my purpose for...."

"Listen, oldboy," I said with almost a smile flickering on my lips and putting my arm round his shoulder. "I shall tell you why you can't elope with her....You see, a couple of years ago I too was in love with Janaki.."

"You? But...."

"Don't interrupt me. Yes, I was in love with her. Now listen to what happened to me...."

BRITAIN IN AFRICA

By Prof. D. N. PHATAK

IT is widely held that the post-war years have brought about the end of colonialism. However, there are today no less than three hundred million peoples who are still dependent. Britain alone rules over some sixty to seventy million peoples of various colonies scattered all over the world. In the continent of Africa and the Middle East Britain's sway remains almost unimpaired. In spite of her evacuation from Palestine, Britain retains her troops in Transjordan by treaty rights. The islands of Malta and Cyprus still remain the sea and air bases linking Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. Britain is as insistent as ever before upon maintaining intact the Mediterranean life line connecting the British Isles to the Indian Ocean. This explains Britain's interest in retaining control over Cyrenaica, one of the Italian colonies on the north coast of Africa, now administered by her. In the continent of Africa, Britain has direct or indirect control over Gambia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria on the west coast, Sudan, British Somaliland, Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, Nyasaland and Northern and Southern Rhodesia in Central and Eastern Africa. These regions south of the Sahara are rich in untapped resources and raw materials and Britain is greatly interested in exploiting them for her post-war recovery.

World War II demonstrated to an overwhelming degree the strategic importance of the African continent which occupies a pivotal position in the continental defence scheme envisaged in the North Atlantic Pact. Dakar at the westernmost tip of the African bluge is at a distance of fifteen air hours from New York. Natal (Brazil) could be reached from Brazaaville (French Equatorial Africa) on the Equator within seventeen or eighteen air hours. The distance between London and Kenya could be bridged in almost the same time. The emergence of the Atlantic community, thanks in no less degree to the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact shows the immeasurable importance of Africa in the strategic coordination

between the United States and the West European countries. The E. R. P. and the North Atlantic Pact are the economic and military counterparts of this over-all integration.

The British colonial policy upto the Second World War remained largely a policy of *laissez faire*, unregulated and without an over-all plan, where the colonies were exposed to hazardous exploitation by private hands. The liberal policy of economic non-interference left the field open for private capital investment without central planning or a systematic and coordinated integration with the Mother country or other far-flung territories. Local governmental authorities enjoyed the widest of powers.

The advent of the Socialist Government and the increasing need for export markets to maintain the living standards at home have brought about a change in this policy. The Government had passed the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in 1940 "to promote development of the resources of any colony" and "the prosperity and happiness of the peoples of the Colonial Empire." The Act authorized 5,000,000 pounds a year and allocated 500,000 a year for the conduct of research over a ten year period. Another such act was passed in the year 1945 authorizing increased expenditure on the developmental schemes and research. The largest loan went to Nigeria as it has the largest population among the colonies. A special body—Colonial Economic and Development Council—has been created to advise the Secretary of State for the Colonies. These two Acts make a significant departure from the earlier policies where free enterprise reigned supreme. The Acts inaugurated planned development of colonies under central direction.

These ten year plans include, among others, vast agricultural projects, large scale exploitation of mineral wealth, development of commerce and marketing, hydraulic schemes and a programme of soil conservation. In the colonies of West Africa, Gambia,

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Sierre Leone and Nigeria is launched a scheme of mining. Plantation of tea and growing of cocoa form a major part of agricultural development. There is an air-port project in Gambia. In East Africa, apart from the plans for agricultural development and the soil conservation, the most outstanding is the peanut project. Extension of mining, commerce and industry, improved water supply and hydraulic schemes, better transport facilities and railway equipment rank high in the developmental projects in East Africa. Britain is employing some 2,000 Italians, most of them war prisoners in Kenya, for the laying of railway lines connecting strategic outposts in East Africa. The construction of the new post at Nikindani in Southern Tanganyika assumes increased importance when linked up with the new scheme of federation of Nyasaland and the two Rhodesias. While Southern Rhodesia is rich in copper, Northern Rhodesia has an abundance of iron ore, coal, mica and the dollar-earning chrome and asbestos. The proposed federation of Capricornia and its mineral wealth will be of great value to East Africa, the new strategic bastion of the British Empire.

Sponsored and directed from London these manifold plans are well coordinated with similar plans of other colonial powers—France, Belgium and Portugal—all of them western powers, members of North Atlantic Pact and interested in the European recovery. Thus there is a three-fold coordination; that between London and the colonies, among the various colonial regions and among the colonial powers themselves. This co-operation is not limited to economic affairs alone. It embraces as well the military strategy of the North Atlantic Ocean.

Africa promises not only an unlimited supply of raw materials and minerals but fulfils Britain's much-felt need for survival and security. Britain's evacuation of Palestine and her withdrawal from India and Burma have left her without an anchorage. East Africa provides the next best territorial foothold in the Middle Eastern strategy. As one writer has pointed out, "In any plan for the defence of Africa in depth from north to south the East African territories,

linked across the width of the continent with West Africa, will be the second line of defence, the barrier in the approach to the Zambesi, the Rhodesias and the Union of South Africa." The development of the Mackinnon Road in the interior of Kenya is the surest indication of the strategic value of Kenya and East Africa.

British activities and ceaseless interest in the Mediterranean outposts and her present preoccupation with the erection of similar bases in the Central-East-West Africa are not contradictory but complementary conceptions. In the age of supersonic flights and long range bombing British military experts no longer entertain the outmoded concepts of the Mediterranean "life line." They realize that in an atomic war this narrow sea could hardly remain open to British vessels. Nevertheless, Britain is not prepared to relax its hold on these bases in the Mediterranean. The Defence Minister, A. V. Alexander, has declared in the Parliament: "The withdrawal of British troops from Palestine reduces our local commitments but does not affect our strategic interests in the security and stability of the Middle East."

Britain's interest in the Mediterranean area and the Middle East is threefold. In the first place this area is rich with valuable raw materials, particularly oil. Recently American interests have increased in this region. Commenting on this the *Times* of London said, "It is their common interest that the entire structure of international security in the Middle East should be saved from the peril which now threatens it." In the second place, the Mediterranean still remains the major highway connecting Europe with the Asian countries. British Overseas Airways and the Royal Air Force stations dot this hub-area of the world. But perhaps, the most important feature that attracts Britain to the Mediterranean and the neighbouring territories is their strategic importance. Britain is no longer the great power of yesterday. She evacuated Greece and later left Palestine. Indeed her position in the Middle East will be indefensible without American collaboration. But if the British position is rather precarious she would not like a potentially hostile power to

have a hold on this vital region. Britain's stay-on policy is thus dictated by her fear of Communism.

These Mediterranean territories lie between the Soviet Union and Britain's African possessions. They are not only a powerful buffer but also a base of defence and a springboard for an all-out offensive. This explains Britain's sympathy for the Arab cause and her attempt to retain control over the Negeb area in Southern Palestine. Britain's acceptance of the new Jewish State of Israel came only as a belated gesture recognizing a political reality difficult to be ignored indefinitely. Britain also wants to retain control over Cyrenaica, the easternmost province of Libya, strategically the most important of the Italian colonies now administered by her. The proposed federation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the erection of military bases in Kenya fit in well in the whole picture. Britain's alliance with Egypt, Iraq and Transjordan and her determination to keep her troops also stem from similar motives. In Cyprus Britain, while introducing the new constitution, has taken care to incorporate an important reservation. According to this reservation the Legislative Assembly cannot discuss the island's accession to Greece, which forms the main ambition of many of the islands of Greek origin. Britain's interest in the tangled politics of the Middle East is thus motivated by her desire to safeguard her colonial empire in Africa. Her policy is governed by strategic and imperial considerations.

What about the political future of these African colonies? For the present, at least, in Africa the struggle for national independence has not reached anything of the proportions it has reached in South-East Asia. However, the British retention of control will have to reckon with the growing political consciousness among the colonial peoples. The increased representation granted to the natives cannot satisfy them indefinitely and would produce more insistent demands for complete political emancipation. In short, the policy of gradualism may not prove to be rapid enough so as to satisfy the aspirations of the peoples. While there is some progress in the

grant of self-government in the west Coast, the white settlers of East Africa are not inclined to favour a rapid programme in this direction.

Despite large-scale educational programmes and grant of partial self-government to these colonies, the indisputable fact remains that Britain is not contemplating to relinquish them in any foreseeable future. It is true the Socialists have installed a new vigour in the administrative set-up and have planned centralized development of the colonial world. But, while the colonies would receive some benefits incidental to these developments, substantial advantage would go to the Mother Country. Faced with depleted investments abroad and a shrinking empire, Britain has shifted her main imperial interests to her African dependencies.

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THE MIDDLE EAST-1

By KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

(This is the first of a series of four articles by the writer.)

THE 16th century saw the first signs of the West entrenching itself in the Orient. In 1521 Venice obtained from the Sultan of Turkey a commercial concession of a form that was to become common throughout the East: freedom to her traders from customs duties or other taxation beyond a stated limit, and judicial extra-territoriality under the authority of her own consuls known as capitulations, that were to persist almost up to the modern times. Commercial pre-eminence in the Mediterranean soon passed from Venetian to French hands with the British as rivals, all of them obtaining concessions on the same pattern. In 1581 the British Levant Trading Company came into the field and in 1599 out of this group emerged the historic English East India Company. By early eighteenth century the balance of positions of these various rival groups had altered. Portuguese and Dutch influences had declined as the French and British had become more aggressive. The British authorities had decided to stake their all on the East India Company and the English became well entrenched in all the commanding positions on the route to India, especially along the Persian Gulf. The French on the other hand were maintaining their position in Egypt and the Levant Coast. Rival Oriental potentates and opportunists increasingly courted the European traders well equipped with their garrisons, naval units and above all, modern weapons; whilst the latter exploited these opportunities to their own ends. Throughout this period the Orient became the scene of their bitter rivalry, which became intensified when the Suez route was opened. Napoleon's romantic adventure in the Middle East and final retreat set the course for English supremacy. In 1806 on the pretext of safeguarding against Napoleonic invasions, Alexandria was occupied by the British. The British army still continues to remain in Egyptian territory! Similarly in the Southern Red sea England occu-

pied Perim and Aden which Lord Valentine declared prophetically the "Gibraltar of the East." Oman, Muscat, Kawai were next brought under her wing and by 1870 a virtual protectorate was established over this region mainly by winning over the Arab Sheiks, first by clearing the Persian Gulf of pirates, next by manoeuvring to get her good offices used in settling disputes between these tribal chiefs. The picture was finally completed when these Sheiks agreed not to grant any concessions to any other foreign power, nor accept any consular representative without the approval of England.

While ostensibly the French influence was establishing itself in Egypt, England was less ostentatiously stabilising her economic position there. The key to this was the Egyptian high grade cotton first introduced in the Lancashire spinning mills in 1821. Cotton became the chief export to England increasing 200 times in quantity in the first three years. The cloth woven out of it was shipped back and fast replaced the more expensive handwoven fabrics which sometimes cost 16% more. By 1849 England's commercial predominance in Egypt could be judged by the fact that she provided nearly half her imports and took about the same quantity of exports. In virtue of the fact that her hold on India was henceforth to be the cardinal point in her policies in the East, she resisted the introduction of any modernisation of communications in this region. The laying of railway tracks was prevented and when the cutting of the Suez Canal was mooted, England opposed it. But the French overcame the opposition by enlisting the support of other rival countries like Russia and Austria.

France's pre-occupation with the war with Germany brought Russia to the forefront in the Middle East and there started the same familiar struggle for a port, naval-base, railway links and the like which made Lord Curzon thunder forth: "Is

Baghdad to become a new Russian capital in the South?" But a more formidable rival appeared in the years following Britain's victory over the French—the Germans. Their undertaking of the construction of the Berlin-Baghdad railway for the Sultan had a dramatic effect. This was followed by a move for a Hejaz railway, ostensibly to carry pilgrims, but in reality for strategic advantage—the rapid movement of Turkish troops to Western Arabia without crossing the Suez Canal. In spite of constant British opposition, Germany however was not to be deterred. She kept pushing ahead with all the vigour of a newly rising power.

Britain was now pretty well established. She had acquired a share in the Suez Canal Company under Disraeli's persuasion. About 78% of the Egyptian public debt and joint stock capital was in foreign hands by now. The end was being hastened. By early 1876 the state was declared bankrupt and British and French commissioners were set up to receive the Egyptian revenues, supervise the ports and railways. Lord Milner observed: "The European concession-hunter and loan-monger, the Greek publican and pawn-broker, the Jewish money-lender and land-grabber, who could with ease obtain the protection of some European power, battered on the Egyptian treasury and the poor Egyptian cultivator to an almost incredible extent." For the Khedive mounting loans raised on the strength of his Suez Canal shares, ostensibly for the purpose of modernising Egypt were mostly wasted on the building of palaces and lavish entertainments—barely 10% going into constructive channels. In any event, far from bringing any relief to the masses who bore the main burden of the rising taxation—an increase of 5% in six years—the loans had added to their distress. For the entire policy of the foreign controlling powers was based on the orthodox financial principle that "no sacrifice should be demanded from the creditors till every reasonable sacrifice has been made by the debtors," which in this case proved extremely callous because, in the final analysis, it meant the already poverty-stricken people of the land. From this to the complete occupation

of the country was for the British a small step. Thus ended this nefarious tale of three decades of the systematic, pitiless exploitation of the ignorant masses for the benefit of the foreign investors.

The Egyptian revolt against the British had spread as far as the Sudan where the situation could be brought under control only after severe military action. The outbreak of world war I found the rebellious forces organised under the greatest leader the Middle East has produced—Zaghlul Pasha. The war emergency was made use of to rule the country under martial law and round up the leaders.

The Versailles conference blessed the British protectorate over Egypt in the name of democracy and peace. But instead, a reign of terror was inaugurated there. The worm had turned and the fellahin had revolted against the foreign power. Provincial republican governments were proclaimed and villages set up their own independent regimes. Britain was forced to make a concession. Egypt was declared independent but subject to certain severe restrictions, the chief of these being the inevitable security of imperial communication and the British control over the Sudan. These the Egyptians did not accept. The reign of terror continued. The opposition symbolised by the Wafdist Party moved from strength to strength. But the Egyptian nationalists had however to fight not only the British but also the king with his coterie of vested interests who obstructed the people's movement and tried to suppress it.

The rise of Nazi Germany and the invasion of Ethiopia by fascist Italy brought a new note and urgency to the question of Anglo-Egyptian relationship. Under the shadow of a new aggressor that sought to make the Mediterranean its *La Mer*, a treaty was negotiated. It was for 20 years but could be revised after ten. The imperial stamp of domination was there. Its principle was that of a military alliance, giving Britain enormous powers in the event of a war, including the right to impose martial law, press censorship and the like. Egypt was of course to recognise the vital interest of Britain in the Suez Canal. Accordingly she

was given the right to retain troops in the Canal area up to 10,000 men, 400 R. A. F. pilots with the necessary ancillary services, until it was agreed that the Egyptian forces themselves could assume responsibility. An equally important clause related to the Soudan. Egypt troops, officials and immigrants were once again to be admitted to the Soudan; (these had been banned after the Lee Stack murder in 1924). There was a significant clause that the Soudanese government would appoint British or Egyptian officials to a post only if a qualified Soudanese were not available. The British were thereby posing as the champions of a Soudanese Nationalist government and claiming to protect its interests.

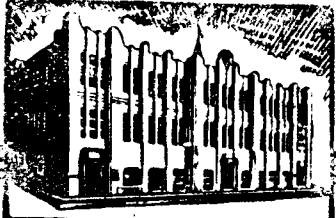
Soudan had for sometime been assuming considerable importance. Considerable apprehension was aroused by the demand in the Allen-

by ultimatum to Egypt after the murder of Sir Lee Stack: "Egyptian consent to the unlimited irrigation of the Soudanese cotton growing district of the Gazira," which had previously been limited to ensure adequate water supply to Egypt. This threat to divert the Nile waters naturally perturbed Egyptians because this vital essential on which depended the entire existence of their country, was completely at the mercy of a foreign power as long as it continued to remain in control of this strategic area.

The British had moreover fully utilised their stay in the Soudan to sponsor a Soudanese nationalist movement under British protection and in whose name Britain could resist Egyptian claims in future. The British were thus driving a dangerous wedge between the two arms of the Nile basin.

(To be continued)

In the United States, the average age of men at the time of marriage is 25. The average age of women on marrying is 21. The average of earnings of the young men is about \$40 a week. Most American girls also work and about half of them continue to work for a few years after marriage to help pay for their homes.



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A JUNGLE STORY

PEERMANDE (North-east Travancore): The jungle speaks with the voices of silence.

It is not just so many million trees growing in lush profusion; the jungle seems to have a composite entity of its own. Sprawled over a range of hills, it is like an oversize leviathan, living, breathing through its million lungs, vigilant, and resentful of intruders. As the car creeps uphill through its eerie silence, the rustle of the wind through the treetops is like the whisperings of a monster's thousand tongues. There are peculiar, inexplicable crackling sounds in the undergrowth, like an unseen army of silent-footed guerillas taking cover; bamboo shoots sigh as they sway in the gentle breeze; and somewhere there is the tip-tip-tip of rubber ooze dripping, drop by drop. There is a sudden swish of wind and a coconut falls with a thud, missing the car by a couple of inches.

The jungle makes it quite clear that intruders are unwelcome.

Or, may be the jungle is a civic organism in which every tree is bound to follow the laws

of growth, of self-preservation and mutual assistance. Here is perfect synthesis of the individualism of a tree and the collective existence of the jungle, an arboreal communistic society in which every tree receives nourishment from the earth and the air, according to its need, gets the fullest scope for self-development on a basis of perfect autonomy, but must contribute its quota of work, in co-operation with other trees, to provide shelter, moisture and fertiliser necessary for the continued existence and growth of the jungle state.

But there is parasitism even here, and one can see creepers with thick leaves clinging to big and powerful trees—like hangers-on round a Minister!

UNTOLD WEALTH

The jungle is jealous and resentful of any intrusion, like a rich house-

holder guarding his hoard of gold. The jungle is rich, beyond the computations of money-minded men.

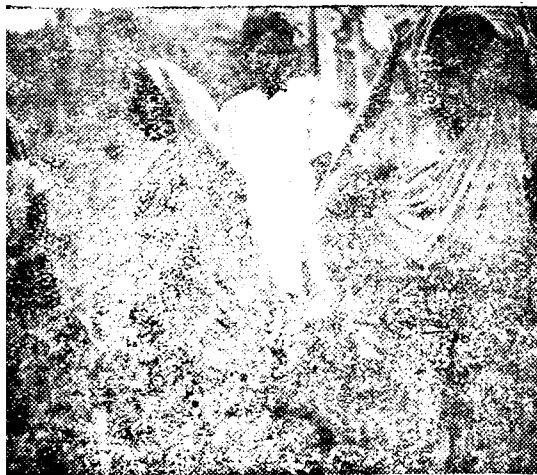
Growing in wild profusion all over the hills in this north-eastern corner of Travancore are some of the most precious varieties of trees. The graceful coconut and areca palms cover the lower slopes; above them is a wooded belt of rubber and tea plantations; while beyond them is the jungle proper, so thick that the sun seldom penetrates through the foliage. Here are to be found teak and blackwood, ebony and sandalwood, bamboo and cardium, rare herbs in the undergrowth, and medicinal plants. Here is timber worth billions, and occasionally you see elephants carrying or dragging huge logs of wood down to the plains. But the sanctity of the jungle is not to be lightly violated. Cut down all the trees for the sake of timber and the wounded

jungle hits back by causing soil erosion and adversely affecting rainfall. Respect its laws of growth, treat it with consideration, and the jungle is your friend; it will even allow you occasionally to cut

down and carry away some of its limbs. But the curse of the jungle is known to have rendered whole areas dry and barren when human greed has led men into cutting down entire forests.

But Travancore is in a desperate state. Travancore must grow more food to fill its empty stomach. In the already over-populated state, the backwaters and the forests account for nearly one-third of cultivable area. The brackish backwaters cannot be reclaimed; so, hesitantly, somewhat reluctantly and fearfully, tentative clearings are being made on the edges of the jungle. As we drive through, here and there one can see a bald patch in the thick of the wooden hills, as if a crazy barber had given them a quaint hair-cut. This is elephant country and many herds of tuskers have been disturbed out of their jungle homes and are





Two leaves and a bud! Tea pickers are mostly women—young women and even girls.

trying to penetrate further inland. They are essentially quiet and peaceful animals, but Man the eternal blunderer has encroached upon their territory and rendered them homeless and cannot complain if at night the elephants return to the clearings and trample the newly-grown paddy crops under their heavy feet. This is the Maharaja's wild game sanctuary and no one is allowed to fire a gun and so the newly-arrived cultivators must live on tops of trees—not hanging in the branches like monkeys, but in fairly comfortable little huts built on top of bamboo clusters. Tree-top dwellings! Here is a capital idea for the over-crowded cities.

SWEAT AND BLOOD IN YOUR CUP OF TEA

Next to Assam, Travancore is one of the biggest tea-producing areas in India. As one drives on the road from Kottayam to Tekhadi (which is on the Travancore-Madras border), one can see miles after miles of tea estates and plantations, each with its own up-to-date factory for drying, 'curing,' rolling and packing the tea-leaves, most of them owned by European planters and some owned by indigenous businessmen.

On these hill slopes, tea plants grow almost naturally. There is plenty of rainfall in this area and once a plantation has been sown, hardly any extra effort is required except picking the tender leaves according to the famous "two leaves

and a bud" formula. The leaves are then taken to the factory where electrically-driven machinery first passes hot air over them, then the leaves are put through huge automatic rollers, sieved and sifted and sorted and finally packed in tins and boxes—to reach your grocer and provision store!

The pickers are mostly women— young women and even girls—or young boys. Short stature is said to be an advantage in this work, so that they do not have to bend too low while picking leaves from the plants which are seldom allowed to grow higher than about three to four feet. Moreover, women and boys cost less; they are less amenable to trade union organisation, are generally content with whatever wages they can get, and seldom go on strike. Behind every group of pickers stands a stern and ferocious-looking watcher to ensure that they do not idle or even relax while they work. They get piece-work wages and so are not paid for holidays or when there is no picking to be done.

Men are employed for other jobs on the plantations and in the tea factories. Most of them, like the women, are Tamilians from the adjoining districts of the Madras presidency. (So many of them have migrated here in search of work that now they form a Tamil-speaking majority in this district of Travancore, and there is a demand to include it in Tamil Nad.)

These men and women, mostly illiterate and unorganised, are among the worst exploited sections of Indian labour. Far from towns and cities, far from their original homes, they lead a peculiar half-life in the plantations, completely cut off from their fellow-workers in other trades. They are made to work very hard, get a wage of less than a rupee per day, and they live in miserable hovels, two families sharing one unventilated room, with no sanitary arrangements, not even an adequate supply of water. Coming from poor, famine-stricken areas, they are content with the little that they can get. They hardly ever protest, and they have still to be properly organised on a trade union basis. On the plantation, the owner's word is law. Even

the law finds it difficult to penetrate to these isolated strongholds of feudalism and colonial exploitation.

A RUBBER KING'S TALE OF WOE!

Side by side with the tea estates are the rubber plantations—whole forests of rubber trees, thousands and thousands of acres owned by individual capitalists or companies. A rubber plantation looks picturesque, but the life of the rubber plantation workers is far from picturesque. Like the tea estate workers, they also live in isolation not only from the life of organised labour in cities, but even from the workers of neighbouring plantations.

The owners of tea estates and rubber plantations, meanwhile, continue to make enormous profits, grudging even the small tax that they have to pay to the Government. The owners and their agents live on the plantations in magnificent bungalows, with every modern convenience including electricity, telephone, private motorable roads for them to drive their limousines, marble swimming pools and teak-lined ball-rooms with rosewood dance floors. Living in one such house which, at a modest estimate, must have cost eight to ten lakhs to build and furnish, the owner of a tea and rubber estate—a Travancorean—told me his tale of woe, how the Government was not giving sufficient encouragement to the planters who were rendering a "national service" by paying so much in taxes, and how he was "hardly able to make any profit." Then, without realising the obvious contradiction, he told me that during the last few years he had bought over several hundred acres of adjacent land from owners of small plantations!

AMONG THE ANIMALS

After passing through the tea estates and rubber plantations with their sordid atmosphere of exploitation, we found the picturesque Periyar Lake and the wild life sanctuary around it a strikingly pleasant contrast. The river Periyar has been dammed here to supply water to the Madura district of the Madras presidency, and a huge lake of irregular shape has been formed. All around it are thickly wooded hills where many species of wild life abound—tigers,

elephants, bisons, sambhar, etc. As no shooting is allowed here, the animals are not particularly frightened of men and some of them may be observed in their natural habitat on the banks of the lake.

Going round the lake (which is like a small sea) in a motor boat, we were quite thrilled by this new and strictly non-violent form of "big game hunting." The only weapons we carried were cameras (which were useless in the cloudy and rainy weather) and binoculars. Through the latter, within a quarter hour of our start, we were able to see a lone tiger which had come down to the edge of the lake, presumably to have a drink, but on seeing the motor boat approaching turned its back towards us and majestically walked away into the jungle. A herd of bisons—huge horned creatures—dispersed only when we were about twenty yards from the bank and then, too, in a most orderly manner. Indeed, we found the bisons model citizens, for without the slightest panic, they allowed the "women and children" of their herd to go first and the biggest of them, obviously the Leader, was the last to leave the scene of danger.

After spying a few lone tuskers at a long distance, we were returning at about sunset time, rather disappointed that we had not been able to see a herd of elephants. We had been told that there were nearly a thousand



A rubber plantation looks picturesque, but the life of the workers is different.

elephants in this forest and were sore that even half a dozen of them had not made an appearance for us. And then we saw a whole herd including half a dozen big tusked, calmly standing on the bank, having a vegetarian meal of grass. Switching off the engine, we were able to go quite close to them without disturbing them. The forest officers accompanying us told us that sometimes an elephant comes right up to the edge of the water if you make a noise. So we shouted and hollered but it seemed that the discipline of the herd did not allow any venturesome individuals to come to us and soon all of them withdrew themselves into the forest.

And all the while, we listened to the stories of the animals who live in this forest and, on the whole, behave with such exemplary sense of social responsibility. We were moved by the story of the tigress whose cub had fallen in a bear pit and who stood guard over it for a day and night, ready to attack any one who approached the pit to catch the cub, and protected her offspring till she herself was shot down. Even more interesting were the stories about the 'rogue elephants'—the anti-social elements in the herd who displayed quarrelsome and violent tendencies and thereafter were treated as outcasts by the entire herd. If

only we could deal thus with our two-legged 'rogue elephants'!

And it was strange to learn from the rangers who observe the life of the forest from day to day that they had never found the tigers attacking the elephants or the elephants massacring the bison. There were no feuds or riots between the different animal communities inhabiting the jungle. Tigers, elephants, bison sambhars and others are living in perfect peace. The animals have yet to evolve into human beings!

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

KARACHI: Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Pakistan Prime Minister, in an interview to the B. B. C. Correspondent, expressed disappointment on the attitude of Britain towards Pakistan. He said that although Pakistan held an important position in the Commonwealth she was not receiving any help from the United Kingdom.

RANGOON: Burma Radio reported that 200 Gurkhas had joined Karen insurgents at Papun in the Salween hills east of Pegu.

TOKYO: "Nippon Times" hailed the fall of Shanghai as a victory for the Asiatics. "Is this the end of a century of western dreams?", the paper asked, in an editorial. "Ghosts of a century of foreign imperialism fade away."

The other day, Mr. S. Nagappa, a Scheduled Caste leader from South India, took the palm as the most amusing speaker of the Constituent Assembly. In a 15-minute oration on the Minorities Advisory Committee's report, he wove a charming fantasy in inconsistency. His sentences broke all rules of grammar, his thoughts defied logic, and his facts bore little semblance to truth. But his enthusiasm was infectious. The speech left the members grunting and laughing and then sent them off to the lobbies for a breakfast of idli, cold coffee and gossip.

Mr. Nagappa began with the informative statement that the majority community happens to be larger in number. Then he delivered the first shock of the series. He said: (I am quoting verbatim from the official reporter's notes) "Though Lord Krishna failed in his last avatar to get impendence (sic) or rather the share in the administration of the country yet in later generations Mahatma Gandhi achieved at the cost of his life political freedom for Harijans."

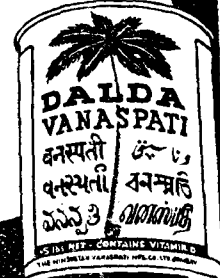
Amplifying his point, Mr. Nagappa went on: "Three thousand years ago we gave you (the majority community) shelter. It is our community that gave protection to everybody. The British could not rule this country without our co-operation; the Muslims could not conquer this country without our co-operation."

Warming up, Mr. Nagappa threw a challenge. "Even today, here and now," he said, "I am prepared for the abolition of reservation, provided every Harijan gets ten acres of wet land, 20 acres of dry land and all the children of Harijans are educated, free of cost, up to the University course and given one-fifth of the key posts either in the civilian departments or in the military departments." For that consideration, a Brahmin member offered to become a Harijan. But Mr. Nagappa would not have him. "Today," he declared, "you could become a Christian or a Muslim; the next day, you could become a Sikh, if you grew a beard, but you cannot become a Harijan except by birth."

At this point, the usually gaunt face of Sardar Patel broadened into a smile. Mr. Nagappa's grammar had been forgiven.—From the Sunday News of India.



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ZAMINDARIS IN EAST PUNJAB

By BAROO

EVACUEE Muslim land in the East Punjab is going to be permanently allotted to Hindu and Sikh refugees from the West. Since more land has been left behind in Pakistan than recovered here, allottees will receive smaller pieces than they originally owned or cultivated. The Government of East Punjab has decided upon a sliding scale as the basis of allotment. The biggest landlords will lose the most, while the smallest proprietors will lose the least.

The big estates left behind by the Muslims will therefore disappear from the scene. They will be cut up and distributed among refugee claimants who will have to be content with fractions of their holdings in the West. But Hindu and Sikh estates in the province will continue undisturbed. There will thus be only a partial abolition of big estates in East Punjab. But this "abolition" will be without compensation of any sort.

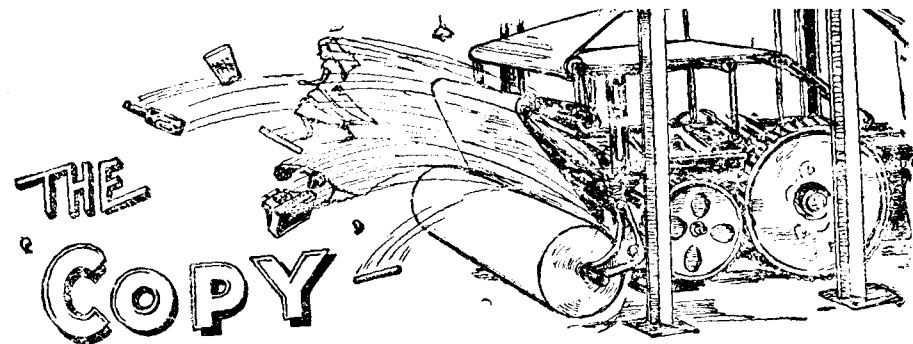
How are the big refugee landlords reacting to this scheme? They are undoubtedly unhappy about it, but feel impotent to do anything in the matter. First, they realise that they cannot claim equal lands as a matter of right; they can claim nothing as a matter of right. They are completely at the mercy of Government, and the realisation that the situation is hopeless has resulted in mental readjustment and an acceptance of the inevitable. Secondly, the landed aristocracy was never as powerful in the Punjab as it is in the U. P. or Bihar for example; the partition has created a grievous rift in its ranks and dispossessed landlords from the West find that they have no longer anything in common with their brothers in the East whom the maelstrom of partition has left untouched. Last, but not least, the economic losses they have suffered have put refugee landlords into a very amenable state of mind. The fight has gone out of them.

That is what makes me think that the vast majority of one-time big landlords will quietly accept what is being offered them. Here and there

a more disgruntled and intelligent sufferer will question the right of non-refugee landlords to continue to enjoy their undiminished estates, and succumb to Communistic ideas out of a feeling of jealousy. Many more will continue to advocate a stronger line towards Pakistan and live on hopes of a war and eventual conquest and restoration to their ancestral lands. But by and large, men have already reconciled themselves to the expropriation they have suffered.

It seems to me that provinces with vexed zamindari problems can learn a great deal from the example of East Punjab. The abolition of zamindaris has been held up in Bihar for want of resources with which to give compensation to zamindars. Difficulties of compensation have similarly obstructed the introduction of the reform in the United Provinces. It has been estimated that the cost of paying compensation to zamindars throughout the country will be roughly 320 crores. This is a burden we cannot shoulder. An alternative has been suggested of letting the tenants buy the land through Land Commissions by paying in instalments over scores of years. But that is no solution at all, because it means the transferring of the burden of compensation to the peasants. Our aim is the relief of the peasant, and immediate relief at that.

Events in the Punjab have shown that the big landlord will quietly accept a large degree of expropriation provided he is convinced that he will not be able to escape it, and that there is no use protesting about it. Of course there must be a great deal of coercion before such a psychology can be created—in the Punjab this coercion was the fear of death during the post-partition holocaust. But a firm line by the Government accompanied by pressure from the peasants below will easily achieve similar results in any other part of the country. But it is presupposing a great deal to hope for a firm line by the Government towards the very vested interests that compose it. That, unfortunately is where the rub lies.



By SANTHA

I put my pen down on the table and leaned back.

"If I do one more stroke of work," I affirmed, "just one more stroke, I will have a fit."

"Have you finished all the copy?" asked Bhadradi.

"Every single one of them."

"What have you done with the District Political Conference?"

"I threw the wretched thing into the waste-paper basket."

"Take it out, will you?"

I retrieved the maltreated copy.

"What about the other items?" asked Bhadradi.

"I have been telling you," I said, a little exasperated. "I have edited them. They can go straight to the press."

"They needn't," he said. "They can wait for tomorrow's dak."

"Have you looked over the magazine page?"

"Well, not exactly...."

"Have you brought the references I wanted?"

"Look," I said. "I have spent the whole morning glued to this desk, editing all this awful muck and you ask me have I brought your disgusting reference. I have been too busy. I am telling you."

"Oh, no, you haven't," said Bhadradi calmly.

"Well! Well! What do you think I have been doing then?"

He put his pen down and began counting on his fingers.

"I will tell you," he said with relish. "You have finished the last few pages of the Peter Cheyney novel you began yesterday, you have written two letters the envelopes for which you borrowed from me, you have had two cups of

coffee, smoked four cigarettes and you have gone up and spoken to the telephone-girl twice."

He leaned back with the satisfied air of a man who had done his duty and got a kick out of it and regarded me thoughtfully.

"I don't know why you go after her."

"Whom?"

"Helen."

"Oh!"

Helen is the telephone girl.

"She said the other day she was sick of seeing that silly face of yours about."

"She did, did she?" I said, feeling amused. Well, last week she had told me that she didn't think Bhadradi was quite a gentleman.

The boy brought in the new set of galley-proofs.

"Push the magazine section down first, will you?" said Bhadradi.

"WHY WE ARE AFRAID OF COMMUNISM—BY G. V. RAO. ARTIFICIAL RAIN AND ITS POSSIBILITIES—BY PROF. B. H. LANSING. Does this Tit-bits column go or stay?"

"Anything interesting?"

"Well, it says that it has been discovered that a dram of whisky every day does an expectant mother immense good. A two-headed calf.... Another set of quads.... The usual stuff...."

"O. K. Let it stay."

"WONDERS OF WIRELESS—WORKING OF PROHIBITION IN THE DISTRICTS. That is out. We have had enough of prohibition here."

"I dare say," said Bhadradi drily. "But that happens to be by a Minia-

ter. Put the item about whisky for expectant mothers next to it."

"What about this short-story?" I asked him. "It is very romantic, all about a nurse and her young man and the conflict inside her. It doesn't say what the conflict is all about but it is fairly obvious, don't you think? The nurse is evidently the old-fashioned kind."

"Let it stay," said Bhadradi.

I rapidly flipped the proofs. AIMS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY. INDIA AND THE COMMONWEALTH. There was an article on EINSTEIN and a picture of him.

The telephone rang. Bhadradi took up the receiver and banged it down again. "Wrong number" he said viciously. "I suppose it is Helen's lunch-hour."

I scanned the film-section. SKETCH OF A RISING STAR. Review of the film FISH AND FLESH. The sun outside got hotter and hotter and the atmosphere more and more heavy with languor. I unbuttoned my collar, cursed the ineffective fan, lighted a cigarette and resumed work.

It was then that the Editor sent for me.

* * *

"Come in, my boy, come in," said a much-feared voice in answer to my knock a couple of minutes later. "You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes," he said genially. "Make yourself at home, will you?"

I gingerly perched myself on the edge of the nearest chair available. "You are the very person I want," he said.

I stared. This was evidently the new technique in giving the fellow the sack. Let Them Down Gently and all that sort of thing.

"You are young," he continued, "and most unlikely to attract particular attention anywhere."

I didn't know quite how to take this one.

"Yours," he finished up giving me a steady concentrated look, "is a formidable task."

I prepared myself for the worst.

"The odds are heavy, my boy," said the Editor with a sigh, "and you have to stand alone and fight."

"Fight whom, sir?" I asked startled. I am not exactly a pacifist but I would hate to be suddenly pushed into the army without being given a chance to say good-bye to my mother.

"The oppressed and the downtrodden," said the Editor unexpectedly.

This was a poser.

"You mean people, sir?" I asked bewildered.

"Yes, of course," he snapped, "You didn't think I meant cows, did you?"

"And fight them, sir?"

"Yes. Yes. Yes."

"But I thought," I said, "that the oppressed and the downtrodden were to be uplifted and not fought with."

"Yes, surely," said the peon who had come to fetch me closing the door behind him and coming in, "that is, when we take the initiative and responsibility. But," he added, lifting a warning finger, "when they take upon themselves to demand and expect things, they have to be put down. Yes, sir, with a firm hand."

I continued to stare.

"He is middle-class," said the peon to the editor pointing at me. "Like myself. But I am a potential capitalist." He turned to me again. "Have you seen Fish And Flesh?"

"Yes," I said. "It only set me one rupee and four annas nearer Communism."

"Some people," he said, "have no taste, no taste at all."

"He acted in it," said the Editor pointing a finger at the peon and glaring at me. "That is Nagesh, the famous actor."

"Ah!" I said. "He must have fallen on evil days to have to take a peon's job."

"Not at all," said Nagesh. "This is part of my service to humanity."

"He is going to be your chief help in this job," said the Editor.

"But " I began.

"After all," continued the Editor not heeding my interruption, "where there is a girl it is always helpful to have a handsome, dashing young man around. You know what women are? And, of course, the setting would be perfect with you as the foil."

I didn't like it at all. But the Editor wasn't giving me a word in edgeways, so busy he was shooting off his own mouth.

"Well, my boy," he said slapping me heartily on the back, "I expect you to

do your best and come back with your mission accomplished. And remember," he added confidentially, "it is the ambition of every under-dog to be an upper-dog. Bear that in mind. It is the secret of all human advancement."

"Where are we going?" I asked Nagesh, utterly confused and at a loss.

"To the Kasturba People's Hospital at Tanjore. The Maternity Ward, specifically. Einstein will fly us over."

"Who?"

"Einstein. You know, the Physics chap."

* * *

"About this Maternity Ward," I began as we walked towards the hospital a couple of hours later. I didn't like the idea at all of going anywhere near anything as private as that.

"That," said Nagesh with a wink, "is where the women have babies".

"But we can't go in there," I protested.

"Why ever not?" asked Nagesh astounded. Evidently he was used to this sort of thing.

"Have you any children?" I asked him bluntly.

"No," he said, "at least I am almost sure. I mean I am quite sure. You see," he added hastily, "I am not married."

We had arrived at a green-painted door. Someone stood just inside, a pretty girl in a nurse's uniform.

"Please come in," she said with a smile.

"This," said Nagesh affecting the introduction pompously, "is Srimathi Kamalanethri who works as a nurse here."

"Hello, Helen," I said.

We walked straight into a spotlessly clean room with white walls. There were about twenty beds in it and on them sat young, tousled women in various forms of dress and undress, all laughing fit to split their sides. The background to the cumulative discord was provided by the lusty bawling of new-born infants.

"Why are they laughing?" I asked puzzled.

"Prohibition, you know."

"You mean they are drunk?" I said. "But this is a dry district, surely!"

"Yes, but you see," explained the nurse, "we have special permits from the Government to give expectant mothers a dram of whisky everyday. It is very essential they shouldn't get

low in spirits during that period, you know. It has a bad effect on the children."

"What effect?"

"It gives them the Teetotaller complex," said Nagesh. "And that makes for Unnatural Citizens."

I looked out of the window. It was a lovely view. But it was rapidly being blocked out by scores of men in red shirts carrying huge banners and placards. They marched in ordered clusters towards a central platform on which was a table. On the table was a black object.

"What is that?" I asked Nagesh.

"That is the rally."

"What are they doing?"

"They are waiting for the call."

"The Call? What Call? Is this a pagan ritual or what?"

Nagesh turned and looked at me oddly.

"You mean to say you don't know what all this is about?"

"Not a thing," I said promptly.

"How on earth," said Nagesh rocking on his heels with astonishment, "did you think you were going to conduct the campaign then?"

"Just a minute," I said. "What campaign are you talking about?"

"The campaign against the Communists."

"What!" I said horror-stricken, "Are we supposed to fight the Communists?"

"Are you a Communist?" asked Nagesh pointedly.

"Never mind who I am," I said. "You are making the most fantastic suggestion. How do you think I am going to fight that mob? They would beat me to a pulp before I can hold up my handkerchief."

"You nitwit!" thundered Nagesh, "You are not supposed to kill them."

"Indeed!"

He sat down on a vacant bed and looked at me as if I was something which had crawled from underneath a rock.

"We have to use tact and patience," he said. "We have to make these people see reason. In short, we have to turn them into Socialists."

"Are you a Socialist?" I asked him.

"Yes," he said. "At heart. But that is neither here nor there. What we

have to do now is to make these people understand they cannot conquer a country by violence. There is going to be no revolution. There is going to be no poisoning the minds of the poor and ignorant and the peasants and winning them over by false promises. The country is not going to be starved out of a good government." He led me to the window. "You see that black object on the table?"

"It looks like a telephone," I said. "It is a telephone," he said.

"Haven't the Communists ever seen a telephone before?"

"They are waiting for the call," said Nagesh.

"For heavens' sake," I said exasperated, "what is this call you keep talking about?"

"They are waiting," said Nagesh, "for a telephone-call from the working committee of the All-South Peasants' Organisation which is holding a meeting in Bombay and which in exactly fourteen minutes will pass a resolution to say it would link hands with the Communist Party in this country."

"Hm."

"Do you see that man in that chair at the table?" continued Nagesh. "The man with the beard. That is Kumara Veeran, the President of the South India Communist Party. They will do anything he tells them to do."

"What do you suppose he will ask them to do?"

"He will ask them," said Nagesh solemnly, "to march through the towns killing crops and burning people—I mean, burning crops and killing people, destroying factories...."

"You must be mistaken," I said. "The Communists would not do such things unprovoked."

"Are you a Communist?" asked Nagesh and then quickly, "No, you needn't answer that question. But the crux of the whole thing is what does it matter what they are going to do as long as what the papers are going to report is something entirely different? And remember, the papers are owned by the capitalists. That is the ABC of capitalist justice."

"In how many minutes did you say," I asked, "is the resolution going to be passed?"

"Twelve."

"Why don't we do something then?"

"That," said Nagesh, "is your job. Mine is here."

A white-coated doctor entered the room. He looked haggard and tired and his face looked weatherbeaten as if he had travelled too much in aeroplanes latterly.

"Mr. Nehru," I said frantically, "what are we going to do about this?"

"I telephoned Attlee about it this morning," said the doctor wearily, "and he said leave it to the Middle-class Intelligentsia. Who they are I am still trying to find out but I believe *Satyameva Jayati*"

"I think it is going to rain," said Nagesh.

"Rain!" I shouted ecstatically, struck by a new and brilliant idea. "That is what we want. Rain. Where is Mr. Einstein?"

"What is the matter with you?" said Nagesh.

"Matter!" I shouted. "I get the idea of the century and you ask what is the matter with me. I am going to give them rain. I am going to deluge the country south of the Vindhyas with rain. There isn't going to be a single acre of dry land anywhere here if I can help it. I am going to get the peasants to busy thinking about their land that they won't have any time or excuse to talk of rights and privileges. Fill the stomach and proletarian idealism crumbles."

Mr. Einstein appeared at the door.

"Pack a couple of tons of powdered ice in the plane, will you Mr. Einstein?" I said. "We are going to play Nature for a few minutes now"

The next seven minutes were the busiest in my life. When I alighted at the end of that time in the hospital compound, dog-tired, I made a bee-line to the telephone and put through a call to Bombay.

"Sorry," said a girl's tired voice. "We can't tell you when your call will come through."

"But it is important," I begged.

"Yes?" she said. "And a lot of other people from all over the place seem to think that it is just as important that somebody in Bombay should know that it has suddenly started to rain cats and dogs here. They keep talking about a resolution. Aren't people crazy?"

I looked out of the window. Like still marionettes in a strange table-

aux the red-shirted figures waited outside staring at that ominous telephone....

"Hello," said a drowsy voice, "how is the plan working out?"

I turned and stared aghast at Nagesh sitting up in a bed not three yards from me. Beside him, looking delicious was that pretty nurse again.

"Nagesh," I said, "get off that bed. At once. Do you hear?"

"What is the matter with it?" asked Nagesh innocently.

"I am ashamed of you," I said furiously. "Here I am working myself dizzy to save the country from rack and ruin and you...you..."

"I can't get out," he said promptly.

"Why not?"

"Because I have no clothes on."

"You mean you are just...did you think this was a nudist colony or what?"

"This is a Maternity Ward, you know," said Nagesh slyly, "and Kamala is on duty here and it is against rules for her to be seen talking to strangers for more than two minutes together. But once you get into one of the beds, you are exempted from all the rules. But you can't get into bed with your clothes on. If you understand what I mean. So, for the present I am a patient and am entitled to any amount of attention from the nurse."

"You have disgraced us," I wailed.

"I must tell father," said the nurse, flashing a smile at Nagesh.

"Who?" I asked.

"My father. You see that gentleman presiding over that rally? That is my father."

"And now look what you have done," I hissed as soon as the girl had left the room. "Do you know who that girl is? She is the daughter of Kumara Veeran. What do you think of that? Now we are in a sweet muddle."

"Muddle!" Nagesh shouted. "What do you mean muddle? Here I am working myself sick since I came here trying to make that girl fall in love with me and you call that a muddle."

"It must have been hard work," I sneered, "but what about the anti-Communist campaign?"

"This is part of the campaign," said Nagesh. "Listen. I am a capitalist. If his daughter marries a capitalist Kumara Veeran cannot very well stick to Communism, can he? Remove the leader and everything is O. K."

"I thought you said you were a Socialist," I said pointedly.

"Of course," he said, "at heart."

"But where do I come in?" I said.

"What about all that I have done?" You mean to say it is all wasted, even the ice?"

"No," conceded Nagesh gratefully, "it achieved two things. It gave us a little more time alone and it has shaken the confidence of the Working Committee at Bombay."

The President of the rally who had disappeared for a few minutes, evidently to hear his daughter's happy news, now returned to his seat looking visibly disturbed and restless.

"He doesn't seem exactly overjoyed, does he?" I said maliciously.

"If he takes that telephone-call from Bombay," said Nagesh, "we are doomed. I am hoping they will decide against telephoning at all."

Inside the room the mothers slept the sleep of the inebriated. And outside, the red-shirts sat waiting quietly.

Exactly two minutes later, the silence all round was shattered by the ringing, loud and imperious, of the telephone. The gathering outside bounded to its feet, faces and eyes alight with concentrated purpose.

"We are finished," said Nagesh.

The President got up and with a face pale as death took up the telephone and put it to his ear. Ten seconds later, in the pin-drop silence that prevailed he put it quietly back again.

"Wrong number," he said.

I remember collapsing on a bed, knocked over by relief. The pretty nurse said: "Take a hypodermic. It is a wonderful stimulant. We often give it to our patients when they are losing their consciousness after repeated doses of medicinal liquor." And before I could say anything, she jabbed the needle into my hand.

* * *

"The cigarette has burned my hand," I said.

"You can light another and go right back to sleep," said Bhadradi.

PRETTY LITTLE BELGIUM

By R. M. CHALLA

IF England has attractive meadows, if Holland has beautiful tulips, if Switzerland has lovely hills, Belgium has wonderful woods. The first thing you feel after leaving the Dutch border and entering Belgium is that you are no more in this world of trains and tickets and men, but you are entering a new unknown world of woods and forests.

After having gone through 3 centuries of domination by the Spanish, Austrian and French invaders successively, free Belgium has started building itself a great city in a fashion which was partly her own and partly also an assimilation of tastes left by her foreign rulers. Thus the modernisation of Brussels (which was in existence since the 10th century) started since 1830. The greatest of their after-freedom efforts is the erection of the Palace of Justice which has taken 18 years (1865-83) to build. It had been designed by a well-known architect, J. Poelaert. It is a colossal edifice of the type of St. Paul's Cathedral in London and is the biggest Palace of Justice in Europe. Unlike in the case of the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Nazis didn't feel any scruples against damaging this structure of Belgian labour and pride. This building hadn't had the luck of St. Paul's Cathedral (which escaped bombing) and has been considerably damaged though not destroyed. After four years of liberation the repair of this palace is not yet over. As Amsterdam has many charming canals in its heart, Brussels gives you glorious vistas with parks and works of sculpture on either side.

Antwerp is even more important than Brussels from the point of view of international sea-trade. This is the biggest port on the Continent of Europe and the third biggest in the world with a 31-mile long quay where more than 12,000 ships call every year. This town is also much more ancient than Brussels, with its origin dating back to the 7th century. The visitor finds a curious mixture of Gothic, Renaissance and modern

styles of buildings. Here is a 24-storeyed sky-scraper, perhaps the only building with so many floors in Europe. Here is also a diamond-cutting factory of the size of the one in Amsterdam, these two being the largest in the world. Antwerp has many more museums than Brussels has and the fact that that great art-museum, the Royal Academy and Higher Institute of Arts is situated here shows the respect the nation has for this ancient town. Of course this was the home of the masters of Flemish art. Here is to be found the magnificent home of that King of Flemish painters, Rubens. After returning from Italy, where he was the court painter for many years, he bought a big Gothic house and garden from a merchant of Amsterdam. By its side he erected a new castle after the Italian Renaissance style. This is now a place of pilgrimage. Antwerp was also the home of Van Dyck, the great pupil who outmastered his master, Rubens. These two men are to Belgium what Frans Hals and Rembrandt are to Holland.

Belgium is a bi-lingual nation. On the Brussels side leading to France people speak French and on the Antwerp side leading to Holland people speak Flemish which is only a variation of Dutch. The Belgians are a simple, honest people. Their love of art is similar to that of the Dutch. Fifty per cent of the houses in Brussels are hotels. Most of the people live on the tourist trade. Belgium is ruled by a Coalition Cabinet of Catholics and Socialists. In a few months' time the General Election is coming. For the first time in Belgian history the women are going to vote. Since the women are supposed to be religious-minded, they expect a huge Catholic success and are happy that Communists will again be as negligibly small as now. There was some trouble between the King and Parliament and he is now in exile in Geneva. There are two huge royal palaces in Brussels. The Regent eats in one and sleeps in the other.

CHIANG: NEITHER GOD NOR DEVIL

By M. N. ROY

NO man in our time has been so much idolised and damned as Chiang Kai-shek. Twice he was the hero: the first occasion was in 1926-27, when he was believed to be leading the revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people against foreign Imperialist and native reaction. In the earlier part of that period, he was allied with the Communists; the international propaganda machinery of Communism built up his personality, and the gullible legions of fellow-travellers joined the chorus. The second historic period of his chequered career was during the second world war, when he was recognised as one of the foremost leaders of the anti-fascist democratic world front. It was curiously forgotten that in between, for nearly a decade, he had carried on a bitter and bloody struggle against the Communists, who branded him as a fascist and at that time, the same international propaganda machinery of Communism, mobilised world left opinion against the henchman of foreign Imperialism and enemy of the revolutionary Chinese people. However his career may end, the frustrated greatness of Chiang Kai-shek should do one good turn to the world: to expose the shallowness of hero-worshipping opinion.

Irrespective of the communist charges against him, when he was not playing their game, it goes without saying that Chiang has never been a democrat, never pretended to be one. His dictatorial ambition has always been quite pronounced. To have noticed those facts does not necessarily mean passing adverse judgment. His ideas are of the Chinese tradition; his personality and character shaped by the social and cultural background. Chiang is not a man with a modern mind. In that sense, he can be called typically Chinese, and therefore fully qualified to be the representative leader of Chinese nationalism. He could be recognised as such; but to hail him

as a leader of the world democratic front was absurd. If he ever had any sympathy with any foreign nation, it was with the Japanese, due to cultural affinity which shaped political and social opinion in both the countries. During the period of his anti-communist crusade, he came closer to the Japanese Government, although he did not spurn American aid also. But his sympathy was with Japan and, through its eastern pole, with the Fascist international axis. During that period, the internal development of nationalist China was also towards fascist dictatorship.

Keeping all these obvious facts in mind, no objective historian can judge the Western Powers allying with nationalist China any more kindly than the Soviet-German Pact. Both were equally unscrupulous and short-sighted. The sin might have cost Russia her very existence. She just escaped the terrible retribution. The present plight of China and the resulting threat to the whole of Asia is the consequence of the unscrupulous short-sighted policy of the Western Powers. It is idle to blame Chiang Kai-shek or the corruption of his regime.

And it is worse than absurd for the Communists to call him a 'war criminal,' after having boosted him as a hero during the war. For ten years, he was 'the bloody butcher' of the Chinese people. All on a sudden, he was celebrated as their leader in the anti-Japanese struggle. The Communists, who had called him the greatest enemy of the Chinese people, declared their readiness to organise the anti-Japanese patriotic front under his leadership. And the left world opinion swallowed communist propaganda, notwithstanding its crass contradictions, and hailed Chiang kai-shek as the representative of resurgent Asia. That superficiality of advanced democratic opinion, ventilated particularly through the American press, infiltrated by fellow-travellers, made it easy for the Western

Powers to ally with Fascists in the struggle against Fascism. It was an orgy of illicit love-making.

The climax was Chiang's visit to India, to convince her nationalist leaders that Japan was not to be trusted. How far he succeeded in his mission is still a secret. He and Madame might have influenced the susceptible Nehru. But old Gandhi was a hard nut to crack. It would not be a surprise should historical research reveal that the mission served a purpose entirely different from that desired by the Western allies. The leaders of Western democracy, in office or out of office, have not yet been able to take a realistic view of Asiatic nationalism. The experience in China has not taught them a lesson. While one bubble is bursting, they are deluding themselves with another illusion, although this time the Communists are not helping them.

Chiang Kai-shek's chequered career is nearing its end. His American patrons have deserted him. His efforts to stage a come-back will not succeed. But before he sinks into the oblivion of history, he must have his due—an objective appreciation of the role he tried to play unsuccessfully, of his frustrated greatness.

Chiang embodied the tradition of Chinese culture more than any other leader of modern China and I happen to know practically all of them. Chiang is more Chinese than Sun Yat-sen was. Both were Christians; but with Chiang, Christianity was puritanism, while with Dr. Sun, it was an influence of liberal democracy. Christian puritanism is more compatible with the Confucian tradition of sanctimoniousness. Sun Yat-sen conceivably wanted to be the George Washington of China, although the analogy is rather farfetched. Cromwell was Chiang's ideal. All his life, he was not only a disciplinarian, but also a rigid moralist. He lived a life of austere simplicity. His mediaeval personality and outlook could not be influenced by the ultra-modern Madame. But mediaevalism meant

honest nationalism which after all is tribal conservatism. Chiang was honest, and did not want to play the Hamlet of China, like his more successful contemporary in India. He wanted to be a full-blooded Chinese, with no hypocritical frills. And Chiang is not the only honest man to go down in the struggle of life. Only let it be noted that honesty is not necessarily goodness, and one can be dreadfully sincere in wrong belief; similarly, false ideals can be pursued with honesty. The goodness or badness of the object of belief has nothing to do with honesty. In either case, it can be honest.

Once nationalism is recognised as an ideal worthy of pursuit, none is entitled to sit in judgment over what Chiang did. One should be judged by his accepted standard. Therefore, the objective historian must not be carried away by propaganda, for or against him. He was neither a God nor a devil. If he failed to be god-like here, the fault is not his, but of his interested propagandists who wanted him to do what they wished. He was not a democrat; how could he serve the cause of democracy? He did not betray anybody; illusions about him were cruelly destroyed, because they were illusions. The disillusioned, whoever they may be, must blame themselves for the bitter experience.

Chiang Kai-shek is not the type of man which makes history, although in the beginning of his career it appeared that he would make the future history of China; the future could be one of freedom or of greater slavery. History is not committed to unbroken progress. But Chiang failed to be the man of destiny; instead of making history, he was tossed in the torrential stream of events. Twice greatness was thrust upon him; but himself not being great by nature, he was overwhelmed by fate, to sink into the oblivion of history, a maligned character and a frustrated soul. Not only is he frustrated, but greatness also, which has still to find a medium of expression in the Chinese scene. (World copyright.)

Nearly 29,000,000 families in the United States—over 68 per cent of the nation's total—own automobiles, a recent survey finds. About 46 per cent of the families own new cars, while 54 per cent own used cars. At present there are approximately 34,000,000 passenger cars in use in the United States.

The typical family car is said to be a 1940 model which has been driven 59,000 miles.

THE LARGER CIRCLE

By A Sita Devi

IN all the world today and especially in this Motherland of ours there is a vital element that is needed. We talk glibly of Brotherhood, but to many that does not mean what it should, since often those who quarrel most bitterly are born as brothers into a given family to work out in any one life the karma of the past.

But there is another word that has no association of strife, but only one of happiness—it is that of *friend*. What are friends? Men, women, or children, chosen by ourselves, because they are congenial, because they give to our longings, our aspirations, a sympathetic response.

Of our friends we do not expect over much. We do not insist they be with us always, that they behave in certain ways. They have lacks which we supply and we have lacks that they supply. While the hand, palm down outstretched, is a symbol of an elder blessing a younger, a fulness pouring down power into a lack, while the hand with beseeching palm upstretched is a symbol of a younger begging from an elder that his lack be filled with fulness, the clasped hands is a symbol of friendship between those who have both lacks and fulness, and can supplement each other's needs. We are often ill at ease with our elders, ashamed of our own smallnesses. We are often similarly ill at ease with those younger than ourselves. But with our friends we can be ourselves. We can be natural. There are no restraints upon a free interchange of our life forces.

Perhaps the reason the Hindu marriage is so happy a one is that it is founded on the ideal of friendship. Two young people starting the new hearthfire which is destined to warm and shelter new citizens for the Motherland, take each other for "friends"—a most fundamental relationship upon which to build a family. Oftentimes we will hear the highest compliment that a child can pay a

parent or a parent a child—"he or she is my dearest friend." It is a veritable accolade, for with our limited eyes in the understanding of a day which has forgotten the truths of karma and rebirth, we are apt to think of the relationships within the family as accidental. We say with those of the West, "Though I cannot choose my relations, thank God I can choose my friends."

Because we can choose our friends and our choice is an unlimited one, just so can our circle of friends be unlimited. Among the poorer, so-called "more ignorant" peoples, the circle of friendship is a very wide one. As a villager once remarked in astonishment to his employer who asked him if such and such a person in the village was a special friend of his, "Why, Sir, all people in the village are friends." Where the visit of the political agitator has been deferred, there you will find among Muslims and Hindus the most cordial and friendly relations existing. Often in villages in the North, Hindus will visit Muslim shrines and Muslims Hindu shrines, and there are shrines with traditions common to both. But when the deadly and insidious propaganda of those who have their political purposes to serve finds its way to a vicinity, then indeed is the fair plant of friendship poisoned and hatred and antagonisms then spring up unchecked.

One reason why there is so little hatred and bitterness in the British political field is that the leader and gentlemen of the opposition are friends of those in power. There will be fulminations in the House of Commons which will give an impression to an outsider that each opponent looked upon the other as the most deadly enemy that civilization could have. But while they have sincere differences of opinion and vigorously express them, that does not stand in the way of genuine friendship. Nor

should it. Some of our best friends are those whose point of view is most divergent from ourselves. So can we most supplement each other in friendly intercourse. So when the British Member of Parliament leaves the council chamber, save with rare exceptions, he will meet in the most friendly social relations those whom he has most strenuously opposed in the legislative and political field. That is why the British House of Commons recognizes its leader of the opposition as most necessary to the operation of Government and even pays him for his services.

These are lessons which we need to learn—how to vigorously uphold an ideal without descending into the field of petty rancours and jealousies. It is a lesson out of our own forgotten past when even the warrior had a magnificent code that made of war itself a thing of honour.

Political divisions certainly need not mean points where friendship ceases. Rather should they be points where friendship begins. The most friendly relations exist between the United States of America and Canada, and a long unpoliced frontier testifies to the solidarity of that friendship. There is no subservience of either nation to the other, and even

when Anglo-American relationships have at times been strained, American and Canadian relationships have continued friendly. Though a few centuries ago—Canada was the home of the "loyalist" and the United States the home of the "revolutionary," there was a quick readjustment to a friendship which has never since been broken. There is no reason why the same readjustment may not be made between India and Pakistan.

But such a sound relationship can only be established on a basis of mutual friendship. It must be fostered by a friendly attitude between those who are the spokesmen for both nations. And we the people must see to it that our spokesmen ever VOICE our truest sentiments. Building on the true and integral friendship existing among the villagers, let us have increasingly wider and wider circles of friendship until at last the whole of India and from India into Asia and the world becomes an area in which friendship is enthroned.

*"He drew a circle and shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout;
But love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a larger circle that took
him in."*

—Edwin Markham.



Acharya Vinobha Bhave at the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Madras.

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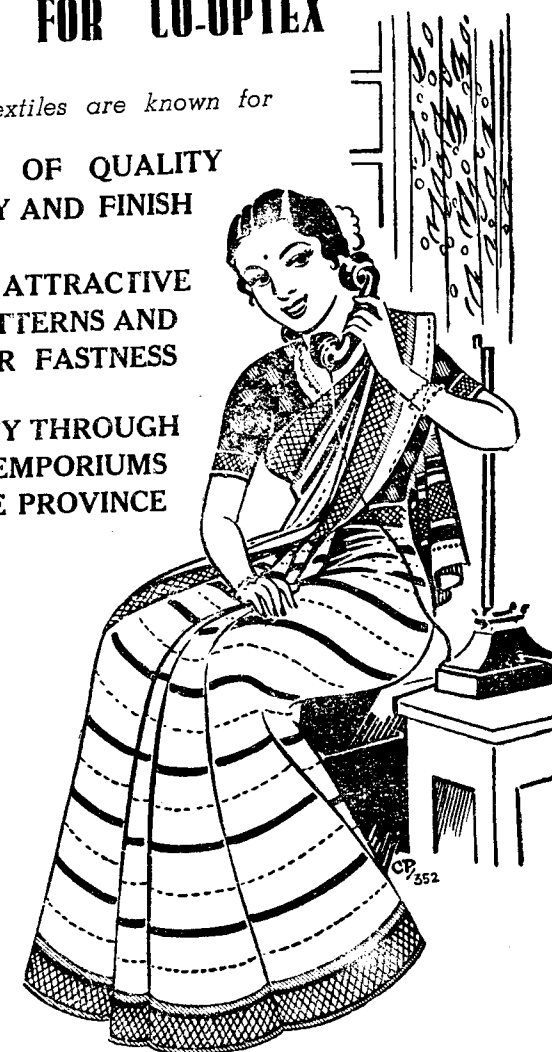
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RIVER DEVELOPMENT IN U. S.

MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR PROJECTS

GREAT land areas totaling more than one-fourth of the United States would be improved by multi-billion-dollar conservation projects under a plan proposed by President Truman.

The plan is to supplement the existing "Tennessee Valley Authority" with two similar agencies of the Federal Government—the Missouri Valley Authority and the Columbia Valley Authority. All three are named after rivers. The drainage areas of these rivers and their tributaries, with some adjacent regions, form the territories, operation fields for conservation, irrigation, flood control, hydroelectric plants, rural electrification, production and distribution of low-cost fertilizer, and companion agriculture developments.

In an article describing the Truman plan's possibilities, and what has already been accomplished in the Tennessee Valley, the newspaper *Washington Star* says all three authorities could affect a total of 790,000 square miles of land. Tennessee Valley accounts for about 40,000 square miles of land. Projects under the proposed new Missouri and Columbia Valley authorities would together cover an area of 750,000 square miles. The entire land area of the United States is 2,977,000 square miles.

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a U. S. Government agency, has operated more than 15 years in seven southern states. It is considered one of the world's outstanding large-area conservation successes. From many lands engineers, government officials and industrial and agricultural experts, have travelled to the United States to study its system of dams, power and fertilizer plants, rural electrification, and various farm improvement projects.

Government estimates are that Columbia River Authority (CVA) projects would benefit an area of about 220,000 square miles in the western and north-western states of Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Wyo-

ming, Nevada and Utah. Present plans of reclamation call for 238 projects in that area, costing upwards of \$5,000,000,000. Another set of plans by U.S. Army engineers would cost around \$3,000,000,000. President Truman has directed those two agencies to coordinate the plans.

Engineers estimate the Columbia River basin already produces more hydroelectric power than any region in the United States, but that it is only one-fifth developed. They also say its amount of irrigated land can be more than doubled to a total of around 7,500,000 acres.

The Missouri Valley Authority (MVA) would benefit about 530,000 square miles with a population of 7,000,000. This includes the states of Missouri, North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota.

Plans for the Missouri Valley area include 105 reservoirs on the Missouri River and its tributaries, and levees for 700 miles along the Missouri. Engineers say more than 4,000,000 acres of new land can be brought under irrigation and protected from floods. Also, the plans include 20 power plants to generate 5,500,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity a year.

TVA takes in 40,000 square miles, wherein 4,000,000 people live, in the states of Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. In 15 years it has constructed 26 dams, and is the largest single producer of electricity in the United States. It has improved a 630-mile navigation channel. It has a fertilizer experiment and production programme and has promoted tree planting, soil conservation, and many other projects.

TVA officials say average savings from flood-damage is about \$11,000,000 annually, that more than half of the farms in its area have become electrified, and that the rates to consumers of electricity are among the lowest in the nation.

TVA estimates that in terms of living standards, people in the area have made double the gains of the average for all U. S. citizens since 1933.

TVA is headed by three directors appointed by the President. The programme in the Missouri and Columbia River valleys is now under an "inter-agency" committee, composed of representatives of the Federal

Government and the states. The "committees" are advisory, but an "authority" can create plans and projects, with the approval of Congress and the President, and the "authority" administers the projects after construction. It is necessary under the American system of government for Congress to enact legislation creating such authorities, or any federal agencies, and to appropriate the money for their operation.

G. D. NAIDU, THE INVENTOR—GENIUS

By "OBSERVER"

G. D. Naidu is a very versatile person. There is nothing on earth in which he is not interested. Though he had no schooling of the proper type, he had been throughout a self-educated man, with a gluttonous appetite for amassing all-round knowledge. In his youth, he studied the Tamil classics all by himself without a teacher, and in his middle life he stomachached the contents of scientific journals and technical books with rapidity and ease. He did not stop with being a mere book-worm but developed a keen interest to practically achieve with his hands what the mind conceived. The result is that he is the father of many admirable inventions, which if properly developed, would have been greatly helpful to India today.

Twenty years ago, he bought a foreign-made camera to take pictures. When he took some snap-shots, he found that the object afar was recorded in small form, whereas the object closer to the lens was recorded big. Why was it? His mind began finding a solution to this difference. Finally, he invented a little device, which if fitted to the camera was capable of doing away with the difference which distance made in the recording of the picture. He was once amazed about the vibration of the auto-engine. He wanted to make it less in intensity and so he set about working. He invented a *vibration-recording machine*, highly praised by British automobile interests. When he went to Europe he found the daily shave very annoying as he was dis-

gusted with the razors in use. He set about inventing an electric-razor, which was acclaimed by the London trade circles as the best in the line! He looked at a *radio*, took the figures relating to how much India spent on foreign made radios annually and then started to make one himself. He succeeded in manufacturing every part of it, except the valve and the cone, for which a certain type of paper was essential. He studied the diesel-engines and took notes of what was right with them and what was wrong. He went over to London and lectured to the British Automobile interests on his own impressions of the diesel engines they manufactured. They warmly approved his suggestions, praised his skill and adopted many of his improvements in their further manufacture. In his quiet laboratory in Coimbatore, he made a small "model-automobile," every part of it being made by himself. He then poured an ounce of petrol into the tiny tot of an engine, started it and made it run for a mile, with a broad smile all to himself of boyish delight. Sir Arthur Hope, a former Governor of Madras, called Naidu the "Nuffield of India" and when Naidu saw the British Nuffield sending out to India *iron lungs* for our hospitals, the Indian imagined to himself that he ought to manufacture that device in thousands to help our hospitals. He wanted to get some models for examination from the United States before he set out to make them, but then, our Import Controller never saw any urgency for them here, and

so refused permission to import the "models"! "I am now through with the idea. They think that I need an iron lung for myself!" he commented sardonically.

Naidu believes in the film as a medium of mass education. He has collected from all parts of the world during his wide travels, over five hundred educational documentaries which if shown continuously would last for 600 hours. He told the Government of Madras to make use of these films, but they made no use of the suggestion.

All these were achievements within the course of just ten years of his life, between his thirty-fifth and forty-fifth year. Today he is in his fifty-fourth year. His wonderful Rasant-electric razor and blade are patent in Germany, England and U.S. They won the first prize at the Leipzig Fair in 1936 and at the Park Fair in Madras. At an exhibition in Lucknow they netted gold-medals. An American offered three lakhs of dollars for the patent rights of his razor

and blades in 1940, but today he has given them to him *absolutely free!* "I have no use for them in India to benefit Indians! At least, you make use of them to benefit America," he wrote him.

The ten blocks of buildings in his residence are all inter-connected with electric wires. Walkie-talkies are fixed in each of his offices, and from his home Gopal Bagh he can talk to his workshop seven miles away at Peelameedu. He has mastered the art of living twenty-four hours a day! Seven years ago, we sat up one night talking till three in the morning. Then, at six, when I was still in bed, I saw him passing through my room after a bath! When I first asked him for an interview as a complete stranger to him, he wrote back: "I have no time to spare for you, but if you could kindly come around by 1-30 a.m. to-night, I shall give you half an hour"! I went of course, and sure, he was there ready to receive me! Rather Shavian, I thought, but then, Naidu is a genius in his own right, as Shaw is in his!

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Letters To The Editor

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

Welcome To Section 93

When the possibility of this province being governed by Regulation 93 was first bruited abroad a few days ago, my heart fluttered with joy at the prospect of better times coming in.

The government of the Ministers has been obnoxious, their regime very inefficient and their natures so implacable that their time is mostly consumed in intrigues and party squabbles. The transaction of day-to-day business is delayed considerably in every case. Their time is mostly consumed with travels, attending party meetings and receiving addresses or opening coffee hotels and hair dressing saloons. They have converted the Secretariat into a fish-market and their example has caused such deterioration in the subordinate staff in the Secretariat that the latter waste their time mostly in loitering about rather than sitting down in their places and attending to the files that pass through them.

The province is so torn with party and linguistic and communal squabbles that it is positively dangerous to pick up advisers from within it. It is certainly worthwhile picking a few honest and good citizens of the land from here and elsewhere.

I do not wish to allow the power to drift into the hands of the I. C. S. men. They are an unimaginative lot, incapable of enterprise in thinking and adventuring out in new lines of activity. I do not impugn their patriotism but they work best when there is an intelligent superior of independent thinking.

To deal concretely with the subject—the name of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer comes uppermost in my mind. His past attitude at the time of the declaration of independence may be trotted forth against him. But I would put it to his intense loyalty to the organisation with which he was associated. It was in his regime that the important projects in the province were initiated. Another person that comes to my mind is Dalal of Tata's. A keen businessman, one who can look ahead is wanted in the present set-up. Another is Deodhar of Poona—unassuming, quiet and incorruptible. These, along with an enlightened Governor could administer the province much more efficiently than the present bunch of nondescript politicians. But one undertaking we must get from them. They must not go about receiving addresses from quasi-party organizations. Some of these, while presenting addresses, praise these men to the skies and make out that barring wings they are angels temporarily sojourning on this earth. Out

of courtesy the addressee has to say a few nice things. Then the addressors go about stating that they have a lot of pull with the big personages and blackmail other people. All this acts in a vicious circle and the vicious circle draws in all and sundry into a sorry mess.

Look at the spectacle of the performance of the anti-corruption department. A few constables were all the victims of their vigilant drive. Many of the tall poppies have got off unscathed. To give one typical example, let them scrutinize the activities of the pipe dealers' association of Madras and bring to light their amazing racket.

A few loud-mouthed politicians will yap "This is not democracy" but their noises had better be ignored.

Well, something has to be done, dear editor, to salvage the province. I beg of you to use your good offices and your strong pen for the consummation of this most desirable end.

KAY.

Fatuous Talk In Consamby

In a discussion recently in the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Das from Bihar made a great point about many people wearing European dress. What is the harm in that? Men of his ilk will not mind penicillin of American make for body defense in cases of illness, nor submarines and aeroplanes of the British and European types for national defense. Let him delve into the books of Charka and Susruta for composition of penicillin-drugs and let us see with what success.

Such sentimental people must be barred from important legislative assemblies. If you are mixing in civilized society don the dress of civilized people, talk their language and cultivate their manners, reserving your sack cloth for the privacy of your own bed-room.

He further raised the question why judges should be paid high salaries. This brings to my mind an incident. Amongst the members of the board of management of an agricultural college, there was a farmer. A question came up before them about the increase of salaries of some of the important professions. Many members objected to the increased demand on the score that the said professors lectured one or two hours only a day. The farmer put an end to the squabble by stating that his stud bull while doing much less work in the course of a week had to be maintained at a much higher cost than other cattle. The moral is there for one who runs to read.

C. R. K.

Mineral Resources Of Andhra Desa.

In my article entitled "Mineral Resources of Andhra Desa" published in SWATANTRA of 28th May, a mistake has crept in. The last sentence of the last but one paragraph with which the article ends is a quotation and should hence be in inverted commas, as it is taken from the presidential address of Prof. C. Mahadevan at the Science Congress. I reproduce the sentence below:

"To barter away our raw materials, in return for food stuffs, or for manufactured goods, to maintain the balance of trade, will keep us in perpetual economic subjection."

A. BHASKARA RAO.

Madras.

The Communal G. O.

In his recent broadcast Mr. Bhakthavatsalam said that the Madras Government adopts the policy of recruiting clerks and of admitting students to the Technical Colleges on communal lines only because they want to bring about equality between all classes and castes. He defended the policy by saying that it was in keeping with the secular nature of the Government.

According to Mr. Bhakthavatsalam and his friends the communal G. O. is intended to uplift the backward castes. In reality the backward castes are in the same deplorable state as before. Thevars, Gounders and Padayachis are rarely represented in the Government services even after the strict observance of the communal G. O. Only the forward Non-Brahmins, the Mudaliars, Menons and Nayudus who are already over-represented in the services are benefitted the more. Dr. Menon, member of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party in a recent speech at the Socialist Youth Conference said that progressive Non-Brahmins use the communal G. O. to crush the Brahmins.

While the population of progressive Non-Brahmins is less than 20 per cent they are given six out of fourteen posts. In addition to this, the seats that are expected to be filled by the Harijans and backward Non-Brahmin candidates are filled in by the progressive Non-Brahmins. As a matter of fact nine vacancies out of fourteen are filled in by the candidates belonging to the progressive Non-Brahmin communities. For example, the population of the Vellala community is less than 5 per cent. But they occupy 25 per cent of the total number of posts in the Government offices. The Co-operative Department is over-run by the Mudaliars. Thus, the Communal G. O., instead of uplifting backward classes, paves the way for the over-representation of the forward Non-Brahmins in the

Government services. No doubt it protects the Nayudus and Mudaliars against the 'unhealthy' competition of the Brahmins.

Mr. Subramaniam of Salem has voiced the grievances of the backward Non-Brahmins. He said in the open Assembly that even in the matter of wholesale permits to merchants, Reddiars and Mudaliars are preferred. What a noble illustration of the non-communal nature of the Madras Government! He warned the Government that a time will come when Padayachis and Thevars will oust progressive Non-Brahmins from power as they do the Brahmins at the present time.

The present problem is whether it is advisable to abolish the communal G. O. altogether or to amend it in the following manner:

(1) To abolish the communal G. O. completely, or (2) To reserve atleast 30 per cent of the posts for the men of merit, or (3) To make changes in the structure of the communal G.O., or (4) To adopt the social and economic G. O. (explained later).

The first and the second methods are not advisable in the present conditions of the province though they might be better than the prevailing method. The backward Non-Brahmins might be somewhat benefitted by the third method of altering the communal G. O. The candidates should be divided into four groups. (1) The forward Hindus (including Brahmins) and Christians—6 seats. (2) Backward Non-Brahmins—5 seats. (3) Muslims—1. (4) Harijans—3. This method will put an end to the co-called Brahmin, Non-Brahmin rivalry and at the same time the backward classes and Harijans will be benefitted more. The fourth alternative to the present communal G. O. is the best one. The 'privileged caste' is not the Brahmin caste but only the rich class. Only the money-bags have more chances than anybody else. They are not in need of earning their livelihood, by having their sons employed in the Government services. If their sons are refused admission in the Medical and Engineering Colleges, they can send their sons abroad.

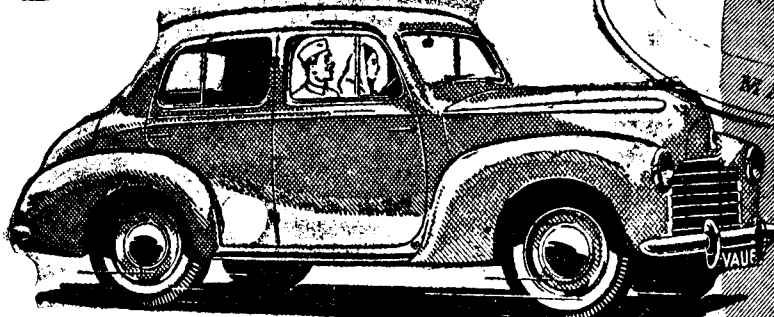
"The backward classes and castes are only those who are poor" said Damodar Swaroop. The Government G. O.'s should be beneficial to the poor, to whatever caste they may belong. The sons of kisans, labourers and clerks should be uplifted and preferred. Instead of paying attention to the caste of the candidate they should pay attention to his economic state. When Lenin, came to power, he did away with the communal orders of the Czar's Government. It is time for the Government to consider the matter and adopt a policy beneficial to the poor masses and to abolish everything based upon communalism.

Madura.

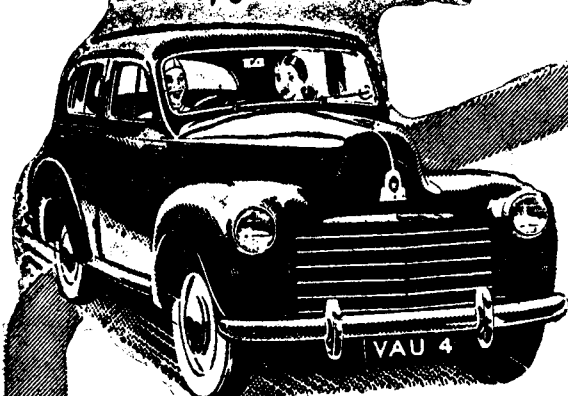
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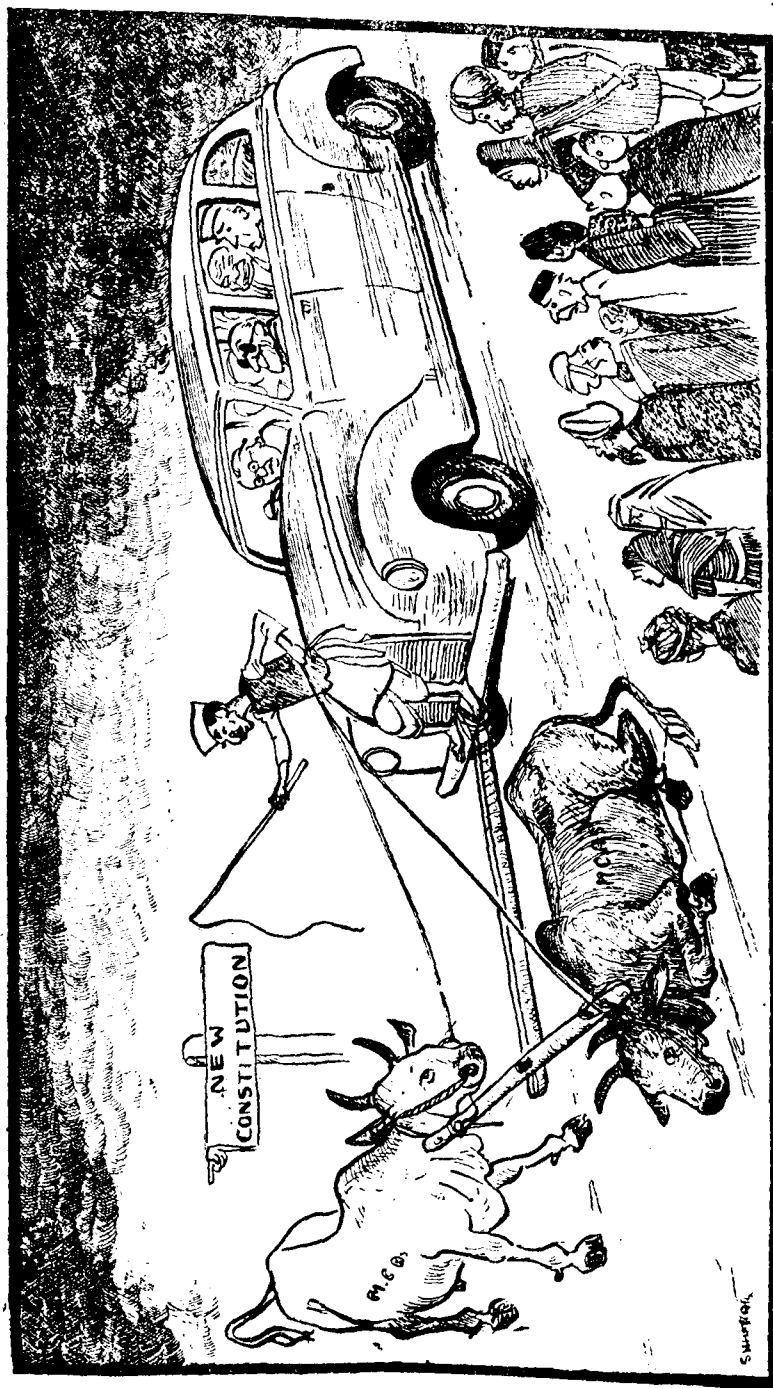
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From SHANKAR'S WEEKLY.

SWATANTRA

MADRAS

VOL. IV
No. 18

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1949

ISSUED
WEEKLY

POLICY TOWARDS COMMUNISTS

FAMILIARITY has tended to numb the sense of shock at political executions in our time, when politics are predominantly the politics of war. One has become used to read in the press, every now and then, of the killing by the State of its political opponents, after legal trials of varying degrees of formality, in countries torn by political strife. The afflicted area is vast, stretching all the way from Spain, Greece and Eastern Europe to China and Malaya.

Yet, the death sentence recently passed on eight Communists in Hyderabad will not, we hope, be accepted cynically as an inevitable extension, to this country, of prevailing political manners. If it is so accepted, either by the rulers or by the people, the prospect for our infant democracy would be dismal. It was on May 19 that the Hyderabad Government issued a press note announcing the judgment of the special tribunal in Nalgonda district on the numerous Communists tried by it. It seems from newspaper reports that the press note was no more than a laconic announcement of the punishments awarded by the tribunal, ranging from rigorous imprisonment to the sentence of death on eight men. Until now the names of the individuals condemned to death have not been published, nor the specific offences for which the extreme penalty has been pronounced on them. This is a serious case of failure, on the part of the national press and news agencies no less than of the Hyderabad Government, to discharge an elementary duty owed to the public. The imposition of the death sentence on eight

men is a matter of public importance and interest about which the fullest information should have been furnished by the authorities and sought by the press, especially when the condemned men are members of a particular political party which is in opposition to the Government.

What is even more disturbing is the indifference with which the country seems to have received the announcement from Hyderabad. Public reaction was far different when the death sentence passed on Ganapathy in Malaya became known. Congressmen, Socialists and Liberals joined in a chorus of indignation at what was rightly protested as a harsh sentence passed after an unpublicised trial. It is odd that these quarters should be altogether unmoved by the Nalgonda tribunal's unpublicised labours which have ended in the sentence of death on eight men. In the Malayan case, the name of the prisoner was at least made public, as well as his offence. In the Hyderabad case, we have been left in ignorance of the names of the doomed men, the particular offences charged against them, and the evidence on which they were convicted. Yet there has been a remarkable absence of protest from people who were eloquent in condemnation of Ganapathy's execution. This anomaly confirms us in our view, suggested earlier in these columns, that much of the reaction in India to the Ganapathy case was the expression of uncritical nationalist sentiment. Both the public and the politicians tended to regard Ganapathy, and sympathise with him, simply as an Indian victim of British colonial harshness, for-

getting that he was prominently associated with a militant Communist movement. If Ganapathy's scene of action had been Hyderabad instead of Malaya, he would very likely have been jailed—and might conceivably have been sentenced to death like the eight men of Nalgonda.

It seems to us that any thoughtful and not merely sentimental critic of Ganapathy's execution in Malaya should equally deplore the sudden and laconic announcement of the death sentence on Communists in Hyderabad. In saying this we are not unaware that Hyderabad has been, in recent years, the scene of violent Communist activity bordering on insurrection. Firm action is certainly needed to secure the safety of the State's citizens and their property from murder and destruction at the hands of the Communists. Clearly, this purpose will be ill served if the Communists are martyred—and that precisely will be the result of sentencing them to death after unpublicised trials. Not only should the due processes of law be fully and sincerely observed (and they possibly were so observed by the Nalgonda tribunal), it is also vital that the public should know that any action taken against Communists is the result of a fair trial. The public has been left without such assurance in the Nalgonda case with the result that the Communist Party is thereby presented with material for dangerous and effective propaganda. Similarly, the present habit of detaining alleged Communists without trial is at once a tyrannical method subversive of democracy, and a foolish method in as much as it enables the Communist Party to invest itself with a plausible halo of martyrdom.

The Congress administration has remained singularly blind to both these dangers in its present policy.

towards Communists. Consider, for instance, the communique issued by the Bombay Government during the recent hunger strike by Communist detenus in that province. Among the demands of the strikers were two which no sincere believer in democracy can resist, however much he may dislike the Communists' ideology and practice. These demands were for a legal trial or release of the detenus, and for the grant of an allowance to families hit by the removal to jail of their bread-winners. Rejecting the first demand, the Bombay Government's communique said that "the demand for trial by a court of law, coming as it does from Communists, can only be described as of academic importance." This, we think, is poor logic and poor political ethics. Trial by an independent judiciary is not a privilege to be extended by the executive only to those who, in its opinion, "deserve" it; it is a basic democratic right that cannot be denied to any citizens—Communists, Socialists or others—without destroying democracy. The communique goes on to defend the rejection of the second demand, on grounds unworthy of any humane Government: "The detenus wantonly exposed their families to certain risks. Now that they have been detained for their (*unproven*) activities, they cannot blame anyone but themselves for the hardships which they have brought on the heads of their families."

These events in Hyderabad and Bombay are not exceptional; they exemplify the policy of the Congress administration, all over India, towards the Communists. It calls for earnest re-examination both by the Government and by all who are concerned for the maintenance and growth of democratic political life in the country.

We can still shape our future for good or for evil, for survival or for suicide. If there is one thing of which I, as an historian, am certain, it is this: History never 'happens.' It is brought about by the free decisions of men as they decide whether to be courageous or cowardly in the face of tomorrow.—ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE.

Sotto Voce

The Gauleiters



DR. Rajan has been relieved, at his own request of course, of the Food portfolio and given instead Public Health his first love. But he sticks fast to the temples and maths. Which shows that Dr. Rajan, like the good Hindu that he has so often claimed to be, attaches more importance in the last instance to salvation than to calories. Most people may be so perverse as to baulk at the notion of having Dr. Rajan for Heaven's door-keeper. But they will have to lump it, as they cannot say with the poet, "Since there is no help for it, come, let us kiss and part."

Dr. Rajan's record as a procurer of the people's food has not been a conspicuous success. And that, said a wag, may be one reason why he goes back to Public Health; his services are probably most needed there now! But there were carping critics of his handling, in the good old days of the Rajagopalachari Ministry, of the medical affairs of the Province. They made ribald fun of his male nurses, and though he axed posts on principle there were not lacking acid comments on the vicarious philanthropy of the neo-Gandhians. And the practitioners of other systems of medicine are not likely to have forgotten or forgiven his aggressive contempt.

The Chopra Committee is all for restoring Indian medicine to its pristine glory. What is even more likely to rouse the ire of allopath fundamentalists, it talks of a synthesis of all systems of medicine. The fact that Col. Chopra, a distinguished "westerner" himself, one too who for

long remained sceptical of the survival value of Indian medicine, is now an enthusiastic sponsor of the scheme, has invested it with the odour of sanctity. And the Government of India may be supposed to regard it with a kindly eye, as their medical conscience-keeper Dr. Jivaraj Mehta is a staunch supporter. And yet the scheme, so far as Madras is concerned, is to be consigned to the tender mercies of Dr. Rajan, whose orthodoxy in medical matters if in no other is unimpeachable.

There is no reason to suppose that "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat." The basic assumption of democratic rule is all the other way about. Experts are good servants but bad masters. Especially in a domain where trade unionism of a particularly virulent type has long masqueraded as professional morals, to appoint a professional as the political head of the administration is to invite endless trouble. And in India, it may prove nothing short of a disaster as, besides the personal rivalries and jealousies which are incidental to any profession, there exist rival systems of medicine here, of which the dominant one looks down upon the others as poor relations.

Doctors, lawyers and engineers become Ministers in other countries too. But that is, as a rule, long after they have left their professional life behind them. Likewise, if they give up politics and revert to their profession, they do so finally. The practice, which is all too common with our Congress medicos, of keeping one leg planted in the Cabinet and the other in the infirmary, can hardly make for healthy politics. Here is Dr.

Jivaraj Mehta, for instance, who is one day India's Director-General of the Health Services, the next day Chief Minister of Baroda. He so ably aids Sardar Patel's efforts at getting Baroda to toe the line that he is made Political Adviser to the Ministry under the new regime.

And now comes his appointment on a salary of one rupee a month as *locum tenens* for the permanent Director-General of the Health Services during the latter's absence abroad. This will be, we are told with bureaucratic *equivoque*, without prejudice to his duties in Baroda. We have not the slightest doubt that this Colossus can bestride the vast expanse between Baroda and New Delhi without an effort. But I must confess to a sneaking sympathy with departmental chiefs who might be under-

standably sore at the supersession. And is not a salary of one rupee a gross example of undercutting?

But I shall concede that it may prove to be a fruitful precedent. Hitherto only Premiers have been allowed to act as if they were Herakles himself; they walk with lordly ease, tucking away under the arm one portfolio after another as it falls from the nerveless grasp of discarded favourites. But if the practice of honorary or one-rupee-salary appointments becomes general, the problem of political patronage may come to be solved at one stroke. Every legislator could be given a department to lord it over, reinforced by the enormous prestige of the one-rupee salary. Who is to do the work? Why, the clerks of course!

VIGNESWARA

The intellectual has only one loyalty: the truth. That is why he is so often hated by the partisan. That one loyalty unites the intellectuals of all countries, but politics divides. To rid the world of politics—that might seem to be our essential duty.—HERBERT READ.

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SIDELIGHTS :

Mammon has enriched his thousands, and has damned his ten thousands.—SOUTH.

THE Minister for Industries, U. P., has described the co-operative movement as "an antidote to Communism in India, one of the biggest movements for the improvement of the economic conditions of the people." At first sight it might appear that the co-operative movement is so axiomatically desirable that not a word of objection can possibly be urged against it. The U.P. Minister, in his enthusiasm, wants to see 100,000 co-operative societies, one for each village, established in his province. There are societies and societies, however. The label "co-operative" is by no means a guarantee that all is well with the societies that boast of it as a prefix. If a fraction of what is reported is true, there is in Bhimavaram, West Godavari district, a co-operative housing society which can only be characterised as a horror and an abomination.

The society seeks to acquire, for building houses for its members, some 29 acres of land of which the major part is already owned by others and built upon and occupied as residences. A portion of the acreage awaits house-building, the owners of the land not having acquired yet the required materials in these hard and difficult days. It would appear that having failed to acquire the sites which others have secured, the disappointed have formed themselves into a "co-operative" housing society so as to enlist the power of Government to realise their possessive ambitions with the trick of statutory compulsory land acquisition. Co-operation has thus turned out to be an instrument for the dispossession of rightful owners by covetous supplanters, and a co-operative housing society an engine of oppression for the dehousing of householders for the benefit of usurpers operating with Government support if not the patronage of some Minister. The harassed victims of this predatory species of "co-operation" in Bhimavaram, threatened

with prospective eviction from their homes, petitioned for succour to the Olympians at Fort St. George over three months ago, but no notice has been taken of their plight so far.

In Madras, too, there is a co-operative house construction society. It counts among its directors such stalwarts as Sri Venkataswami Naidu and Sri Guntur Narasimha Rao. It is supposed to exist "for a public purpose, to wit, construction of houses." A particularly distressing case of victimisation connected with the activities of this body raises grave doubts about the ethical foundations of co-operative housing as fashionably practised in our midst. The victim happens to be a tenant-resident of the city who with great difficulty bought two years ago a plot of land now included within the zone of the acquisition operations of the society. He obtained a lay-out plan sanctioned by the Corporation. The money demanded by the Corporation by way of improvement charges for laying of roads, sewage and electrical facilities was paid by him. He was only waiting for permission of the Corporation for commencing the construction of a house of his own on the plot. It was at this stage that the acquisition proceedings started. He then pleaded that as he wanted to build his own house on his plot he may be exempted from being forced to part with it in order that another may be provided with a house on his land. The land acquisition officer referred him to the society. The society referred him to the land acquisition officer. Whereupon he met the officer once again who said that he could do nothing in the matter and asked him to address the Government direct.

The Minister concerned was appealed to but declined to interfere. He seemed to think that it was no part of his duty to alleviate inconvenience caused to individuals. A curious circumstance is worth recording in this connection. A day after the Gazette notification announcing the application of the Land Acquisition Act to

the plot marked out for the society's house-building scheme, Sri C. K. Vijayaraghavan, then Inspector-General of Police, lately Chief Secretary and now member of the Board of Revenue, started constructing a house for himself right in the heart of the plot. Apparently the terrors of the land acquisition were for ordinary citizens only and not for high-placed officials. Is it the purpose of co-operative housing societies to rear bands of monopolists with State aid to compel citizens to sell their land at a lower price for the privilege of buying it again at a higher price, or to prevent

individuals from building houses except with their consent and authority? Among all the directors of the society there was only one intrepid enough to protest against this sort of conversion of an alleged service into a hard tyranny, this discrimination between the influential and the ordinary. It was Srimati Minambal Sivaraj. Messrs. Venkataswami Naidu and Narasimha Rao seem to have counselled her not to antagonise the influential, but she scornfully declined to weigh duty in the scales of self-interest. All honour to the gallant lady for so splendid a stand.—**SAKA**

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MADRAS GOVERNMENT'S TANK IRRIGATION SCHEMES

By "SOIL CONSERVATIONIST"

THE Madras Government have now taken up a scheme to renovate 25,000 irrigation tanks which have been under disrepair since ages in the province, with the object of augmenting the food production especially in dry districts. A scrutiny of the history of these tanks will give us the background of inefficient land utilisation on the catchments of these tanks. There used to be a network of tanks in Rayalaseema during Krishna Deva Raya's reign, but due to the utter neglect of the land consequent on the political and social turmoils after the downfall of the Vijayanagar empire, the tanks had become the repositories of the food-producing soil washed down by the rushing waters.

There is a mass of evidence to show that such networks of tanks used to be in existence in a number of other places in the province. They were all well as long as their feeding catchments were clothed under thick forest cover. But when feudalism expanded in tiny bits all over the land, an exploiting type of agriculture was set in motion and the forests were cut. The naked hill slopes began feeding the tanks with heavy silt-laden water, and the tanks had become the grave-yards of the food producing lands and the hill slope soils. Tank beds were set under cultivation and increasing extents of the forests were brought under the plough to compensate for the loss of tank irrigation.

The restoration of these silted tanks and the construction of new ones constitute a costly plan attended with several hazards. In the first place the upstream catchments of these tanks are now in a hopelessly denuded condition, and therefore they are liable to be resilted no sooner than they are formed. Similar is the case with new tanks. We have before us the examples of rapid siltation of reservoir and canal bottoms in the delta areas resulting in the dislocation of irrigation systems. Unless the up-

stream catchments are clothed in forest cover and the catchment land is also put under better land utilisation, the silting problem of the newly formed tanks will be extremely serious and the maintenance costs of desilting will be prohibitively heavy. The whole scheme will thereby be rendered uneconomical.

Another feature of these tanks in the scarcity areas like the Ceded Districts is that whenever the rainfall is below normal, the tanks cease to get adequate replenishment to irrigate the assigned areas. It means that even a partial crop cannot be expected during the draught years. We have been having repeated monsoon failures during the last few years and scarcity of water is being felt even in the delta areas served by major river irrigation systems. Such continued draughts will simply render the tanks useless.

The problem in the dry districts is therefore one of conservation of soil and rain and the effective integration of these two elements with conservation farming for sustained crop growth under sustained conditions of soil fertility. Under a scientific system of conservation farming, the hill slopes are restored to forest and grass cover and kept under reservation with controlled felling and grazing. The bottom lands are all terraced on the contour so that the soil is saved from runoff and the rain is conserved and allowed to soak in wherever it falls. Erosion and runoff are thereby prevented, and given improved agronomic practices, the soil fertility is always kept at a high pitch. Even during draught years, the little rainfall that the area gets is preserved wherever it falls by the contour bunds or terraces and a fairly good crop is ensured.

As an example of the relative costs and benefits of tank irrigation and contour terracing with conservation farming, we can examine the follow-

ing data on a catchment of 20 square miles or approximately 13,000 acres.

The estimated cost for the construction of a tank and the irrigation channels is Rs. 4 lakhs when carried out with famine labour. Instead of a tank, if the same catchment is contour-terraced, the expenditure will be Rs. 1,56,000 at Rs. 12 per acre which is less than 50 per cent of the expenditure under tank irrigation. The moisture that is conserved under terracing is 10 times more than that under irrigation. When compared with the expenditure, the cost of moisture preservation for crop growth with counter-terracing will be 20 times less than that with tank irrigation. The following are the other points of comparison.

The tank projects will not help in any way in controlling the soil erosion of the catchment, while under contour-bunding soil erosion is checked.

The moisture will be conserved in the limited area of the catchment which feeds the tanks while terracing will preserve the moisture on the whole catchment.

The tank irrigates nearly 450 acres at the cost of upper catchments which is likely to fetch Rs. 2,250 as irrigation revenues or nearly 0.5 per cent of the capital outlay.

The maintenance costs of the bunding project will be far less than that of the tank project. Except under emergencies, the job can be carried out by the farmers themselves on the terraced fields.

Tanks cannot supply water under conditions of draught, while the terraces preserve whatever rain falls thus ensuring at least a partial crop.

These conclusions are based upon actual observations of the working of the Machkhandi tank near Bagalkot in the Bijapur district. It was constructed in 1885 having a catchment of 24 square miles. The catchments around this area had all been contour-bunded with the hill slopes contour trenched and afforested, and the behaviour of the tank catchments were compared with the catchment of the bunding projects carried out by the Bombay Land Im-

provement Department. The results listed above were observed.

We will therefore do well to examine the relative utility of tank irrigation and contour terraced natural irrigation on specified areas. Reconnaissance land utilization surveys will help us to demarcate areas for each of the systems. Tanks fed by rivers under flood function well. The American Soil Conservation Service has perfected the system of "natural irrigation" through the combined operations of conservation farming, and we will do well to adopt an identical technique in our country without allowing our minds to be clouded by our age-long practices of unprotected and unscientific irrigated farming.

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MADRAS, THE MOST INDIAN CITY

A TRIBUTE TO KALKI

MADRAS: Four black bodies, bare but for a loin cloth, shiny with sweat, tensed with the strain of heavy labour, as they drag and push a cart loaded with bales of cloth. The bodies would have looked beautiful if they were muscular but they are thin and under-nourished, revealing not flexed muscles but ribs bursting out of the thin, taut skin.

Looking down from the fourth floor of a hotel, I see this living tableau of sweated human labour the whole day long. In Madras you hardly ever encounter a motor-driven truck. Only rarely do you see a bullock-cart. Man-power is cheaper than animal-power. So on every road, you see human beings pushing rickshaws and dragging over-loaded carts—panting, puffing, perspiring, doing the work of bullocks and horses for the sake of a few annas.

Most of the carts have no pneumatic tyres and often two or three lean men have to drag and push them up and down very steep gradients of bridges, in the sultry, enervating heat of the midday sun or in torrential rain.

If they were bullocks or horses, the sensitive and gentle souls of the Society For Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would protest, write to the press, hold meetings to rouse public opinion, lead deputations to the municipal authorities, collect donations from kind-hearted philanthropists for the care of the injured and over-worked animals.

But the S.P.C.A. is not interested in two-legged animals!

GRIM CARICATURE

It is strange how different aspects of a city's life strike a visitor on different occasions.

When I first came to Madras (about fifteen years ago) as a member of the U.P. Universities Debating Team, I carried back a view of the beautiful Marina beach as my most vivid memory of Madras.

When I came here

for the second time I was impressed (and almost over-awed) by the fact that many thousand citizens of Madras turned up (and paid for admission) to attend a Writers' Conference. It seemed to be a living testimony to the cultural awareness of the people of this city.

But this time, somehow, it is the grim spectacle of these human animals—rickshaw-pullers and cart-men—that haunts me. Wherever I go in the city I encounter them—pushing, puffing, panting, perspiring. A grim caricature of the dignity of labour. A grotesque distortion of the beauty of the human body.

I know that a hopelessly low standard of living drives men into these animal occupations. The rickshaw-pullers and cart-pushers of Madras are not the only examples of sweated labour. In fields, factories, workshops, mines, there are millions who are eking out just as inadequate and precarious a living. These men from the chronically famine-ridden areas of Tamil Nad and Andhra know that it is better to pull a rickshaw or push a cart (even if it means losing one's lungs) than to starve or beg in the streets. It is also apparent that, within the frame-work of the profit-motive economic system, humanitarian reforms are not always conducive to the welfare of the workers. I know a number of people who never take a rickshaw—to see a fellow-human dragging them shocks their sensibilities. But that does not solve the problem. It only deprives some rickshaw-pullers of a few annas that they might have earned otherwise. In Shanghai when rickshaws were abolished the rickshaw-pullers protested that they were being starved. Humanitarians in Madras may also succeed in getting rickshaws and

man-driven carts abolished. But, unless alternative employment is provided to them, that is not going to improve the lot of these human "beasts of burden."

And yet there is something infinitely



gruesome and revolting in the spectacle of thin, under-nourished human beings choking their lungs while they carry other (and invariably fatter and healthier) human beings in rickshaws or drag carts which are heavy enough to require elephants (or 30 horsepower engines) to drag them. Seen from high above, these tiny black bodies dragging enormous loads are a symbol of exploitation of man by man which is even more blatant in Madras than anywhere else.

MOST INDIAN CITY

Mercifully, there are other aspects of Madras which are not so unpleasant as the common sight I have just described.

The Marina still remains the most beautiful and lively beach in India—a vast stretch of soft and fine sand where the rich and the poor, the old and the young, gather in the evening for fresh air and fun.

There is still, comparatively, greater cultural, artistic and literary awareness in Madras than most other cities in India. Larger appreciative crowds turn up at demonstrations of classical music and dance in Madras than almost anywhere else. *Anandaviketan* and *Kalki*, the two popular Tamil weeklies published from Madras, enjoy a circulation of over 70,000 copies each. Madras is perhaps the only city where Indian language papers have attained the status of Big Business.

Madras was the first major port in India where the British established a foot-hold. "Madrasis" were until recently supposed to be most proficient in English. More people could read, write, speak or at least understand English in Madras than anywhere else. And yet Madras (presidency as well as the city) has remained less Anglicised than any other province or city in India. Indeed, the South Indian generally is more Indian than the man from the North. Fewer people wearing western clothes will be observed in the streets of Madras than in Bombay or Calcutta or Delhi or Lucknow. Very rarely do you find even well-to-do people eating in the western style. Madras is more Swadeshi-conscious than any other city and many more people habitually wear Khaddar here than in any other city. Madras is a big city with the habits of a small town.

Like a well-behaved child it goes to sleep at about 9 p.m. There is hardly any night life and the streets are deserted much before eleven. Once I returned from a late cinema show to my hotel at the stroke of midnight and found the door locked. It took nearly ten minutes to wake up the watchman and the suspicious manner he looked at me and cross-examined me as to where I had been was so disconcerting that I have not dared to repeat another late show.

With a quiet way of life and cultural integrity, Madras has also preserved many of the anachronisms of orthodoxy. The rigours of the caste system are slowly disappearing all over the South, but still you find more caste-marks, more top-knots and sacred tufts in Madras than in any other city. There is, of course, a greater percentage of temple-goers. Many shops display quaint devices to avert the "evil eye." In Madras there is more religion, more orthodoxy, more superstition and more astrology than in any other comparable city. "Untouchability," however, is on the run and should disappear altogether in another five years. I was glad to find that the owner of one of the biggest restaurants has recently been heavily fined for refusing to serve food to a Harijan. Slowly but surely the numerous coffee shops and a growing number of Bombay style Irani restaurants are helping to break the barriers of caste.

Madras, like Bombay and unlike Calcutta, is a multi-lingual city. At least one third of the population speaks Telugu, while there are substantial numbers of Malayalees and small communities of Gujaratis, Marwaris, Sindhis and (since the partition) even of Junjabis. Nevertheless, Madras is by no means a cosmopolitan city in the sense that Bombay is cosmopolitan. The various language groups are not socially mingling together to evolve a composite and cosmopolitan cultural pattern; they continue to live in isolation, as if on separate cultural islands.

TAMIL FILMS

Talking about culture, I think only the lowest form of the rich South Indian cultures is represented in the Tamil and Telugu films that are produced in Madras, Coimbatore or

Salem. Even the phenomenally popular *Chandrasekhar*, artistically speaking, can hardly be said to be representative of a culture that produced the sculptures of Madura and Mahabalipuram.

Technically, no doubt, the Tamil and Telugu films have advanced, in some cases, even beyond the products of Bombay and Calcutta studios. The success of *Meera* and *Chandrasekhar* will tempt more and more South Indian producers to send their films Northwards. This can be a medium of the much-needed cultural exchange between the North and the South. But I think the Tamil film will have to "grow up" before it can successfully invade the North Indian market. I saw a Tamil film—one of the best among the current attractions—and was amused by the unsubtle presentation of the mythological legend, the crude and tinselly nature of the sets and costumes, the unabashed plethora of songs which were sung by every one—including Arjuna and Krishna—at the slightest provocation or without any provocation at all. I could not follow the words but I could sense that the quality of singing was of a much higher order than what passes for film music in our Hindustani films. But, here too, popular tunes are sometimes copied from Hindustani films much to the detriment of genuine musical quality which hitherto has been the best feature of Tamil films.

The preponderance of mythological themes in Tamil films is indicative of the more or less feudal stage in which Tamilian life is still steeped. Politically and socially, Tamil Nad is perhaps the most conservative province in India; Communism and Socialism are at their lowest ebb here. Compared to other languages, very little progressive or even iconoclastic literature is being written in Tamil. Tamil journalism is sedate and conservative, without flash and vigour. Even popular journals publish commentaries on religious and mythological texts alongside escapist romantic short stories. Barring a microscopic minority of Marxists and Socialists, the generality of progressive-minded Tamilians have not progressed beyond a vague humanitarian reformism, the best examples of which are to be

found in the short stories of Rajaji and Kalki.

Talking about Kalki, I found this amiable 45-year old journalist and author one of the most interesting and phenomenal personalities of modern Tamil Nad. His literary output is prodigious. Serial novels, short stories, literary and art criticism, political articles all flow from his pen, week after week. His weekly, *Kalki*, has risen to the top of Tamil weekly journals, only on the strength of his writings. No other single living Indian writer enjoys such popularity and wields such influence as Kalki does in Tamil Nad. His greatest achievement, however, has been the revival of popular interest in the poetry of Bharati, the unorthodox and, in some ways, revolutionary poet of Tamil renaissance, who died some twenty years ago. A magnificent memorial to Bharati has been raised and the Government has been persuaded to take over the publication rights of his works and to arrange for their proper publication. The efforts made by Kalki and others on behalf of the Bharathi Memorial have created a province-wide interest in literature and litterateurs. The Government has appointed poet-laureates in all the four languages of the presidency (Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada) each of whom receives a yearly stipend, and prizes are being offered every year to the authors of the six most outstanding works in Tamil on different branches of knowledge.

But to revert to the Tamil films, only a few of them deal with contemporary social scene, and that too in a half-hearted, escapist manner. Mythology is generally the safest bet of a film producer. And yet it is significant that two of the biggest box-office hits of the last twelve months were "social" films which sought, however obliquely, to reflect social reality. "We Two," a story of two brothers, was given the background of the national struggle; while "Valaikari" (Servant Girl), I understand, offers some pungent comments on the inequities and injustices of the present economic and social system.

The screen and literature may not yet have adequately reflected them, but there are conflicts and tensions

enough in the social structure and politics of the South; and next week I may briefly indicate some of them.

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"SRINAGAR: Maharaja Hari Singh will leave the State for a certain period during which his son will act for him in a constitutional manner on the same lines as the Governor of a province in India... in view of the none too happy relations between the Maharaja and the Ministry of Sheikh Abdullah which could be traced to the "Quit Kashmir" movement of the pre-partition period, it has become inevitable for the Ruler to be absent from the State for some months or years."

"LAHORE: Another batch of 50 Sikh pilgrims—the fourth to enter Pakistan territory since the great Panjab massacre—reached Lahore for a three-day stay in the city's most historic gurudwara. At one time, Sikhs and Muslims used to mingle freely at this Mela and many long for the day when it will be possible for similar gestures of fraternization to be resumed."

"OOTACAMUND: Partial lifting in the Nilgiris has been ordered by the Madras Government. According to

this order, liquor permits will be granted to persons coming to the Nilgiris from other provinces. This news has been received here with great jubilation and it is learnt that prohibition will be totally lifted when Nilgiris is made a tourist centre."

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"HYDERABAD: There is one dispensary for 235 square miles and one hospital bed for 68,000 of the population in Hyderabad State, said Nawab Zain Yar Jung, Member of Public Health, Hyderabad Government."

"BOMBAY: The 23-year old Raja of Jamkhandi, former Ruler of a merged state of the Deccan states, with properties worth two crores of rupees, is serving with the Government of Bombay as Chief Traffic Inspector at Sholapur. More princes are likely to take up Government administrative jobs."

"CALCUTTA: Two Assistant Commissioners of Police and 25 persons were injured in a clash among spectators at a foot-ball match on Calcutta Maidan when a large number of persons, failing to get tickets, started throwing brickbats and soda water bottles inside the enclosure."

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THE GREAT BETRAYAL IN SOUTH AFRICA

By MUKUL MUKHERJI

THE position of Indians in South Africa is growing serious day by day. The Nationalist Government seems intent on not allowing them to live in peace. There is a persistent and almost unanimous cry from the nationalists and from the reactionary elements in the United Party too, that Indians must be repatriated. The Government of South Africa seems ill-disposed to heed the warnings given by General Smuts and Mr. Hofmeyr, or to the trend of events at U. N. O.

History cited to prove that Indians are aliens in South Africa is only half-history. For history also tells us how the sugar industry was saved from a break-down by Indian labour. Such a premature collapse of African sugar business being quite detrimental to the White-interest in Africa, the foreign rulers of India arranged to loot Africa through Indian labour. The land was provided by black Africa and the labour by brown India but the capital was one hundred per cent European. India was made to supply indentured labour at ridiculously low rates and on insulting terms. The labourers despatched were derogatively called "coolies." The terms of agreement provided for the opulent sum of *ten rupees* a month apart from boarding, lodging and voyaging 'facilities.' Also that if on the expiry of their contract they opted to remain in South Africa, they were to be allowed to do so and buy land and have the same rights as other colonists.

The phenomenal success of Indian labour in South Africa made the Natal Legislative Council agree in 1870 to the stipulation of Lord Salisbury, the then Colonial Secretary, that the colonial laws and their administration would be conducive to the settlement of the Indian labourers on completion of their terms of service so that they would be considered as free men in all respects, having equality with the white settlers.

Yet despite those promises to them and their most valuable contribution to the progress of Natal ever since 1835, a series of discriminatory laws against the Indians have been passed. There could hardly be a worse case of ingratitude and betrayal than that shown by the present South African Europeans in violation of international agreements and human values.

In spite of the fact that the Europeans form a minority in South Africa they alone are entitled to votes, sit in Councils and form its Government. Hence the result of the elections can be regarded at best as the mandate of the white minority of South Africa without any reference to its coloured majority. The Government of the Union of South Africa is the government of the whites, for the whites and by the whites.

To Malanists all that South Africa is has been pre-destined by God and whoever opposed Apartheid opposed God. So Malan wants the non-Europeans to fulfil willingly the will of God. Let the oppressed people but hold a meeting, let them criticise their masters, let them but point to their wounds and they will immediately be tracked down and brought before the Inquisition under the Riotous Assemblies Act with charges of incitement to public violence and fomenting hostility between the blacks and the whites. In every field or factory, the non-whites know that all the many problems of South Africa have now become fused and focussed into one single, over-riding question—Apartheid or "White South Africa's attempt to square accounts with non-white South Africa, once for all."

The recent African anger directed against the Indians in Durban and in other parts of Natal, resulting in a high toll of life and damage to property is symptomatic of what racial hatred can cause in a country which is inhabited by a multi-racial population. The European Press alleges black-marketing by Indian merchants and bus-ownership in Africa by

Indians to be some of the causes of these disturbances. It is only part of an organised propaganda such as the Fascist Press in Europe made the world familiar with. It is ridiculous to suppose that black-marketing in the world of today or bus-ownership could result in mass murders under any organised Government. In the process of colonising Africa and developing the country, the part played by the Indians was in no way less important than that played by the whites.

But true to the policy followed by their kith and kin elsewhere, the Government of Malan quickly contrived to create a rift between the two non-white sections of the population in South Africa. The white minority was nervous about the possibility of a united front of the exploited majority. Hence the same policy of "Divide and Rule" which created Pakistan and Israel determined also the course of action in South Africa. Quite in tune with the accepted method of creating the necessary rift, entirely

baseless stories were circulated about the incivility of Indians to Africans in buses. Other equally untrue allegations eventually created an atmosphere conducive to racial riots.

The natives have been warned by their wiser leaders and it appears that the foul game of Malan and his associates stands exposed. Those Indian shops which were not destroyed in the riots are once again serving native customers. Many Indian buses are plying in Durban and carrying native passengers, while the anti-Indian boycott, where it is not artificially stimulated, shows signs of slackening.

Nevertheless it would be dangerous complacency to take this change of events for granted. Indians and Africans would be well advised to be constantly on the alert against false and malicious propaganda. If the Africans are to live, they must let live, for their future is closely linked with that of the Indian settlers in their country.

AMBASSADOR VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

BEFORE Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit arrived in Washington from India to become the first woman ambassador to the United States, there was a great to do among protocol experts over how she should be addressed. For a man, the title is Mister Ambassador. The argument finally boiled down to a choice between Madame Ambassador or Madama Ambassadress. They finally agreed on Madame Ambassador and the State Department made this announcement. It thought the matter was settled. But at her first press conference she was called Mr. Ambassador and Mrs. Ambassador, as well as just plain Mrs. Pandit. She did not mind. But she said that she was willing to rest on the State Department decision that she should be called Madame Ambassador. Ever since her arrival here she has been as busy as the proverbial bee attending receptions and addressing meetings. Americans seem to like her frank approach to problems. At the Women's National Press Club in Washington she was accorded perhaps the warmest greetings. Women

have a part to play in the world today and they are not playing it, Mrs. Pandit told the Women's National Press Club. She added that she was willing to say this, at the risk of being unpopular, because she was interested in peace not merely for her own country of India but for the world. "Too many sugary things are said today and I am surfeited with them," she said. Ambassador Pandit said that a balanced point of view can prevail in the world only if women really get into politics in all phases from municipalities on up to international conferences. "If I had had a choice I would never have taken politics for a field," she said. "The struggle for freedom pitched Indian women into politics due to the insistence of Gandhi on the fact that the movement could not succeed without the complete partnership of women. We in India always thought of America as the land of opportunity for women, and that women have a wonderful deal here, she added. I am not so sure since I came here," she concluded.

—P. G. Krishnayya's Service.

Short Story

THE TEMPLE AND THE BOOK

By Kanailal Mukhopadhyay

THE broad road that led south from the bridge approach was jammed with men, women, children, cows, goats, dogs, gharries and cars on the Saturday evening. On both sides of the road were shops—displaying an infinity of wares that a woman could think of buying. As one came nearer the temple, the percentage of priests, prostitutes, pickpockets, beggars and lepers in the crowd increased. He turned left and set foot on the last lap of the strange pilgrimage. He was at once surrounded by a number of emaciated, bare-bodied Brahmins bombarding him with questions as well as importunities.

"Arn't you going to the temple, to Mother?"

"Arn't you going to purchase your oblations here?"

"Please step in, sir, pl-ease!"

Promatha (who was the nearest approach to Prometheus to his students in a Calcutta college) looked to the dozen of them, drew in a quantity of dusty, tingling air into his lungs and made ready to say something when a batch of women brushed him roughly in their march to the temple. Three new priests had come as more than half a dozen left him as a bad case for others more promising. His face lighted up as he saw Nalini Thakur coming briskly towards him.

"Are you waiting long, Babuji? Please follow me...."

"Where?"

"Let's move away from the middle of the road. I'll take you to a quiet place where you can sit and rest a while..."

"I don't require rest!"

"You'll wait then!" Nalini Thakur smiled sweetly and explained that the inauspicious fag-end of Saturday would last two hours more and so

Promatha could not be given the talisman before eight in the night.

He felt relieved. He had two hours more to think, to decide. He could go away if he finally decided like that. As he sank upon the mat behind the busy fruit and sweetmeat shop, Nalini Thakur looked intently at his face. He thought something for a moment and asked in a clear ringing voice—as it were from a long distance "When is the selection at Delhi?"

"Wednesday."

"Right. Your child...how's she now?"

"She's in a very bad way. I don't know if I should not have gone to the doctor instead of fooling here!"

There was a fierceness in his eyes as well as his tone. Nalini Thakur put in calmly, "Your brother's there. You've so many friends and relatives. Why should you worry about going to the doctors yourself?"

"I was thinking about my own obligation, not of brother's or friends'."

"Your duty's here, at the Mother's lotus feet, Babuji! Depend on her for everything, every eventuality. If doctors or drugs could save life, no rich man would have died. Wait for me, please. I'll be coming just in time."

Nalini Thakur disappeared with a mixed group of devotees behind the busy flower stall. They too were his clients and he had to lead them to the temple. The frail priest appeared to be full of amaranthine life—always flitting on his legs.

It was just like that on the evening of his visit to Promatha's house. Nalini Thakur appeared to smell the disturbed condition of the house in no time and said, "What ails you, pray?"

The old mother of Promatha explained that her grand-daughter had been suffering from suspected typhoid for the past six days while her father (Promatha) must leave for Delhi without delay to appear before a board for selection for a big post. The condition of her grand-child, she added, had been causing anxiety.

Nalini Thakur stood silent. One imagined that the smile still played on his face as he swung imperceptibly on his pair of legs. Promatha's mother called Leela and others. They flocked round the smiling priest. He was undoubtedly a likable person—in favour with the young generation. Promatha came last. He looked at the glittering book-shelves containing the complete works of Darwin, Freud, Huxley and Russell behind the erect figure of the priest. The tenseness of his face broke in a cynical smile as Nalini Thakur faced the young professor. Promatha forgot his worries, even if for a moment, and asked, "So the mother Kali's great lieutenant is here already!"

Nalini Thakur could not be much older than Promatha. Promatha was always playfully hostile to him. At first the old lady remonstrated. But the priest would have none of it. He argued that everybody had the right to hold an opinion and her son could be no exception after reading so many books. Promatha read and thought, while he believed and acted. The old woman trembled with fear and said, "He will tempt Providence. I'm sure he'll come to grief for those theories of his."

Nalini Thakur took her to task. He asked, looking sharply at her, "What's the business of a priest, pray? I'm there to do good to you. It is my duty and constant endeavour to keep you out of harm's way." That sounded prophetic to the old woman—even to Leela. Promatha uttered, "Excellent!"

The priest addressed the old lady, without minding Promatha in the least, "Where's your son's horoscope? Will you let me see it for a little?"

Promatha smiled indulgently. He had, at one stage of his groping, read Cheiro and practised thought-reading. But he thought that he had shed his illusions now.

Nalini Thakur got down to business and made his calculations. He always appeared as an interesting study to Promatha, who watched him closely. After an hour or so, he rose and went to the sick room. He sat on a stool near the head of the typhoid-stricken child and smiled sweetly. The girl looked and recognized the priest.

"How're you, dear? Feeling bad? Oh, no, you'll soon come round!—I'll ask the Mother to drive away the devil typhoid."

"How good of you, Thakur Mashai. I must thank you!"

"That's no reason to thank me, dear. You pray to Mother for me, my success in getting the better of that devil. You know I love you. How can I see you suffer pain?"

The little girl felt flustered. A flush of happiness spread in her face and raced tingling through her frame.

Nalini Thakur closed his eyes, placed his right palm lightly on the fevered face and chanted a few mantras. That finished, he withdrew softly. He beckoned Promatha to a secluded corner and asked him to go to the temple positively on Saturday evening.

"Why?"

"That Saturn of yours is angry. I'll give you an amulet to keep you and yours out of all harms."

"But you know very well that this amulet and talisman business is all bunkum. I've no faith in that..."

"I know, Babu Saheb. Still you must come. It can't do any evil—a small talisman on your right arm!"

"May be it can't. But it means a surrender to irrationalism, to nonsense and superstition for me."

"I'm no match for you in arguments, you know. You must come for her sake, for your big prospects at Delhi. I'll keep everything ready for you."

Promatha feared that a prolonged interview might attract his mother or Leela or both. He would surely have to go if anyone of them chanced to know Nalini Thakur's proposition. So he hastened to say, "How much have I to pay?"

Nalini Thakur's face darkened. He asked, "Whom? Pay for what?"

"Well," began Promatha, "that blessed talisman and yourself.... I mean..."

"I see. You mustn't think of that, Bubuji. I know how much you can pay. You are my jazman. If you remain in peace and happiness, you'll have enough time to pay me!"

"But the talisman..."

"Nothing much for that. You may not spend anything."

"Still..."

"Well, pay five and quarter annas only towards the cost of the amulet and oblation."

Promatha was disappointed at the mention of such a paltry amount. Why should that Brahmin take such trouble for him when he did not want any money? Could anything be more irrational? After all, priestly business was just another profession to his way of looking at it. When the vast people lay steeped in religious superstition, when they stood in such awe of the innumerable gods and goddesses, the priests had a prosperous business indeed! But Nalini Thakur jolted him.

The priest did not wait. He left soon for another customer of his—three streets off.

Nalini Thakur, that sweet man, left a void in the air of the house. He was a slight, poor man. Only an undersized dhoti reached down to a point slightly below his knees. His feet were bare. A half-soiled chaddar was carelessly wrapped round his chest and back. But a winning smile played on his face all the time. He exuded goodness, confidence and joy. He seemed to enjoy his life. The deceptions in and around the temple, the squalor and filth of the temple environs, the niggardliness of most of his clients, nothing appeared to upset him! How could he do it? Promatha wondered. He thought that the priest had no quarrel with anyone. He was like water under the soft glow of the morning sun. If stirred or struck, it took little time to settle down.

As he rose to go to the doctor, he was surprised to see Leela.

"When did you come here?"

"Quite ten minutes! What were you thinking so absorbedly? You looked a picture of abstraction."

"No; distraction."

"Why? What did Thakur Mashai tell you?"

It sounded the tocsin. Promatha parried, "What else than sweet lies and high assurances?"

"No, you mustn't be rude. Why should you suppose that truth is always with you? You can't say that all the mysteries of life and death have been solved by your Freud and Huxley!"

"No. But they stand for Reason and Proof. One must know what one does or why one should do a thing. Nalini Thakur won't argue. He'll say: Depend on the great Mother; we can't do anything; we can't understand much; leave everything to Her. Well, that's irrational. That's deceiving yourself and blocking the way to all progress of philosophy."

"But when the heart bleeds under the hammering of fate, when your strength sinks, you like to depend on something or somebody—even if you don't understand."

"That's giving way to blind fear and deception."

"Sure! But you want the support as you are often frightened or weak. Thakur Mashai gives us that support."

Leela laid a significant emphasis on "us." That was a known signal used by his wife whenever she wanted to close a debate. Promatha did not say anything more and waited.

The crisis developed at once. Leela asked straight, "Did he tell you anything on the horoscope, my dear? Please tell me, yes or no. Ma also is anxious to know."

Promatha grew pale. He knew what this meant—a stiff fight on more than one front for him. He thought for a while. It was apparent that the priest had said nothing about the angry Saturn to anyone else. Should he not tell a lie to avoid the nagging and whimpering of the women, to entrench himself on the home front so that he might avoid a senseless ritual? Could a lie under the circumstances be very bad?

Leela urged, "Won't you tell me, dear?" She burst into tears—fearing that the priest had told him something bad about the girl. Promatha felt like being lashed. He hastened to tell the truth, the whole truth. Leela needed that comfort of the

priest's lies and the ceremony of holding a talisman on the right arm at the cost of five annas and three pies only. Yet he fought back valiantly. He did not care at all for the Delhi interview. He ran to the best doctors. He wanted some rapid results to convince the women that a patient could depend on the qualified medical men and do away with the amulet of the priest. But it was enteric fever which must take its time to run its course. Leela, a woman and a mother, could certainly claim equal rights with Promatha. Even the child could be as much hers as his. But, then, had anybody any right to be unreasonable? Why should he be forced to wear the amulet? Why should he be forced to go to the temple when he found nothing in him or in those books to support such a course?

Leela asked, "Why did you buy me that costly ring?"

"To please you, to acquire something that had a value in the market!"

"Well, go to please me. It has value to me. It does not cost you even half a rupee!"

"But that's no logic, Leela. Read those books."

"I know. But there are many more books. You haven't read all books."

"But I have an intellect, a reasoning power."

"That again is only limited. You live to learn more and more. A day may come when you'll throw away all these books or revise your views."

Promatha felt like bursting. He felt the most miserable man in the big city. He had no doubt that it was a mistake to marry a Bengalee girl. Leela might be a graduate. But she had learnt nothing. She remained an out and out Indian woman under that modern-looking exterior.

He immersed himself in his books as the corridor of time sounded with the heavy foot-falls of Saturday. He devoured the paragraphs. He thought furiously. The conflict gathered painful intensity as it raged in him. Freud's relentlessness hurt him. But the intellectual tolerance of Russell restored a little of his balance. It was close upon four in the evening. The handy volume of Russell was in his hand as his old mother summoned

him to the sick-bed of his dear little child. She tossed in agony. Her face looked sallow and wan. Would she die? He felt a fear seize him, a pain shoot through his whole consciousness.

He was practically shoved out of the house, dispatched post haste to the priest. It was only when Nalini Thakur left him in the quiet back room that he realised that he held the book in his hand. A peculiar numbness had overtaken his mind. The idea of a man reading an English treatise on agnosticism, pragmatism or rationalism while he was on the point of entering into a temple or wearing an amulet at the cost of five and quarter annas tickled him not a little.

He paced the small room. But it was not long before he came out and looked. The devotees might be driven. But the cackling showed that they were not in the least dumb. They purchased toys, worthless trinkets, threw away small coins on lepers and beggars. It was a noisy, jostling, merry bazar—that space in front of the temple. A stately bullock seemed an adept at swallowing flowers and garlands purchased by the unwary people for the goddess. Women, shut up for months, overdid the short freedom in the outer ring. A hubbub rose and spread above the dome of the temple. He looked up to the sky. But he could not pierce the dull beams of light—reeking with shiny particles of dust and night flies.

The ding-dong of the temple bells, the happy cries and croaks of the worshippers, the jostling women with vermilion stained faces, oblation packets overladen with flowers and holy leaves... the hurrying priests doing a brisk business stifled the conflict in him. Did all these men and women feel nothing, know nothing or think nothing? Did beaming faces, the excitement, the light movements mean nothing? He looked at the tapering dome, the bedecked glittering walls of the drooping cornice edges of the temple. He remembered the image inside: jet black broad face; deep red lolling tongue; the fiercely glittering eyes set with diamonds; the heavy sacrificial scimitar dripping "blood"... it could not fail to strike terror into the hearts of the guilty and inspire awe in the weak!

Nalini Thakur came.

The two men looked at each other. The priest lowered his eyes as he was quick to discern the return of the old hostility in his client's eyes.

"Let's go to the back room," proposed the priest.

"Won't you complete your triumph by dragging me to the temple?" Nalini Thakur stammered, as if in pain, "Babuji!"

"Well?"

"You really must take it easy. What's there in it if you don't believe in what I do? Who can claim to have known all, the great Beyond? Just as an aeroplane cannot rise above a certain limit, our mind can't reach out to the uncharted regions not lit up by our little reason and science. Who can say that these mantras won't do any good to you or your child?"

Something happened to Promatha. He thought that he had never heard that voice before! The reprimand of the priest burst the dam that held the reservoir of his emotions. He had suffered terribly in the past few hours; the conflict had smitten and battered him.

Nalini Thakur placed his right hand affectionately on the rebel's shoulder and said, "I shan't take you to the temple!"

"Why?" Promatha was rattled.

"Because it will be no joy to you. I'll bring the talisman here, sprinkle a little Ganges water on you and give it to you."

"Won't that mean mutilation of ceremony?"

"Ceremonies have no meaning for you!"

"But they have for you! Isn't it so, Thakur Mashai?"

"We only reflect the age, the mind and the need of our jazman or clients!"

"Do you say that you won't rectify the bad man; the greedy, vile clients?"

"That depends. The good and the bad; the bullocks and men; the pehlwan and leper; the suttee and the professional are all created and loved by Mother. Nothing happens without Her knowing or willing it. Your father, the long, long line of your ancestors knew all that; believed in

the omnipotence of the Divine Powers. You want to break away. You want to reason out. You suffer. But one cannot escape that suffering when one wants to find out, to stand on one's own legs. Even all that is known to Her. You can't regain your peace of mind till she wills it. This conflict only shows that you are an honest, good man!"

Promatha looked intently at the Brahmin. He saw him take money from those women behind the flower stall. He saw this very man lead so many people by their nose to the temple. Why should he make an exception of him? He might be different from the other priests. He might not be a grabbing art. He could even be credited with intelligence of a very high order. But what gave him that poise, that ever-glowing smile, that inexhaustible fund of patience? Did he not believe in what he said? He refused to be agitated by the insoluble mystery. He submitted unreservedly to the Divine Mother and depended on Her in all that he failed to find out!

* * *

The professor returned home with a talisman on the right arm. He had thrown two ten rupee notes on the face of the priest as the ceremony, a very brief one for all that, was over.

Nalini Thakur smiled as always, folded the notes with care but firmly returned the pieces of paper. He said, "Have no bitterness, Babuji. It is not easy for a 'rational' man like you to come to God with an open mind just as it is hard to free oneself of the beliefs and traditions of one's ancestors. These remain in the back of your mind even though you do not suspect their existence. You might not have ultimately held that amulet if you had not got that old blood in your veins. As for me, I'm a poor, unlettered Brahmin. I do not even know the meaning of all the mantras I chant like a machine. And so, why should you pay me like that? I'm trying to do good to you. I'll be praying for your success and your dear child to the Mother. Don't throw those notes on my face. That gives me pain. Keep these, go home, be happy! I gain only when you, my old clients, are happy!"

THE MIDDLE EAST-II

By KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

AWAY from this steadily rising stream was developing another equally important current—the revolt against Turkish rule. Two factors encouraged this: the young Turk movement with its ideas of liberalism and the political change effected in the Turkish administrative machinery after 1864 to achieve greater centralization. This consequently led to wider enforcement of the Turkish language in the provinces and roused deep resentment. For the study of Arabic language and the revival of Arabic cultural heritage had become an important symbol of Arab national identity. A society founded in Istanbul—Al-Ikha al-Arabi al-Uthmani—to further Arab nationalism with young Turk collaboration, flourished for a while but the Sultan suppressed this Arab Ottoman Brotherhood. It then went underground. Within the Arab lands several secret societies flourished and kept alive the revolutionary urge. The only open political expression was the Reform Committee which consisted mainly of Arab students abroad. In 1913 a Congress convened by this committee in Paris put in a plea for national autonomy which was received with great enthusiasm all over the Arab countries.

The separatists gradually gained greater momentum and sought the intervention of Britain and France in the impending war. Plans in this direction were worked out before the actual outbreak of war. But in their struggle for freedom from Turkish domination the Arab leaders were fully alive to the dangers of European intervention. The nationalist movement gave a great spirit to general cultural activities. But it was handicapped because it had to function only in secrecy. Its class character was also very restricted being confined to the small coterie of intellectuals and army officers, with practically no touch yet with the masses. It lacked movement and dynamics. World War I seemed to offer it a great opportunity. The general Arab revolt in conjunction with the Allies and its betrayal by the foreign interests is now

common history. Lord Wavell commenting on the revolt said: "Its value to the British command was great... there were important services rendered and worth the subsidies in gold and munitions expended on the Arab forces." But the top bureaucrats echoed a different note describing it as a "displeasing surprise whose collapse would be far less prejudicial to us than would our military intervention in support of it."

The Arab nationalist forces unaware of the nefarious Allied plans for them assembled at a Congress in Damascus in 1920 and proclaimed an independent kingdom of Greater Syria with King Faisal as its head, only to find a month later at the San Remo Conference that Syria and Lebanon were made into a mandate area and given over to France, and later at the Treaty of Sevres, Iraq similarly handed over to England along with Transjordan and Palestine. The publication of the secret treaties revealed that these were long planned plots.

The new set-up ignored the demands of a politically maturing Orient and of a fast changing world. It was just the old, old compromise between two rival imperialist forces, the traditional division of the spheres of interest under a new form—the mandate. With Britain, the overwhelming consideration was that this region was the key to the control over India. The "safeguarding" of this interest was only possible if she could exercise certain sovereign powers and control decisive state prerogatives.

Iraq had been progressively occupied during the war and maintained under a military rule whose tone was set by the Government of India and its reactionary arm, the army which was hostile to Arab nationalism. The instructions of its Chief Civil Commissioner to his officers on the holding of a plebiscite to prove the British thesis that it was for remaining under the aegis of Britain, were: "*When public opinion appears likely to take a definitely satisfactory line you are authorised to convene the assembly, informing that the answers will be*

conveyed to me for submission to Government; where public opinion seems likely to be sharply divided or in the unlikely event of its being unfavourable, you should defer holding a meeting and report to me for instructions."

The advent of the Mandatory Government was necessarily met by open rebellion everywhere. In Iraq it resulted in heavy casualties on both sides, the damage to railways and loss of revenue amounting to £400,000. Superior British arms and the liberal use of Indian troops overcame the Arabs. But it was obvious that some concessions would have to be made. King Faisal driven out of Syria by the French, was picked as the ruler. Faisal got a lukewarm reception from the Arabs. A mock referendum was taken by sending a printed resolution in favour of King Faisal round for signatures. Officials who permitted any nationalist expression were peremptorily dismissed. The majority however demanded the end of foreign control. Even the small minority who supported the British move did so in the hope that the mandate might lead to an ultimate independent state of Iraq. The British were however determined to retain major control of the country. The Twenty Years Treaty between the two countries stipulated that the King was to be guided by the British High Commissioner and British advisers and officials assigned to specific posts. The people refused to accept the ignominious treaty. But the British had managed to win over a sufficient majority in the National Assembly when the new Government was set up to assure its ratification by that body. Even the resistance continued and finally the voting took place under another fierce ultimatum and with barely an hour left for it to expire—thirty-seven for, twenty-four against, eight abstentions and thirty-one absentees!

In 1925, the Council of the Leagues of Nations under British influence decided that the mandate should continue for 25 years unless Iraq were admitted as a member of the League. England offered to sponsor the admission on condition that Iraq agreed to maintain a Government bound by obligation and gratitude to her. Iraq once again resisted and was without

a Government for three months. But British intimidation gained the day and a Government drawn from the big feudal interests was formed to accept the British terms which were to last twenty-five years. These included conceding of air-bases; right to move military and supplies across the country; right over communications and other facilities in the event of war, preference to be given to British personnel when engaging experts and Iraqi personnel sent abroad naturally to go to England. Iraq was admitted to the League under British sponsorship.

In the day to day administration, clashes were inevitable, for while the top officials acquiesced in the British control, the rank and file resented the superior positions occupied by these foreigners the higher salaries they drew, the undue privileges they enjoyed. The foreigners had greater security while the Iraqi officials rose and fell with each Ministry. The continuous friction led to deadlock impending normal progress. Above all the Iraqis were only too conscious that the British served their own imperialist interests.

We have already seen how the French unceremoniously terminated the independent Arab state of Syria with the League aid. They realised however that their position there was extremely precarious. Their survival lay in the traditional "divide and rule" method for which Syria with its numerous religious groups offered fertile ground. Sunni Muslims form 53% of the total population; 340,000 Maronites, a Christian sect that was born during the Crusades when Syrians first entered the Roman Catholic Church, distinguished by its retention of Syria as its liturgical language; 325,000 Nusairiya, a Muslim sect, a curious amalgam of Shia Islam with early Christian and pre-Christian elements; 160,000 Druzes, also a Muslim sect; 200,000 Kurds; such was the varied and chequered pattern of the population. The individualist tendencies of these different groups had been emphasised by Ottoman rule. Provincial frontiers were redrawn, so that no one community in any area had an absolute majority. Jebel Druze and Latakia were separated and each made into a tiny state,

as these were to be French air and military bases. The Sanjaq of Alexandretta though having only 39% Turkish speaking population was allowed by the French to be annexed to Turkey in defiance of the League of Nations Commission. An attempt was even made to split the entire country up into the two states of Damascus and Aleppo. Thus having dismembered the country, they turned to the other conventional forms of subordinating the country such as linking the Syrian currency to the French franc. The French language was imposed. A number of foreigners were drafted into the services as the loyalty of the Syrians was doubted. In 1936 a treaty was negotiated to give a larger measure of powers to the Syrian Government but the advent of World War II was made an excuse to withdraw the proposals.

We have noted how Britain had tried to preserve her pre-eminence in the Arabian peninsula by secret agreements with her allies under which they pledged themselves not to

acquire or permit a third party to acquire territory or any naval or military base in that area. For this reason Britain had maintained cordial relations with the young Wahabi Ibn Saud. In spite of British pressure he had not joined in the general Arab revolt against Turkey mainly because he could not line up with the Hussein group of Mecca which the austere Wahabis regarded as a sort of corrupt Muslims. Their resentment reached the peak when Sharif Hussein declared himself King of the Arabs. The ground for taking over the Hejaz had already been prepared by Ibn Saud through intensive propaganda amongst the Hejaz tribes. The post-war Arab betrayal culminating in the Balfour Declaration left Sharif Hussein weak, and Ibn Saud timed this for his swoop upon the Hejaz and annexed it, along with Nejd and the various dependencies which he consolidated into the present Saudi Arabia. The British accepted the inevitable and recognized Ibn Saud and his new kingdom.

PRINCESS ALY KHAN

And so little girl married her Prince Charming and there was great rejoicing and feasting in the town and they lived happily ever after... That was the romantic fade-out today in the glittering scenerio-like life of Rita Hayworth, whose full-blown beauty and dancing feet have made her a legendary figure in movieland. She has come a long way from that little cafe in Ague Calinete where, as a wide-eyed girl of 15 she was discovered while dancing with her father. She was reared in prosaic Jackson Heights and attended public school there before she took to trouping with her father, Eduarde Cansino, third generation star of a Spanish dancing family. Her mother, Volga Hayworth was a Broadway showgirl before she met and married Rita's father and settled down on Central Park West. Born on October 17, 1918, Rita was christened Margarita Carmen Cansino. Born to dance, Rita started learning her routine from her father as soon as she could toddle. She accompanied him on a Mexican tour, where she was

spotted by a Fox film executive. He popped her straight off to Hollywood. But her first picture, "Dante's Inferno," with Spencer Tracy, was a flop and Rita became just another Hollywood starlet. By 1940, however, the critics woke up to Rita's breathtaking and agitating beauty and named her glamour girl of the year, and from then on her fame was secure. From 1941 to 1945 she appeared almost exclusively in dancing sexy dramas like "Gilda" and "The Lady from Shanghai." Despite her reportedly placid disposition, Rita's love life has been appropriately dramatic. In 1937 she married Edward C. Judson, an oil man much elder than she. Five years later she divorced him. In 1943 she married Orson Welles, the wonder boy, and gave birth to a girl a year later. The marriage lasted four years. So today, she has again made a bid for lasting marriage, love and romance in her marriage to Prince Aly Khan, at Vallauri, France.

—P. G. Krishnayya's Service.



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(TX 308)

HOW INDIA CAN IMPROVE HER FOREIGN SERVICE

By WILLIAM D. ALLEN

(Editor, "World in Brief," New York.)

A relatively simple change of attitude on the part of a few top officials in New Delhi would, I believe, speed up India's heroic campaign to assert herself as one of the three or four most important of all nations.

Before independence, friends of Indian freedom in America dreamed of fundamental reforms in world relations as soon as India's soul force and practical idealism gained a seat in the councils of nations. But in the daily, slow, persistent struggle by the less important clerks and officers in India's bureaux abroad, one senses the heavy hand of the past, the lingering of a traditional approach to international relations which ceased being useful and "real" as soon as kings surrendered their powers to peoples.

Too many important things were happening too rapidly at the rebirth of free India a couple of years ago. Nobody therefore should be surprised or critical because those in charge of foreign relations turned backward to the safe careful precedents of British, American, French and Chinese diplomatic experience. To have been creative, to have built a new, revolutionary concept of how India should handle its consular and diplomatic affairs would have required much time on the part of the relatively small group of men and women who will go down in

history as the immortal founders of the New India. But there is still time for frank, friendly exchange of thoughts leading perhaps to corrections of some errors. I for one am speaking in the belief that India may find interest in the thinking of one of the many Americans whose undying love of India led them to struggle year after year to counteract vicious anti-Indian propaganda—people who today are appalled that Indian independence has led to a decline in American interest in India! Before commenting on India's foreign services, I should say that the changes in attitudes and methods which I suggest are such as can be carried

through without moving a single clerk from his present job, and without financial cost.

The top leadership of foreign relations in New Delhi would do well to stop thinking that past diplomatic attitudes and practices are worthy of imitation and should base their thinking on their own dreams of what human relations, nation to nation, should be. Surely India can recognize and practise fully Jawaharlal Nehru's concept that it is to India's practical strategic self-interest to take the side of justice rather than opportunism. Surely India can see how little we all have gained from centuries of clever compromises and sly lying oratory by diplomats. Nor was Chiang's diplomatic policy, full of non-committal courtesy and patience, helpful to China. No diplomacy has yet recognized that it was dealing with masses of simple citizens rather than with cliques and party-dominated Governments.

To put into practice a new diplomacy which has no precedent, the New Delhi leadership would inevitably recognize the need for a period of experimentation and the need for releasing their younger, minor employees from a cramping, conservative, overcautious centralization of power. Once the central officials have carefully chosen a minor representative, why not give him the strongest encouragement to do whatever is most likely to help India in a given situation and place? Why cripple the invaluable natural desire of all young people to distinguish themselves and to get results? And how could a small group of men in New Delhi, even were they demi-gods, know better what will actually get results in a far-off place than does the man on the spot? What harm could occasional errors do that would hurt India as much as does the slowing up and intimidation of the little office-holders whose slightest spark of initiative is killed? Bureaucratic red tape and timidity and slowness of

action, have plagued all Governments since the dawn of civilization and drastic, bold, rapid efforts are needed to save India from falling into the same old ruts. Pressures of tradition and opportunism are so strong that the efforts to stay out of ruts needs to be vital and deliberate.

Why not encourage officials to give non-governmental or even anti-governmental opinion instead of sticking to some oversimplified parrot-like speech? Even from a down to earth immediate view to expediency, this would pay India in the long run. For then the American or European journalist would know that he could get the truth from a single source, not simply one side of the truth but all sides. This obviously increases the power and influence of the Government spokesman. The man on the spot usually would like to do this but his superiors who do not recognise American or European conditions would reprimand him for not sticking to a narrow interpretation of his duties. Of course I am not referring here to the topmost category of veterans who have forceful personalities superior to most diplomats of other lands—but how few are these who dare win friends by being themselves instead of parrots!

A single unimportant experience of mine brings out several points. I was writing an article on India's industries and wanted it to be at once very accurate yet enthusiastic, optimistic, and favourable to American economic support of India's programme. As usual in U.S.A., there was very little time available for my research. I was

shamefully hurried. I phoned a certain Indian bureau, not, I gladly report, in Washington, but found that the distinguished, marvellously informed head of the office was not in. So a young assistant was called to answer me, a man described as the specialist on industries. He was puzzled that I should want data on that subject, which he assured me, was of minor importance in India. I asked as to the rank India holds at the moment as an industrial producer. He had never heard that India was one of the most important industrial nations but on the contrary had believed India to be near the bottom of the list. He tried to refer me to Wash-

ington but I told him I did not have time to correspond with the excellent Indian information services there. He seemed astounded that anyone should be in a hurry, having apparently plenty of time ahead of him. So he referred me to another Indian office in New York but did not know their correct name, address or phone number or who would be in charge of information there.

The above incident is typical (not, please note, only of Indian foreign staffs but of almost all similar small officials). The young man had attitudes toward his job and public which sabotage whatever natural capacities and training he may have. The concept of service was lacking. Nor did he appreciate the importance of facts that are striking and easily remembered, especially in U.S.A. where the busy reader cannot absorb statistics about India except in primitive forms such as "half as much as U.S." or "twice the production of France and England combined." And he seemed not to have a deep conviction of the tremendous importance of India, a contagious pride in being Indian. He was, in short, like petty bureaucrats in U.S.A. and everywhere else, listlessly waiting for the clock to say he could go to the movies, with an eye of anxiety only on what his boss would think of his record for docility.

Dismissing such people is obviously no solution. Very helpful would be either persisting or periodical indoctrination of all employees including the temporary help recruited outside of India. During office hours there could be gatherings to hear visiting experts tell of new techniques about India, or to play amusing quiz games dealing with facts on India or to discuss inquiries received and question the staff on how they should have been answered. All these devices are being practised already, by the way, but the more advanced techniques are found in fields outside diplomacy. Study of facts on India within office hours is urgently needed—no human being could be expected to know it all when accepted for the job and facts get out of date rapidly. Those willing to improve their knowledge and skill after office hours, in ways useful to India, should be rewarded by advancement or payment of their study expenses.

It is unwise in an office representing India abroad to neglect the morale and enthusiasm about India among the temporary and smaller employees. Attitudes are often contagious. A single bored secretary who would be happier in a bunk or insurance office, who knows and cares nothing for India, can make his colleagues lose interest in their work and can destroy in a moment the invaluable factor of eager curiosity on the part of an information seeker.

It would be advantageous to give the employees of the Indian foreign service an informal "house organ" or service exchange publication whose primary objective would be to keep alive the spirit of service, enthusiasm and frank willingness to tell of one's successes and failures for the improvement of one's colleagues. Failures teach as much as successes but could be reported on anonymously if need be. Small rewards such as the similar publication of the U.S.A. State Department offers for useful suggestions would help keep up interest.

A point particularly important in relation to U.S.A. is: Should Indian publicity focus on certain groups or on all Americans at once? As I watched the efforts to win American support for Indian freedom during the years 1932 to 1947, I became increasingly convinced that it was an error to spend so much effort on converting those already converted and those whose nature and occupation did not make them influential in American life. The same error of judgment persists today as far as I have personally noticed. In U.S.A. where the religious, artistic, philosophical, educational leader has little influence, where the real effectuals are bankers, manufacturers, why not focus expenditure and time on the latter groups almost entirely? Whatever appeals to them can also appeal to the clique devoted to India, the pacifists and anti-imperialistic theorists, the sentimental teachers to whom thinking about India is a cozy, effortless escape from their dull lives. And the few thousand Indians residing in U.S.A.—is it not short-sighted of them to demand so much attention from the Indian staffs who are so overwhelmed with hard work, so rushed, but who are constantly put in fear of offending some little group of their country-

men demanding personal attention? I feel that on the contrary, the Indians residing in U.S.A., and particularly the subsidized students, should work hard and gladly, to help their Government representatives in America during these difficult times, by organized efforts to educate the vast public which is so grossly misinformed.

The well-meaning but impractical tradition of undifferentiated courtesy to all comers leads India's more important representatives in U.S.A. and Europe to spend an excessive proportion of their time being interviewed by silly ineffectuals—a grave complaint prejudicing the usefulness of U.S.A. federal officials also. Long attendance at unimportant meetings has the same weakness. Talking at some tiny religious college whose president has hounded the India representative mercilessly, (so as to get without charge an audience— attracting celebrity), will take more time and expense than winning for India the enthusiastic co-operation of a major business or political leader, the head of a chain of newspapers or factories.

India must choose in the near future. Either build up a timid bureaucratic foreign service like that of most other countries, in which younger men gain promotion by office intrigue and through patiently avoiding any action involving possible error. Or else go in for bold experimentation in which even the least of employees would be given full freedom and opportunity to show the best in them, so that they can develop by actual experience into the leaders India will so urgently need in the future.—N.P.S. (Copyright).

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PLACE OF EXAMINATIONS IN EDUCATION

By AN EDUCATIONIST

THE tendencies among the student world have alarmed the state authorities, the public, the press and the educationists. But no serious attempt has so far been made to probe into their causes and remedy them. Various are the causes of the trouble, and these cannot be grasped without thorough investigation. The authorities are generally inclined to put others in the wrong and fail to realize their own shortcomings and errors. Understanding is born of sympathy, and unless we view the matter with dispassion and the necessary detachment, the working of the minds of the youth will elude our grasp. It is true that the leakage of papers has never been as frequent and flagrant as it has become in the last few years. But it is often overlooked that the problems of education have been receiving scant attention in recent years. And while the standards of attainment of the students and the quality of instruction imparted to them have deteriorated considerably owing to various causes, the standards of examinations have not been lowered correspondingly. Overcrowding of schools and colleges on the one hand and lack of suitable personnel on the other have not so far engaged the serious attention of the agencies in charge of education as in advanced countries like England and America. As the grievances of teachers are ignored, those of students also are overlooked. Their representations regarding lack of facilities, amenities, etc., do not receive the attention they deserve, which is one of the potent factors for developing the spirit of defiance among students. In recent years they have not been receiving proper training for lack of facilities in several directions. The strength has been increasing, and expenditure is reduced on library books, equipment, etc. Because of the dearth of teachers, even instruction is not provided in certain subjects during certain periods. Such conditions cannot but provoke rebellion. From institution

to institution there is considerable variation in standards of discipline, quality of instruction, facilities afforded and tone. The wide-spread tendency of students to circumvent the ordinary rules for the passing of examinations, by resorting to strikes and other unfair means' is explicable under such conditions.

Detention in college classes was an unheard of thing in the past, and even in schools this right was exercised very sparingly. That was the right thing. We know that our fears as well as our expectations are belied in certain cases. Surprises are in store for us both ways. The student whom we expect to pass, fails, and he of whom we have no hope passes sometimes. High standard should be maintained by imparting efficient training and not by attaching undue importance to examinations. Examinations should be viewed only as a rough method of testing students' attainments, and cannot make good the deficiencies of defective training. Nor can marks give any indication of the qualities that make for success in life. The unsympathetic and unimaginative approach of the authorities in dealing with problems of students as well as of teachers has brought to the forefront several evils which hamper efficiency, discipline and progress.

It must be realized that detention is an evil which does incalculable harm from the very beginning of the school course. The huge wastage involved in this unthinking procedure cannot be realized by those who have not studied this problem thoroughly. The heads of institutions generally feel touchy on this matter, and resent interference in the exercise of this right. But they must realize that this is a right which is to be used most sparingly and only in very exceptional cases. Even in such cases they must show reason why it has been found imperative, and account for lack of progress. Formal examinations must be entirely dispensed with in the early stages. The strength of the

classes must be as low as possible in order to enable the teacher to pay individual attention which is quite essential in the early stages. Under ideal conditions progress cannot but be satisfactory except in the case of the mentally defective children. Whether the pupil is fit to follow instruction in the next higher class should be the only consideration in deciding promotion and not at all marks obtained in formal examinations, which are unreliable for various reasons. The present practice of attaching too much importance to marks involves the waste of precious years of a large number of children, and this must be avoided.

Detention in lower classes is indefensible. There are various defects in the text books used, subject-matter taught, instruction imparted and examinations conducted. Class and examination marks do not tally, and are subject to considerable variation. But the authorities pay little heed to such considerations, and follow the rough and ready method with greater and greater rigour. Sometimes there is variation in the development of children, and no allowance is made for such differences. Aptitude also varies considerably, and certain children find it very difficult to master certain subjects, and these things will be remedied by time. Exceptionally bright children deserve the utmost consideration in this respect. They are well up only in the subjects of their interest, and sometimes show even a positive dislike to certain other subjects. It would be doing the greatest harm to such promising children, if they are forced to conform to routine methods which ignore individual differences emphasized by Dr. Alexis Carrel in his well-known book 'Man The Unknown.'

Having proved victims to this vexatious practice when they were young, the students naturally protest against it when they become vocal and develop concerted action. It is unfortunate that organizations of students as well as of teachers should be looked upon with distrust and suspicion in Free India. The advantage of dealing with organised groups is not yet realized in our country. Collective strength is misused only when the authorities are deaf to constitutional

methods. One kind of extreme attitude begets another. Fairness and justice can alone solve human problems satisfactorily. Injustice provokes injustice. On the other hand goodwill and sincerity and frankness succeed in winning the confidence of others. Because they are youngsters, it is not proper on our part to treat the views of students with contempt and indifference in an authoritative way without giving due consideration to them. It is such an attitude that leads to antagonism. It requires imagination and foresight to enter into their spirit and grasp their point of view, and every question must be decided purely on its merits. It is not maintained that there will be agreement on all questions. What is urged is mutual understanding and mutual adjustment, wherein lies the secret of success and the prevention of waste of human endeavour. Only then is it possible to ensure satisfactory progress. It is learnt from the Association of University Teachers in England that 'relations with students are quite cordial and in many institutions there are joint staff-student committees to discuss matters of mutual interest.' Such a spirit of co-operation and mutual goodwill can work wonders in our educational system.

The teachers of young children must be specially gifted to enter into their spirit and foresee their difficulties. Upto the age of 10 or 12 they should not be tortured with frequent examinations. Such cruelty stunts the physical growth of children and retards their mental development. The strain, suspense and anxiety, which cannot be avoided under such a system, are highly injurious to children. Again it is the inexpert and inexperienced teacher that asks difficult, out-of-the-way questions which baffle even more advanced students. The skill of the teacher consists in testing the student's grasp of the subject without confounding him by driving him to his wit's end.

In these days it is usual to criticise the Government's interference in educational matters even when it is salutary. Sometimes professional exclusiveness leads to extreme and harmful results. Certain intelligent parents who are not teachers very

shrewdly detect the serious flaws of certain methods, and to refuse to be guided by their opinions would be professional narrow-mindedness. The Government did well to abolish selection in the S.S.L.C. class, which was productive of much mischief. It would be good to abolish detention in every class from the lowest to the highest, as is said to have been done by the Mysore Government. They will be conferring a great benefit on children if they do it, as that will be preventing the immense harm now being done to the brain-power and the nervous system of under-fed, ill-nourished, weak children who form the vast bulk of the school-going children. How can a boy or girl of 10 or 12 years grasp the modern period in Indian History? They should not be forced to master such alien matter, which certainly taxes their power with no benefit but resulting in much harm. It is necessary to see that the things taught are suited to the age of the pupils. Formal testing in such subjects should be eliminated, so that the pupils may retain what they can without positive distaste created in them for these subjects, when their minds are not sufficiently developed to grasp the intricacies of these subjects. The teaching of problems is also commenced too early to the confusion of young minds. What we expect from students at the end of their courses should not be aimed at from the very beginning. This is the greatest mistake committed by educators at the present day. To aim too high and too early is harmful to young minds. Literature, interesting stories and simple poems carefully chosen, must form the core of children's studies. The bother of grammar and the way in which it is taught and tested! Woe unto the children that they should be taught grammar at all! Any scheme to improve higher education must take into consideration the conditions in schools.

The probable irregularities and defects in the conduct of examinations and assessment of performances detract their value and reliability. But these are minimised in the S.S.L.C. and University examinations. Their impersonal character is a great advantage. Success or failure, the candidates are at a loss to know whom

they should praise or blame. Under such a system the results are generally fair and impartial. Formerly their reliability was unquestioned. Of late things have taken an unhealthy turn, and the former rigour is relaxed owing to various conditions. Rumours gain currency of the exercise of influence in manipulating results in stray cases. Very often they may be unfounded and sometimes exaggerated. But the least suspicion undermines the prestige and unquestionable nature of these impersonal examinations even. The frequent leakage of papers adds weight to wild rumours and unconfirmed reports. A certain amount of unfairness is generally taken for granted, and this seems to lend sanction to unwholesome practices which are on the increase. Regular expeditions are set afoot, on a more and more large scale with no compunction. One province tries to beat another in these practices. Thus a vicious circle is set in motion which confounds the conscientious. The whole atmosphere must change to bring about a healthy outlook; otherwise it is vain to look for improvement. An all-round tightening on an all-India basis can alone set matters right.

Secondly, experience has shown that the assessment of performances even without extraneous influences is liable to considerable variation and error. Such being the case in impersonal examinations, how much more are the results of local examinations unreliable under conditions which should be imagined rather than described. Hence the old faith in examinations has been shaken. At the same time it is true that no system of education can dispense with examinations altogether. But every attempt should be made to eradicate the defects and make the examinations more reliable by means of research and carefully conducted experiments. There is no doubt that the evils must be minimised and that formal examinations must be dispensed with altogether in the early stages of the school course. The waste involved in the large-scale detentions in vogue in almost all schools must be put an end to.

It cannot be too much emphasized that importance should be laid on

training and not on examinations. The prevailing practice is the other way about. Instruction or teaching is of low quality and defective in several respects. The worse the quality of instruction, the greater is the importance attached to examinations. There is no prospect of the standard of training improving as long as the teacher is forced to suffer from economic disability and supplement his income by additional work in order to eke out a wretched and cursed livelihood. The teacher of young children and buoyant youth must have abundant energy in order to satisfy their endless curiosity and not to damp their enthusiasm by curbing their overflowing spirits. But it is sad to contemplate the spectacle of half-famished children and undernourished youth presided over by no-better-fed teachers. The children and youth of the country are the greatest asset to a nation, and nothing should be stinted to foster their growth and healthy development. Human lives and human needs ought to be of greater concern to the state than the fabulous riches of the few, who stand in the way of every pressing national reform and who will not hesitate to sacrifice nation and country for private gain.

Able-bodied and well-trained youth are an asset of supreme importance and all the resources of the nation should be pooled together to afford efficient training and draw out the best in them. Such well-trained personnel are urgently needed for the service of the nation. If our schools and colleges turn out undisciplined, irresponsible and inefficient groups with neither initiative nor sterling qualities which go to make a great nation, the fault is not entirely theirs. It is the training that is very largely to be blamed. The canker that eats into these institutions may not be seen by those who are not intimately acquainted with the real state of affairs.

From beginning to end, life at school or college is a series of hurdles to the vast majority. Admitting students to courses to which they are not fitted, huge numbers which preclude individual attention, lack of suitable machinery to watch the progress of every student and give timely warning where necessary, not finding out the

special difficulties of individual students, not satisfying the essential needs of students in the classroom, in the hostel and on the playground, lack of opportunities for exercising special capacities without undue strain on one's time, lack of closer co-operation between the teacher and the taught and the absence of a healthy and invigorating atmosphere, are some of the drawbacks that must engage the serious attention of educationists, heads of institutions, managements and the Government.

Lack of finance is the reason that is generally advanced for not tackling this problem in the right spirit. But the Governments, both Provincial and Central, must find it possible to allocate large proportions of their revenues to education, without which satisfactory progress cannot be expected. While it is realized that none can be expected to discharge his duties efficiently without certain standards of comfort and decent living, it is often overlooked that the teachers too should have their wants satisfied if they are to give their best to the arduous task of training the youth. Suitable personnel, without whom it is vain to look for progress, can be attracted to the profession only when the status and emoluments of teachers are considerably raised. The entire problem must be reviewed by a dispassionate body, and service conditions of teachers should be revised in the light of improvements effected in the course of the last six or seven years in advanced countries like England and America. In England the relation between salary scales and the cost of living has been kept constantly under review, and during the war years and subsequently considerable improvement has been effected in the salaries of teachers; whereas in our country, while some slight improvement has been effected in the salaries of school teachers, practically nothing has been done in the case of college teachers especially in our province. With regards to Government grants too the colleges are affected adversely. In England the University institutions receive grants from local authorities as well as Parliamentary grants. And from the latest report of the University Grants Committee, it is found that Parlia-

mentary grants to University institutions in 1946-47 show an increase of about 70 per cent over the 1935-36 figures, and are more than double the fee-income, whereas most of our colleges have to depend mainly on fee-income. The serious consequences of such a state of affairs should not be overlooked by the Government. The effects of the meagre grants on the efficiency of the institutions may well be imagined. All the agencies concerned with education should move with the times, if the nation-building process is to progress satisfactorily. Any attempt to perpetuate the old order will prove a dismal failure.

The shortage of teachers is a serious handicap to the advancement of education, and the only way to

remedy this grave situation is to raise the status, dignity and prospects of teachers, who are engaged in the vital task of educating the flower of youth. The country is in need of ideal educational institutions, which secure the best men by paying double the salaries that are in force now, which charge half the rates of fees with plenty of free places for poor and deserving students and which provide excellent facilities for the study and recreation of teachers and students with hostel and residential accommodation. Mere multiplication of institutions cannot serve much useful purpose. It is to be hoped that well equipped and well staffed institutions will be established in large numbers for the proper training of the youth of the nation!

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UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITIES

By "P. M."

IN all criticisms of Indian universities, there is implicit a subconscious obsession with their British prototypes which is unfortunate because it is wholly irrelevant. Subject to the limitations under which all universities have functioned everywhere, it may be conceded that British universities have been part and parcel of the intellectual and cultural history of the British people. They have grown with their growth, and have changed in accordance with the changes which have modified their character. But, taken by and large, their influence has been more qualitative than quantitative; and even that in regard to secondary things in life.

In India, however, they have been exotics from their inception, and have been reared in an artificially conditioned atmosphere. Their roots are still, for the most part, seen sprawling on the surface. This fundamental difference accounts almost wholly for all the disabilities and deficiencies of our universities. They came into existence with a limited aim, and have, within limits, fulfilled that aim to perfection. The curious may trace their history from the date of Macaulay's famous minute to our own times.

But the proper comparison should be between Oxford and the older universities of Europe on the one hand, and our own defunct centres of learning like Madura, Kanchi, Kumbakonam, Kasi and Sringeri, (leaving out of account for the present Taxila, Ujjain and other capitals which seem to have become legends even a thousand years ago). They had suffered from the ravages of time and the malice of men; but in their palmy days, they seem to have developed an individuality, an atmosphere which became diffused far and wide through their alumni. The tutorial system now so feelingly associated with Oxford and other Western seats of learning was better known among our forbears in their rural universities as the 'Guru-Sishya' relationship. If I should plead for the restoration of our own ancient ashram system and

discipline, I would be told that such resurrection of a mythical past would be impossible under modern conditions. And yet, a little reflection would show that any analogous attempt to transplant the Oxford system in an entirely different milieu, is bound to be even more unprofitable.

What Oxford stands for is a very large, and may I add, a very open question. Arnold has elaborated it in one of his famous paragraphs of wistful reminiscence and rumination; he has also epitomised it in the pithy phrase that it is the 'home of lost causes.'

When Oxford gave hospitality to a king fleeing from the wrath of his subjects, but could not tolerate the under-graduate exuberance of a genius like Shelley, but must needs rusticate him, was it an expression of individuality or parochialism or catholicism? Newman lingering by the trappings of High-churchmanry drew with his eloquence enthusiastic audiences at Oriel; but he had to find sanctuary elsewhere when he announced that he had gone over to Rome. Such was and perhaps still is Oxford hospitality!

The Oxford pattern or mould, far from promoting individuality, effaces it with a thoroughness which discloses a profound distrust of it. Galsworthy the novelist and Nobel Laureate was, I believe, an Oxford man. His studies of Oxford types in many of his novels show them as exponents of what is described as 'Form' which amounts to a sort of dehydration of human personality. It was the academic counterpart of the vulgar myth of the strong silent man, the hero of a popular type of novel. Conformity rather than individuality is the keynote of ancient institutions. The uniform enshrines the very soul and spirit of the army; so does the school-tie that of educational institutions whose strongest point is their vintage virtue. Of course pedigree does count, because a long process of trial and error has gone to enrich it. Sheffield cutlery, German silver-ware, Lady longcloth, Irish linen, Dacca muslin all disclose pedigree. But each in it-

self has a desolating sameness which palls sooner than later. The objection to mass production of goods holds in the case of institutions which mass produce men stamped with a recognisable hall-mark. Under such conditions, the human mind longs for a change, even if it be for the worse.

A Balliol-man recognising another Balliol-man in any part of the world is not a virtue so much as an art, for it involves the complementary feat of cutting the rest of the world dead with effortless ease. It seems to me that there is more virtue in the humanity of the Good Samaritan who was obviously *not* an Oxford man. It would therefore be correct to say that Balliol or any other Oxford college teaches precisely the reverse of what is universal, namely, to look out for the school-tie and—ignore the rest!

Then again, it is extremely doubtful if Oxford or Cambridge or any of the older universities of Europe stands for Christendom as claimed. For the number of Christendoms that flourish to-day is legion. There is, for instance, the Christendom of the primitive, pristine and anarchic Church—an ideological quiddity the light of which never was on sea or land. There is the Christendom of the Catholic Church, and of the continuous apostolic succession. There is the Christendom of heretics, rebels, schismatics, puritans, dissenters and the promoters of what Arnold dubs 'hole-and-corner societies.' There is, to conclude, also the Christendom of the Church of England, perched uneasily on 32 articles, and statutorily made subordinate to the occupant of the throne of England. All these separate Christendoms growl and snarl at one another, while simultaneously speaking in the name of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. To feel the glow of Christendom through the miasma of these jealousies must be a unique experience indeed, specially to one standing beyond the fane.

It is quite some time now since the inadequacy of the older British universities was underlined by the trend of events and the progress of science. With the onward march of democracy, culture has been in retreat throughout the world. Unwilling or unable to adjust themselves quickly or gracefully

ly enough to changing conditions, the older British universities are to-day lagging behind in the field of technology, applied science, original and creative thought. For it is a fact that none of the great and germinating ideas that have changed the face of our times have originated in our universities. What is worse, most of them have put themselves out of court by their ineffective or inglorious role in attempting to stem the tide of progress. The only answer to the superciliousness of the Don is the sneer of the common man who is beginning to see through the largely bogus pretensions of thistle-headed academicians. The sophistries of Newman about knowledge being pursued for its own sake, and of culture being an end in itself have bemused the older universities so much that they are now in danger of being cut off altogether from the main stream of national or human life. It is all very well for professors to speak of high sounding generalities, and to deprecate the mechanics of living, because fellowships ensure them bread and butter from graduation to the grave. But the hungry sheep, as ever, look up and are not fed. Little wonder then if means discredit ends!

The demand for the autonomy of our universities is another vestigial survival of a golden past in which education at once controlled the Church and the State while affecting a subservience to both which was mostly on the surface and which had the effect of imposing on the vulgar. In Europe, the Church controlled education till the Renaissance; and strengthening itself through it, exercised a potent sway over the State itself which is a matter of history. Education was a primary charge on religious endowments in olden times, though the position is almost entirely reversed today in pursuance of the notion that a modern, enlightened and progressive State should dub itself a 'secular' State. As modern trends have impinged on ancient and well-established foundations, vested interests which have inevitably grown have had to suffer various degrees of expropriation. Henry VIII who raided monasteries left most of the educational foundations intact; indeed, he added to some of them as a salve to his conscience. Basking on such im-

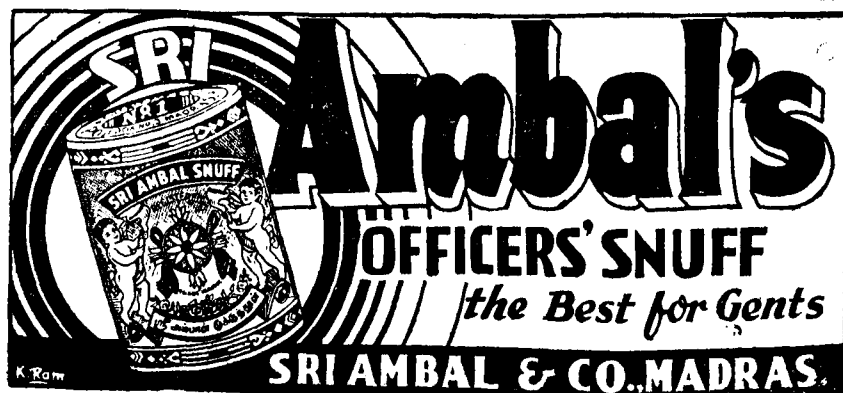
pregnable foundations, academic authorities have, not infrequently, snapped their fingers at reforming or vandalistic zeal. But modern educational effort is so variegated, so intensive and so extensive that the fat-test of the older foundations is unequal to the responsibilities of sustaining it unaided. Thus the State has necessarily to supplement private effort. To the extent that financial aid is furnished by any outside agency, to that extent, the claims of autonomy must suffer abridgement. Even otherwise, the potentialities of technology are of such far-reaching scope that its progress must be within the cognisance of, if not indeed under the control of the State, in the general interest of all.

Arising from the above, it may also be stated that to prescribe utter freedom from politics to our universities is to hope for the impossible. That the world of action should be reflected inside the world of study and preparation is now widely conceded as necessary and salutary. The university cannot but be a microcosm of the macrocosm which is to be lived in by the alumni as they march out of its portals. If the foundations of the good life are well and truly laid, if the concept of a robust patriotism is inculcated and an undivided and unconditional loyalty to the State is insinuated into the emotional set-up of our young men, a certain degree of latitude in regard to local politics may be allowed. It is for instance inescapable that all the older universities like Oxford are incurably conservative, while younger universities are as a rule liberal or labour.

It may be true that no strike of students is possible in any English university. But the extent of the inhumanity of undergraduate 'ragging' in England and America must make admirers of the British pattern pause and think. Pussyfoot Johnson, hero of American prohibition lost one of his eyes in an Oxford melee. A strike of students is a peccadillo in contrast to such organised brutality.

Lastly, concerning the maintenance of academic standards. It is often taken for granted that the lowering of standards is an unwelcome imposition from outside, and that the universities, left to themselves, would be like Caesar's wife—above suspicion. In point of fact, it is a case of fifty: fifty. There have been periods in the history of the best universities when academic rivalries, squabbles and jealousies have been known to assume the proportions of a public scandal. Dons are capable of an extent of clannishness, of intellectual savagery which to the simple and uninitiated might seem incredible. It is for this reason that the transactions of our academic bodies should be open to public scrutiny. Compare the amount of space given in the press to the proceedings of our academic bodies with that given to police-court reports, and you will get a measure of the importance attached to the sayings and doings of dons.

After all, what the statute can hope to achieve is the formulation and enforcement of minimum conditions and standards; but the spirit that should inform our new experiments in education must be liberal and liberating, while at the same time studying to be in consonance with past traditions and the genius of our race.



THE ECONOMIC PROSPECT

By BAROO

COMMERCE Minister Neogy's addresses to the Import and Export Advisory Councils the other day can be best appreciated against the background of India's fast-dwindling sterling balances. The growing gap between our import and export figures represents a drain on our resources which we cannot afford to bear for any length of time. The country is today living on its fat. The pity is that there isn't so much of fat to live on, either.

The situation demands that we should cut down on imports and step up exports. Unless we are to endure large-scale and further privations, an immediate increase in production is called for to achieve this object. We must produce more food to make ourselves independent of foreign imports, and more consumer and capital goods of all sorts, both for our own use at home and export abroad. Our imports must be limited to capital goods and the really essential consumer goods, including food so long as we are not self-sufficient in it.

That is the aim, and Government is alive to it. Government hope to import no more foodgrains after 1951. Similarly, they have hopes that within four or five years, that is, by the time our sterling balances run out, we shall have achieved sufficient industrial potential to be able to pay our way in foreign trade. At that stage we will be standing on our own legs and capable of procuring, through our current earnings, the means of a progressively higher standard of life for the masses.

That is the ideal. But are we likely to achieve it? Will we be self-sufficient in food within another two years? Will we have attained the necessary degree of industrialisation before we exhaust our foreign holdings? These are questions which hold the key to the future.

Judging from the way things have shaped during the past two years, I should think it extremely improbable that we will be able to make much headway in the near future. The food situation will never be solved by the

sort of ineffectual drives that Jairamdas Daulatram makes off and on, or by the conferences he so frequently calls. None of the big hydel schemes are expected to be completed within the next two years, so irrigation from that source is not likely to work miracles before the target date of 1951. Nor, you can take it, will Datar Singh's compost and fertiliser schemes bridge the gap between demand and supply. If there is one thing that can work wonders on the agricultural front, it is "Land to the Tillers," but of course we can have no such thing short of a major revolution.

On the industrial front, businessmen's distrust of Government's intentions (so confusedly expressed in the beginning and so abjectly professed recently) is as great as is their reluctance to embark on new ventures for patriotic reasons of the sort Government has begun to invoke lately. A desire to make quick profits shows itself in investments in trade rather than industry, and in the short-sighted methods in exports that Neogy has been bemoaning. No wonder Government has had to look to foreign sources for the provision of capital. Indigenous "trustees of wealth" have failed to rise to the occasion as well as to the belated bait offered by a penitent Government.

How then will events shape themselves? We have a clue in Pandit Nehru's reference at Dehra Dun last month to the part that our economic ties with Britain have played in our decision to stay within the Commonwealth. We have also heard of the Truman plan for backward countries.

Let foreign capital and influence flow into India by all means. Let us not chase the mirage of an "independent" foreign policy at the cost of material well-being. Let us not be worried by uncharitable references to messes of pottage. But let us show some positive results to the common man, *whatever else we might do*. Else not all the foreign help in the world will save us from revolution and chaos. Let us remember China, her Koumintang, her Chiang.

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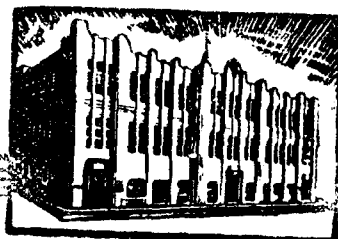
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BREAKING THE BEGGING BOWL

By SANTHA

"EXCEPT in the case of grave calamity such as widespread failure of crops or for building up a Central Reserve, Government will not import any foodgrains from abroad after 1951" declared Sri Jairamdas Daulatram in the Dominion Parliament on March 19 this year. His visit to Madras was evidently to promote implementation of the decisions arrived at by the Central Government last month. The provinces have been told that the problem of food will hereafter cease to be the ordained prerogative of the Centre. It has also been made clear that the greatest amount of money, time and attention is going to be spent on the reclamation of lands all over the country.

It has taken seven years for the Food Ministry to realise that it is in "India's economic interest as also in the interest of the industrial development of the country that we must give more resources to the development of agriculture" and that "unless our country develops agriculturally, you cannot progress industrially." One of the main decisions taken in March was that provincial Governments should hereafter assume entire charge of their respective food portfolios. The Centre would allocate funds, offer technical advice, carry on research and generally help in every possible way. But that is just as far as it would be prepared to go. The business of persuading two blades to grow where one grew before would be a matter for the provincial Ministers. The Central Food Ministry refuses to be placed again in the position in which it was placed on 10th September 1947 when New Delhi found itself with just two days' supplies of grain.

This is where the Madras Ministry is going to be put to the test. Its achievements in the matter of food production since the first Food Grain Control Order of 1942 seem an impressive list on paper, but of concrete results obtained, there is precious little evidence. Till the end of 1944, supply and distribution—they did not

take up production until much later—were carried through a maze of orders and controls. While they were in full swing the grain tended to disappear through the trap-door of the black market. A report issued by the Madras Development Department for 1945-46 gives the reasons for the precariousness of the food situation: "An unusual combination of meteorological elements and world conditions a widespread cyclone and tidal wave..... extensive and abnormal drought.... general failure of monsoon.... serious shrinkage in the area under cultivation." What they perhaps forgot to mention in their catalogue of calamities, were black-marketing, profiteering, corruption and jerrymandering. Hundreds of petrol fuel pumps, electric motor pumping sets and dozens of tractors were given to the ryots, seed material and vine cuttings were distributed to them. Demonstrations were held in villages to teach farmers improved methods of agriculture. Radio talks were given on land problems. Exhibitions and shows were organised. Co-operative marketing societies sprang up everywhere. Irrigation experiments were started in Coimbatore, Bellary and Pattukottai. As against all these came muddling in the execution of Government orders; price control came without the necessary concomitant of physical control of stocks; procurement too often became a matter of collusion between the landed gentry and procurement officials; the blackmarket, bolstered by the fear of insecurity of the people and their weakening confidence in the Government, flourished. The over-all result was that not only was the Government not able to keep any kind of grain reserve for the province, but in 1947, when the north-east monsoon failed, Madras had to indent on the Centre for more than twice the previous year's allotment.

One cannot blame the Madras Government for not putting through all the irrigation schemes that they

had outlined on paper, because irrigation is necessarily a long-term project. But short-term expedients like the de-silting of tanks and minimization of seepage and waste, the clearing of wells, the execution of drainage schemes, ought to have received immediate and expert attention and that the Madras Government did not see the urgency of these elementary precautions and preparations speaks ill of their foresight and of their concern for the welfare of the common man.

As for land reclamation now being so enthusiastically taken up by the Centre, one might very legitimately ask why it had not been done sooner. "Since August, 1947," said Sri Jairamdas at Patharia recently, "our great task has been to produce out of less land and still less irrigated land enough food to feed a greater proportion of the population." But August 1947 was more than five years after the Grow More Food Campaign had been started and it is already almost two years ago. It is true land reclamation was started in a desultory fashion in 1946 with two hundred heavy tractors left by the U. S. Army Disposals Department but they were not used till late in 1947. And though the Government of India claim to have reclaimed 32,306 acres of waste land in 1948, there lie unclaimed yet one and a half million acres of rice land in heavy rainfall areas like Tarai in U. P. and in the Orissa States. This stretch, it is said, is going to be taken up as part of the new 6.2 million acres of land to be reclaimed during the next few years (as recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee). But how far the promised reclamation is actually going to be effected is problematical. In the meanwhile, food imports are getting heavier. Last year, India imported 2.84 million tons of foodgrains (Rs. 130 crores) and entered into eight agreements with foreign countries. And this year the provinces have so far asked for double the allotment of last year. What the provinces have to do now is to turn over every inch of arable land for rice production and for food crops. It is a lamentable fact that while the yields in cotton and sugar-cane have risen, there has been practically no rise in the average yield per acre of rice in spite of research, experiment

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and best protection organisations. Now, not only have we to make up the present deficit in foodgrains, but we must face deficits in future years arising out of the steady increase in population. And there is, of course, the over-all problem of increasing the nutritional standards of the people. The prospect is bleak indeed.

The province of Madras has got no money to tackle her larger irrigation projects and hardly any money to see even her short-term measures through. The Zamindari Bill has been shelved and so one-third of agricultural land in the province continues to exist under a system of subinfeudation. Absentee landlordism is

rampant. There are nearly 11 million acres of culturable waste in the province but nothing can be done with them until they are given irrigational facilities, and contour-bunding and clearance of weeds are undertaken as preliminary measures.

With the situation so depressing, it seems ironical in the extreme that the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UNO should decide to send young men for training at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research Centre at New Delhi which is being much admired for its pioneering work in the field of agriculture. The pity is the work has so far been mostly on paper.

FRENCH INDIA—EFFECT OF CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

By "MIMI"

ANYONE who knows anything about what is happening in French India today consequent on the termination of the Customs Agreement of 1941 would be surprised at the vast hue and cry that is raised in India on the complaint of the French Indian Administration. The imposition of the Customs regulations does undoubtedly act as an economic blockade causing untold hardships and sufferings to the residents of French India who are no other than our own kith and kin. The present position is this:

(1) Nobody can enter into or come out of Pondicherry and Karikal without possessing a certificate of identity in obtaining which one has to go through all the formalities that are to be gone through in getting a passport.

(2) All articles have been classified as either prohibited or restricted and prohibited articles cannot be taken into French India at all while restricted articles can be taken only with the permission of the Export Trade Controller at Madras, even for personal consumption.

(3) Nothing can be imported from French India without paying a customs duty thereon provided its entry is not prohibited absolutely.

It is a wellknown fact that the people of India and of Pondicherry and

Karikal have very close and intimate connection socially, domestically, economically and culturally and never before was one treated as a foreigner with reference to the other. Further, the French Establishments in India have always depended upon India for their daily necessities. If this background is kept in view, it will not be difficult to appreciate the serious nature of the sufferings to which the residents of French India are subjected. There have been instances when the people on one side of the border were not able to attend the marriage or funeral of their very close relatives on the other side because of the imposition of the passport regulations. People who apply for passport have to wait for more than three weeks or a month even in some cases before they can get the same. The gosha ladies who strictly observe purdha can never apply for a passport as they will have to send two copies of their photographs along with the application, the required particulars of which include height, colour of hair, colour of eyes and special peculiarities of the applicant. The application itself and one of the photographs have to be attested by a magistrate. If this be the case, is it any wonder that people on both sides of the frontier are seething with bitterness and discontent? What will be the reaction of the people of the city

if they are told that they should obtain a passport if they want to go to George Town from Mylapore or to Mambalam from Triplicane? Even assuming that the Government take steps to expedite the issue of passports, how are the gosha ladies and the poor people who cannot afford the paraphernalia of a passport, to get the same?

This is not all. Medicines come under the category of either prohibited or restricted articles. The writer himself had personal experience of this hardship. He was prevented at the Sannamangal Chowki, Karikal frontier, from taking a bottle of "VITAZYME," a Vitamin B complex preparation, manufactured at Calcutta, for the use of his ailing wife, who is a resident of Karikal on the prescription of a doctor. The bottle still remains with the Customs officer of the Chowki against whose attitude of callousness and want of politeness and courtesy the writer registered an emphatic protest with the Assistant Collector of Customs, Pondicherry and Karikal, Kandamangalam, in preferring a complaint against the prevention. Though the complaint was made nearly a month ago and the letter was acknowledged promptly and an investigation was promised, nothing has been communicated about its result so far. Chemists at Karikal have told the present writer that such a vital medicine like penicillin which has become so much a matter of life and death, has been declared to be a prohibited article and its suppliers from Madras who approached the Export Trade Controller were refused permission to export the same to Karikal as it was a prohibited article.

Our press and the public seem to take the view that the only patriotic answer which we can give to the general complaint of economic blockade of the French Indian Administration is to taunt them by saying that as they alone refused to continue the Customs Agreement of 1941 till the referendum they must be prepared to face the consequences of the Government of India resuming the Customs cordon. Even assuming the correctness of the facts underlying such an attitude, it is pertinent to point out that it is our own kith and kin, who are one with us, whom we invite to live along with us under one administration,

that suffer as a result of the alleged wrong attitude of the French Administration. The real fact is there has been no resumption of Customs cordon by the Government of India but only the imposition of new Customs regulations along with the enforcement of passport rules. Prior to the Customs Agreement of 1941, there was absolutely no export control. Anything could be taken into French India in any quantity. But things that were imported from French India were subjected to Customs duty which was justified by the circumstance that Karikal and Pondicherry were and are free ports. Consequently the people of French India did not suffer. Now, for the first time, the Government of India have imposed strict export control which alone is responsible for the suffering of the people. Vegetables including betel leaves and even cooked food are subjected to export control. There has been a scarcity of milk, curds, etc., in the adjoining Indian area as they used to be brought in by people living in villages on the other side of the frontier.

As export regulations are in force in India, if unrestricted exports are allowed into French India, all the goods in India may find their way there and the export regulations in India may be nullified. This is the only justification for the imposition of export control. But such an abuse can be avoided by allowing export to the extent needed to meet the actual needs of the residents in French India and by allowing goods carried bonafide for personal consumption. But the unimaginative and thoughtless administration of these regulations by the petty-minded officials on the spot is causing horrible harassment to the people and this alone is responsible for the anti-merger feeling among the residents of the French Establishment in India.

The whole thing smacks of coercion and vengeance which are unbecoming of a great country like India. The real fact seems to be that the matter has not been dealt with at the highest Cabinet level and is still in the lower Secretariat level giving enough room for the display of bureaucratic tendencies of the small-minded officials who have not yet got out of the old rut.

SPOTLIGHT ON AUROBINDO ASHRAM

By SUMITRA

ONE of the most enigmatic figures in present-day India is Sri Aurobindo, the Saint and Savant. His history as a revolutionary and a mystic is well known and respected in all parts of India and the world, and thousands have been attracted to his Ashram in Pondicherry. For those thousands, however, it is enough to be within the aura of his sanctity, for they neither see him nor hear him, nor communicate with him in any way. Since 1927, Sri Aurobindo has become the mystic *par excellence*, for no outsider can say what he truly thinks or what is the nature of his personal life. He lives in a sealed upper floor of the main Ashram buildings, where closed shutters alone indicate his presence. His personal needs are attended to by a small inner circle headed by the "Mother," a French lady, and a few trusted lieutenants who do his secretarial work. Other ashramites do not apparently see him at all except on the four darshan days in a year, when they file past his door and worship him and the Mother from a distance, along with guest devotees from India and abroad. Communication with him is therefore only through the medium of the Mother, who not only issues his communiques, but also interprets his philosophical works in her occult classes. Direct communion with him is thus impossible. Ashramites aver that he is not of this world nor interested in its petty proceedings as he is concentrating solely upon the realisation of the great Supramental Force which, it is supposed, will come through him, to Mankind. Sceptics can only feel they cannot take other people's word for it. Thus Sri Aurobindo is at once a great teacher, or the most exploited thinker, according to what you personally are capable of believing.

The word Ashram conjures up a secluded haven of peace, isolated in some remote and rural spot, wherein man can find his soul at the feet of a great Master. Visitors to Pondi-

cherry, inspired by the legend of Sri Aurobindo, are invariably slightly taken aback when they find bits of the Ashram at their front door. In Pondicherry City, the Ashram is the biggest property-owner and as a house becomes vacant, no matter where it is placed, it is immediately bought by the Ashram and given over to groups of inmates. The main buildings are a neat block of houses in the centre of the residential quarter of the "Ville Blanche" and only a stone's throw from the French Government House. In almost every block of the geometrically arranged streets of this little capital of the French possession in India, clean house indicated the premises of the Ashram. Only one building was actually constructed by them and that is a great modern structure, called "Golkonda," which is their luxurious guest house.

Ashramites are each given a room or a small house according to their needs and their importance in the eyes of the Mother. The interiors are clean and simple and often far from austere. The total "population" of this "Vatican City" is about 600 and the inmates are free to come and go in their daily lives, meditate or not as they see fit, or leave the Ashram completely if they so desire. It would seem that nothing could be more perfect, if it were not understood clearly that the first condition for becoming a member of the Ashram is the handing over utterly and completely of your worldly goods and your very being into the hands of the "Mother." Until you can surrender yourself to her (not to Sri Aurobindo) you cannot enter the sacred precincts, and in doing so you surrender your volition, your desires, your so-called attachments. You thereupon become in truth *the Child* and she, *the Mother*. Added to the fact that you have no worldly goods, it is not difficult to understand that to break rules requires courage and decision of which you possess as little as you do hard cash. A mortal soul is also easily awed

by what it does not understand and feels it never will. It is not surprising that the crushing weight of "divinity" proves too much for most people. It is difficult if not impossible to exercise judgement in a matter you admit you know little about and about which the other party proclaims he knows all. When it is understood that an Ashram will attract first and foremost the unhappy, the misfits, the frustrated and the lonely, and only very rarely the genuine seeker after Truth, it is not surprising that an element of blind worship will exist where a sort of mass-hypnotism can be exercised with thoroughness. Added to this, the administration of this particular Ashram is a gem of totalitarian efficiency. All is rendered unto the Mother and literally all subsequently comes from her, from food, linen, soap and the necessities of life to permission to seek people or attend any functions in the town. Ashramites were enthusiastic participants in the Bastille Day procession of the French Government and were absent from the funeral cortege that the whole population of Pondicherry joined when Gandhiji was assassinated. The discipline under the "Mother" is a model of efficiency. The Ashramites say it is the product of their intense devotion to her. With placards in the Ashram stating, "Act, speak and think as though the "Mother" were present, for indeed she is," and signed "Sri Aurobindo," this devotion is certainly fortified.

Enthusiasts of the Ashram, both French and Indian, often loudly state that the Ashram is unique because Sri Aurobindo has created something utterly new in Indian philosophy. This is undoubtedly true. No great teacher from Buddha to Gandhi has accepted the fact of his divinity within his own life time. Nor has any other teacher taken the full responsibility for bringing the divine force *en masse* into the souls of ordinary men upon this planet. Sri Ramakrishna advised Vivekananda to accept that he could never be a "realised being" and therefore to turn his energies to alleviating the crushing burdens and sorrows of ordinary men. Thanks to these counsels, a great humanitarian movement was set afoot and those rare ones who could seek and find a higher spiritual plane, continue their lofty and un-

known labours. Sri Aurobindo however does all the spiritual work for and on behalf of every one, and yogic exercises or meditation on the part of ashramites do not appear to be particularly necessary. Every evening there is an hour of meditation presided over by the "Mother," but many do not attend.

Life in the Ashram is thus turned inwards rather than outwards, on more than the spiritual plane. The unrealised being does not appear to do much more than surrender himself completely and then proceed to live a very ordinary life in ascetic and well-ordered surroundings. In exchange for the complete taking-over of his worries and responsibilities, he must render manual service to the Ashram according to his talents. Groups are thus allocated to the modern bakery, to gardening, to sewing and to embroidery, to the printing press and the laundry. Each of these labours, to mention but a few, is purely collective work. The bakery makes bread for all the Ashramites plus a few loaves that are sent to Government House, the British community and a few other favoured people in the town, since bread was for many months unobtainable in the city. Soap is manufactured likewise for use of the Ashramites alone and their clothes are scientifically washed, ironed and delivered. Flowers are grown by a selected group, but with the sole purpose of use as offerings to the "Mother."

The sewing and embroidery work undertaken by a band of about twenty women, is also exclusively for the "Mother." They embroider costly and elaborate saris, robes, head-bands, curtains, covers, bedspreads, tablecloths for her alone, and even footrests of embroidered velvet, the edges for her chair and the inner soles of her shoes. Beyond this labour of love, these twenty hand-maidens wash and iron her clothes, for she can wear them but once.

The Ashram is rich in versatile people, artists, musicians, engineers, doctors and others with talents more lowly. But the town of Pondicherry cannot hope to share in any of this. To combat the understandable antipathy towards the Ashram by local people who see their wealth, assets and exclusiveness from uncomfortable

close surroundings, the Ashramites say "Under a candle there is always an area of darkness." Actually, the Ashram contributes nothing but politics to local life. That is however another story. The language of the Ashram (composed largely of Indians from all parts of the country) has now become French. In the last few years, with the threat of a free India expelling the French and menacing what seems to be the Mother's dream of an independent spiritual empire, the Ashram has openly entered the political arena, allied itself with the French Government and created an Ashram-directed party in the local Assembly. The Ashramites likewise participate in all French celebrations and in the Indian one of August 15th alone, because it happens to be Sri Aurobindo's own birthday.

Who is this mysterious figure who rules the Ashram in the name of Sri Aurobindo? She was Madame Paul Richard, the mystic-minded daughter of a French Colonial Governor, whose brothers were also said to have been governors in the colonies. During the war of 1914, she came under the spell of Sri Aurobindo and in 1918 came to Pondicherry for good, to look after him and protect him. In the beginning Madame Paul Richard was a seeker after Truth and became in time, through lengthy austerities and meditation, a true yogini. That she has power, Ashramites not only insist, but even go further and call it definitely occult. They have gone to the length of warning outsiders not to cross her for fear of consequences and are

themselves fearful of her influence over their destinies.

When she attained a state of realisation, Sri Aurobindo proclaimed her the "Mother" and she then became his official interpreter and intermediary. Gradually his old associates lost direct contact with him and a spiritual curtain grew up within the Ashram as it did without. Power was thus transferred entirely into her hands.

On her insistence the Mother does not proclaim to be a saint or a divine being. She likes to play ping-pong and tennis and does so despite her 68 years. She likes lovely clothes and her hand-maidens spend months of devoted labour making the most exquisite gold, silver and coloured embroideries on the choicest chiffons and silks for her to wear. Her shoes are lined with petit-point and velvet, her morning robes are of Banares brocade and nylon and she carries plastic bags. She has big teeth and hypnotic eyes. Gorgeously dressed she is supreme in the power she exercises over the smallest details of the lives of her six hundred subjects.

Unlike Sri Aurobindo, the "Mother" is accessible. She is not only the supreme dictator of the working of the Ashram and its policy, but she sees to every detail of its management. She directs and receives all reports on everything that happens within the Ashram and without. She directs classes and teaches them herself and is generally surrounded by her adoring worshippers. Hers is a life of power, the reward for her life of austerity.—N. P. S. (Copyright).

"POCKET TELEPHONE" SERVICE

A person apparently talking to himself while walking down a city street or along a row of corn in a field soon may become a familiar sight in the United States. Actually, he will not be talking to himself but to another person perhaps an associate at the office or his wife at home.

He will be using the facilities of the Citizens Radio Service, authorized to begin operations on June 1 by the Federal Communications Commission, a U. S. Government agency. The service will make it possible for one person to talk with another by means of their own miniature radio receiving and sending sets. The set may be carried like a camera under the arm, in a coat pocket, or by means of a strap over the shoulder.

Any citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older, will be eligible to receive a "broadcasting" license from the FCC to use the new service.

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.

Sand And Stones Sold With Seeds

I expected to get good seeds from the Agricultural Department. I wanted to buy 80 lbs. of Sun hemp seeds for growing a green manure crop. I went to Guindy. There was no stock there. I was directed to go to Ponneri. I went all the way to the Agricultural demonstrator, Ponneri and purchased 80 lbs. of the seed. To my surprise, I found that the seeds were mixed up very badly with stones and sand. Then and there, I had the seeds cleaned up. There were 22 lbs. of stones and sand and only 58 lbs. of seeds. There were about 3,000 lbs. of Sun hemp seeds in the store and the whole quantity was similarly mixed up with sand and stones.

The Agricultural demonstrator said that he was not responsible for this condition as the seeds were supplied by the department in that state. As the District Agricultural Officer was then camping there, I reported to him about the matter. He said that he had been in the district only for one month and that he could not be held responsible. As he had no powers to give any rebate for the sand and stones found in the seeds, I had to pay at the rate of Rs. 0-3-9 per lb. for the dirt also which I had left behind.

The Agricultural Department is there to guarantee the quality of the seeds supplied through them. The ryots are prepared to pay more than the market price for purchases made through the department, because they expect better supervision and better quality than by purchasing through the traders.

I hope that this matter will receive the attention of the higher authorities, so that the reputation of the department may not go down still further.

(Dr.) A. LAKSHMIPATHI.

Section 144 At Villupuram

The executive of the Tamil Nad Socialist Party and a number of invitees met on 30th May at Villupuram. In this town Section 144 continues for the last one and a half years. In view of the coming District Board elections, the local Socialists requested the authorities to permit the holding of a public meeting at Villupuram on 30th May. The Secretary of the Tamil Nad Socialist Party, Mr. S. R. Subramaniam, telegraphed to the Premier and the District Magistrate for permission for a public meeting. No reply was received. But permission to hold meetings is given to various other

organisations. As the natural human right of speech was involved in this question the members of the Party decided to speak at the public meeting. From 4 p.m. the police went on dispersing the gathering. They arrested the important members of the executive after Mr. S. A. Rahim was proposed by Mr. K. Raman as chairman of the meeting. It was highly indiscreet on the part of the police to arrest the important leaders and speakers at a public gathering.

Twenty-one members of the Party were taken at 10 o'clock at night to Jingee Jail which was at a distance of about 30 miles and were locked up in hot, dirty, congested rooms. They starved for the next day as a protest against this treatment. They were let on bail at 3 in the afternoon. These Socialists had no other alternative than to disobey Sec. 144. How else is it possible to set up candidates for the District Board elections? The right of public meetings on the eve of the election is being denied by the application of Sec. 144 in several areas. Important workers and leaders of rival parties are kept in detention without trial. Why not Government pass an ordinance that none but Congressmen should stand for District Board elections?

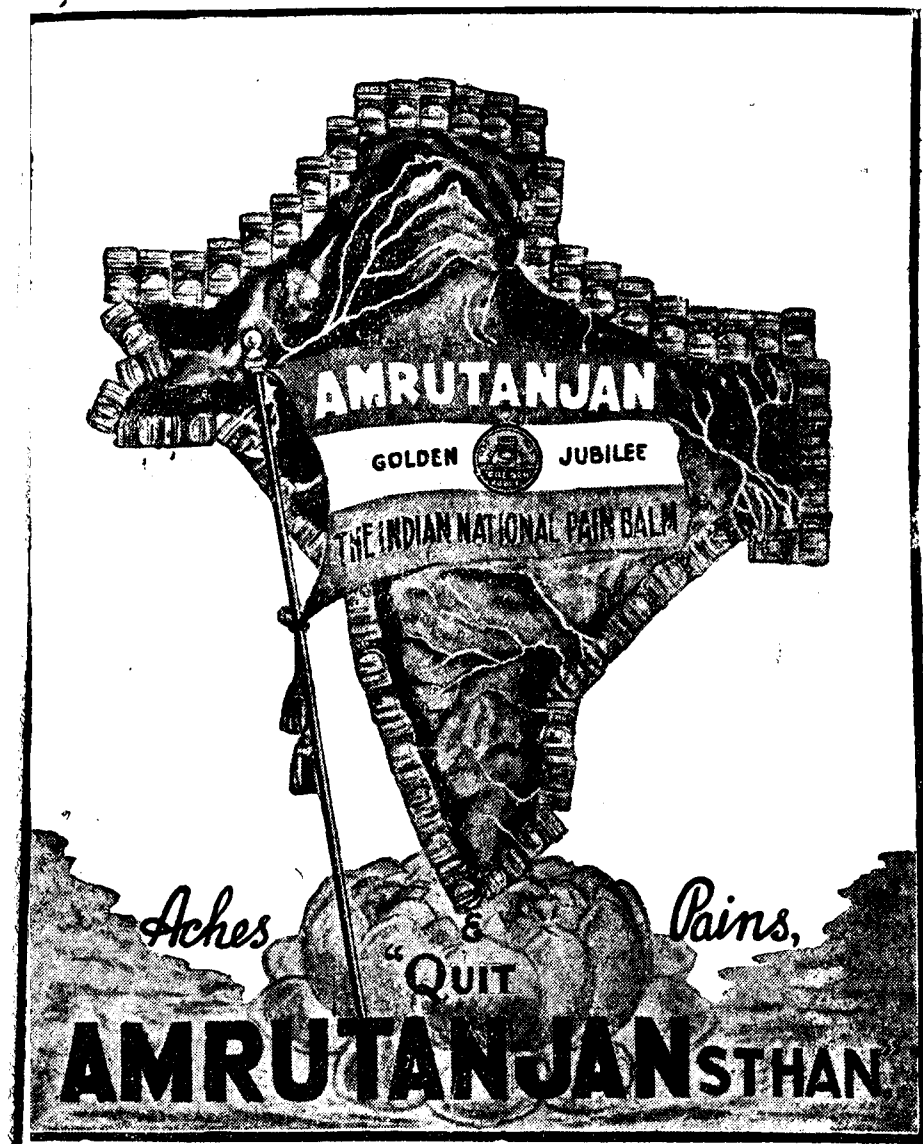
K. G. SIVASWAMY,
President, Madras Civil Liberties'
Union.

From Pillar To Post

It is said that there are four channels by which cement can be had—the Honorary Controller, the Cement Company, the Tahsildar and the distributor himself. Each is said to control 25% of a consignment to the distributor. For the last one year, in dire need of cement for most urgent repairs I tried to get ten bags but I could not. The Tahsildar receives the paper and passes it on to the clerk who gives a decent burial to it. The distributor, even though the Secretary or President of a co-operative stores, prearranges applications from his own kith and kin and distributes. The Tahsildar's clerk and co-operative stores manager always say there is no free stock. One like me not prone to backdoor ways finds always the front door shut. Is there any officer to scrutinise these matters?

S. EASAN.

Periyakulam.



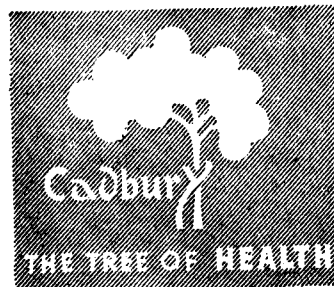
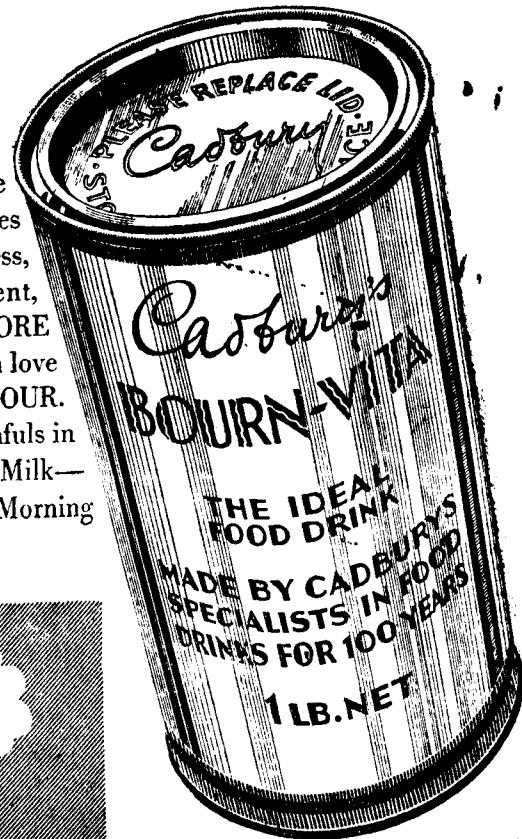
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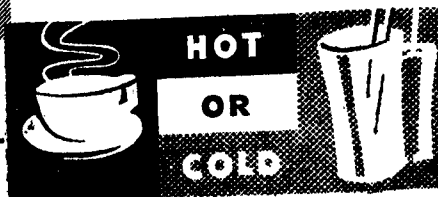
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SWATANTRA

VOL. IV, NO. 19.

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 1949

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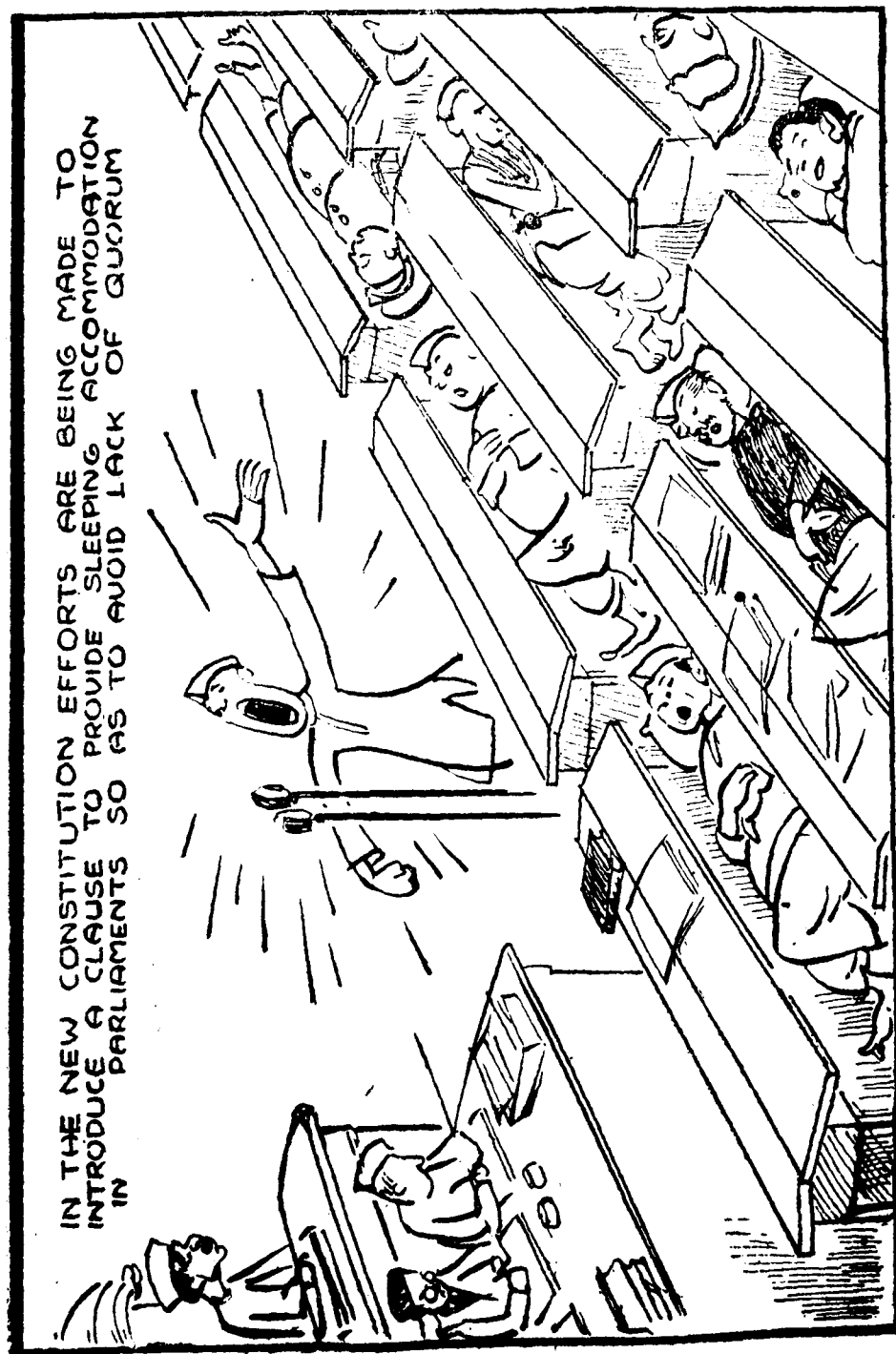
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SWATANTRA

VOL. IV
No. 19

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 1949

ISSUED
WEEKLY

THE TEST BEGINS

THE victory of Sri Sarat Chandra Bose in the South Calcutta bye-election should give a jolt to Congress leaders prone, as they have been, to dwell ecstatically in public forums over their achievements as administrators during the past two years. It has been suggested that the magnetic name of the Bose family, with the magical spell exercised on Indian minds by memories of Netaji Subhas, might have had something to do with the rout sustained by the Congress candidate. Such a suggestion under-rates the importance of Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel in the politics of the country. Neither has spared Sarat Bose from considerations of restraint due to their position at the head of the Central Government. They have brought to bear the full blast of a partisan propaganda zest on the hustings at Calcutta. There was no lack of readiness either, on the part of Dr. B. C. Roy, the Premier of the province, to make use of official influence and the vantage of executive authority for the trouncing of Sri Sarat Bose. No merely personal factor could have carried any candidate to victory, however glamorous the traditions surrounding his name, against so formidable a combination of powerful forces. Sri Sarat Bose won mainly because he was the mouth-piece of a very widespread revulsion of popular sentiment against the ruling regime in Bengal which not even the undoubted personal prestige of India's Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister could, despite all the effort they put forth, succeed in overcoming.

The decline of Congress influence revealed in the Calcutta bye-election cannot be brushed aside as an isolated phenomenon. It is a definite advance signal of approaching disaster to the whole structure of the Congress Government unless vigorous measures are taken *forthwith* to regain the fast disappearing public confidence. The fact is that a weak and wobbling Central direction has changed provincial autonomy from a discipline into a malady, and let loose, on the provinces, regimes depending for their strength on the corrupt cultivation of vote-catching touts with a free use of State resources.

Our provincial leaders are elected not for their stature or ability or character, but for the attractiveness of their inconsequence, affording, with the dummy potentiality banked out of them, the greatest measure of benefits and permits to the largest number of bargainers with votes to blackmarket. Our Ministers have no plans for the promotion of the general welfare. With reckless wildness they spend enormous amounts of public money in haphazard travelling serving no useful purpose. The greater part of their energy is spent in building political support for themselves with grants of unconscionable favours to the damnation of administrative equity. Thoroughly incompetent to devise measures for increased production and employment to secure larger revenues to be spent on expanding social services, they have made themselves instruments of crushingly burdensome taxation, killing the goose laying the golden eggs and making life oppressive and miserable for

the masses subjected to their power. Their pretence of service to the poor to justify their exactions is a further aggravation, and while as propaganda it has failed miserably, it has added the disgust of revulsion at its hypocrisy to the chagrin of disappointment of the public over the barrenness, inadequacy and folly of the administration.

The plain truth of the matter is that the Congress regimes in the provinces have failed to touch the imagination of the millions and inspire them with faith and confidence. Apart from a small coterie dwelling in the sunshine of the new rulers' favour, empowered by them to get rich quick and lord it over their fellows in their respective localities, to common people in general these two years of Congress rule have meant a sad shattering of fondly cherished hopes, what with the nepotism of the Ministers, their ignorance on top of arrogance, their exhibition of *mala fides* with rank communal policies opposed to the very basic creed of the Congress, their indifference to civil liberties, their hopeless addiction to extravagance and to rapacity in taxation, their intolerance of criticism and insolent indifference to public opinion, their shameless appropriation of the opportunities of power and office to sectional, clannish and personal ends, their sanctimonious mouthing of theoretical democratic principles while demonstrating in practice the repellent characteristics of fascist despots moving inexorably in the direction of a police State. Formerly people supported the Congress as they felt that the Congress leaders were earnest devotees of freedom pledged to Gandhian principles conceived solely in the interests of public welfare. The Congress ticket therefore fetched votes at elections and won tremendous victories for Congress candidates. But in the past two years, disillusionment has been swift and bitter, and the insufferable antics and Tammany Hall commercialism of the Roys and the Sarcars, the Gopala Reddis and the Sitarama Reddis have

been costing the Congress millions of votes, while they, entrenched in their ephemeral paradise of power, go on sowing seeds of illwill and spreading exasperation on a scale that no Maxwell of the British period could reach. With the experience that they have had of the baser type of Congress Ministers, people have come to feel that the Congress leaders in power care only for themselves and not for public good. The verdict of the electorate of South Calcutta is an unmistakable demonstration of this popular tendency throughout the country.

During our two years of freedom which have been years of travail, the reverence of the masses for top leaders of the Congress organisation of the stamp of Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, as also the momentum of the political habit of a quarter of a century, enabled the Congress to survive as the dominant political party despite the ruinous sabotaging of its influence by the misgovernment of the corrupt in the provincial Ministries. But South Calcutta underlines the truth that the liabilities have begun to demolish the assets in the Congress organisation. No longer can credit be sustained by white-washing and complacency. The weight of public disapprobation will pull the whole Congress down unless the policy-makers at the Centre hasten to cut in time the cord still binding them to the too long pampered violators of Congress principles in the provincial Ministries. The corrupt Ministers should be sacked if the Congress as an organisation is to be saved. But judging from the pattern of the Shanker Rao Deo enquiry, there is no indication that the urgent needs of the developing crisis in Congress affairs will be met wisely and firmly. The pleasant bids fair to over-ride the necessary, and we seem to be in for a continuance of the fatal policy of covering up the grave with bouquets and garlands, letting things drift so as to multiply in a thousand and one other places the disaster that has begun in West Bengal.

Sotto Voce

"In The Name Of The Public!"



THE first shots in what promises to be a battle royal have been fired—unless, indeed, the whole thing fizzles out in a competitive development of cold feet. Newspaper proprietors have protested against the proposed levy of an advertisement tax and have reinforced it with what the Ministers have without much exaggeration described as a threat. And the Ministers, not to be outdone in heroics, have in their turn darkly hinted at reprisals. And both, with a belated realisation that the public might have something to say in the matter, have sought to rope it in.

The Ministers say they want money badly because of total prohibition. The advertisement tax seems to them an obvious way of getting it, since the newspapers, especially the big ones, are making easy money. The owners reply that an advertisement tax is something unprecedented and that, as newspapers are engaged in a public service, they should not be burdened with taxes that might cripple their usefulness. The obvious reply to the Ministers would be that they were repeatedly warned that total prohibition would prove a costly fad. And it should be said that the Madras Ministry has not been conspicuously wise in its spending.

One Minister has chosen to stalk about on moral stilts. In accordance with the ancient practice of abusing the plaintiff's attorney he has been telling an audience of journalists—of all people!—that if an editor attacks prohibition he can hardly be regarded as speaking for the people. The Government, he said, would be entitled to

discount his paper's opposition as actuated by one man's prejudice. He seems to have forgotten that a Ministry which is prepared to allow liquor to flow like water on the hills in order to attract foreign tourists cannot afford to take the high moral line.

Newspapers, say the Ministers, have been making huge profits. But they have been doing so with the Government's help and connivance. A statutory minimum price per page, unlimited advertisements paid for from the public revenues, a virtual monopoly brought about by the ban on new papers—these were the various ways by which the bad old bureaucracy kept the press in good humour during the ticklish days of the war. And though the emergency has long since passed and the Britisher along with it, our popular Governments have not been particularly anxious to stop these privileges. Why now this sudden wave of virtuous indignation against newspaper profiteers?

The clue is perhaps to be found in an unguarded statement of the Premier. Addressing a Tirunelveli audience he said that the newspapers that were loudest in their denunciation of the tax were those that had never supported the Ministry and would be glad to see it go under. Are we to suppose that the Ministers, disappointed in their hopes of getting blind all-out support in return for favours conferred, are now brandishing the big stick? The advertisement tax may not have been consciously fashioned in retaliation.

But the demagoguery which makes the Ministers resort to rabble-rousing by talking of bloated profits is hardly calculated to induce faith in their *bona fides*.

The Ministers profess to be scandalised by the suggestion that they need not hereafter look for free boosts in the press if they are going to persist with the tax. One of them has said that he and his colleagues had never wanted personal publicity. A public that could believe that could believe anything. The Premier has complacently remarked that if the newspapers did not report them the radio would. Truth to tell, the radio has of late been doing very little else. A Government monopoly, it is being systematically abused, in the manner of monopolies, for building up the public personalities of the politicians in power. Even more revealing, the Premier is prepared, if necessary, to organise a boycott of newspapers. Would not papers, he asks, which so

far forgot their duty as to black out Government news richly deserve this?

Newspapers are an industry and it should be news to nobody that industries could function as pressure groups. But protest comes with an ill grace from a Government which is so cynically contemptuous of the freedom of the press that it has proposed to take powers to itself (in connection with the Bill to put down the black-market) to compel newspapers to publish its hand-outs. The public to which both sides in this quarrel appeal with unction should have no illusions about either. But in its own interest it should definitely side with the newspapers. It is the advertisements that enable it to buy at two annas what without them would cost three annas to produce. And if in this war the first casualty should be the bilge which passes for Ministerial publicity the newspaper reader should be the last to complain.

VIGHNESWARA.

SIDELIGHTS :

When the savages wish to have fruit they cut down the tree and gather it. That is exactly a despotic government. —MONTESQUIEU.

THE policy of the Madras Ministry, if it can be called a policy at all, in the matter of advances under the State Aid to Industries Act, has given rise to a lot of suspicion. The story has been told in SWATANTRA already of how a big loan was given to a vegetable ghee factory belonging to the relatives of the Finance Minister in which the Minister himself had an interest. To justify the grant of this loan, other loans had to be given to other factories also which, when canvassed earlier, had been refused. This sort of waywardness, refusing aid at first to some vegetable ghee factories, giving it later to another, and then extending it subsequently to those who had been at first refused, raises grave issues as to the principles that should govern the grant of loans to companies in the name of State aid to industry.

What are these principles? One of them, undoubtedly, to which scarcely anyone can take exception, is that the industry aided with State funds should be beneficial in a public sense and possess a nation-building character. It should promote indigenous production in respect of a useful commodity or help to cause a foreign import to be reduced substantially. The loan should be the first charge on the property of the company aided. It should be sufficient to make the company work and not merely serve as a lever to make the Government pay more on the plea that otherwise the purpose of the first loan could not be carried into effect, that to prevent the first loan going to waste more loans must be granted.

Have these principles been honoured in the cases of State aid

cited above? The feeble efforts made on behalf of the Ministers concerned, to shove the responsibility on to a statutory industries board supposed to be independent, have not carried conviction to anybody. The members of the board are no more independent than officers of Government. Be it noted that the chairman of the board is the Director of Industries, and its secretary one of the Secretaries of the Industries Department. Several of the members are nominated. As constituted, the board cannot help dotting the (i)s and crossing (t)s for the Government. One would like to know how many cases of rejection of applications of State aid dissenting from ministerial recommendations the board can show to its credit.

Vegetable ghee is no industry at all. Oil is hydrogenated into a spurious substance which is made to pass off as ghee. The food content and property in the oil is in no way improved by the hydrogenation. A recent enquiry of the Government of India showed that rats fed on vegetable ghee became blind in the third generation and that it is therefore inferentially harmful to the health of people consuming it. Powerful vested interests concerned in the sale of vegetable ghee as profitable trade have combined and are trying to prove that the report that emerged from the Government of India enquiry was not correct. They have set up another enquiry which is still proceeding. The fate of vegetable ghee hangs in the balance pending the effort going on to set up a clash of scientists to save it, but harmful or not, it may meanwhile be taken as absolutely indisputable that vegetable ghee as an article of diet is no improvement on oil. Is it to promote the production of a commodity of this nature, possibly injurious but certainly not beneficial, that we have a Finance Minister giving away ten lakhs of public money over a factory run by his

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brothers, cousins and brothers-in-law?

Now that Sri Shankar Rao Deo has come down to enquire into charges of corruption against some of the Ministers, let him take account of how much of the money supposed to be spent by way of State aid to industry has gone to the benefit of the relatives of the present Finance Minister and the late Industries Minister. Let him compare the applications for State aid conceded through Ministers' interest and *quid pro quo* arrangements between one Minister and another, with other applications rejected, and find out whether any principles or semblance of principles can be attributed at all to the series of transactions involved. The complete story of the transactions will let the whole cat out of the bag if the Daniel that has come to judgment cares to pursue it.

Madras Ministers against whom

charges of corruption have been made, have retaliated by making counter-charges against others who had been Ministers before them. A corrupt Minister does harm which is sought to be removed by removing him from office. No such remedy is possible in the case of an ex-Minister who, not being in office, can neither cause harm nor be punished for doing so. Public interest in Belcher ceased in Britain from the moment he vacated the ministerial post which he had previously held. It is a different matter if the attempt is to investigate the whole question of how Congress rule has been carried out throughout the country in the two years since freedom. It is an unfortunate mental attitude for a Minister charged with corruption to plead that other Ministers before him had been corrupt. As if the delinquency of others is a factor contributing to one's own rectitude, or is a solatium worth grand mention to the public affected!—SAKA.

CONFLICTS IN THE SOUTH—COMMUNAL AND LINGUAL

IN the North, we have been familiar with only one major communal conflict—between the fanatical Muslims and the fanatical Hindus.

In Bombay the Gujarati-Maharashtrian conflict has a lingual as well as economic basis.

In Bengal, the Non-Bengalis (especially the rich and influential Marwaris) present a problem and sometimes provoke the Bengali sentiment.

In Madras Presidency—and generally in South—the Muslims are numerically too few and culturally too well assimilated to be a major problem. But there are any number of communal, caste and lingual conflicts, all of which have been considerably sharpened since the advent of independence.

ANDHRA-TAMIL CONFLICT

As many as four major languages are spoken in the Madras presidency and the linguistic feud between the Andhras and the Tamilians is even acuter than the Gujarati-Maharashtrian conflict, while the Malayalees want to cut off Malabar division to form their "Aikya Kerala" and the Kannada-speaking people are anxious to carve their United Karnatak out of southern Bombay and Northern Madras.

I asked an Andhra friend who is certainly not a fanatic or Chauvinist to explain to me the real basis of the Andhras' anxiety to separate from the Tamilians. He thought over the matter a bit and replied, "It is a feeling of neglect which is the cause of all the resentment."

As usual in such conflict, it is not the vague and abstract rival concepts of culture and language but hard, concrete economic grievances which provide the incentive for Andhra patriotism and the demands for the separation and unification of Andhra desa.

The Andhras, said my friend, feel that their area has been left comparatively undeveloped while Tamil Nad has been helped to take long strides towards economic progress and

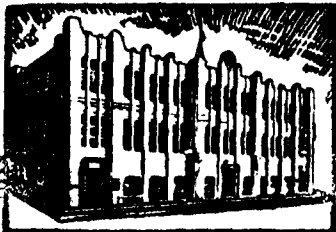
prosperity. As a specific example he cited the various irrigational projects. The Mettur and Pykara dams are both in the Tamil-speaking areas of the South, providing not only irrigation but also cheap hydro-electric power. The development of an industrial town like Coimbatore is ascribed only to this project. On the other hand the Ramapadasagar project in the Telugu-speaking Northern Circars has been abandoned for reasons which somehow the Andhras suspect. It appears that American engineers and experts were consulted and opined that the project would help to irrigate hundreds of thousands of acres and at the same time to provide cheap electricity for industrialization of the surrounding area. At a time when the cry of "Grow More Food" is heard everywhere, the Ramapadasagar project was abandoned. Why? asks the resentful, politically-conscious Andhra and suspects that the dominant Tamilians who are in majority and in power do not wish to see the Andhras prosper—or at least they neglect them.

There is no doubt that the Telugu-speaking northern area of the presidency is grossly under-developed. Raw materials there are—e.g. Cotton in the Ceded Districts, Mica in Nellore district—and vast potential power in the rivers Godavari and Krishna but there is no industry. There are no big towns. There is very little prosperity.

The demand for the separation of Andhra, said my friend, is the result of the failure of the Tamilian majority to look after the Telugu minority.

Among the Andhras there is a resentful attitude—the inferiority complex of the "junior partner"—while the Tamilians tend to assume the somewhat condescending and patronising airs of the "big brother."

The economic backwardness of the Andhras, however, does not seem to have been an unmixed evil. It has sharpened their political consciousness and their hunger for social justice.

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A TIMELY WARNING

By BAROO

NO acute observer can have failed to notice the effect that the victories of the Chinese Communists have had during recent weeks on opinion in India. Respect for indigenous Reds has increased visibly in the eyes of the common man, and the Communist Party of India is beginning to be considered more seriously than ever before as the party of the future. Of course it will be some time before this accession of strength to the Party is officially recognised by a generally hostile press. Meanwhile, the Government has not failed to see the writing on the wall. Not only has it adopted, in its domestic sphere, a policy which has won Mr. Attlee's approbation for its firmness, but it has also inaugurated a foreign policy that can no longer be called non-partisan.

To posit that while the Indian masses are facing Left, the Government is committed to an increasingly Rightist role is to utter a commonplace. The social revolution that many people thought would accompany the achievement of independence has still to be fought for and won. The Congress has failed to usher in a Ram Rajya, and has lost a very great deal of the goodwill it possessed when the British quit. Corruption and selfishness stalk its ranks and the desire to entrench itself into power is making it play an increasingly reactionary and socially timid role. In these circumstances the significance of Chinese events to India is to be found in a widening of the breach between the Government and the people. While a panicky Congress High Command is turning Westwards for solace, millions of sorely-pressed men and women have taken heart from happenings in the East.

It does not take a prophet to see that violent clashes between the Government and Communists will increase in proportion as the Party increases in strength. Will the Party become so powerful as to plunge the country into chaos and civil strife?

If it does, it will be less because of its own efforts than of the failure

of both the Congress and the Socialist Party, and of these, the failure more of the latter than the former. For the Congress is in the grip of forces greater than itself, and being in power, it is not easy for it to reform itself. The problem of problems today is the chronic economic crisis that we are in; the Congress has become far too identified with Big Business to be able to achieve a concerted national drive to break through the vicious circle of inflation and low production. Corruption and inefficiency dog its footsteps and even its topmost leaders seem to have lost their vision. It still has prestige enough to win the next elections on the strength of its past record, but it will ultimately founder on the rocks of the continued sufferings of the people.

The active discontent of the people and the vast potential of political opposition to the Congress that it represents is bound to be fully tapped sooner or later. The contest lies between the Socialists and the Communists. In this contest the Communists have a start over their rivals. Not only is the CPI an older political entity, but it is powerfully entrenched in the labour movement and in pockets in Malabar, Andhra-desh, West Bengal and Bombay. It is better organised, and being more extreme, appeals readily to the hungry and the naked. In contrast, the Socialist Party is in its infancy, possesses no traditions and an ideology it takes some education to understand.

They say, true to the homoeopathic principle, that Socialism is the best defence against Communism. But the only man alive who could rally the country round the Socialist banner and thus bring about a peaceful economic revolution is today the head of an increasingly conservative Government. Let Pandit Nehru remember that he can save the country from mounting bloodshed, but not as head of the present Government. His name is still a thing to conjure with—if only he had a mind of his own of the kind we thought he had!

LIFE IN PARIS

By R. M. CHALLA

THERE is a general impression abroad that all the Paris night clubs are dungeons of sin. I have to deny this after visiting a few night clubs where I found highly artistic cabarets. There are different types of night clubs in Paris. The two I have seen in the Latin Quarter are situated in the underground dens of the times of the French Revolution and there you have French folk-love music and some jugglery. Then there are the fashionable night clubs where they give exquisite musical feasts and where you can dance in between the shows. In one such club I saw a wonderful exposition of the evolution of man and as one watched the artistes in dance and play one felt really like moving with man in the different ages of his progress. I am not sure that the best American film could copy a show of this type.

The Latin Quarter is the ancient part of Paris. Here is the University of Paris, called the Sorbonne University, one of the most ancient universities of Europe. This is not like the Indian, English and American universities where the tuition fees and the cost of living of the students are high. I am told that the annual fees at the Sorbonne University are only about Rs. 60 and that almost all its students live on about a Rs. 60 a month. Even the sons of the rich are not allowed more than that sum by their parents. The students live in cheap hotels and usually their daily food consists of three large pieces of bread, one cup of coffee and two glasses of beer. Occasionally they buy some meat and vegetables if they can manage to save a bit from their meagre allowances. But the boys and girls are gay just the same. It is a delight to watch crowds of students of all colours and nationalities walking along the two famous cultural boulevards of St. Michel and St. Germain. On these roads you have a bookstall in every alternate building. Foreign visitors pass by gazing at the books for the beauty of their multitude and arrangement. Also along the quays of the Seine you find large rows of books on sale for very cheap prices. Here in

the Latin Quarter one feels the spell of Latin times, Latin culture and romance.

On the west side of the Latin Quarter there is the world-famous museum of paintings and sculptures in the ancient Palace of the Louvre. The view from the Louvre is an eye-filling lovely view said to be the finest in the world. A little further away along the Seine is the Avenue de New York, where, in the Palais New York, the most modern building of Paris, is located the world's biggest museum of modern art and sculpture.

The Tomb of Napoleon is another of the great sights of Paris. It is constructed by the French in the same manner as Shah Jehan built the Taj Mahal. The great European builders, as a rule, do not seem to care about the outside as much as about the inside. The inside of the Tomb of Napoleon is as charming as the outside of Taj Mahal. It is all of beautiful marble and lovely painted walls. In the centre, beneath a 200 feet high dome, in a circular underground hollow, lies the body of Napoleon in a glittering casket of a coffin. On the walls surrounding this tomb, there are frescoes of Napoleon and his sayings of what he had done to art, beauty, law, order, virtue, goodness, religion, etc. Facing this tomb is a statue of Christ in crucifixion. All this shows that the French adore Napoleon as a savior somewhat equal to Jesus Christ. This is carrying admiration too far. In the Exhibition adjacent to the tomb are placed the original letters, robes and arms of Napoleon and the bed in which Napoleon died in misery.

The Parisian is a much gayer individual than the Londoner and New Yorker. At times, if he is in a hurry, the respectable gentleman of Paris doesn't mind going out without a shave or a tie. The men and women of fashion know how to dress more cheaply and more elegantly than the Londoners and New Yorkers. Paris is an ancient city where there are not more than a thousand modern houses in all. On the walls of most public buildings is inscribed the motto of

the Revolution, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." The spirit of this motto really seems to be infused into the lives of the people. There is no official superiority and everybody meets everybody on level terms. This freedom is sometimes carried a little too far, for in Paris there is a great lack of discipline and chivalry. There is a great deal of poverty in Paris. Very common is the unclean habit of writing and carving slang on the walls as

in Indian provincial towns. The Parisian takes life easy and expects his fellow-beings to do so. There is a prodigious amount of street kissing. In very European town men and women kiss each other in street corners and on park benches but in Paris they don't mind doing so in the middle of great crowds on important streets and in theatres. Parisians are given to continual fondling and caressing in public.

FREEDOM IN FREE INDIA

By "M. C."

USUALLY big individuals write about themselves. I am not one of that tribe. I belong to the middle class; I am an employee in an office. I want to unburden the thoughts that hover in my mind—small as I am—and tell a plain unvarnished tale with candour and frankness.

As a shy boy and as a student I visualised life in a different way with a rosy hue. Now, after ten years at the desk, I realise how hard it is to live.

Much of life is dull, drab and dreary amidst the monotonous daily routine. I have moments of elation like the crest of a wave only to be flattened to the dead surface; I fall often into bogs of depression; at such moments a feeling of despair and a sense of frustration overwhelms me. It is partly due to lack of self-expression and creative effort with so much that remains unsaid and unrealised in a soulless society which is callous to human feeling and in which money governs every aspect of life. In the present order of society 'equality of opportunity' seems to be a pompous and empty phrase, which is not true to actual life.

For a time, I reconcile myself and think that contentment is a virtue, that life should be taken as it comes, whatever the odds be; then I take pleasantly the rough with the smooth. Yet, something within me deeply stirs to which I could not give freedom and which remains unfulfilled in the midst of daily life. It seems to sap the energies and eat into the vitals of the body like a fatal cancer.

I have bouts of energy in good health when the heart would dance

with the clouds. The ripple of the waves on endless march to the shore, the happy laughter of healthy and carefree children and the tender movement of a blade of grass in the sighing wind, give a strange delight and thrill the heart. I tap the toes to the lilt of the music within and the mind would aspire to achieve many things which lie smothered and hidden in the inmost recess.

Soon life brings a feeling of misery—unstable as the wind and indefinable as the cloud.

I felt solace in the thought that life would be different in "Free India." The freedom that was won—more than a year back—might have given emotional satisfaction with rich vagueness. But I do not feel myself a free citizen of "Free India" in its true sense as it should be, much as I wanted to. That rich glow of freedom is absent and I feel enveloped in smoke. It gives an ache.

There are several who feel alike. Economic servitude and poverty is a terrible curse in the modern world which smothers all that is beautiful, good, fine and true in life and bars every road to make way and live life in a true sense after one's own heart.

Is there no escape except to struggle hard amidst sweat and toil, ultimately to become one with the dust and carry unrealised thoughts to the grave? Are the fruits of freedom only for those who don the Gandhi cap (for wearing which I was once put in prison) with tainted money in their pockets?

Am I wrong? I do not know. I wonder at times!

PHILIPPINE PANORAMA: THE "RUM & COCO-COLA REPUBLIC"

By ANDREW ROTH

(Despite the long-winded pretensions of its U. N. delegate, Carlos Romulo, the Philippine Government has almost entirely ignored the rest of Asia. In this, the first of a series of two articles on the subject, Andrew Roth points out that, as a result of the combined impact of Spanish-Catholicism and American Capitalism, the Philippine Republic is quite outside the main stream of Asian developments.)

WHEN we were six hundred miles South-east of Hongkong, the pilot said to us in choice Brooklynese: "That place down there is as stable as a floating crap (dice) game!" We were over guerilla-speckled Luzon, largest of the seven thousand Philippine islands that lie like a bolo off the coast of Asia.

Driving in from the airport, gutted buildings remind one that Manila is one of the world's capitals that suffered most from the last war. After Rangoon it is probably the one which has been rebuilt the least.

There remain numerous other evidences of the war's impact. Some are visible, like the gun-buts sticking out of swaggering pants pockets or the sign on the swank Manila Hotel: "No Firearms Permitted." There is also the moral backwash: it costs two hundred pesos (U.S. \$100) in thinly-disguised bribes to clear every commercial plane through Manila's airport.

A glance at the Manila Hotel's rate chart reminds you that Manila is the most expensive city in Asia, 50% higher than nearby Hongkong. A decent hotel room is U. S. \$12.50 a day, breakfast U.S. \$1.50. These prices do not irk Manila's immaculately-dressed moneyed classes who crowd its streets with their luxurious American cars. As much as one-third of the national income goes into the pockets of the top one percent of Filipinos.

Out in the *barong-barongs*, the jerry-built slums, living is also high, three and a half times what it was before the war. Rice is five times pre-war and fish, the other staple, costs a peso (U. S. \$50) a pound, while an average manual worker earns only four pesos (U.S. \$2.00) a day. Only

that half of the city workers who are fully employed can keep up with the cost of living. Despite this, living standards here have never dropped to the grinding level of continental Asia. The average annual income for the Philippines' twenty million inhabitants is about U. S. \$145 a year, several times that of China or India.

One gets the feeling that the Philippines should be off the coast of South America, so strong is its "Rum and Coco-cola" flavour. Although closely related racially to the people of Indonesia and Malaya, over three hundred years of Spanish rule almost expunged the Filipinos' indigenous culture and replaced it with an export version of Spanish Catholicism. The Filipinos are today the only Christian people in Asia, mostly Catholics.

As in much of Latin America, the Filipino social pyramid has Spanish *hacendados* (large landowners) at the top, with *mestizos* of mixed Spanish-Filipino blood, just below them. Filipinos have more than a little Latin American romanticism and swagger, as well as its morality. Said a Manila editor: "We are a real banana republic!"

On top of the Spanish rum came a stiff jolt of American Coca-cola. After fifty years of contagious American rule what should be described as a "dialect of English" is the most widely-spoken language here, with a quarter of the people literate in it. (Another quarter is literate in Spanish, Tagalog and other local languages.)

Every gesture of the traffic policeman who stopped my taxi had been carefully modelled on a Hollywood stereotype. Rather un-imaginatively, the Philippine Congress even has a

"Committee on un-Philippine Activities." Half the columnists in the American-style newspapers write like unrestrained Latinized versions of Westbrook Pegler, Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson. It is silly, however, to suggest—as the Soviet have—that the press is American-censored. It is obviously not only uncensored but not even hampered by libel laws.

There is little obvious indication of extensive U.S. military influence at present. A U.S. advisory group trains the Philippine Army and the U.S. is pledged to military assistance and has rights to a series of military, naval and air bases. However only three of these bases are being used and total U.S. personnel has been reportedly reduced to under ten thousand persons as part of the general American strategic withdrawal from the Pacific.

It is in the market place, however, that the American imprint is heaviest, as a result of U.S. goods entering without paying customs. Chevrolets, Parker 51s and Hawaiian shirts scream out the amazing fact that last year 90% of Philippine imports came from the U.S. with consumers goods making up 85% of all imports. Filipinos have the distinction of being—after the U.S.—the world's largest consumers of American cigarettes and Coco-cola. Although a tobacco-growing country, last year the Philippines spent U.S. \$24,990,000 on importing American cigarettes. This same sort of fecklessness applies to food imports. Although rice is terribly high in the postwar world and the Philippines could easily step up its production to make up the ten percent it has been importing, nothing has been done about it.

This careless approach to dollar expenditure persists although the Philippines has been importing almost twice as much as it has been exporting, with the annual \$300,000,000 deficit just barely made up by American payments for war damages. These payments will taper off next year. Yet it was only in January that first attempts were made to reduce unnecessary dollar imports.

American commercial predominance has helped stifle Filipino culture. Although American books and slick magazines are plentiful, there are scarcely any books published in the Philippines. Scouring Manila for material on the Philippines itself, this writer found the only books available are those published in the U. S.

As a result of the drawing power of Spanish-Catholicism and American Capitalism, the Philippines are as far outside the main stream of Asian developments as if the republic were actually situated off the coast of South America. Although the first colony in Asia to receive its formal independence, the Philippine Government has almost entirely ignored the rest of Asia, despite the longwinded pretensions by its articulate U.N. delegate, Carlos P. Romulo. In the last three years this republic has established legations in Washington, London, Madrid, Rome and even distant Buenos Aires, but in Asia it has diplomatic and consular representation only in China (and Hongkong), and, of course, at the court of General Douglas MacArthur. Although Carlos Romulo, the Philippine representative at the New Delhi Conference on Indonesia last January had the temerity to suggest a regional Asian bloc with headquarters in Manila (or New Delhi), in actuality Filipino leaders have little knowledge or interest even in their South-east Asian neighbours. They are very hot under the collar about Dutch aggression in Indonesia—their nearest neighbour—but have never had enough interest to establish a consulate there as a listening post. The Filipino newsmen with apparently the greatest recent experience in Indonesia is an ebullient gossip columnist. Indicative of official ignorance is the fact that the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs told me they are now thinking of setting up a legation in Bangkok, partly to counter the Soviet legation there which, he solemnly informed me, has a staff of two hundred! He was startled to find that the news agency report, on which he relied for his information was grossly inaccurate.

THE MIDDLE EAST—III

By KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

THE Allies' betrayal of the Arabs had left them in a very sullen mood. Nor were Axis powers slow to exploit it. They too had, like the Allies in the earlier war, come to an agreement on the distribution of the spheres between themselves: Levant and Egypt to go into the Italian sphere; Iraq and Persia to come under the influence of Germany.

Italy had built up a powerful propaganda machine directed from the Italian Legation in Cairo through the 60,000 Italians scattered through the cities of Egypt. The Axis powers were also said to have supplied arms to the Arabs during the Palestine trouble. Leading Nazi leaders paid visits to Middle Eastern capitals and assiduously cultivated the nationalist groups. Nevertheless the actual outbreak of war seemed to leave the large majority of the people politically unaffected. They felt that it was none of their business and they were not going to be duped into supporting it a second time. The solemn declaration of the Indian people refusing to participate in a war which was not of their making, found a ready echo in every other subject nation. They knew only too well that the Western powers, be they Axis or Allied, were primarily imperialistic, and never to be trusted. It was therefore inevitable that the few coups that were engineered such as in Iraq by Rashid Ali or the Grand Mufti and his group were bound to fail.

The second global war left the intrinsic character of imperialism unchanged. The Free French Committee fighting with its back to the wall, did not hesitate to pound at the Syrians with bombs and artillery. The close of the war brought a complete change in the alignment of the Western forces and the Middle East was left with two powers to dominate it—the British and the American—the former supplying the diplomatic, the latter the financial motifs. Today, every Arab country may be nominally independent but in reality they are all subject to foreign pressure. Bri-

tain is the arch intriguer in the Arab world as in every colonial and semi-colonial land. Naturally she is the most hated power. She reduces to a mockery the independence of the Arab people by pursuing her same old wily policies. It is a world tragedy that even a Socialist Britain has not been able to change these old methods.

Let us now sum up what the Middle East means in the present world politics. It is a very important world highway; 90 to 100 per cent of the total British imports of jute, tea, rubber, 70 to 80 per cent of hemp, manganese ore, 50 to 65 per cent of rice, wool, coffee, zinc ore, lead, etc., pass through the Suez Canal. Nor is the land route, the most ancient high way that first took the East to the West, of negligible importance. We have seen how the German attempt to construct the Berlin-Baghdad Railway was one of the immediate causes of World War I. The Middle East is the world's highway and has therefore been the cause of the struggle for supremacy right from the time of the Crusades down to the 20th century. Transport routes instead of becoming the channels of closer human understanding and universal peace, make instead for global wars in an imperialist dominated world. Renan when welcoming de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal, said prophetically: "I come not to bring peace but the sword." This saying must have frequently crossed your mind; now that you have cut through it, the Isthmus has become a defile, that is to say a battlefield. The Bosphorus by itself has been enough to keep the whole civilised world embarrassed, now you have created a second and more serious one. In case of war, it will be of supreme importance and everyone will be striving at top speed to occupy it. You have thus marked out a great battlefield for the future." The British are in permanent occupation of this zone as well as the Sudan and keep a virtual grip over all Egypt. The countries that lie along the route continue to pay the price.

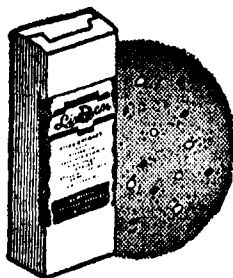
What is the best Government? That which teaches us to govern ourselves.—GOETHE.

The two important raw materials of the Middle East are oil and cotton. Here again Britain still holds a decisive position though America is running a close race. While its importance as a market for manufacture is high, it is really more valuable as a field for investment. Loans to States, an old old game, has become even more strategic now, and while providing a lucrative income, it also hands the State on a platter to the creditor.

The changing conditions following the war were reflected in Egypt's demand for a revision of the 1936 Treaty in her favour and centred round the major points; the immediate evacuation of British troops and the establishment of effective Egyptian sovereignty over Soudan. The Soudanese Umma party under British encouragement was working for an independent Soudan. The Governor-General of the Soudan announced that the British policy was to go ahead with the task of preparing the Soudanese for self-government, irrespective of the recognition of the Egyptian crown as the titular head of the country. Regarding the withdrawal of troops, the British wanted an assurance of the necessary assistance from Egypt in time or threat of war. British troops still continue to occupy the Canal Zone. Keenly aware of the obstacles to their independence the Egyptians are keeping up a continued agitation against their successive Governments which they blame for the present state of affairs.

Iraq is virtually treated by the British as a colony. The Government is run by British picked men on British advice. The resultant political instability is obvious from the fact that between 1921 and 1936 there were no fewer than 36 governmental changes. The Government is not really controlled by the Chamber of Deputies. One of the Iraqi leaders described the election as follows: "Nominations to the elections are so arranged as to include all former Ministers, presiding officers of Parliament, eminent ex-officials receiving Government pensions, distinguished heads of communities, professional men, tribal chiefs, etc., which make up nearly 60% of the Chamber, while the rest are people who lean on Government patronage."

The close of the war saw Iraq also demand a revision of the 1930 Treaty. The British agreed. The new treaty which the Prime Minister of Iraq was persuaded to sign at Portsmouth in January 1948, however turned out to be just another version of the old one—the same concessions, surrender of bases, retention of troops until such time as peace treaties have become effective with all enemy countries, i.e. when the allied forces are withdrawn from the territories of all ex-enemy states! This naturally was a signal for violent disturbances and the situation could be brought under control when the Iraq Government gave an assurance that the Treaty would not be ratified.



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PROSPECTS OF COMMUNISM IN INDIA

By M. N. ROY

NAPOLÉON lost the battle of Europe on the Nile. That defeat frustrated his plan of conquering Britain in Asia. Red Napoleonism seems to be succeeding in the venture which marked the decline of his career.

The hope of the proletarian revolution spreading in Europe having disappeared by 1923, Lenin turned his eyes eastwards, and discerned a vast field where Communism might possibly gain easy victories to upset the reverse in Europe. The experience of the failure of the Berlin blockade compelled the Russians to do what Lenin did a quarter of a century ago. They also turned eastwards, no longer to see the possibility of easy victories; but actually launched upon the policy of conquering Europe in Asia.

Within less than a year, the Red Flag has reached the Pacific; Communism has swept practically the whole of China; nothing can keep it out of Burma and the Further Indian Peninsula. It can be anticipated that the Far Eastern push may in the near future be followed up by a similar movement in the Middle East; in that case, India will be caught in the arms of a gigantic pincers. This grim perspective explains why India has suddenly acquired such an importance in the council of the Western Powers.

Reviewing the situation, the *Washington Post*, believed to be in the confidence of the State Department, writes: "The ally we can think of in dealing with fermenting Asia is India's Nehru." But will India be able to throw back the Red tidal wave if it threatens her from the West as well as the East? She is the only country in a continent in flames with a stable Government and orderly conditions. But there is plenty of inflammable material about. It would be foolish to be complacent; at the same time, it must be realised that unless an attractive alternative is offered, the appeal of Communism will find a growing response.

Speculation about the possibility of India proving to be an effective anti-Communist bastion of the East, however, cannot ignore the fact that the strategy of conquering Europe in Asia has already yielded a bountiful harvest. *The New York Times*, for example, writes: The Communist victories in China "mark not only a defeat for the West which in this case means primarily the U.S.A., but the fiasco of its entire Far Eastern policy." Referring to demands for more energetic action to stop the spread of Communism in consequence of its spectacular triumph in China, the same journal warns against further possible disaster: "It would be unwise to take far more effective steps to insulate a Communist victory in China than now appear to be included in any Government plan."

If Napoleon were not stopped on the Nile, he could most probably have reached India—the coveted goal of all ambitious conquerors. In view of the heavy stakes in China and the strategic plan of transforming the Pacific into an American lake studded with numerous air and naval bases, which placed the front line of the "defence zone" in China, it was generally anticipated that the eastern adventure of Red Napoleonism would come up against a resistance on the Yangtse. But in that eventuality, the civil war in China would be transformed into an international armed conflict. Just as the Egyptians did not stop Napoleon on the Nile, similarly without direct American intervention, Communism could not be stopped on the Yangtse. The anticipated resistance to the Communist armies along the Yangtse did not materialise because America attached greater importance to Europe than to Asia. Apart from other considerations, the failure of the earlier policy of backing the reactionary and corrupt nationalist regime in China also forced the new policy.

The American aid to the Chinese nationalist regime since the collapse

of Japan in 1945 amounted to more than 2,000 million dollars. Yet, when the Communists reached the Yangtze, the State Department discovered to its dismay that "there was no military reason why they could not penetrate in very short time to any point of South China." Heavy stakes had been put on a wrong horse; it could not possibly be salvaged. The U. S. State Department officials bitterly declared: "The disaster to the forces of the Chinese Government is complete and irretrievable, and the responsibility for the failure rests squarely upon the incompetence and lack of leadership of the Government of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek." The Secretary of State opposed the proposal of a 1,500 million dollars loan to the Nanking Government for fighting Communism on the ground that an "undertaking of such magnitude will almost surely be catastrophic." In other words, even the vast resources of America are not enough to fight a global war on two fronts.

The policy of withdrawing from China was not adopted all on a sudden. It was worked out steadily and deliberately simultaneously with the negotiations for the lifting of the Russian blockade of Berlin. The two rivals for world domination were bargaining for at least a temporary demarcation of respective zones of influence. Seeing that America was not prepared for further commitments in Asia, Russian diplomacy decided to withdraw the horns in Europe, so as to have a free hand to strike decisively in Asia. In return for a respite in Europe, America, on her part, wrote off China. But the dynamics of events does not promise to fall in the neat pattern of a diplomatic bargain.

Having swept China, the tidal wave of Communism will not stop. It is already finding new channels—in Indo-China and Burma. In both the countries, the chances of Communist victory are no less bright than in China. While Ho Chi-minh is being reinforced by Communist infiltration across the southern border of China, advance guards of Red Napoleonism are reported to have reached the eastern frontiers of India. They are operating in the Chin Hills and also in the hills of Arakan. After the bitter experience of the policy of plac-

ing high stakes on the nationalist regime in China, the feverish plans to bolster up the tottering Government of Thakin Nu cannot be expected to be any less of a fiasco. Nothing less than a modern army with adequate and uninterrupted supplies can dislodge the Communists and their allies from North and Central Burma. They control the famous Burma Road which brings the eastern frontiers of India within a striking distance from South-Western China, which will before long become the advance base of Red Napoleonism marching upon India. Eastern experts in London anticipated new Communist moves in Asia in consequence of the lifting of the Berlin blockade. The opinion even in Government quarters was reported to regard the Berlin agreement as "designed to put the Western nations in a happier frame of mind while the Communists consolidate their gains in China and make new moves elsewhere in Asia."

Only simpletons would believe that there was no connection between these developments and the recent Commonwealth Conference in London. The great anxiety to keep India in the Commonwealth, headed by a King, even as a Republic, would be altogether pointless if it did not signify recognition of the supreme importance of her strategic position; and the Socialist Republic Prime Minister of India would not see any point in the belaboured constitutional casuistry unless membership of the Commonwealth offered guarantees against the possible onslaught of Red Napoleonism. With her own resources, India cannot possibly build up an army required to meet the emergency. Having theoretically joined the anti-Communist crusade, nationalist India must take the next step, and accept the membership of the Commonwealth which will be instrumental for the purpose. Communism inside the country can be fought easily enough with words, police and law. But the internal relation of forces will change with Hannibal ante portas.

Meanwhile, evidently well informed of what is coming, the Communists are keeping the pot boiling. As soon as The Day will dawn, the lid will be thrown off the boiling pot, and the legacy of British Imperialism, a police State and a submissive people, ma-

not stand long between the present apparent orderly conditions of India and the chaos and lawlessness which are opening the floodgates of Communism in one country after another of East Asia.

While the perspective of possible developments on the eastern border of India is getting clearer, the situation in Afghanistan and the North-Western Frontier still remains shrouded in mystery. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that Russian strategy is to threaten India from two sides. For some time, troubles have been brewing in Afghanistan. It would not be surprising if Russian hands were found behind the Pathanistan agitation. It has been reliably reported that "in Afghanistan there are all the makings of an explosion which could be touched off when the Kremlin chooses." The fear of British penetration through Pakistan or American through Iran, fostered by insidious propaganda, may eventually induce the Afghans to seek the protection of powerful Russia in company of their Moslem brothers across the frontiers—Tajiks and Usbeks. Should the Kabul Government not fall in line, a tribal revolt against its "corruption by infidel influence" could be easily engineered by purchasable fanatical Mullahs. What happened to Amanullah may also happen to the present King. And Amanullah may not be really averse to avenging his downfall, thanks to the persuasiveness of non-official Soviet diplomacy and Russian propaganda.

Any such development in Afghani-

stan cannot be checked from India in the near future. And it is also reported that the Russians are planning to head off any intervention from the other side. The recent Russo-Persian disputes are straws indicating how the wind blows. It is believed in knowledgeable quarters that the outcome of the Commonwealth Conference may hasten Soviet moves towards the Persian Gulf.

Of course, if Red Napoleonism threatens the Middle East also, then it may come to the test whether it has really conquered Europe in Asia. Because, then there will be no more room for the rival to fall back, and the final showdown will have to be risked. But in the meantime, the Russians are having their way in Asia. If they proceed at this rate, the solidity of the only bastion of crumbling Asia may be put to test. In China, nationalism, with untold American goodwill and material aid, could not stand the test. There is no reason to hope that, a more glorious fate awaits it in India. It may equally go down in the fight against Communism, having plunged the country into chaos in the process.

It still remains to be seen if the Russians will succeed in conquering Europe in Asia, or their Communism will degenerate into Asiatic despotism. In the meantime, a spurious brand of Communism is conquering Asia; and it is idle to believe that it can be stopped even at the gates of India, unless something better is offered to its dupes.—World Copyright.

THE START OF THE SANDWICH

Sandwich is derived from the name of the fourth Earl of Sandwich. He was a notorious gambler and often became so engrossed in his cards that he would not stop to eat his meals. Instead he would have an attendant put meat between two pieces of bread, which he ate without leaving the gaming table. Although the Earl thus gave his name to the sandwich, he was not the first to eat bread or biscuits and meat so combined. The Romans knew the sandwich under the name *uffula*, diminutive of *offa*, signifying bit or morsel. The sandwich may very well have been introduced into England by the Romans nearly 1,800 years before the birth of the Earl of Sandwich.—GEORGE STIMPSON.

CORRUPTION, NOW A MAJOR PROBLEM

By K. S. VENKATARAMANI

SRI V. V. Prasad of New Delhi has done us a real service by his interview with Dr. Rajendra Prasad, raising particularly the question of Corruption. I am not worried about Dr. Rajendra Prasad's subsequent contradiction, for I have lived long enough in New Delhi to visualise the cyclonic and dictatorial character of its political atmosphere, the currents and cross-currents, the sway and conflict of pressure groups, actively flourishing in the docile background of a well-domesticated Constituent Assembly. There is no scope for a healthy and critical opposition in our Assembly which has desexed our parliamentary life. Hence no problem, administrative or substantive, receives the scrutiny, drive and energetic introspection and planning that it deserves. In this atmosphere of sterility no major problem of our country could be correctly or constructively solved. The Cabinet could reflect only the temper and mood of the Parliament and the impulse and urge for dynamic and victorious leadership is lost in this atmosphere of docility and arid assents.

The Prime Minister's personality is also a prime factor. Pandit Jawaharlal's mind is ecstatically and truly international, fascinated by the West, its beauty, discipline, capacity for team-work and strength. Every national problem vexes his catholic and aerial mind as a minor pin-prick and needless worry, provokes his indignation but fails to release the constructive administrative solution. For no country, especially for Indian conditions the Prime Minister should be the Foreign Minister as well. It is a fatal and emasculating combination, for it fails to secure that vital concentration so necessary for the growth of a home economy on authentic national lines. For, the real Prime Minister is in essence a Home Minister in plain clothes without the trappings of portfolio. Panditji should immediately make a choice for the welfare of India between the Prime Ministership and the Foreign Ministership

Sardar Vallabhai Patel is just the reverse of Pandit Nehru in many ways, and he has an intensely national mind without decorative waste in perceptions or actions. It is only the greatness and catholicity of Gandhiji that has kept both of them in work-partnership without a break for thirty years. By the Grace of God and his own Bismarckian will, Sardar has achieved the integration of the States. He is just the type of statesman who could easily solve corruption. But he is a tired man today and is now wholly absorbed in securing a thumping victory at all costs to the Congress in the coming general elections and thus achieve the further consolidation of the Congress as the dominant one party to rule. He thinks it is essential for the welfare of India to "build" it up quietly with available materials, good and bad, and then take off his iron hand and allow all "isms" to have their full and free play. Any attempt at basic reforms on idealistic, ideological or puritan grounds he feels would weaken the Congress by wide and unexpected exposures and lead to the breaking up of the Congress co-operating units even though they are found to be undesirable "vested interests." He feels that we could easily root them out after 5 or 10 years after we build really strong. That is why the most pernicious problems like corruption and communalism are not directly and forcefully handled from the top even by our Bismarck. The fear of a break-up is choking the throat. If our Panditji is wholly fascinated by and engrossed in the panorama of shifting and fast-changing world events, Sardar Vallabhai Patel's mind is completely immersed in plans for a resounding victory for the Congress at the next general elections.

Rajaji's infinite atomic energy and skilled operative methods and administrative experience are immobilised as Governor-General, and spent wholly for the benefit of embassies, Bha-

In this extraordinary setting a saintly soul like Dr. Rajendra Prasad is reduced to the immobility of a noble picture on the wall with a garland now and then for ceremonial purposes as at the recent Dehra Dun A.-I.C.C. meeting. The milieu in which Dr. Rajendra Prasad has grown tenderly and intimately these years, with the Big Three now in power, he could neither escape from nor transform. Because Nature has not endowed him with the dynamic will for revolt and reorganisation even in an emergency, he accepts with sweetness and equipoise—like Mother Earth—both sunshine and rain, and without asking for more or less tries to produce what all he could by himself. Truly Gandhian! Dr. Rajendra Prasad is a saint among our politicians and the one leader most devoted to the Gandhian ideology as most fitted for the progress of Indian life on right lines after our freedom. But he feels keenly that the Time-spirit, the drift of our affairs caught in the eddies of the world's chess-play, and the new set-up do not allow its implementation in any measure. Though his essential sincerity and loyalty and association of a life-time with the purest man revolt against the spreading corruption, he sees the problem philosophically as of the individual citizen and minimises the duty of the State, which is itself only the reflection of the average citizen and his citizenship.

Corruption does not require a numerical or 60% majority to be popularly styled as "wide-spread." If it exceeds 10%—the normal allowed for human weakness collectively—it is really wide-spread for all purposes. For corruption is a highly contagious and quick-spreading disease.

Corruption must be understood in its most comprehensive forms, agnatic and cognatic. Not only money but all the equivalents of money which influence judgment from the path of rectitude and duty are comprised in it. Nepotism is a dreaded form of corruption in our country based on clan, community or province. The Indian temperament is equally and easily prove to corruption and sainthood and sacrifice with a truly *advaitic* nonchalance and flair. So if the political and economic and administrative system gives scope for corrup-

tion, nobody could rival us in this art. If you close down all chances by a proper social organisation the predominant sinner in corruption will be the first ready for *bhajan*s, prayer and worship with one meal a day. One dangerous form of corruption is fast getting into our life, which I shall term lap-dogism! The most servile form of flattery of the boss, cringing and fawning at his door-mat or ante-chambers. I find in many places preferment comes easily to the lap-dog devoid of character or ability.

Sardar Vallabhai Patel—our great leaders have not really reared their true successors—is still the best fitted to take immediate drastic action against corruption in spite of his old age and many commitments and the enormous work and responsibility which integration of States means for him. Somebody should convince him that this drastic purging action against corruption would bring Congress the most resounding victory at the polls at the next general elections. A thorough enquiry and a few exemplary convictions would go a long way to consolidate India. We have already put so many in jails, good and bad, should we fear to put there some of our corrupt men, even at the top, as a salutary example?

The immediate step to be taken before the 15th of August should be the constitution of an anti-corruption tribunal for every province, which shall have ample powers to investigate into the record of all Ministers, M. L. As and Gazetted officers. Every direct or indirect acquisition of property, since accession to office, shall have to be explained and vindicated.

As corruption is an urban malady, the main long-range remedy is to decentralise our politics and economics on Gandhian ideology, based on autonomous self-governing, self-sufficient village units. Here scope is very little for corruption. Soaring salaries help the way of life that encourages corruption. In the staple life of the village corruption will find a natural death. This decentralisation will automatically cut down the chaotic urban life of parasitical cities, save 50% and beautifully reverse the fatal tilt in our life today and restore to us balance, peace and happiness.

KRISHNA RAM MEHATA: A LOST LINK

By POTHAN JOSEPH

KRISHNA RAM MEHTA who died at 69 belonged to the old school of journalists. If he had not found his moorings with the *Leader of Allahabad* and the late C. Y. Chintamani, he might have attached himself to the Servants of India Society and made his unsmiling contribution to the advance of the country. I was recommended as a cub to the *Leader of Allahabad* by the late Mr. N. M. Samarth, and Mr. Krishna Ram Mehta, then Manager, received me. Paradoxical as it may seem, I was impressed by the inconspicuous airs of the man, although he had been a politician and journalist under the tall shelter of the redoubtable Chintamani. As the scene of my early struggle was Bombay, Krishna Ram Mehta proposed that I should send a Weekly Letter from Bombay. In those days, news travelled slow and it was the practice to pad the column with recondite reflections. He would however first confirm the proposal after consultation with the Maharaja of Benares, Chairman of the Board, residing in the next-door room at the Taj Mahal Hotel. Krishna Ram Mehta, though of the Taj level, belonged to the class that required vegetarian food from friends in Girgaum. The luxuries of the room he could not enjoy, while I wondered what a rollicking time I could make of it if only they allowed me accommodation at the expense of the Maharaja of Benares. The *Leader* as a Moderate journal must have valued my moderate views, and I received a couple of cheques (moderate) from Krishna Ram Mehta drawn on the Benares Bank before it failed, as remuneration for my weekly letters. Then rose the *Independent* of Pandit Motilal Nehru where I got entangled with personages like Horniman and Syed Hussain for a while, but I used to keep in touch with the *Leader* office, since they had a huge library of blue-books which Chintamani had built up after the fashion of Gokhale.

In those days facts and figures were

supposed to be formidable weapons. Romesh Chander Dutt and Gopala Krishna Gokhale bludgeoned Lord Curzon with arguments based on facts and figures, since the idea was to shame the rulers of India into the realisation that they were un-British. Krishna Ram Mehta believed in the technique of slow, ruthless unmasking so that the authorities "at home" could be startled into the realization of the wrongs done in their name. In what Dadabhai Naoroji and his friends wrote of "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India," the psychological approach was to make the British people rise as a nation and do belated British justice to India. Krishna Ram Mehta had huge files of newspaper cuttings justifying the hope of Conservative thinkers believing in co-operation whenever possible, opposition whenever necessary, with Ripon as the Hero-Viceroy. He was an adherent of the Liberal Party, the Moderates but he did not have the malevolent vivacity of Prithivi Chandra Ray who roused Surendranath Banerjee against the Congress. A different ideology of negativism had come into vogue, and there was more fashion in spinning yarns than in analysing the contents of blue-books when the stock of Krishna Ram Mehta and his fellow-Liberals dropped like Tata Deferreds after Liaquat Ali Khan's budget, which, by the way, really precipitated the partition of India. Krishna Ram Mehta clung to his faith of better things to come like Gokhale, low in the contents of humour, slightly pedagogic in argument and bearing the fugitive manner of a person who is watched even in moments of innocence.

With the late G. A. Natesan, he strongly held the view that contributors must be paid and that young aspirants in journalism must not be exploited on the ground that patriotism is a rewardless virtue. We have been taught by experience that the contrary is the case, if one is lucky enough with a long-term horoscope.

When Krishna Ram Mehta contemplated his future in 1906 as a lawyer in Benares, he gave up the dream of skinning clients. His career was that of scholar of humanities in mild action, contemplative.

When Chintamani became Minister of the United Provinces, Krishna Ram Mehta officiated as Editor without intriguing against his Chief and seating himself tight, a rare phenomenon in the annals of Indian journalism. Chintamani trusted Krishna Ram absolutely, although I feel it was a story of one-sided admiration. The output of pedestrian English from the *Leader* office was taken for granted and writers in Allahabad were ho-

noured as embodiments of encyclopaedias. Krishna Ram Mehta at the desk writing editorials was a feeble sight compared with Chintamani bulldozing through files of papers. Krishna Ram Mehta's health must have stood in the way of his cover ambitions of youth. We cannot recall "sensational" or "historic" leading articles written by Krishna Ram Mehta to alter the destiny of nations or causing uneasiness to Viceroy in Simla but he played his part with detachment. He never caused a crisis, and the last link in public memory with C. Y. Chintamani has vanished, and the country is now the poorer for the loss of a great gentleman.

PUBLIC PROSECUTORS' "DEMANDS"

By S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE deliberations of the recently held Public Prosecutors' Conference provide amusing reading, and one is left wondering as to how these specially favoured, even pampered folk could have any "grievances" worth ventilating. The plain fact is that Public Prosecutors, especially in the mofussal, are a fifth wheel in the coach, and in any well thought-out plan for retrenchment, they should have been the first to be "axed."

In Madras City, the Public Prosecutor and the Crown Prosecutor are attached to the High Court. Assistant Public Prosecutors are in charge of Presidency Magistrate's Courts. The Public Prosecutor represents the Crown in all matters coming up from the mofussal by way of appeal, reference and revision in criminal cases. The Crown Prosecutor (who is also the King's Proctor in divorce cases), attends to the Sessions work in the High Court and appears for the Crown in all appeals, reference and revision against the decision of the Presidency Magistrate. Both these functionaries are independent entities, and it is not unoften that the Public Prosecutor appears against the Crown in the City criminal cases or appeals and the Crown Prosecutor in mofussal criminal appeals. The Advocate-General, however, is the residual Crown advocate and does not appear

against the Crown on any account. In the Bhagavathar—N. S. Krishnan case, the Crown Prosecutor conducted the committal court proceedings, the Advocate-General appeared at the Sessions, but in the final appeal before the Division Bench, the Public Prosecutor argued the case for the accused. Obviously, certain special circumstances were responsible for this seeming anomaly, but it is high time that the position of both the Crown and the Public Prosecutors is assimilated to that of the Counsel for the Income Tax Department or the legal adviser of banks, disentitling them to appear against the Crown under any condition whatsoever. The recent G. O. prohibiting mofussal Public Prosecutors from accepting any engagement against the Crown, conforms to the strict canons of professional etiquette and a responsible body of people like the Public Prosecutors should not have cavilled at it. It is of course true that as stated in the Conference, defence counsel get a higher fee, but this should have weighed with the appointees before they canvassed for the post or accepted it. You cannot have a cake and eat it too.

Public Prosecutors, in the mofussal, appear at the Sessions trial before the District Judge and in the criminal appeals against the decision of the

Assistant Sessions Judge and the Magistrates. The Additional Public Prosecutor is solely concerned with the Sessions work in the Sub-Court. The preliminary and all essential work in all these cases, including the appeals in the First Class Magistrate's Courts, is delegated to the Assistant Public Prosecutors who are recruited from amongst members of the bar with active practice in criminal courts. These eminently qualified set of people are, as a class, over-worked and ill paid and share none of the amenities of the Public Prosecutors. They work day and night, negotiating long distances each day in untravellable buses and roads. Logically speaking, there is no reason why these people should not function in the Sessions Courts too, and the supernumeraries who merely dot the "I"s and cross the "T"s of the Assistant Public Prosecutors, abolished altogether, providing in specially important or difficult cases for the engagement of eminent counsel as in England. As it is, there is a wide gap in the pay and prospects of these two classes of Prosecutors. The remuneration paid to these people is in inverse proportion to the work extracted. An Assistant Public Prosecutor may hope to get at the highest Rs. 250 per month without any future prospects whereas a Public Prosecutor, especially in heavy Sessions districts, may be able to make Rs. 1,000 a month with 2 months' vacation. As for prospects, it is worth noting that a Home Member, a Minister, four Presidents of the Endowments Board and the present President of the Public Services Commission had, all been Public Prosecutors.

In the good old days, Public Prosecutors in Madras Province were almost without exception the leaders of the bar in the district headquarters. Since the reformed constitution came into force, the politically important got the job in preference to the professionally eminent. It was not unusual for the same individual to be the President of the District Board, Member of the Legislative Assembly and the Public Prosecutor. Almost the very first act of the late Mr. K. Raman Menon, Law Member in C. R.'s Ministry, was to devise a method by which the best could not be shut out. The office was made electable by all the lawyers in the place by means of secret ballot. It was given effect to in Chittoor, and everything augured well. But suddenly in Tinnevely an uproar was created which resulted in C. R. interfering and scrapping the whole thing altogether.

The plea at the Conference for greater representation in the higher ranks of the judiciary, has to be considered against the fact that out of 8 direct recruits from the bar to the posts of District Judge, since 1926, five were moffussal lawyers and all of them were Public Prosecutors! Naturally enough, the Conference did not worry itself with some of the pressing problems of the day, such as criminal law reform, abolition of capital punishment, the separation of the judiciary and the executive, etc. The "talents" of the Public Prosecutors, which a speaker at the Conference complained, "should not be allowed to be wasted," should have been employed to throw light on these questions.

ALL-WEATHER PAPER

"All-weather" paper which preserved wartime maps through water, mud, grime and oil in all theatres of World War II, will find many important peacetime uses, scientists predict.

Some of the possible uses for the strong, tough paper are to wrap such varied items as wet fruits and vegetables or radio parts, to make strong bags and sacks and for outdoor advertising.

Secret of the high wet-strength of the map paper is a colloidal solution of melamine-formaldehyde resin added to the pulp. This resin bending process helps the paper stand up under conditions which would disintegrate conventional types of paper. Best results were obtained in experiments by using fibre "furnishes" of 100 per cent bleached sulphate pulps. Opacity, the ability to resist light rays, was achieved by adding titanium dioxide.—SCIENCE DIGEST.

THIS ENGLAND

By K. C. RAGHAVAN

SO this is England!

I have been here now a week.... but, let me begin from the beginning.....

It was on a hot and sunny afternoon that I left Czechoslovakia on a Czech Airline Dakota. At the airport I was amused to see posters all over the walls saying, "It's always O. K. by the Czechoslovakia Air Line," (Czech planes carry international markings "O. K."). Except for our little party, there were only two other passengers on the plane to London. I was given to understand that, though there are often quite a number of people entering the country, very few leave it. However, the Air Lines, being a nationalized concern cares two hoots one way or the other, and carries on business as usual.

Three hours later, in spite of bumpy weather almost all the way through, we landed at Northolt in London. We were greeted enthusiastically by the famous London drizzle. I was soon diving into my overcoat, when I discovered that Spring in London is just a shade worse than a Russian winter. The Customs man scrutinized my honest countenance, while I wondered whether it was one tin or two tins of cigarettes one was allowed to bring into the country and was on the brink of declaring the tins that lay guiltily in my bag, in a last-minute scramble for salvation. Finally, the dear man decided to let me pass—and without so much as even opening my suitcase! "Thank you, sir"—and I was given the freedom of the city, so to speak. Yes, I was in England, where the English move "in strange and mysterious ways."

A week now has passed. I have since then been amused, irritated, flabbergasted, perplexed, awed and bored as each new facet of English life has been presented to the light of mine eyes. But, one thing has not changed all these seven days. It is still raining! Asking a London shopkeeper when summer begins in this England, I was given the astonishing reply, "Well, sir, summer was on a

Wednesday last year." He elucidated his statement after a pause. "It was raining the rest of the time!" However, this beastly weather does not prevent your average Londoner from strolling forth into the drizzle, hatless, and with his raincoat on his arm.

Like a village yokel I have been wandering about this great village of concrete huts and asphalt pathways, with my mouth agape at such sights as they strike the eye. At other times I am seized with a twinge of nostalgia for Madras, and find myself vowing that "there's no place like home." Such moods come over me frequently, especially when I am confronted with the exorbitant prices of things, the peculiar contributions I am constantly called for by the British Exchequer, the lack of good food (both in quality and quantity) and the horrifying and mysterious secrets of the ration book.

I still cannot understand how the British housewife comprehends and tolerates the maze of rationing rules and systems. I was told that I was entitled to two eggs a week. Behold my amazement when three eggs were thrust on me last week; then, I received one egg this week, with a vague threat, from the grocer, of no egg next week! A kind friend explained to me the system of points by which tinned goods may be bought. I was told that I was allowed 20 points a month. The other day I bought a tin of meat, which cost me the month's sheet of points! I was not in the least surprised to read in the papers that, though the new rationing year began over two weeks back, a million persons have still not yet collected their ration books. I suppose there is a tide in the affairs of man when he just gives up—and decides to be a cafe habitue. One, thus, saves oneself a lot of bother, though it is an expensive way of living.

I recall the row that was kicked up in Madras some years back, on the introduction and later enhancement of the sales tax. The British take as a matter of course a similar vile invention called purchase tax, levied

on practically every type of goods. Sir Stafford had another bright idea when he gave the British another secret weapon called double purchase tax, imposed on such luxury goods as Rolls-Royce and Daimler cars. One pays anything up to £2,000 as purchase tax on a Rolls! I hope this does not give our Madras Finance Minister any brainwaves.

I find I am already slipping into the British habit on continuous grumbling. Can you blame me when I tell you that I just received my laundry bill for two shirts, one singlet, two underwear pants and two handkerchiefs. It demands from me the imposing sum of 4s-1½d (about Rs. 3), which includes a tax of 1s-9d, representing 75 per cent of my actual bill! And the British have been stoically bearing up with all this all these years. It is a wonder they have not erupted into a revolution or a civil war. But, I suppose that somewhere, under all the piles of red tape and files, behind all the endless queues and short rations, amid the taxes and the struggle for survival, there is a hope for the dawn—for that free and happy world two generations of men have laid their lives down.

But, there are patches of light in all this gloom. The transport system, at least in London, is excellent. The Underground electric trains arrive at platforms every minute or so, and there seems to be a profusion of London's famous red, double-decker buses.

Fish is not rationed, nor vegetables. If one is a seeker of knowledge, most of the libraries will take you as a reader, without payment of any subscription or fee, which reveals a touching faith in humanity. And there is, of course, the traditional English courtesy and politeness one receives everywhere. I was, however, surprised to see that this courtesy does not extend to offering standing or strap-hanging women in the Tube, or in buses, a seat. (Madras Transport authorities, please note). I suppose this is also one of the Freedoms women enjoy with the political, economic and social emancipation of their sex. I made the mistake once of offering a woman a seat in the Underground, no doubt a reflex reaction of mine after reading frequent Letters to the Editors of Madras newspapers by 'Disgusted' and 'Housewife.' The seat was indignantly refused, (the lady apparently wishing to assert her rights of equality), and five seconds later a male strap-hanger had unashamedly slid into the vacant place, before I could regain my composure or the seat.

Perhaps all this talk is true, that things are slowly getting better in Britain. After all, Cripps has taken a penny off beer. However, if you still think that, at this rate, the Day of Reckoning is fast approaching, you can always go to a pub and lose a week-end, join the Salvation Army—or vote Conservative at the next elections!

"We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself and the product of his labour; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labour. Here are two not only different but incompatible things called by the same name, liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names—liberty and tyranny. The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty. Plainly the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of the word liberty."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Short Story

ROMEOS AND JULIET

By P. S.

"THE modern girl," said Gopal, bringing down his heavy fist on the table, "is more sinned against than sinning."

"It comes to the same thing," said someone drily.

"That is not what I mean," Gopal hastened to add. "There is such a lot of rubbish being talked about her propensities."

We felt bored, but we were too bored to contradict Gopal. We were five at the club that evening, but two didn't know bridge, so we were drivelling.

"There are, for instance, those who say that the modern girl delights in playing Juliet to half a dozen Romeos."

"That reminds me. Listen, fellows," said Ramaswami.

"Help! A college romance," shouted someone. But you can't stop a man who has a story to tell.

I know a thing or two about these boy-and-girl affairs (said Ramaswami). You ought to know, too, Gopal, because up at the old college they were such a commonplace. I must explain to the others that our college was the last word in refinement, an institution where the girls took tips for their clothes from the *Illustrated Weekly*, and the boys evinced greater interest in the art of Meeyan, the tailor, than in the art of Shakespeare. Cupid was no stranger in our midst. The girls may or may not have been Juliets, but there were few boys who did not desperately set up for Romeos. Most of them could reel off the girls' names as promptly as our waiter here can reel off the day's menu. They broke a heart-string or two, every one of them, and whispered a couple of names nightly to their pillows. They languished, sickened and lost weight in true cavalier fashion. Yet they dreaded actualities; they took an unhealthy delight in worshipping names, hugging shadows, giving the eye behind a door,

but anything like a blood-red passion they were quite incapable of.

I went down the stream myself. I did not lag behind my companions. I wanted to be in the swim. I wanted to feel the sensation. Why not acknowledge it? I took to this affection of affection, play without passion, as a man takes to smoking or drinking, purely out of curiosity, without an inner craving or compulsion. I did not fall in love, I sauntered jauntily, deliberately, into love's cloud-cuckoo-land.

My equipment for this excursion was very poor. A certain amount of good looks I had, and some brains—just enough of the latter to realize that looks or brains or even brawn have only a secondary appeal for the average educated girl. Half the nonsense we get in our stories and films would be spared us if our would-be authors had the sense to see that the educated girl is first and foremost a snob; that in her affections the bank balance takes precedence over the boy.

I was poor. But when we are young poverty does not deter us from adventure.

The first thing to do in a planned flirtation is to study the sartorial talent in your vicinity. God made man, but it was left to the tailor to make the gentleman. I set about this matter in earnest. Till now I had dressed in a *djubbba* and *dhoti* but judging by the fortunes of the young men about me, I guessed that this style of dress was "out" with the college girl. I joined the ranks of Meeyan's admirers and came out in natty suits and blazing ties.

The second thing to do in a loveless love-affair is, of course, to choose a girl. The tailor comes first because good tailors are rare while good girls are plenty. If a normal boy and a normal girl are suitably arranged in space and time, it is ten to one that they strike a spark like charged electrodes.

There was a name that had stayed in my memory out of all the banal names one heard—the endless Kamas and Shantas and Sarojas: Manorama. A sweet name. It filled one's mouth like a lump of candy. I had spun round that name a silken web of romance even before I had seen its possessor. But seeing her did not shatter my dreams. She was the sort of girl anybody would like to fall in love with. Without being exceptional in appearance or intelligence, she possessed that superficial vivacity which in a woman makes up for all deficiencies. She was not an iceberg. She was warm and companionable, but by no means vulgar. She did not make up. She displayed a refined taste in her clothes and jewellery. Her looks were incendiary bombs; wherever she dropped them flares were started. She was one of the popular ones. A prize in a sporting event and an operation for appendicitis had spread her name far and wide. An attempt at suicide in the men's hostel raised her to a pinnacle of glory. She had a long retinue of admirers. Even Kistayya whose only claim to notice, apart from a rank in the U.T.C. and an enormous waistline, was a father who was a Secretary to Government, had his eye on Manorama; an eye which in moments of ecstatic devotion reminded you of a particularly revolting bull-frog.

I inaugurated my campaign. I followed a time-honoured technique. I strove to place myself as much in the way of the well-beloved as I could. I loafed about the corridors and lurked in the vicinity of the women students' room when I had no business to do anything of the kind. I would lie in wait for her to step off the bus and follow her to the college at a safe but effective distance. I manoeuvred to leave the college at the same time as she did. I boarded the bus she took and was sometimes transported to localities of which I had no knowledge. She was something of a "speechifier"—so I practised oratory before the mirror in my room, and soon became a familiar though unwanted figure on the platform of the Union. She was a member of the Dramatic Club, so I applied for the role of footman that had been left unfilled in our play for the year. She was brought to book for love

after all is a mathematical function of proximity and time. *Sentiments-centimeters*. I reduced the centimeters between us. Within two months I had set undergraduate imagination ablaze, and professorial heads aching, by my very frequent tete-a-tetes with Manorama.

We were together a great deal, a great deal more than was good for us. I took her out to lunch with me at Swami's Restaurant, not far from the college, in defiance of evil eyes and slanderous tongues. I engaged her for long spells on the telephone on holidays. Most of the hours in which I was free I managed to spend in her company, choosing whatever place was convenient, the corridors, vacant class-rooms, the college park, or the private apartment at Swami's Restaurant. We were gravitating towards something more serious than a flirtation.

Speaking for myself I must say that I had soon reached the pathological condition called love. I could not pass a day in quiet without seeing her. I neglected my lessons day-dreaming about her. I cut whole chunks of classes passing the hours in her company. I do not remember what we spoke to each other during these stolen hours; today it strikes me as absurd that we had so many inconsequent things to tell each other.

What were Manorama's feelings towards me? I can't say. But the delight she found in my society, her desire to please me in little things, the looks she gave me sometimes, on the sudden and apropos of nothing, but out of some elemental feeling from within, the exquisitely meaningless words she spoke to me now and then, an occasional quiver of the lips, an arch of the eyebrows, a touch of the hand... was I altogether wrong in thinking that her feelings were similar to mine?

One day, towards the end of the year, Manorama told me that there was a picture on at the Phoenix Theatre which she was on all fours to see. She went to pictures a lot, but she rarely mentioned the subject while with me. It required no lover's intuition to read in this an invitation. I offered to take her and she accepted the offer.

I walked on thin air. But my wild fancies received a rude jolt when I

recalled that it was the month-end and I was in the seasonal economic depression. There was just an hour left for me to beg or borrow. The book-shop where I made certain strategic transactions on extreme occasions was too far away. I had, since I began wooing Manorama, jeopardised my reputation at the hostel so much by my frequent borrowings and infrequent returns that most of my friends had become "untouchable." All the world loves a lover, however; before the hour was out I had realised the truth of the saying.

I was at the theatre a good half hour before the show. Manorama came by and by. She looked comelier than ever in an abridged blouse of some wonder stuff which the angels probably weave, for angels to wear, and a *saree* of—well, I don't understand the subtleties of feminine apparel, I generally get only the total effect. Today I know that it is seldom an extra square inch of skin tactically exposed fails to fascinate, but that day, I was fascinated.

I bought two balcony tickets and we went in. The picture was *Queen Christina*—that is all I remember about it. I went to see it if it is revived anywhere, for I am told it is an extra-ordinarily good film, but that day—what was *Queen Christina* or Greta Garbo to me, with the loveliest girl in the world dropped plump on my hands as a gift from the gods!

I can't describe what I felt that evening. A stealthy happiness suffused my body and soul. Here was an adorable girl who had planned and plotted to meet me alone in the cosy darkness of the cinema theatre. A girl to whom I therefore must mean something more than the hundreds of young men she knew and met, a girl whose heart beat a little faster at the thought of me. If ever I believed in love, I did during those two memorable hours. I dared not speak to her lest the language of the commonplace should disrobe the silence of its sacredness. What were the thoughts that passed in her mind? Were they akin to mine?

In the darkness fingers of the softness of petals were laid, seemingly by accident, on mine. I felt a mad thrill and I fought down a mad desire to press the hand to my lips.

It would have been lunacy to hazard further. We were like a couple of inexperienced motorists taking a plunge down a steep ravine in utter darkness in a rickety car, both clutching desperately at the wheel.

In the darkness our eyes met. We pressed the brakes with all our might; a little mismanipulation, and it would have been the accelerator. A faulty step and we would have irreparably committed ourselves. It was a battle between desire and discretion.

To me the battle did not seem worth fighting. I could not bear that look. It went straight into my soul like some penetrative radiation. How can I describe its mute appeal to you, my friends? You must feel it in your blood, in your bones, to understand it.

The show was over all too soon. So was our passion play. Dazed, unable to adjust myself to the sordid world into which the end of the picture hurled me from my flight in the Empyrean, I staggered into the lobby. I mumbled some imbecile words of courtesy. I hailed a taxi, crammed all the money I had into the palm of the driver, and saw her off to her hostel.

Reality was relentless with me that evening. Searching in my pocket I became aware that there was not a copper left with me to drive a beggar away with. Four miles separated me from my hotel. I felt like the victim of a rude practical joke.

There was nothing for it but to foot it. And I did. How vividly I remember that Marathon tramp down the highways and byways of the city! My foppish clothes consorted ill with my means of travel. I slouched away from the solicitous calls of rickshaw-pullers and taxi-men. I felt that the eyes of the whole world were watching my humiliation.... But Manorama's look lingered in my memory. It kept me company. It filled my heart and brain to the exclusion of all else. It made me giddy. It awakened desires within me of which I had never felt the strength before. It set me thinking. I sketched rough plans in my head. Here at last I, a wondering leaf in the wind so far, was finding my balance. A purpose and a centre were beginning to unfold out of the chaotic mess that my life had been. Was it true a woman could draw forth

whatever is best in a man? I would work, I would struggle, I would be worthy of the goddess whom destiny had thrown into my arms. Surely I could make something of myself yet, something acceptable to Manorama.

I stepped off the pavement at the entrance of a building which I recognised afterwards to be "The Idyllic," a hotel of dubious reputation. There was the frantic hoot of a horn close to me, followed instantaneously by a scream and a jar of levers as a car jerked precipitately to a stop. It took me a few seconds to realize that I had miraculously escaped the wheels

of the car which had been pulled up within a hair's-breadth of me. The enraged motorist descended with a mouthful of Billingsgate. The voice and the portly figure seemed familiar. It was Kistayya.

He had discharged one volley of his foul eloquence and was gathering breath for another, when another voice took up the job where he left off—the voice of his lady friend:

"Haven't you got your eyes about you, you blundering idiot?"

Was it possible? I took a step forward and peered through the wind-screen. Yes, it was she. Manorama.

RACE SUPERIORITY NONSENSE

By C. VIRARAGHAVAN

"I am convinced that there is no more evil thing in the present world than race prejudice," said H. G. Wells. But in South Africa Europeans who profess to be civilised are practising a racial discrimination which is not far from brutality. Indians are thrown out of running trains. They are chased and shot.

On the other side of the globe is the United States of America where the Negroes are lynched. The Americans are more worried about racial discrimination in Palestine than in their own country! Anti-Negro prejudice is virtually national in extent in U.S.A. and is almost nursed as an American custom. Anti-Negro pictures like the "Birth of a Nation," "Intolerance" and "Grapes of Wrath" draw record crowds in the United States. Ras Imaru, the Ethiopian Minister in the United States, had to leave a meeting because of his colour under the very nose of President Truman. The exploitation of race prejudice by the enemies and critics of the United States has created a defensive anti-colour-barism in responsible quarters.

Racial superiority reached incredible heights during Hitler's Nazi regime. According to the Nazi theory, a non-Nordic person was not a cent-percent human being, but an intermediary between man and ape! The features of the Nordic race were des-

cribed as follows: long head, blue eyes, long and wavy hair, blonde complexion, etc. But not even the Nazi demigods, Hitler, Gobbels and Goering, answered to this description.

Some wonder whether the world can possibly be rid of racial prejudice. Is this racial problem natural and inescapable? In short, is race real?

No race is pure anywhere in the world. The Celt, the Saxon, the Dane and the Norman have coalesced into the modern Englishman. The blood of every conceivable European nationality has entered into the blood streams of the modern American. Impartial thinkers have made it clear that "race" is not a scientific term. Throughout the world inter-mixture has taken place through immigration, conquest, capture, tribal adoption and conversion. Among the Europeans the greatest amount of contribution in both the fields of thought and action was made by the people of mixed origin like the British, the Germans and the French. It is the considered opinion of great observers that the basic qualities of the human mind are the same among all the peoples. There are the same dominant instincts, the same primary emotions and the same capacity for reason and judgment. Huxley and Haddon wrote: "In the vast majority of existing peoples and more especially in those of Europe, most individuals present combinations of characters which are to be traced to

a variety of sources." Regarding the diversity of colour they contend that "white is connected with black and also with yellow through every gradation of type and in each case along several distinct main lines." Black has a survival value in the lower latitudes, yellow in dry zones, and various shades of white in temperate areas.

Miss Fleming of the University College of Wales (quoted by Dr. E. Asirvadam in his "A New Social Order") who has been making studies of Anglo-Negro and Anglo-Chinese half-caste children claims that they are in no way inferior either physically or intellectually to those of "pure races." It is true that in 14% of the Anglo-Negro cases studied, she found mental deficiency, but in each case it was traced back to the English mother's side. It is an unwarranted assumption that the best brains are to be found in any exclusive race. Favourable economic circumstances, social environment, climatic conditions and cultural contacts are more

important than any form of genetic mixture. It is a matter of common knowledge that the American has developed in physical stature on account of facilities possible only in American abundance. Lord Bryce has rightly observed that the American Negro has developed more in sixty years than the Anglo-Saxon has done in six centuries. As a matter of fact, the American Negro is more American than the white American. In a suitable environment blacks, whites and yellows may exert a powerful sexual attraction on one another. The hybrid populations of Mexico and South America are good examples of this.

A sincere analysis of the race-problem will show that there is no such thing as pure race at all; much less a superior race, or God's chosen race. Are not these civilised nations of the world, at least in their own interests, capable of discovering the magnitude of stupidity in this racial discrimination?

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JELALU-'D-DIN RUMI, THE SUFI POET

By R. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

ISLAM like every other religion was in its early stages a call to the intenser life rather than a body of doctrines or a system of philosophy. The early disciples of the Prophet strove to build up their inner and outer lives in the light of the teachings of their Master and their aim was the realisation of God and the attainment of eternal bliss. The more earnest and zealous among them retired from the world and spent their time in prayer and meditation, controlling their carnal desires and subjecting themselves to a rigorous discipline. These men of God came to be known as Sufis.

The term Sufi has been interpreted in various ways. Some say that it is derived from Sufa which means purity and that the Sufi was a man with a pure heart. Others derive the word from Suf which means wool and that the Sufis were so called because they wore woollen garments to make themselves uncomfortable like the mediaeval Christian saints who wore hair-shirts. Yet another meaning of the word is "men of the suffa or (terrace)" because the Sufis slept on the terrace of the mosque in which they lived. Whatever the derivation of the term, it signified a body of men consumed with a burning desire to see God and engaged in singing His praises or meditating on Him.

The next stage in the growth of Islam was the development of a metaphysical system which in its emphasis on the oneness of God and His creation is closely akin to the philosophy of the Upanishads. The phenomenal world is unreal. There is a reality behind and beyond it, to whose existence we are blind because of the veils that separate the soul from God. In the words of one of the early sufis,

"In neighbour, friend, companion,
Him we see,
In beggar's rags or robes of
royalty,
In Union's cell or distraction's
haunts,

There is none but He my God,
there's none but He."

Not all Sufis, however, were monists, though even in the Koran there are passages which seem to point to a God who is both immanent and transcendent:

"We (God) are nearer to man
than his jugular vein"
"He is the first and the last, the
outward and the inward"
"And God encompasseth all
things"

Doctor Mir Valiuddin writing in "Islamic Culture" expresses the opinion that according to Sufi philosophy all created beings originally existed in God's mind as ideas, but once they were created the relation between them and God was not one of identity but of "otherness."

Sufism in the sense of a metaphysical system dates from the 10th century. It was in vogue for about four centuries during which it produced a succession of brilliant philosopher-poets. Foremost of these was Jelalu-'D-Din.

Jelalu-'D-Din Rumi was born in Balkh in A.D. 1207. His father and mother both came of royal families. When Jelal was a child his parents migrated to I-Conium in Asia Minor at the invitation of the King. The boy was educated at Aleppo and Damascus and on the completion of his education was appointed professor of four colleges at I-Conium. Here his piety and learning became so well-known that Muslims from all parts of the world flocked to him for spiritual consolation and enlightenment. Unlike the orthodox Muslims who objected to music in religious services as savouring of profanity Jelal believed in music and dancing (Sama) as aids to piety and the realisation of God and instituted the order of Darweshes known as Dancing Darweshes. He died in A.D. 1273 at the age of 66.

Jelal's greatest work was the Mesnevi or Mathnawi. It is a long poem in seven parts consisting of

allegorical stories and mystical aphorisms. The stories which have been rendered into English verse by Mr. Redhouse are heavily padded with digressive, but instructive comments and speculations on the life spiritual. They abound in picturesque imagery the beauty of which is not altogether lost even in a translation.

The Mesnevi opens with the lamentation of the reed-flute for its separation from the jungle-bed on which it grew, for "he who from home is snatched away longs to return some future day." The reed's longing for re-union symbolises the longing of the human soul for re-union with God, or in terms of Indian philosophy, of the Jivatman with the Paramatman. The message of the reed, however, is not one of despair, but of hope. It counsels man to take heart and not give way to sorrow, for whole seas cannot drown a fish. If man will give up his selfish desire and be promoted by love even as the flute is, his re-union with God is certain.

The first step to such re-union consists in the conquest of the lower self and this is suggested in the allegorical story of "The King and the Handmaid." When the baser self of man is satiated with a life of sensual gratification and when he comes under the influence of a great teacher, his thoughts are turned towards God and he eventually comes to realise his true self. The necessity of a spiritual guide for self-realisation is one of the fundamental tenets of Sufism. Seek a spiritual guide, Pir or Shaikh. Love and obey him. Merge your will in his will. This merging is called *fana-fi-shaikh* or annihilation of one's self in the Shaikh. According to Jelal saints are God's shadows on the earth and we should not attempt to thread the maze of life without their guidance.

That unity is real and diversity only apparent is suggested by means of a number of interesting parables.

A man had a squint-eyed servant. Pointing to a bottle on the shelf the master said:

"Bring me that bottle."

"Which of the two?" queried the servant.

"Fool, there is only one."

"Pardon, master, but I see two."



—Courtesy Shankar's Weekly.

"Then break one."

The servant did so and when he saw that none remained, he was frightened, and the master said:

"There was but one; your eyes were the cause you saw two. The one away, the other was gone too."

So according to Jelal pluralism is not real, but due to defectiveness of spiritual vision.

A man once knocked at a friend's door. "Who's there?" asked the friend.

"It's I," said he.

"Oh, then thou may'st go away.

Thou art thou? Then thou art crude and must purge thyself of the selfish

dross in the fire of tribulation." The man went away in anguish, saw not his friend for a whole year and pined and yearned for him. His soul was purified in suffering and he sought the door from which he had been repulsed and knocked again. Again the question came:

"Who art thou?" and the answer this time was "Thy own second self though all too poor."

"Then let myself enter. My room is too small for two. Thou art welcome, self of mine." Thus there is no salvation for the human soul as long as the notion of two persists and it retains its egoism or *Ahamkara*. It is only when by penance and suffering it realises its oneness with all beings that it becomes truly liberated. "With the heart harmonised by Yoga and looking at all things with an even eye he beholds the self in all beings and all beings in the self."—*Bhagavad-Gita VI. 29*.

This essential unity of all things cannot be realised merely by intellectual experience, and philosophical argument. Reason is not omnipotent, nor is it always a safe guide. Mere reasoners are like cripples propped on wooden legs. Without faith in God and without His grace the staff of reason would snap and we should fall prone on our face. Spiritual discipline and purification of the heart by devotion are the means by which the reality behind the apparent multiplicity of the universe is to be realised.

Silent and one-pointed meditation (*Samadhi*) is necessary for the realisation of God. In this state known as *ana-hil-lah* (annihilation in God) the self loses its egoism and enjoys supreme bliss. The self is the bride-room and God is the bride. To the world the bride shows only her veiled faces; but alone with the bridegroom she takes off her veil and entrances him by her beauty. And finally the bride and bridegroom become one.

The longing for liberation felt by the human soul is like the longing for

freedom of the parrot in the cage. A merchant's parrot escapes from its cage and bids adieu to its master in these words:

"Adieu, master dear, I'm off now to my home.

Mayst thou too be free when the judgment shall come."

A foretaste of the joy of liberation is experienced by every man in sleep and by the saint in *Samadhi*. Each night the soul escapes from the trap of flesh like a bird from its cage and enjoys supreme bliss. The sleeping state of the perfected soul at all hours. He (the perfect man) is asleep to all the things of the earth by night, by day and "his spirit wanders in the groves of the Absolute." ("That which is night to all beings, in that the self-controlled man wakes. That in which all beings wake is night to the self-seeing Muni"—*Bhagavad-Gita II. 69*.)

An Arab, a Turk, an Iranian and a Roman got a coin and wanted to buy something sweet to eat. The Arab wished to buy an "Inab," the Turk an "Usum" the Iranian an "Angur" and the Roman an "Istifal". They did not know one another's language and a violent quarrel ensued. Then a man who knew all the four languages passed that way. Understanding the cause of their quarrel he went to the bazaar and returned with some grapes. Then they all jumped up and said that that was exactly what each of them wanted. Men of all creeds are seeking the same goal and only quarrel through ignorance. When ignorance is dispelled by true knowledge men will be able to love and tolerate one another.

"Peep not into their features,
Look not at their skins,
Inquire their thoughts, their hearts
—if these be free from sins,
A negro findest thou one with
thee in faith and creed
Him deem white; thy brother
is he in thy need."

She was trying hard to impress her suave companion of the evening. "I'm looking forward," she said, "to my 24th birthday."
"Aren't you," suggested her date, "facing in the wrong direction?"

FAULTY JUDGMENT

By EDW. T. FERNANDEZ

SHANKAR lay in bed, cogitating within himself. Gosh! But that girl was pretty cute. He had grown tired of waiting for an opening for two long weeks. She seemed rather reserved, but there was no denying the fact that there were depths of passion within her. There were possibilities. Great possibilities! And he could not wait much longer. He had to act—now!

Once he had made up his mind to get a definite move on, it did not take him long to work out the details of his plan of action. The very next day, he locked himself in his room and proceeded to disguise himself in the garb of a Punjabi fortune-teller. On his way to the girl's house, he saw his father standing on the pavement of the road, holding a conversation with a fellow-officer in the police force. Shankar's legs felt shaky, but both officers gave him a casual glance only. Splendid! thought Shankar. If his father didn't recognise him in his disguise, nobody else would.

Approaching the girl's house, Shankar announced himself as he pretended to pass by: "Fortune-telling, Sir. Fortune-telling, madam. Heart full of love, for girl in house. Very 'appy future coming."

Just as he hoped, the window blinds were drawn apart and the pretty face of Leila peered through the bars. Shankar lost no time. "Lady in love," he revealed. "Lady doubting. Boy doubting. But everything go well. Don't worry. I can make both 'appy. Much 'appiness coming."

Leila, the girl of his dreams, signalled to him to come to the door. The next moment the door stood ajar and Leila ushered him into the hall, a finger on her lovely lips.

"Come, tell me my fortune," she said excitedly. "You must finish quickly, please."

"Yes, madam. Your palm please." Shankar found it difficult to be serious. He was all excitement indeed. To hold Leila's hand so tenderly—though professionally—was

very heaven for him. They were nice, soft little hands. He could not possibly take his eyes off her and concentrate on his fortune-telling. She looked adorable, sitting opposite him with such an excited look on her lovely countenance.

"Ah!" Shankar began. "Just as I said. The lady love. The lady much wondering if young man love her."

"Does he?" Leila asked eagerly.

"Yes, madam. Young man love lady very much. Young man shy to tell lady so. Lady shy to show young man she love him. Result, no success. But myself can make success come. Madam like to know how?"

"Yes, yes," answered the girl, "please tell me."

"Madam will meet young man again?" he asked.

"Yes, I meet him often."

"Very good. Next time madam meet young man she tell young man she have headache and then she pretend to faint. Then allow young man to worry about lady. Everything come all right then."

Having got thus far in his fortune-telling, Shankar hoped that the girl would dispense with him then. He was rather lucky in this. There was a knock at the door and Leila left him to go and see who it was.

"Anybody at home?" said a voice from outside. At the sound of that voice, Shankar felt his hair stand on end. Surely it was the voice of his father!

The girl answered. "Only my mother," she said.

"Your father will be out long?"

"No, he will be back in half an hour, I'm sure."

"Shall I wait for him, then?"

"Yes, certainly. Do come in and take a seat."

What the devil! Shankar swore under his breath. The visitor was none other than his father. And in his police inspector's uniform, too—just as he had seen him on the road a little while ago. What did he want there? Shankar wondered.

"A fortune-teller?" Inspector Balu said as his eyes alighted on the Punjabi. "Is he any good?"

"Oh! He was just telling me that I would secure a pass in college this year," Leila lied. "I hope I do." Then, turning to the Punjabi, she said, "You may go. Please keep this." And she held out a rupee note to Shankar. He could not very well refuse it. Besides, he was anxious to be gone from his father's unnerving presence. So he took the note and made his exit quickly.

Once outside, he put the rupee note to his nostrils and took a deep breath. Funny, he mused. Everything these pretty girls touched smelt sweet afterwards!

So Leila really cared for him! Just as he thought. Anyway, he would be meeting her that very evening at the Hindi class, as usual. She would pretend to faint, of course, and then—well, he could trust himself to do the needful.

He thought of his father then. What was the old man doing there? Was he a friend of Leila's father and a constant visitor to the house? That was unlikely, as Leila didn't seem to know him at all. However, his father did not recognise him. That was pretty certain.

That evening, Shankar was in a fever of excitement. He dressed himself with meticulous care, whistling gaily as he looked at the reflection of his handsome face in the mirror. Only a matter of an hour or so, and he would have Leila in his arms.

But he was doomed to disappointment. Leila did not turn up. In fact, he did not see her for a whole week, even though he passed her house twice—without wearing a disguise, of course. At the end of that week, his father, who appeared to be in a jovial mood that day, spoke to him thus:

"Shankar, you attend the Hindi classes at—don't you?"

"Yes, dad," Shankar answered.

"Do you know Miss Leila there?" was the father's next question.

Shankar was immediately on the alert. His father's question puzzled him. What was the old man driving at, he wondered.

"Yes, dad, I know her," he said.

"She doesn't attend the classes anymore, does she?"

"No. She stopped about a week ago."

"Do you know why?"

"No. How should I?"

"Well, you'll be interested to know why, I'm sure. She is shortly to be married to a young man whom she has known for quite some time. But the most interesting side of the story is the way in which they were able to find the courage to h'm—confess their love for each other. Leila and her betrothed had secretly been in love with each other for many months, but neither of them had the courage to say so. Then, one day, a Punjabi fortune-teller, revealing to her as much as she cared for him, her as much as she care for him, suggested that she should pretend to have a headache and swoon the next time she was in his company. He guaranteed that this would create a favourable situation for love making. Well, Leila carried out his suggestion to the letter that very evening, and, just as the fortune-teller had predicted, the young fellow in question was so concerned about her that he actually kissed her and made love to her. And now, everything has been settled between their parents and both of them are to be married shortly."

Something seemed to go dry in Shankar's mouth as he listened to his father's story. However, his curiosity was so great that he was able to put the only other question which puzzled him.

"But how did you come to know of all this, dad?" he asked.

"Ah! that's the one question I have been waiting for," replied his father. "You see, that same Punjabi fortune-teller passed me on his way to this girl Leila's house. Somehow, he didn't seem real to me. His clean clothes, his bushy beard, his well-trimmed moustachios, his polished shoes, and above all, his badly-done turban—they were all out of place. But what confirmed my suspicions most was the shirt this Punjabi fellow was wearing. It was of the same material which I bought two weeks ago and for which I paid through my nose. I therefore followed the fellow at a distance and

saw him entering this girl Leila's house. Knowing him for what he is, I knew he meant no good. After I had allowed a few minutes to elapse, I tapped at the door and—well, the Punjabi fellow knows the rest. What he would like to know is whether or not I knew Leila or her father. Well, I didn't. But I soon made it my business to get to know the father and, as you might imagine, we became great friends and I soon learned about his daughter Leila's proposed marriage. She, poor girl, confided in me

her secret (not suspecting that I had inveigled her into doing so) and that's the whole story."

Shankar felt guilty. "I'm sorry, dad," he tried to say. "But it has ended well after all."

"Yes, it has," replied his father. "At least for once in his life-time my son has been the cause of bringing two people together instead of tearing them apart."

After saying which words, Mr. Balu left for the station, a cheerful smile on his face.

A MARXIST MANDARIN

By "P. M."

AS the Red Star is mounting to its zenith in China, a great deal of anxious curiosity and wishful thinking have been indulged in concerning the character and personality of Mao Tse Tung—the one man with whose name current victories of Chinese Communists are indissolubly associated. It may therefore be of more than topical interest if light could be thrown on his views and opinions. Fortunately for us, there is extant an almost verbatim report of what Gen. Mao Tse Tung held to be the mission of Communists in the special conditions of China ten years ago when it was parcelled out between Japan on the one hand and the Western European powers on the other with nationalists oscillating uneasily between them.

Mao Tse Tung like all war-lords holds that war is but a continuation of policy with a change of means; and policy is largely shaped by the inculcation of a type of ideology which would further the interests of Communism. So he drew up an elaborate programme of propaganda on the literary front to second the efforts of the soldiers as they marched forward tarring the country red.

He starts with the delicious paradox that the proletariat is ignorant and should therefore be educated, but that the proletariat is also infallible and must therefore never be criticised or satirised or laughed at. Every Marxist should be completely posted in the elements of Marxism

and its dialectics in all their encyclopaedic range and implications. This is the basic requisite for every Marxist evangel.

In organising the proletariat, the aim should be to start with the working classes and expand gradually until all other sections are also roped in. The rational basis of the propaganda being assumed, it is enjoined on the evangelist that he should praise facts and expose them,—whatever that may mean. The audience to be addressed includes ourselves, our friends and our enemies. On account of the ignorance of the masses, they are victims of a backward ideology which must be rooted out by means of propaganda.

As China, like India, is a predominantly agricultural country, and an urban proletariat is either exiguous or non-existent, the pear-point of the Communist offensive must have for its aim the long-suffering peasant. In order to enter into the life of the rustics, the propagandist is enjoined to live in their milieu and share their simple joys and sorrows, to inspire confidence in them as to the prospects of Communism and a better social order. Incidentally, Mao Tse Tung indulges in a caustic description of the intellectuals as a decadent, finicky lot who turn up their noses at the so-called 'uncleanness' of the multitude. Adapting a remark of Christ, Mao Tse Tung claims that it is far better to be unclean in body with an unpolluted mind, than vice versa! Only thus

can the propaganda machine do its work of effecting a 'transformation of sentiments'—a changing over from one class to another—if not in body at least in mind and soul.

The peasant, the factory worker, and the soldier in the army of liberation form the nuclei round which the entire structure of proletarian China is to be refashioned. With the gradual but inevitable expansion of the proletarian mass, the bourgeoisie would be squeezed out effectively but unspectacularly. In this detail, the Chinese aspiration must be pronounced more humane than the Russian example which still remains a ghastly warning, a lurid memory,—after thirty years.

What about the methods and aims of propaganda. Mao Tse Tung offers a few catching but vague slogans: Raise the standard, broaden the sphere, he urges. Life here and now, as lived by the masses, is the proper material; all else is second hand. People do need literature and art, for art is superior to nature, and is obtained by nature being heightened, or touched up. It is in this way that standards should be raised, and the basis broadened.

There are specialists who are assigned the more delicate tasks involved in organised propaganda. These are the graduates in Marxist-Leninism who have made a special study of the mysterious workings of mass psychosis. Down with the aristos who are supercilious; there is no place for them in the Marxist scheme.

A very intricate and systematic methodology governs the relations between literary ideals and party organisation, and the relation of both to the outside world. One consequence of this is that art follows political lines. Art for its own sake is a figment of an idle brain. The proletariat is a potential conglomeration of statesmen in the mass. It is the duty of literature and art to catch their opinions, condense or diffuse them according to need, and thus make them aware of their own strength.

Democracy, when it is new, arises from resentment against the previous holders of power; but so long as it is new it is unstable. Men who represent themselves as enemies of the old monarchs or oligarchs may succeed in restoring a monarchical or oligarchical system: Napoleon and Hitler could win public support when the Bourbons and Hohenzollerns could not. It is only when democracy has lasted long enough to become traditional that it is stable.—**BERTRAND RUSSELL.**

Against Japan, he was prepared for a measure of compromise with other national groups in the interests of a united front. But this union was to be so exploited as to promote the infiltration of Communist ideology even in those groups which at first might remain indifferent or hostile.

The general principles which emerge from the discussion may be summed up as follows:

There is no abstract human nature; what we are concerned with is men and women individually and in the mass.

Love of humanity is an abstraction which is practicable only after the abolition or liquidation of all classes; until then, class struggle must go on.

There is no intrinsic good or bad; they are to be judged by results.

There can be no impartiality or objectivity in art.

In this brief summary of the Chinese Communist viewpoint as represented by Mao Tse Tung, it is of interest to note a considerable blunting of the fanatical zeal of Russian Communists because of the intrusion of the Chinese national temper moderating such fanaticism. This is perhaps the reason why the victories of Chinese Communists have not provoked that degree of panic which the advance of Communism in the West has registered. In other words, it is worthwhile to hazard the view that in China Communism would eventually be subordinated to the exigencies of progress conditioned by national characteristics and limitations. In the seats of the mighty, the Chinese Communist might even become as innocuous as Congress radicals are now found in India—soft-peddalling progress from their positions of vantage.

If so, it would disprove the inevitability of a class-war accompanied by all the horrors of the October Revolution in Russia. It would be no mean gain. Another moral that could be drawn with equal plausibility is that nationalism as an impulse or creed or even a policy will die hard!

THE HOLLYWOOD 'WESTERN'

By **SANTHA**

"THE main thing," I said settling myself in the chair more comfortably, "is to relax and avoid committing the conventional error of trying to follow every word that is said."

"But what about the jokes?" asked Balu, aged seventeen.

"For one thing," I said, "these Westerns have precious few jokes. It is mostly action. And for another, the jokes when they are made, are usually the elementary kind, if you understand what I mean. Mostly about horses and things like that."

"What about Westerns," asked Ramani, my other nephew aged sixteen, rather unimaginatively, "where there are no horses?"

"There are no Westerns," his brother informed him succinctly, "without horses, guns, punches on the jaw and women with secret pockets in their dresses."

"Another thing that I find difficult," pursued Ramani, "is the conversation. They talk a kind of dialect, don't they?"

"No, not a separate dialect," I said, "but there are certainly small differences between the English spoken say in New York and Missouri or Indiana and Florida. But you don't have to follow all the conversation, you know. You certainly don't read all the words when you are reading a book, do you?"

This rather staggered my young nephews.

"Don't you?" they said a-chorus, in obvious astonishment.

"No," I said, "you don't. An experienced and practised reader, I mean one to whom reading is a habit, reads only 60% of the words. The rest he doesn't read in the sense he puts the spelling together. His eye just takes it in. It is the same with pictures. In a Western, for instance, I can even anticipate what is going to happen. Question of experience."

"But in pictures," said Balu, "you have to take in all the conversation if you are to follow the story."

"Not necessarily," I said. "Your perspicacity lies in being able to fill in the gaps you have missed yourself."

"My what?" said Ramani.

"Your intelligence. Perspicacity. Your capacity for comprehension. Your faculty for understanding."



"Oh!"

"There is the pamphlet, anyway, to help you," said Balu. "You can read up the story in it."

"That," I said, directing an earnest gaze at him "is precisely what you must not do. It is as unhealthy a habit as reading books of notes for your examinations and as unexciting as to turn to the end of a detective story to see who the killer is before you have read half the story."

"I don't know," said Balu, "how anyone can distinguish one from another in a Western. The same dresses, the same belts, the same guns, the same grimy shirts and the same grim, stiff faces. How do you ever make out who is the hero and who the villain?"

That was how it started, with my young nephews wanting to know how you distinguished the hero from the villain in a Western. It was most natural they should have expressed their doubts to me of all their friends because I am the most inveterate picture-goer among all my acquaintance and I do believe I have seen more British and American pictures than anyone else this side of the intellectual line in the city of Madras. What I don't know about musicals isn't worth knowing. The gags I haven't heard in drawing-room

comedy haven't come out of ingenious young American heads yet. And as far as serious tragedy or serious drama goes, I have seen everyone of them since Ben Hur. Compared to this impressive array, the classified Hollywood Western is chicken-feed. Why, anybody could follow a Western, that is of course, anybody with a certain amount of native intelligence and imagination. That's what I think. Or rather that's what I thought. I didn't know that even in the small world of picture-goers there were anybodies and anybodies.



The day I attended the thrilling, super gun-toting Western, "A shot in the Dark" is a day I will not easily forget. We were late as usual and the last record was being played just before the lights were put out for the newsreels when we settled down in our seats. Hardly had I made myself comfortable when I heard a thin, clear voice speaking behind me.

"This is the typical Western music," said the voice. "The guitar, piano, drum... there, do you hear it? and that is the trombone, and... wait, ah, here is the tymbrel and xylophone and, of course, the castanets."

I felt rather than saw Balu and Ramani exchange a startled glance before they turned to the screen again as the music stopped and the lights went out.

The news-reel came first. There were shots of Princess Margaret Rose vacationing in Rome. A close-up of her in a very charming costume and hat among that great city's ruins.

"The idea for that hat," said the thin voice at my back again, "must have been taken from the American sombrero. The felt hat with the wide brim but, of course, the white lace veil and the cluster of white roses on the brim in front are entirely new innovations. I understand it is the pre-

vailing fashion in Vienna and Naples. Of course, the colour of the roses varies from white to all shades of red."

There came on the screen next a rodeo in Texas.

"I suppose they will soon be singing 'Don't fence me in!'" said the thin voice and sure enough a rich, baritone took up that enchanting song.

"Imagine!" said Balu and Ramani together.

I threw a furious look backwards and found it taking in a bald, round-faced, harmless-looking person sitting directly behind me and by his side, a thin, lanky and solemn young female person in her very early teens.

"I dislike people," I whispered to Balu, "who talk in the theatre. Shall we move somewhere else?"

"Yes," said Balu but not with alacrity. He looked around. "Every seat is occupied," he said happily.

The lights went out and the Board of Censors Certificate came on the screen.

"Eight thousand six hundred feet," said the thin voice immediately. "They would have taken less than six weeks to produce it even if they did go on location which they probably didn't."

I turned round and looked long and fixedly at the round-faced gentleman. I saw smooth round cheeks, a smiling mouth but the eyes were in shadow. But in spite of my significant stare the commentary went on. I saw Balu and Ramani pricking their ears as the picture flashed by on the screen in a confused whirl of horses' hooves, the rustle of women's petticoats and the sound of clinking glasses. There were three men and two women, each as like the other as two peas.



"Who is the hero?" Balu wanted to know.

"It is Gene Autrey," I said not feeling quite so sure.

"I beg your pardon," said the gentleman at the back, "but it is Bill Boyd. Gene always wears his hat on the back of his head and, moreover, he has quite a different type of nose. And a better forehead."

"Imagine!" said Balu and Ramani together.

"And Bill plans to stop the stage-coach nearabouts the Harrington Place so that they could transfer their loot quickly to the underground cellars at the Place," continued the voice with the story. "But Dale who sees the two men conversing through the chink in the door..."

"That was not Dale," I said triumphantly, "that was Sandra who peeped in."

"I beg your pardon," said the gentleman icily, "Sandra is locked up in the house of the gun-runner, Whitely, if you remember. And if you want further proof, I dare say you will soon see Sandra trying to escape through the window or something."

And sure enough five minutes later there was Sandra sliding down the rain-pipe.

"But as Dale runs away to tell Zach, her father, about the plot to loot the stage-coach, Bill hears her footsteps and realises she knows all. And so he chases her determined... ah, we will see some action here, I think."

On the screen the big powerful figure of Bill Morgan strode towards the cowering Dale huddled in a corner of the inn looking up at him with the eyes of a frightened doe...

"This," I told the boys, "will be a typical Texan scene. Just watch!"

"Oh no," said a horrified voice behind me. "That is Oklahoma, not Texas."

"I am sure," I said through set teeth, "this is Texas. I ought to know Texas when I see it."

"My dear sir," he said gently, "but in Texas women don't wear high-heeled shoes or carry parasols or wear bustles. This is a purely Oklahoman custom."

"Just imagine!" said Balu and Ramani together directing a worshipful look into the darkness at the back of us.

There were a dozen shots from all over the inn and the air was thick with smoke. And as it cleared, the

camera advanced into an empty room over to a figure in a neat suit slumped over the bar.

"Poor Bill!" I said. "I can't imagine whoever could have shot him!"

"That, if I am not much mistaken," said the hateful voice at my back, "is the Sheriff. I was wondering when he was going to put in an appearance."

"Will you kindly keep quiet?" said an indignant voice further down the row.

And now Bill and Whitely were talking not knowing Sandra was flying away on one of their own horses to Alcott's house. Or was it to the Sheriff's house she was flying? Bill patted Whitely on the shoulder and said something. About a dozen people in the theatre laughed including, of course, the thin-voiced gentleman at the back.

"What did he say? Ramani wanted to know.

"Some joke," I said laughing. "I think you two are too young to be told such jokes."



Bill said something more and the dozen people broke out into fresh gales of laughter. I could almost feel the gentleman at my back holding his sides and trying to stifle his mirth.

"It must be a very funny joke," said Balu with a significant look at me.

Soon what seemed an army of horsemen entered the inn and carried the Sheriff out.

"What are they going to do to him?" asked Ramani. "Who are they?"

"Why don't you watch," I said a trifle impatiently, "and not ask so many questions?"

"But you said you could anticipate everything!" he said.

On the screen it was bedlam. The camera raced from Bill and Whitely with their guns cocked looking through the window of a house at the

dust raised by the hooves of horses coming—or were they going?—at a distance, to Dale who slithered from behind one huge stone to another and one tree to another all the time keeping an eye on a man wearing a huge sombrero who stood in the shadow of a wall watching Zach's little stone house.

"Is this the house," asked Balu, "in which Bill and Whitely are waiting?"

The scene shifted to Sandra washing herself at a lake and then immediately to the stage-coach into which the Sheriff, inanimate as before, was being bundled by the horsemen.

"Is he dead?" asked the voice which had a few minutes before demanded silence from our end of the row.

"I don't know," I said hesitating, flattered at being consulted.

"I beg your pardon," said the voice. "I didn't ask you. I was referring the matter to the gentleman at the back."

"No," said the voice of Round-face, "I think the Sheriff is just pretending to be dead. Now we can except some action."

And sure enough there was. The stage-coach bumped along the forest-tracks, Dale jumped into it from behind her tree, the man in the shadow of the wall jumped in from the other side and inside the coach the Sheriff bounded to his feet, two pistols in two hands. The one in his left hand went off and the man in the big sombrero fell back, dead—presumably. The Sheriff then turned towards Dale and just then the scene shifted. Zach's gun went off and the rear wheel of the coach rolled away. There were more shots. Goodness, you never saw so many smoking pistols in your life.

At our end of the row was pandemonium.

"But where is Bill?" Balu wanted to know.

"Bill is inside the cottage with Whitely," said the round-faced gentleman, "and Whitely doesn't know yet...."

"Know what?" asked Balu almost halfway over the back of his chair with excitement.

"About the stage-coach disaster, of course," I said.

"Oh no," said the round-faced gentleman. "He knows all about the stage-coach disaster because it was he

who plotted it, don't you remember, in almost the first scene?"

"But I thought it was Bill," I said distractedly, "who plotted the stage-coach accident?"

"Oh no," he said, worsening my confusion, "he only pretended to be plotting so as to stage that attack on the Sheriff so as to let everyone believe the Sheriff was dead."

"And isn't he?" Ramu wanted to know.

"Of course not. Didn't you see him jump to his feet in the stage-coach?"

"Yes," said another excited voice two seats away, "but don't tell me the Sheriff is going to shoot Dale?"

"Of course, he isn't" said Balu contempt in his voice. "Is he, uncle?"

"Well, let us see," I said, feeling harassed, my ego quite submerged by this time.

"That must be the 40%," said Ramani blandly, "which you don't follow."

We now hear soft music as the screen, suddenly quietened, shows us the Sheriff striding down the lane, the sun shining white on the scene. All over the place groups of people stand quietly watching him. Something obviously in the air. The climax. The Sheriff enters the house at the end of the lane and kicks open the door.

"Stick them up, boys," he says.



Bill and Whitely shoot up their hands and their guns fall to the floor. The Sheriff picks up the gun Whitely

has dropped and as he stoops, Bill quickly picks up his.

"Oh no," wailed Balu. "Don't tell me the Sheriff is going to be shot at the end, after all!"

Bill picks up his gun and comes towards the Sheriff.

"Thanks, Sheriff," he says holding out his hand. "We have got all of Whitely's men."

You could have knocked Whitely down with a feather. If it came to that, you could have knocked me down with a feather. So Bill was on the side of the law, after all.

And now the camera follows Bill's back as he walks down the road with the people standing just as before and shows him tapping at another door at the other end and then quietly pushing it open. There is a woman standing at the stove. Who it is, Dale or Sandra, is just anybody's guess. My guess was that it was Sandra and, of course, it turned out to be Dale.

"Bill," she says kind of swooning.

"Dale," he says and then follows a scene which even the young person sitting beside the round-faced gentleman must have been able to understand without explanations.

The door opens, Sandra peeps in and sees Bill and Dale oblivious of the whole world. She sadly closes the door and walks away and mounts the steps of her own house with leaden feet and goes in and closes the door. Immediately we hear a shot.

"Poor Sandra!" I said. "I suppose the poor girl was in love with Bill."

The Sheriff comes dashing up the steps and throws open the door.

"Hello, Russ," Sandra says cheerfully. "I was cleaning the gun and it went off. Oh Russ, aren't you glad it is all over?" So she is the Sheriff's wife! Well! Well! Well! What do you know!

Every normal man, woman and child, is a genius at something, as well as an idiot at something. It remains to discover what—at any rate in respect of the genius.—PROF. SPEARMAN.



Jayalakshmi, Sriraman and Varalakshmi in the Tamil Social "Navajeevanam".

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.

"Policy Towards Communists"

In view of certain remarks in your editorial article "Policy towards Communists" (SWATANTRA, June 11, 1949) regarding the sentences passed on eight persons by the Special Tribunal Court, Nalgonda, I feel it is necessary to place before you the facts of the case in so far as it concerns the Government of Hyderabad.

You have commented on the lack of publicity for the trial. The trial was open to the public and the Press, and in fact we got into touch with the leading news agencies and newspapers in Hyderabad and offered them facilities if they cared to report the proceedings. As it turned out, none of the news agencies or newspapers appear to have availed themselves of this offer. You complain that neither the names of the condemned men nor the offences for which they were sentenced have been made known. Both were given in the Hyderabad Government's Press Note of May 19, to which you refer in another connexion. Moreover, everybody knows that the very object of the Special Tribunals Regulation,—under which the Special Tribunal Court at Nalgonda was set up—was to deal with offences like murder, arson, loot, etc., arising from the disturbances just before and after the Police Action.

Your assumption that "the due processes of law" were "fully and sincerely observed" by the Nalgonda Tribunal is perfectly correct. It has been made public in a Press Note that all legal requirements were observed in the case and the usual defence facilities provided. The accused cited some defence witnesses, and these were duly examined.

Finally, I should like to stress that the eight persons were sentenced to death not because they were Communists, or because they belonged to a particular political party, but because they were found guilty of a criminal offence—namely, murder—which, you will agree, is a crime by whomsoever committed. The sentence is not final. The prisoners have the right of appeal, first, to the High Court and then, if necessary, to His Excellency the Military Governor.

BINOD U. RAO,
Director of Information,
Hyderabad.

The New Taxes

As some wise man has already put it, to tax and remain popular is no more possible than to love and be wise. It is therefore natural for the taxation measures of the Madras Ministry to be assailed bitterly by the interests affected. The new tax on newspaper advertisements has been opposed on the misleading ground that it would amount to a tax on knowledge. People who buy newspapers are actuated by a variety of motives; but a zeal for the acquisition of knowledge is NOT one of them. If editors plead that they sugar-coat the pill, and that the public is becoming wiser every day, more knowledgeable progressively, then it remains occult for all plain and simple folk to see or gauge or determine. Advertisements cannot be classified under knowledge; but if it is contended that the newspaper is run with the help of the advertisement revenue, then obviously, it would be the advertisers who would be called upon to pay the new tax, and they, being businessmen, may be counted upon to take it back from the long-suffering public in whose name or under whose cloak all vested interests seek to flourish if not aggrandize themselves.

There is a case for letting off certain kinds of periodicals—the weeklies and monthlies—which while standing for the best in journalism languish for want of advertisement revenue. It should not be difficult for the Government to introduce provisions by which advertisement revenue below a line—say Rs. 15,000 per annum might be exempted or merely asked to take out a licence for a nominal figure—as in the case of sales tax incidence. Taxation of higher income levels may be on the sliding or slab principle.

So also with the tax on cinema shows; the organised bullying of the trade threatened for the 30th of this month should not deter the Government from proceeding with the measure—again taking care to see that entertainment is not killed out. If some cinemas and some newspapers go out of business, neither would be a national calamity; but the chances are that no such disaster as now threatened is in the offing!

AN UNDERPAID JOURNALIST

Are oranges
good for
the
blood?



Oranges are indeed a wonderful fruit. They contain both vitamin C and mineral salts which are indispensable to healthy physical functioning of the body. Oranges enrich and purify the blood and have even healing properties in cases of anæmia (poor blood). And yet we could not live on oranges alone because our body as a whole requires other food values as well. In other words, for full health and strength we need a *balanced* diet containing all the food values — namely, proteins, carbo-hydrates, vitamins, minerals (found in fruits, raw vegetables, milk, pulses, eggs, fish, meat, nuts, cereals) and *fat*. One of the finest forms of fat is Dalda. Made only of the purest vegetable oils it reaches you safe in sealed tins to help replenish your daily energy.



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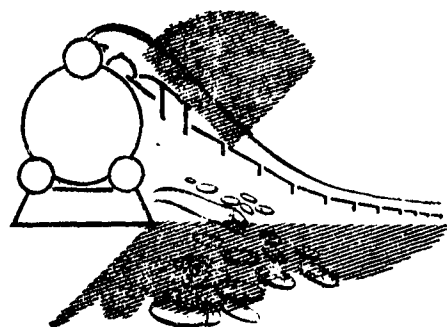
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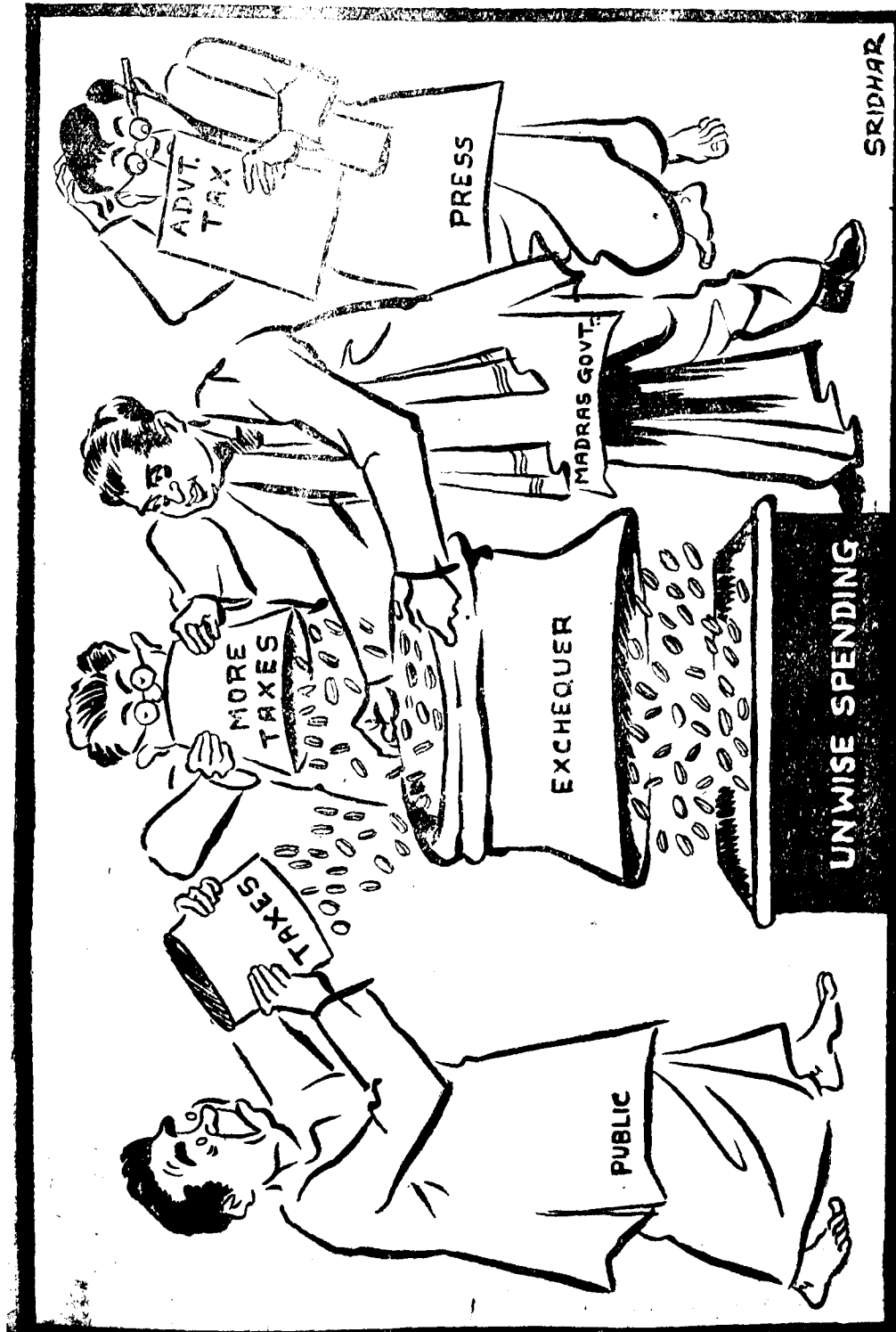
CASTE IN GOVERNMENT

THE executive of the Madras Congress Legislature Party has turned down a resolution brought forward by Sri T. Viswanatham for the elimination of caste from specific mention in official documents. The object of the resolution was to promote an atmosphere in which caste consciousness will not play the part it now does in Government appointments, promotions, admissions to colleges and the like. The view of the party executive on the resolution reflects the view of the Ministry. The Ministry in Madras are not prepared to allow the importance now being given to communal considerations to be diluted in any manner in the sphere of administration subject to their control.

There is a clear conflict between the Centre and the Madras Government in this matter of communalism. Certain supporters of the provincial Government's communal policies have pleaded that the communalism discredited by the Centre is of a different texture and complexion from the communalism of the South—that the Centre had in mind Hindu-Muslim communalism and not Brahmin-Non-Brahmin communalism. Correspondence ventilating this view was accorded full publicity in the Letters Section of *Swatantra*, but we referred the question to India's Prime Minister as the highest authority in the land competent to pronounce an opinion in the matter. His reply which was duly published stated that he is "opposed to all kinds of communalism and sectarianism, whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Brahmin, Non-Brahmin or any other."

The situation that has developed in Madras is thus a peculiar one. The Ministry in power professes to be a Congress Ministry, but its administrative policies are communal, in downright hostility to the substance and spirit of the Congress creed, the clear opinion, unequivocally expressed, of the Prime Minister who is also the topmost national leader. While Pandit Nehru denounces communalism in any form, Ministers of the Madras Government are found going about openly advocating communalism as necessary and indispensable in this province. While the drive of the Central Government is in the direction of eliminating communalism from the administration, the energies of the Madras Government are being devoted to the promotion of an exactly contrary policy. In the framing of India's constitution it is the voice of the top leaders at the Centre that has prevailed. Specific provisions have been included in the constitution affording to citizens protection from communal discrimination of the very type now being enforced in full blast by the Madras Ministry. When the new constitution comes into force, the whole of the elaborate system of preferences and discriminations on communal grounds being worked into our provincial administration will become unconstitutional, and the Ministry will either have to abandon it or embark on defiance of the highest judicial authorities charged with the interpretation of the constitution, in order to enforce it.

No organisation can keep its hold on public opinion when the public



statements of Ministers ruling in its name fail to show a sense of collective responsibility. But who is to bend down to whose level in the endeavour to remove breaches of outlook? Is Pandit Nehru to adopt the political philosophy associated with our communal provincial stalwarts, or is the provincial policy to be brought into conformity with the all-India line? If only for the sake of maintaining an integrity of outlook in the Congress organisation so as to make it intelligible to people and impel them to put faith in it, the time for hard and clear thinking and drastic decision has come.

The social justice plea which the communalists are fond of advancing has to be examined with care and objective detachment. They point to a society seething with backward elements, and while they lay the burden of the blame for the backwardness on the advanced, they plead for special measures of favour to enable the backward to make good the lost leeway with the others. The fallacy lies in mixing up care of the backward with harsh treatment of their betters. It is not a crime for any individual or group to have come up to the front in the competitive race of life, and any policy based on such a supposition will only pave the way for supplanters and supplanted changing places at intervals in an eternal cycle. It will effect the whole swiftness of movement of the race. It is not a scienti-

fic essential of the care of the backward that those lying outside its orbit should be impeded or hurt or dealt with harshly. It is not social justice but anti-social unbalance to create conditions that cause backwardness to be claimed as a premium.

Not social concern for the removal of backwardness, but anti-social exploitation of backwardness for political ends has come forth in the upsurge of communalism. The anti-merit formulas that hold the field under the banner of communalism provide a measure of the anti-social mischief that makes communalism repugnant to all lovers of progress as a principle of government. Social benefit is the result of the application of merit to the tasks of government, and society will have little good to look forward to under any dispensation that tends to suppress merit. In an article in *The Times* taking stock of Congress rule in India since Independence, Sir Mirza Ismail deplores that "experienced administrators have far too often been replaced by incompetent men." The rule of incompetent men is an inevitable corollary from policies that deviate from the assiduous cultivation of merit as the primary foundation of all social and administrative good, and if Congress rule is to be saved from deterioration, it has to save itself first from the anti-merit invasion of the communalists on its policies and standards.

One of the principal modern temptations is to divide the world into two parts—the one dominated by Communism and the other by Capitalism—into 'Soviet Russia' and 'America.' People repeat hackneyed phrases in their attempt to consolidate this division and thus prepare the way for war. The polarisation of the world in a rather military fashion into two camps is originally an invention of the Marxist Communists....he who divides the world into two parts moves in the sphere of abstractions, and Marxist doctrine contributes greatly to this movement. The ideologists of capitalism, on the other hand, fail to realise that they are merely Marxists in reverse. The world as it is, and not as people dream it to be, is not divided into two camps; it is infinitely more complex and diverse. 'Soviet Russia,' 'America,' 'capitalist encirclement,' 'iron curtain,' and the rest, are abstractions invented to a large extent as tactical weapons of war.—NICOLAS BERDYAEV.

Sotto Voce

Adullam



AN interesting correspondence has been started in a local newspaper on the teaching of Islamic History and Culture in the Government Muslim College. The name of the institution, by the way, is an anachronism. Though started in the spacious days of British rule for the special benefit of the Muslims it is no longer reserved for them. With the transfer to it of the Intermediate sections from Presidency College, it is bound to become predominantly non-Muslim in its student-composition. But the chivalrous considerateness of the Congress Ministry, which reserves its iconoclasm for the institutions of Hinduism, and the aggressive piety of the faithful may combine to keep the College, not merely in name, a citadel of obscurantism.

The continued provision of instruction in "Islamic History and Culture," said a correspondent in the newspaper in question, was contrary to the spirit of the times; and it belied the heart-change which Swaraj was supposed to have brought about. He pointed out that there was precious little of culture in the way the subject was being actually taught. There was no critical study attempted of comparative religion. No grounding in the classic literatures of Islam and no knowledge of Arabic and Persian were expected of those who elected to offer what in reality was a soft option. Its only effect seemed to be, he said, to promote a narrow sectarian outlook and cultural chauvinism.

Neither the Madras University nor the Madras Government can be convicted of excessive zeal for culture.

Indian History was not allowed to gain even a precarious foothold in our colleges for many years. And Philosophy was drummed out of the premier Government college years ago with every mark of ignominy. Many great religions, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, not to mention the teeming multiplicity of the Hindu system, were born on Indian soil and still flourish here. But the official custodians of higher education in Madras have not shown the slightest interest in the vigorous philosophy and living culture associated with each of these.

"Educationist's" letter has provoked the wrath of a Muslim lady correspondent. "It would be strange indeed," she scornfully remarks, "if a secular State sought to discourage dissemination of knowledge of the religion and culture of a section of its people." It would be difficult to pack more absurdities into so few words. Nobody stands in the way of the lady and those who share her views disseminating knowledge of Islam and its culture. All that is contended is that public money should not be wasted on the teaching of subjects which may breed irrational antagonisms in unhealthy minds.

Islamic history is largely a record of wars of conquest carried on in the name of the gentle Prophet, as the wars of the Crusades were fought in the name of the Prince of Peasants. And Islamic culture is not the possession of Indian Muslims except in a Pickwickian sense. It remains most of them a pious aspiration. Our Muslim brethren in the South have no more had a hand

the making of the culture of Baghdad and Cordova than our Christians in building the cultural tradition of the West. There have been in history cases of the culture of the invader swamping a whole people, as happened in Persia under the onset of Islam. Muslim rule, however, was but an episode in the long pageant of Indian history.

Islam like other invading faiths gathered recruits; but, culturally speaking, they have remained mostly unassimilated. On the other hand the newcomers slowly took their colour from their surroundings. Under the Moghuls a conscious attempt at blending the two cultures was made. And its influence spread so far down to the extreme South that there are many important places of pilgrimage here sacred to both faiths and many fairs and festivals associated with one in which adherents of the other joyfully participate. But the Maulvis and the Mullahs frowned upon such

innocent fraternising and frowned upon it still.

There is a Muslim weekly in Tamil published from Madras, which manages to combine extreme orthodoxy with ardent admiration for E. V. R. and his Self-Respectors. In a recent issue a contributor rejoicing in the title of Maulana makes elaborate fun of the faith and ceremonial of the Hindus. A long-standing popular tradition speaks of a Muslim woman devotee having gained her salvation by devotion to the deity of the shrine of Alagarkoil. This old legend, to which no Hindu attaches any propagandistic value, has outraged the sensibilities of our good Muslim. So he must needs cap it with a satirical tale of his own invention in which the Goddess Minakshi figures like a character in a Reynolds novel. It would be no service to culture to invite this crude fanaticism into our academic precincts.

VIGNESWARA

SIDELIGHTS :

Men are apt to prefer a prosperous error to an afflicted truth.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

SRI Shankar Rao Deo has made a mess of the enquiry into the charges against the Madras Ministers which he came over here to conduct. Whoever was responsible for pitching upon him for this mission cannot be complimented on his wisdom. Past contacts of Sri Shankar Rao Deo with local people did not leave a happy impression behind. He accompanied Acharya Kripalani when he as Congress President conducted the election meeting of the Congress Legislature Party which led to the unseating of Sri Prakasam as leader. Kripalani on that occasion somehow looked like being ill at ease on account of a shadow which he could not shake off that dogged him relentlessly throughout his stay. It was evident that he found himself faced with a distasteful task and would have liked to see peace established between the warring groups in the legislature. Not so Sri Shankar Rao Deo. There was no lack of theoretical exhortation on the virtues of unity in his utterances. But that impartiality could not be expected of him became very clear at the outset to one of the groups who felt that he had taken definitely the side of the other.

As the senior Secretary of the Congress organisation Sri Shankar Rao Deo had been in charge of its political and parliamentary departments deemed the most important, but when Dr. Pattabhi chose Sri Kala Venkat Rao as Secretary, Sri Shankar Rao Deo found himself entrusted with comparatively unimportant sections of work. The most important sections which had been previously in his charge were passed on to the junior newcomer. Kala who had been befriended by Deo in the earlier anti-Prakasam conflict became in a measure his supplanter later on.

The fact that Sri Kala Venkat Rao is one of the Ministers involved in the Congress Party enquiry should have sufficed to put Sri Shankar Rao Deo out of court as the proper person to be entrusted with it. Fellow Secre-

taries in a common organisation cannot be expected to take a dispassionate view of each other. In the stress of continual participation in common work, neutrality gets worn out as the parties concerned develop respect or the reverse of it for each other, crystallising into alternative attitudes of friendliness and unfriendliness. Objective impartiality is out of question when one Secretary is imposed as a critic or judge on any activity of a fellow Secretary. Is the Congress such a desert that no other not subject to these embarrassments could have been found for conducting the enquiry into the complaints against the Ministers?

On the ground that Sri Shankar Rao Deo did not show them the Ministers' replies to the charges, some of the accusers held aloof. From one of the Ministers' replies that somehow got to be divulged, it seemed to have been established that he did not deny the charge of having traded in permits, but only pleaded that the proceeds had been applied to a good cause. It is too much to expect however, when a complaint is made against a Minister, that his reply would furnish material helpful to the complaint, and the accusers of the Ministers should have proved their cases with all the data at their disposal, irrespective of what the accused Ministers might have to say in reply. The enquiry of course would have been advanced and not impeded if no secret had been made of the Ministers' replies.

In one particular Sri Shankar Rao Deo definitely failed in his duty. The counter-complaints elicited by the charges against the Ministers included the allegation that Sri Prakasam while Premier had taken a cheque from a certain party. Sri Prakasam demanded that the officials of the bank concerned should be summoned by telegram and examined. But no action was taken on his demand. This omission cannot be too much condemned and betrays a pitiable lack of fairplay which cannot but reflect very adversely on the worth and character of this so-called enquiry.—SAKA.

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ON TALKING TOO MUCH

By S. PARTHASARATHY

"DID you get rest and quiet in Kodaikanal?" the Swamiji enquired of me as soon as I met him after my return from the hills. "I had complete rest and quiet throughout the entire period of my stay" I answered, and then recollecting some conversations with friends, I added: "Curiously, few people seem to like Kodai. One friend said that there was an atmosphere of almost oppressive silence about the place; another remarked that the place was too sleepy to be diverting, and a third complained that he felt frightfully bored during the time he stayed there." "Hah, Hah!" laughed the Swamiji, "See how the modern man reacts to the 'silence of the hills' which we value so very highly. I am not surprised. The modern man is such a noisy and restless creature that silence can convey no significance to him. You can see the symptoms of the disease that he suffers from in an exaggerated form in the politician. The politician is fond of talking all the time. He is prepared to talk on every conceivable subject. He can talk without understanding the subject. He can talk even if he is not understood. He will talk though he may please nobody. He will talk anywhere, not only on public platforms but inside temple sanctums, during music performances, in drawing rooms, in the middle of the road, during meals, in the cremation grounds, and even during sleep. He needs only a few people around him to start his monologue. He is a true karma yogin so far as talking is concerned, for he is indifferent to the results that flow from his talks. If he is chided for saying something that he ought not to have, he promptly corrects himself by issuing a contradiction to the press. He is honest about it, for as he never plans his talk he does not remember afterwards what he has talked about.

"In the matter of talking, the Indian politician will take precedence over the gesticulating Latin. Compared to all others, he thinks less and acts least. Gandhi never talked with-

out a purpose. His weekly silence days enabled him to store up energy for constructive thinking. But some of his followers who observe the silence day gush forth on other days with redoubled vigour. This habit of talking often for its own sake has now overtaken every man, woman and child. Men discuss the foibles of their intimate friends, the existence of the Divine, their matrimonial and amorous experiences—in fact, they discuss everything that should be discussed only in the recess of one's heart. The women do much the same thing in addition to acting as purveyors of news about the happenings in the domestic lives of others. The children, thanks to the magazines, fancy themselves as teen-agers of the American variety and discuss their parents, their brothers and sisters, and the heroes in the film-land. The modern man has never cared to reflect upon the incalculable harm that he causes by such purposeless talking. Talking to see one's own name in print, talking to create a laugh at somebody's expense, talking to attract attention to oneself, talking to impress others, talking to shock others, talking to wound others, talking to air one's importance and talking just to while away time, have been responsible for wars among nations, for breaking up of family ties, for sundering lifelong friendships, for separating the husband and wife and for all political, social and religious feuds, factions and hatreds.

"It is said in the Vedas that creation proceeded from sound, is being sustained by it and can only be realised through it. The sound they refer to is the sound of silence and not the sound of human babble. Talking purposelessly is not merely so much time wasted but also so much obstruction caused to the silence that should guide men. We must therefore begin life by first learning to listen. If as a nation, we talk less, we will not become dumb; if as a nation we talk only when there is a purpose to be served, we will talk wisdom; if as a nation we learn to listen we will lead

the world on to a higher goal for its humanity."

After listening to Swamiji's talk spell-bound, I returned home and turned over in my mind the recent speeches of our politicians. The first that came up was the speech of our Premier in Tirunelveli. The doubt cropped up: Was it necessary for a person holding such a high office of authority and dignity to employ the language of bluster? Was there any need to create the distinction of irreconcilable interests between the rich and the poor? Was it necessary to mislead the public by the reference to the poor as the sole consideration for the imposition of the advertisement tax? One can hardly expect the persons affected by a tax to accord support to it. The imposition of a new tax must be justified to the people at large and not to one section of it. The Government does not just collect tax from the rich in order to ensure the distribution of wealth among the poor. More often than not, the proceeds of taxation are utilised in creating an additional army of administrative men. Anyway, the Congress ideology does not envisage a classless society. Why then should we engender hostility between the rich and poor through our speeches? You cannot tax the rich without the consent of the poor or the poor without the consent of the rich. If you tax the rich excessively, they will have less to spend on servants, on charity and in the purchase of goods made by the poor. If you tax the poor on the food they buy, they will lose stamina and heart, and will not engage themselves in production. Here was an instance where talking was not necessary.

I then thought of the interview accorded to the correspondent of the *Indian Express* by the Congress President. "The people," he said, "must have administrative sense, a social sense, a governmental sense and a good deal of common sense to understand how much of domestic matters to expose and how much to cover." As I did not read any subsequent contradiction by him that 'for people' one should read 'Ministers,' I assume that by 'people' he meant the people at large. The Doctor did not refer to the need to exercise a judicial sense also. If I remember right, on the

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last occasion that he spoke in the High Court buildings, he did not seem to attach much importance to judicial procedures and practices. That must have accounted for the freedom with which he commented on the charges against high ranking politicians. Whatever that is, there appears to be no justification for this slander on the people. Excessive criticism against the government of a new nation should certainly not be encouraged as it discourages men in charge of administration from building up traditions of good government. But the fault, if any, lies with the Congress politicians who 'cover' when they should 'expose' and who 'expose' when they should 'cover'. On the other hand, if rightful criticism by the public is sought to be suppressed, it will cause not only resentment in the people but such resentment will survive to overthrow even a good government when it comes into being. This is another occasion when our politician need not have talked at all.

The last thing that comes to my mind is the speech of Prime Minister Nehru. He wants to make more public speeches in order to free the people's minds of the misunderstandings about the Congress policies and doings. In all humility, I wonder if speeches at this stage will do much good. The people want proofs of good government and not promises of good government. The Congressman during the days of the Gandhian revolution was of the people, thought with the people and lived with the people. Today, after assumption of office by the Congress party, the Congress administrator lives in isolated islands surrounded by subordinate officials and hangers-on. The march of events during the last few years has been so rapid that he appears, when he begins to talk, like another Rip Van Winkle emerging out of the past. Take the instance of Prime Minister Nehru's reference to the rich industrialists not coming forward to invest money in industries. The Tatas, the Birlas, the Dalmias and the Singhanias, have started industries not out of their own moneys but with the savings of the people. I wonder if all their resources and the hoarded

wealth of others of that ilk put together will be enough to start a dozen big industries in India. During the war period, scarcity of consumer goods and restricted avenues of expenditure constituted a kind of enforced saving for the middle class and the upper middle class. But with the present policy of liberal imports of consumer goods and the mounting cost of living, the surpluses in their incomes have become deficits. It was these people and the financial houses like insurance companies and banks who during the immediate post-war period rushed into the share markets with their savings and funds for investment in industrial equities. Is it any wonder that a period of high taxation, high cost of living and of uncertain ideologies is not conducive to the flow of capital to new industries? The managements of financial houses, seeing the rapid depreciation of their post-war investments are now sadder and wiser men.

Speeches unrelated to actual conditions of life in the country or speeches merely to exercise a doping influence on anxious minds can produce no beneficial or lasting effect. Communism, communalism and indiscipline in the country must be fought, by heroic efforts directed to the betterment of the internal conditions in the country. An extravagant and unimaginative administration cannot be sustained by speeches alone of one great man. Like the kings of old, our Congress administrators should learn to go in mufti among the people and get acquainted with the actual conditions obtaining in the country. They should meet people who will not be flattered by their condescending to talk to them. They must probe into the causes favouring the appeal of communism, the spread of communalism and the increase in corruption and indiscipline. We cannot dismiss as mere perversity on the part of the people all the undesirable and disquieting symptoms that we witness. The roots of the diseases lie deeper and cannot be successfully eradicated by superficial operations.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice.

WAR BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PRESS

"NATIONAL HERALD" ON MADRAS SITUATION

Associated with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the NATIONAL HERALD (Lucknow), is edited by Sri M. Chalapathi Rau, one of the ablest of Indian journalists. In a leading article under the caption "Government Versus Press" the HERALD characterises the Madras Government's treatment of newspapers in the matter of taxation as disquieting rapacity, cruelty for the sake of a small sum. As the article will be of interest to readers of SWATANTRA, it is reproduced below:

IN the Madras province where public opinion is sober, in spite of the appearance of political murder, and progress is tinged with sanatanism, a war is raging between the Government and press. It illustrates in an irritating form the difficulty of maintaining harmony between two agencies of public service, one official and the other unofficial, inheriting from the same sources of nationalism but with no respect for each other. The press of Madras, whether in the reflection of public opinion or in the moulding of it, is the best developed in the country and in the main is restrained in tone and display. The Madras Government, on the other hand, whatever may be the changes in personnel, have been pitiable victims of vicissitudes of public reputation and today face serious charges. The criticised Ministers, who have received a publicity not warranted by their importance, ability or character, have not answered the high seriousness of the press with advances in public rectitude but have shown an intolerance of criticism more worthy of parvenus than public men. The situation constitutes a serious portent to democracy in this country. If a Government cannot ignore public opinion as represented by the press, neither can the press seek to bully a government, for the press does not exhaust public opinion and, while its interests depend ultimately on its ownership, governments in democratic countries exist by the suffrage of the people. The British Labour Party won the general election of 1945 in spite of the fact that the press was overwhelmingly Conservative and earlier Baldwin, refusing to be bullied

by the powerful Beaverbrook press, had characterised its claim to dictate to public men as "the privilege of the harlot, power without responsibility." The controversy in Madras has been invested with acrimony by an unnecessary outburst of temper on the part of the Premier. But the Premier it must be said, was only answering a sternly worded challenge from the Madras Regional Committee of the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society, which in a resolution had stated that if the proposal to tax newspaper advertisements was not withdrawn newspapers would be compelled "to consider ways and means to induce the Government to withdraw these measures in the public interest" and had referred by the way to the publicity "now made freely available to Ministers of Government and members of the legislature." This reference was plainly unwarranted. But it did not justify the threat of the Premier, still of nonage in experience of public administration, that he would ask the public to boycott newspapers which might fall in their duty to report governmental activities in the public interest. What has made the controversy more important than it need be is the insinuation that it is only the newspapers who have been no friends of the Government that are fighting the proposal to levy a tax on advertisements and the retort courteous, on behalf of the press, that the Government propose to levy the tax as a punishment for newspaper criticism.

The real issue is whether the sales tax on newspapers and the proposed tax on newspaper advertisements are just, equitable and sound. The case

against the sales tax has been tersely summed up by Mr. C. R. Srinivasan, president of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference. He says that the tax is a tax on knowledge, uneven in its incidence because it is applied without discrimination to small as well as to big newspapers, and unheard of anywhere else in the world. Wherever a sales tax has been levied, newspapers have been exempted. A sales tax on newspapers cannot be passed on to the buyer as sales taxes normally are intended to be done. The Premier has admitted that the total amount realized by the levy on newspapers is only about two lakhs of rupees in a revenue of about Rs. 50 crores. According to a statement of the Finance Minister of Madras, receipts from the sales tax have risen from Rs. 33.99 lakhs in 1939-40 to Rs. 746.00 lakhs in 1946-47 and Rs. 1302 lakhs in 1948-49. While the Madras Government have shown a disquieting rapacity in their collection of the sales tax, uneven according to all accounts, they have been cruel in the case of newspapers for the sake of a small sum. There seems to be among the Ministers a spirit of greed for collecting as much tax as possible but this cannot be explained as entirely zeal for measures like prohibition. For the fact remains that the Government have not yet thought of an agricultural income-tax, that Ministers have removed cuts in their salaries, that allowances of legislators are being increased, that dearness allowances for high-paid Government servants are being sanctioned. Whether the taxation level is high or not is a debatable point but there is no doubt that no concession is made in favour of the poor.

A tax on newspaper advertisements raises similar issues, though it may offer a more fascinating prospect for finance ministers. It is wholly wrong to contend that the proposed tax is a tax on advertisements, for the advertisers will not pay it. Whatever its guise it is plainly a tax on newspapers.

It is an anomaly of free enterprise under capitalism that newspapers can live only by the advertisements they secure. No newspaper has found it possible to pay its cost of production through sales and the experience of a newspaper like *P. M.* which eked out a precarious existence for a few years without advertisements was not inspiring. The Premier has sought to argue that the new tax will hit only the rich newspapers. The provisions of the bill do not seem to make any such distinction. The wholesome course would have been to shift the burden to the taxable surplus. More alarming than the burden of the proposed tax is the power sought to be given to the executive to enter the premises of a press, to make searches or effect seizures. The Finance Minister seems to be inspired more by pique than by public considerations, for a bare knowledge of newspaper finance should have been enough to convince him of the unreasonableness of his stand. He may have found strength in the Bombay Government's intention to levy a similar tax. That Government, like the Government of Madras, are also unhappy as far as the press is concerned. But we do not know whether the call of the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society to the Government of India to intervene will be useful. For the provincial Governments have shown an increasing obstinacy in these matters and the remedy for restoring the situation to normalcy rests with the provincial Governments themselves, if they take a broad-minded view of the rights of the press. From the point of view of taxation, the question is how far newspapers are an industry and how far they are still means of public opinion. To hit every newspaper on the basis of an indiscriminating principle is to undermine the press which may suit some public men today but which in the long term will destroy decent public life altogether. Let there be no bullying from either side in the conflicting claims to public service.

TAXATION: The art of plucking the goose to secure the greatest amount of feathers with the least amount of squawking.—ANON.

SPOTLIGHT

GERMANY AND THE WESTERN POWERS

REVIEWING the world economic conditions at the annual conference of the International Labour Organisation recently, Mr. David A. Morse, Director-General, warned the world against a possible trade recession in the near future. He said: "Already in some countries, notably in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States, there is evidence suggesting that a turning point may have been reached. There have been sharp breaks in the prices of certain commodities, and unemployment has risen to a greater extent than can be accounted for by purely seasonal factors."

Support to this view comes from a report issued by the U. S. Federal Reserve Board for the month of April, which points out a fall in industrial production in the United States from 184% of the 1935-'39 level to 179%. The unemployment figures are mounting and the latest cited is three million, though President Truman has discounted the seriousness of the situation saying: "There is no crisis in jobs and business."

While many opinions have been voiced about when the next slump is likely to come, there has been general unanimity in the view that there are the elements of a depression in the present economy of the United States and the non-Communist world. Already a bumper wheat crop has been forecast in America that may end in a glut in the world market. Wheat acreage is sought to be reduced so that supplies next year will be 20 percent below present levels.

It is against this background that the political and economic affairs of Europe should be studied as European economy is still highly sensitive to American fluctuations. It is well-known that Western Europe is attempting economic recovery with the help of Marshall dollars with the ultimate objective of self-sufficiency. What is not adequately realised is the similar industrial development

of West European countries which require raw materials from East Europe to feed their industries. Also, their products can find the most natural outlet only in the East European market. Thus, no permanent stability of trade or employment can be planned for the West ignoring the artificial political partition of Europe between Russia and the Western Powers.

In this connection, the offer made by M. Vyshinsky at the Big Four Foreign Ministers Conference in Paris recently acquires importance. Though he re-stated his time-worn charge that the Western Powers had been guilty of a breach of the Potsdam Agreement on Germany, his proposals aimed at a concrete economic unity of Germany. He advocated an all-German State Council superseding both the Bonn Government of the Western Powers and the People's Council in the East, to co-ordinate the work of the various economic bodies and functional agencies. He had shelved the question of political unity for the time being, as it would be attainable only on the basis of extending to the Soviet zone of Germany some of the Bonn democracy with supervised free elections. That may be dangerous to Russia's interest, if one were to remember the elections to the People's Congress in the Eastern zone when nearly 40 per cent of the voters voted against the single list put up by the Communist Party.

However, nothing much has been done about this Russian proposal; instead, Mr. Dean Acheson, U. S. Secretary of State, made a counter-proposal that a Four-Power Government for Greater Berlin be set up with legislative, executive and judicial powers to be exercised by the Germans themselves. He also demanded free access to Berlin for the Western Powers. This has not met with an enthusiastic response from the Russian Foreign Minister.

Among other things which the Paris Conference discussed to little purpose

was the preparation of a peace treaty for Germany. On Mr. Acheson pointing out that the preparation of the treaty and the unification of Germany must proceed hand in hand, it was conveniently presumed that the subject had been exhausted.

Some progress, however, seems to have been made by the Foreign Ministers in their discussions on the conclusion of an Austrian Treaty. The Western Allies have offered to settle the Soviet claim of £37,500,000 (payable in six months) on German assets in Austria in return for Moscow's agreement not to press Yugoslavia's territorial and reparation claims in Austria. It may be that this bargaining by Russia also suited her policy of bringing Tito to book. So far, appeals to the West for help have been reported only from Yugoslavia, and this would be the first time that Russia needed the help of the Western Powers for putting Tito in his place. Normally, America and Britain should welcome Titoish breaks in world Communist solidarity. But the possibility of restoring an undismembered Austria to the Western camp has outweighed any finer points of etiquette towards a potential Communist ally. It will not be surprising, therefore, if the Paris talks lead to a rapid conclusion of the Austrian Treaty. And that would be quite an achievement in the total absence of any settlement on the German question.

In the meanwhile, the U. S. Military Government in Germany have succeeded in forging an agreement with the British for the first sale of any of the I. G. Farben chemical trust properties. A major policy step, this action on the I. G. Farben trusts is being initiated bilaterally by the U. S. and Britain although Allied Control Law requires four power action on Farben properties. The Soviet Union was not consulted but France has

been invited as an observer so that she might be inspired to take similar action on Farben properties in her zone.

This decartelisation policy is by no means very widely practised. The U. S. Military Government could reach no agreement with the British on the match monopoly because "the British seem to think it is a pretty good outfit." It is the British position that this trust was formed by a pre-Hitler law in the public interest. There have also been difficulties with regard to the steel and coal decartelisation measures, because the Allied Control Council Law relating to it provides for the naming of German trustees in the Ruhr and has aroused the French Government's anger.

Whatever the differences between the Western Powers on their policy in Germany, they have shown more unanimity in their policy towards Communists in the Far East. An understanding is stated to have been reached in Paris by Britain, France, Holland and the United States that they should co-operate closely in protecting South-East Asia from Communism. A belated recognition that increased prosperity can remove reasons for discontent has been responsible for their decision to extend economic and technical assistance to the industries in these countries. Holland has gone so far as to talk of a change in her policy in Indonesia. Dr. Van Royen who leads the Dutch delegation at the joint talks in Batavia over Indonesia's future, has optimistically predicted that the Soekarno-Hatta Republican Government will return to Jogjakarta by the end of the month. If the Dutch prove as good as their word the Republicans will soon be attending the talks at The Hague on a United States of Indonesia in which they will be the most important members.

BRITAIN IN MIDDLE EAST

By KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

PALESTINE and Transjordan, carved out of the lands east of the Jordan, have become the focal points of Middle Eastern politics today. With their keen foresight the British joined these two arrows to their imperialist bow. The plan to make Palestine a British foothold goes at least a century back when the first British consul appointed there was entrusted with the special task of protecting the rights of the Jews. The plan thenceforward began to unfold itself with an inducement to Jews from the ghettos of Europe to migrate to Palestine and settle down there. Special colonisation plans were sponsored by British organisations, and the corporations set up to finance these colonisation schemes were predominantly British. The belief was that such a British-created colony would remain a faithful ally of her benefactor.

Imperialism thrives on internal disunity. Zionism had for many decades occupied a dual significance on the imperialist scheme. It could be utilised to impede the legitimate struggle of the Palestinians for freedom; secondly, it provided a facade behind which imperialism could hide its visage and towards which the ire of the Arab masses could be directed. There were subtler situations created. For instance, the British appointed Jews as heads of some of their concerns so that any anti-British move by the Arabs could be given an anti-Jewish twist. Where its pocket was touched, imperialism wore a double guise to accommodate itself to the Arab-Jewish antagonism and indirectly encourage it. Thus the Anglo-American Tobacco Company built two separate enterprises, one on Tel Aviv to supply the Jewish market, employing Jewish, the other in Karaman, Dick and Salt, to supply the Arab market, employing only Arab workers and advertising itself as an Arab national enterprise and actually identifying itself with the pro-Arab propaganda against the sale of land to the Jews. The deepening hatred between the two communities naturally enabled the imperialist rulers to make Palestine a Police State, maintaining one policeman for

every 100 citizens as against one for nearly 700 in England. The financial appropriation for Police was 27% of the budget as against 0.3 in England. An autocratic State thus flourished in Palestine without a Parliament or an elected body of any kind. Thus Zionism, far from redeeming the Jews from suffering, merely made them a buffer bloc between imperialism and the Arab freedom struggle. The tragedy of it all was that the calamity of the Jews which was the direct result of the existing social order should have been exploited by a ruling power to maintain its grip on this unhappy land and that the youth of these long and cruelly persecuted people should have become the blind tools of world power politics. Palestine became a symbol of British survival in this strategic region.

The Balfour Declaration of a National Home for the Jews was based on the slogan "to reset the ancient glories of the Jewish nation in the freedom of a new British dominion in Palestine." But the new protegee, carefully nurtured on British diplomacy, developed on different lines. Nazism which arose out of World War I and the post-war economic set-up found a special target in the Jews. Persecuted everywhere, the Jews found an ideal haven in the new National Home of Palestine. Some of the very elite of the Jewish race have now settled down in Palestine—intellectuals, technicians, experts of various kinds, people with modern ideas, full of new visions and vigour. As they began to populate the ancient land of Palestine, a sudden transformation manifested itself. Under the impact of starting a new life after much suppression and humiliation these settlers began to create and elove new social and economic forms of expression. Large agricultural and industrial co-operatives were set up. With the rapid growth of co-operative settlements came community activities on a socialist pattern such as community homes, kitchens and the like. Above all Leftist forces grew and expanded as labour and co-operatives got better organised. The Jews in Palestine were fast becoming

The members of the Fine Arts Club, Triplicane intend staging "THUPPARIYUM SAMBU" a Tamil Social drama by "DEVAN" of Anandavikatan at 6 p. m. on Sunday, 3rd July 1949 at the Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Mylapore. The proceeds of the drama will be utilized for opening up a free reading room and a small library for the public.

The name of the club has been changed from "The Triplicane Fine Arts Club" to "The Fine Arts Club, Triplicane." The Club is open to the public of the whole City of Madras and anybody can become a member.

a force which held no promise of remaining tied to British apron strings. As the Jewish pressure increased especially in organised forms of violence, the British found their position in Palestine untenable.

Britain had however characteristically tried to keep in also with the Arabs. The outbreak of World War II had made this more imperative. Thus while she kept swinging from one side to the other, she gave the Arab statesmen to understand that she was no longer averse to the emergence of the Arab League—a move she had vigorously opposed previously when it was shaping itself as the symbol of revolt against Western imperialism under the polite fiction of mandates. Now Arab collaboration developed under the impact of Jewish aggression in Palestine and in the spring of 1945 a federation of the Governments of Arab-speaking States was formed which the British Government blessed as a force to offset the rising Jewish threat. But constituted as the League was to safeguard the sovereignty and independence of the Arab States, the British could not expect it to serve their own imperialist self-interest. So even while they paid lip sympathy to the League, they had already set in motion plans for undermining it.

After the collapse of the Arabic State of Greater Syria under the French assault, the lands east of the Jordan were carved into the kingdom of Transjordan, whose throne, Abdullah, one of the elder sons of Husain, Sharif of Mecca, mounted with British military and financial assistance. The kingdom of Transjordan had to be built anew. The British offered an annual subsidy of 2½ million pounds and Glubb Pasha a military officer to train the army. Britain next got it exempted from all the clauses of the mandate concerned with the establishment of a Jewish national home. She thereby very cleverly laid the foundation of an edifice to protect her power and, in the event of pressure, as a last foothold in this strategic area.

King Abdullah is an extremely ambitious man. He was greatly upset that his younger brother Feisal should have been chosen as the first king of the Arab kingdom set up in Damascus and later given the throne of Bagh-

dad. In fact he has never renounced his hereditary right, as the son of the Sharif of Mecca, to be the king of the Arabs. The British have been and are doing all they can to fan these ambitions, for it makes him rely more and more on the British for the realisation of his future plans. He is the weak link in the Arab League. He can and will act only with British approval.

At the same time, King Abdullah has been projected into continuous intrigues in Syria by British interests which lurk behind the curtain. Taking advantage of the prevailing discontent in Syria, Abdullah's henchmen try to canalise this into a decisive blow to overthrow the present regime and link it up with Transjordan to form Greater Syria. Thereby, the British would get a firmer footing in this region and widen their base of influence and control. Opportunists in Iraq lend a hand to Abdullah in the name of establishing the Hashimite dynasty. Whatever may be the intensity of their sentiments towards the Hashimites, they are really the satellites and creatures of the British.

While Abdullah is regarded in the Arab League as the bad boy, Ibn Saud is more or less the bully—the strong man who is in perpetual opposition to Abdullah. Another complicating factor is that the Zionists have never accepted the exclusion of Transjordan from their potential embrace. Dr Weizmann told the Zionist Congress sometime ago: "The question of the eastern frontier will be better answered when Transjordan is so full of Jews that a way is forced into Transjordan." In order to get at least the Arab districts of Palestine under his rule, King Abdullah yielded to the British plan of partitioning Palestine when the latter quit there. The Palestinians of these districts over which Abdullah is establishing his rule do not want him nor do they desire to become part of Transjordan. But it is the Transjordan army under British patronage that stands today between them and the Jewish forces.

In fact, the Israel troops in pursuit of their resolve to claim Transjordan have violated the frontier and entered the country. That the British regarded this seriously is evident from the fact that British reinforcements were sent there recently. The Israel troops

occupying the southern Negeb gion have come face to face with British troops garrisoning the Transjordan port of Akaba.

After the first World war, Britain had been able to confirm the dominant position she had so assiduously built up in the 19th century in the Middle East. The second World War however shook that up on account of the serious impoverishment of her resources. Ostensibly she seemed to yield place to America. But actually, Britain still dominates politically through a trained diplomatic personnel. While seemingly conceding independence to the Arab countries, she contrives to retain the economic and political hold by supporting the deca-

dent upper classes and corrupt vested interests and maintaining them as the ruling class in order to safeguard her own imperialist interests.

Even Socialist Britain has not altered this policy. In response to a suggestion at the Labour Party Conference that parts of the Middle East should become the responsibility of an international organisation, Bevin blatantly replied, "I am not going to be a party to voluntarily putting British interests in a pool, while everybody else sticks to his own."

That is how the British liquidate their empire. British diplomacy steps in where British arms fail. They quit India only to keep her within the Commonwealth.

THE HINDU CODE BILL

By GARGI RANI MAHAJAN

THE Hindu Code Bill has raised a storm of controversy. There have been vehement speeches and statements for and against it by leaders of public opinion and social reform. One section denounces it as a highly retrograde measure bound to sap the very vitals of Hindu society while others welcome it as a veritable blessing. Dr. Ambedkar, while moving the Bill in the Parliament, quoted Edmund Burke who once remarked, "Those who want to conserve must be ready to repair."

The dictum is full of wisdom. The Hindu Code Bill calls for nothing more than repairing those parts of Hindu society which have almost become dilapidated. Women in this country have been subjected to social slavery for centuries and since they did not receive proper education their minds were dwarfed. It seldom struck them that they were occupying a very low position in society. They only learned to lean on their husbands for social and economic existence and practically merged their entities into those of their husbands. The Hindu Code Bill is a just and timely measure to restore the Indian women to a status of equality with men—a right which had been alienated from them during the last several centuries.

It is wrong to say that the Hindu Code Bill militates against the spirit of Hindu religion. No religion can be so narrow as to withhold justice and fairness from its adherents on the score of sex. It is equally wrong to say that the Bill is against the instructions embodied in the Smritis. Surely, our old Rishis could never have sought to perpetuate unfair and unwholesome customs in Hindu society.

The Bill is a compromise between the modern and conservative element of Hindu society. Most of its provisions are of an optional nature. No compulsion or obligation is imposed on the orthodox. Their only effect is to give the growing and clamant body of Hindus, men and women, the liberty to live a life which they wish to lead without in any way affecting or infringing on the freedom of those who prefer to adhere to the old ways. For example, if any member of the community wants to follow the orthodox system which requires that marriage shall not be valid unless the bride and the bridegroom belong to the same varna, caste or sub-caste there is nothing in this code which can prevent him from giving effect to his wishes. In the same way if any reformist Hindu who does not believe

in the restrictions of varna, caste or sub-caste wants to marry outside his varna, caste or sub-caste, the law will extend recognition to his marriage also.

The introduction of monogamy in Hindu society can in no way be considered an innovation. Hindu scriptures do not give a Hindu unfettered or unqualified right to polygamy. Kautilya's Arthashastra considerably restricts the right of a husband to marry a second wife. Similarly the recent legislation passed by the Bombay, Madras and Baroda assemblies enjoins upon the Hindu community to observe monogamy. It is clear, therefore, that, while sponsoring the Hindu Code Bill, the Government of India are not proposing to make any radical or revolutionary change; they have precedents for what they are doing both in the laws that have been passed in various provinces or states in India and in the ancient Shastras. The Bill merely confirms that India also believes in the salutary principle of monogamy which has been recognised all over the world.

It has often been noticed that not many marriages are successful and in many cases the dissolution of the marriage would lead to greater happiness for the man and women than if they were undesirably tied up despite their longing for separation. Divorce laws in the West have compelled many erring husbands and wives to improve their domestic conduct in their anxiety to avoid a break-up. In India, practically ninety percent of the total population (as against ten percent of what are called caste Hindus) believe in and practise the custom of divorce. The provision for divorce in the Hindu Code Bill, therefore, should not shock any body.

In the realm of adoption, the Bill widens the field of choice. If a Kshatriya wants to adopt a Shudra or a

Brahmin boy, nothing can prevent him from doing so and such an adoption would be absolutely valid. The Bill, however, does not permit the adopted boy to divest an adopting mother completely of her rights over property and make her nothing more than a mere dependent upon the adopted boy. It has been seen in several cases that an adopted son is often a stranger to an adopting mother, notwithstanding the important change that the boy has entered into the family of the adopting father. Even after adoption, for all practical purposes, the boy continues his close relationship with the members of his own family. This has resulted in the adopting mother getting no kind of security for herself as a result of adoption—the security which a mother would get from her own son. Often an adopted son has run away with the property of the adopting mother which he acquired after adoption and left her without anything but the right of maintenance. The Bill provides that only one half of the property of the adopting mother would go to the adopting son, the other half, notwithstanding the fact of adoption, to remain in the possession and enjoyment of the adopting mother.

In regard to the law of succession, the Bill follows the principles of natural love and affection. It introduces an element of uniformity in the field of inheritance. No enlightened person would consider the incursion of daughters among the heirs as an objectionable innovation. Similarly other provisions of the Bill are based on justice, equity and fairness.

The Hindu Code Bill is truly a great landmark in the social history of India. It introduces uniformity and codifies the principles of the Hindu Law in such a way that they may be based on justice and yet may be easily understood by any ordinary citizen of India.—N. P. S. (Copyright).

I have not very much use for people who are not in touch with the invisible world. At best they are good animals, and too often not even that. The men and women who have done best, both for themselves and their fellows, are those who have brought these two worlds into relation If you do not make any contact with this timeless world (in other words, have no inner life) you have at best a very precarious hold on happiness. Given that contact, you enjoy a very considerable security from the results of misfortune in the visible world, and a complete immunity from boredom.—J. B. S. HALDANE.

FOR HER SON'S SAKE

By
V. K. RANGANATHA RAO

SHE had stood before the imposing war memorial which a grateful corporation had erected to those of her brave sons who, having participated in the Great War, had forfeited their lives for King and country. A little shabby old woman with a face wrinkled like the skin of an apple that has been kept overlong, and eyes dimmed with much weeping.

She had come very early so as to get a good place. It was 'Victory' day, and later there would be a big crowd for the memorial service, at which the Commander-in-Chief and his staff were to be present.

Few people had assembled as yet, but they were beginning to wend their way up to the fine promenade, in the centre of which the memorial proudly raised its column. Women for the most part—relatives or sweethearts of the dead—and each carried a floral offering to the treasured memory of some loved one.

Only the little old woman was empty-handed. She had no money for flowers—the few rupees allowed her monthly by a benign Government barely sufficed to pay for her bit of food and the one room she occupied. But she had her feelings and her only son's name was among those engraved upon the panels of the war memorial. He had, in fact, been one of the first victims of the war.

The thought that her boy's spirit was hovering near obsessed the poor mother. How hurt he must feel that for him alone there was no gift of blossoms—and he had been so fond of flowers too. Many a time she had known him tramp miles into the country to gather the lovely wild flowers to her. He had always been a good and kind son to her. And now she was all alone in the world. The old lips quivered and a tear trickled down a furrow in the worn cheek.

As she turned away from the memorial a young widow passed her, carrying a wealth of pure white lilies, and as their sweet cloying perfume was wafted to the elder woman's nostrils it awakened in her mind the memory of a scene of the previous evening, when, chancing to wander through one of the more important thoroughfares, she had been just in time to see the flower-laden coffin of a wealthy and respected businessman who had died a few days earlier, borne from his late residence to the waiting hearse, the top of which was hidden beneath a wealth of floral tributes of every size and shape, which filled the air with an almost overpowering sweetness.

Now as the bereaved mother visualized the scene of yesterday with its magnificent floral display, she was conscious of a sense of unfairness. Why should such a wealth of exquisite blossoms be showered upon one elderly tradesman while her son—a hero, cut off in early manhood—had not a single flower?

And right on the heels of this reflection came a thought that brought an unaccustomed flush to the old woman's cheek, and caused her to glance guiltily over her shoulders, as if Satan himself had whispered into her ear the evil suggestion that one wreath would never be missed from the tradesman's grave. Shuddering, she shook her head, muttering beneath her breath that she had always lived honest and respectable. As for robbing other folk's graves....

But even as she thrust the temptation from her, a chance sentence uttered by an elderly workman overruled her scruples and stilled the voice of conscience.

"Yes, this here wreath took pretty well the most of my week's earnings," complained a gruff but kindly voice. "But mother and I would not like

think our poor boy did not have as good as the rest of those who fell with him."

A pang pierced the heart of the poor mother as she listened. Her son alone was neglected! And suddenly her mind was made up. Her boy should have his flowers—bless him.

It was no great distance to the old burial-ground where the deceased businessman had been laid to rest. The place was little frequented and today it lay peaceful and deserted in the morning sunshine.

Not a living creature was in sight as the old woman, glancing nervously to right and left, cautiously made her way down the centre path between rows of ancient moss-covered headstones.

The tradesman's grave was not difficult to find, since the freshly-disturbed earth of a mound which lay beneath a group of almond trees, was almost hidden by its pall of flowers. Wreaths, garlands, cushions, bouquets, and all manner of elaborate and expensive floral devices were piled upon that newly-made grave, and all as fragrant and unblemished as if they had but that moment been placed there.

For a full minute the old woman stood deliberating. Which should she take? That splendid wreath of roses and carnations?

"No, No!" she decided, aware that such an obviously costly thing in her hand would at once arouse suspicion. "It is too grand for the likes of me."

Then she caught sight of a small cross composed of roses and jasmine, simple and unpretentious, bearing on the black-bordered card attached to it the inscription: "Krupan: In loving remembrance."

"Krupan! her son's name!"

"Like as if it had been put there on purpose," she told herself. But still she hesitated, for never in her life had she stolen anything, and after all, to remove flowers from a grave was stealing—stealing from the dead. A cold shiver passed over her at the bare idea.

Then, suddenly, with startling distinctiveness, there seemed again to echo in her ears the workman's words: "We would not like to think our poor boy did not have as good as the rest of those who fell with him."

Instantly her decision was taken. Casting a stealthy glance around, she stooped and picking up the floral cross, hastily concealed it beneath her cloak. Once again she looked nervously about her, then, satisfied that she was still unobserved, turned with tottering steps towards the gate.

But, all unsuspected by this aged grave-robber, there had been an eye-witness of her act of depredation—and he a magistrate of all people.

He had come to the old grave-yard to visit the grave of his wife and to place thereon—as was his custom on this, the anniversary of their wedding day—a bunch of flowers, just as during her life-time he had never failed to bring them to her on this day of the year.

The magistrate had emerged from behind a tall monument which had concealed him from view, at the very moment when the woman bent to lift the cross from the tradesman's grave, and his first impulse was to reveal himself and tax her with the theft. But on second thoughts he stepped back again behind the sheltering tomb, from where, himself invisible, he was able to observe her every movement, and as she hastened down the path, she passed so close to his hiding place that by stretching out his hands he could have touched her.

The upholder of law and order was conscious of a feeling of surprise as he noted that, although obviously poor, the culprit looked thoroughly respectable—not at all like the ordinary sort of thief—thought the man whose office made him acquainted with all types of humanity. But poverty will often lead people into crime, he reflected with a sigh, and doubtless the old woman intended to sell the stolen cross to some visitor to the war memorial in order to obtain money for food. Still, he was not going to be soft-hearted. He would follow her and as soon as she offered her ill-gotten gains for sale, he would have something to say to her. He did not wish to have the aged pilferer arrested, but merely to teach her a wholesome lesson.

As soon as the flower-snatcher had reached the gate, the magistrate, hurried out to his motor car, which was waiting to convey him to the war memorial, for he, too, had lost his

only son—a promising young lieutenant, whose ship had been torpedoed by the Germans.

"Drive slowly," he directed the chauffeur, before stepping into the car. "I want to keep that old woman in sight." The man touched his cap. "Very good, Sir," he replied.

Slowly the car glided through the busy streets, and, all unconscious of watching eyes, the shabby little mother hastened towards her goal, the white cross clasped to her thin bosom beneath the threadbare cloak.

By the time the pursued and pursuer reached their destination, a considerable crowd had assembled, while in the roped-in enclosure around the memorial were stationed detachments of soldiers, with their bands in attendance.

A steady stream of relations and friends of the departed flowed towards the mighty column, each mourner in turn laying his or her floral offering upon the ever-mounting pile of blossoms of every sort and colour.

Timidly, the small shabby figure joined the rear of the procession, and now she no longer concealed the cross, but bore it proudly for all to see.

"Now!" soliloquized the man of law eyeing his quarry grimly. "I must not lose sight of the old girl for a minute." And taking from a florist's paper bag beside him a beautifully wrought garland of red and white and blue flowers—his tribute to the memory of his dead son—he quickly alighted from the car and slipped into the procession immediately behind the grave-robber, ready to pounce upon her directly she attempted to offer her stolen property for sale.

Slowly the moving mass advanced towards the memorial, the magistrate never for a moment removing his eyes from the shabby figure in front of him. At last, they reached the column itself, and now he moved a step nearer to the old woman, in order that he might at once frustrate any attempt on her part to find a purchaser for the cross.

But, to his surprise, instead of doing what he expected, she slowly ascended the granite steps, and kneeling

reverently, deposited the cross at the foot of the column. Then, as she rose from her knees, he saw that, although tears streamed down the thin wrinkled old cheeks, her face wore a transfigured look as if she had seen a beatific vision. And as she moved away he caught the faintly murmured words, unconsciously uttered aloud: "The Almighty will understand—it was for my boy's sake."

And the magistrate, who was by nature the kindest hearted of men, and knew what it meant to lose an only child, felt suddenly humbled, and there was an unaccustomed moisture in his own eyes as, instead of carrying out his intention of "pouncing," he turned and quietly made his way to the place that had been allotted to him in the special enclosure.

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POLITICAL PERSUASION IN THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES

By Sir ERNEST BARKER

Sir Ernest Barker, Cambridge political philosopher, is a fellow of the British Academy, a Doctor of Letters of the Universities of both Oxford and Cambridge, and a Doctor of Laws of the Universities of Edinburgh, Harvard, Calcutta, Dalhousie, and Salonika. From 1920 to 1927, he was Principal of King's College, London University, and from 1928 to 1939, Professor of Political Science and Fellow of Peterhouse (College), Cambridge. He was President of the Education Section of the British Association in 1924, and, from 1943 to 1945, Chairman of the Books and Periodicals Commission of the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education.

ALL our Western democracies are systems of discussion. The discussion is between alternative policies, presented to the citizen's choice by different advocates and commended to his reason by all the arts and methods of rational persuasion. The essential basis of every democratic system of discussion is, therefore, the free citizen; the citizen who is triply free as possessing three rights to freedom—first, freedom of thought; next, freedom of the expression of thought and promulgation of opinion; and, lastly freedom of assembly and association for the purpose of such expression and propagation.

The free citizen, thinking freely, and discussing freely different ideas and alternative policies, and engaged in a process of mutual persuasion with his fellow-citizens—this is the source and the strength of every democracy.

Three principles of political persuasion follow these premises. The first is that it should be multiple. There can be no choice by the chooser unless a number of choices are offered. A number of choices cannot be offered unless there are a number of persuaders—not one persuader (or group of persuaders), with a monopoly of the means of persuasion, but many persuaders (or groups of persuaders) with equal and open access to all the means of persuasion. Normally, in a democracy, the persuaders are arrayed in groups, alternative and competing groups, composed of freely associated members who form political parties.

Political persuasion, in a democratic system, which offers a number of

choices for discussion to the electorate, demands a plurality of parties and a multiplicity of persuaders. But this multiplicity is not always easily achieved. A persuading group may persuade itself that it offers the only right alternative and the only permissible choice; and it may therefore seek to vindicate a monopoly of persuasion. But persuasion dies when it becomes a monopoly. It ceases to be persuasion and it becomes compulsion. Democracy dies with it; for discussion ceases when compulsion kills the free comparison of alternatives and the free choice of the citizen.

If there is to be any democracy, there must be multiple persuasion. The extreme Right must tolerate the right of the extreme Left to enjoy equal and open access to all the means of persuasion. The extreme Left must tolerate the similar right of the extreme Right. This is the first principle of political persuasion which all our Western democracies recognise, and all are determined to preserve.

A second principle which they recognise and are determined to preserve is that political persuasion should be rational—or at any rate primarily rational. It is true that man is a mixed creature; that his passions and emotions are closely allied with his reason; and that a purely rational man would be an abstract and unreal spectre. But it is also true that discussion is essentially a rational process, and that democracy is based on the rule of reason and law, and not of passion and arbitrary will.

True persuasion will always appeal to the best in man; it will appeal to his reason, and it will

therefore be rational. This is no doubt a counsel of perfection. It is so much easier to appeal to passion than it is to appeal to reason. But though it may be easier, it is not wise; and, what is more, it is not successful. There is a sovereign good sense and a rational power in the mind of the general people which listen most, in the last resort, to the still small voice of reason.

A third principle of political persuasion is that it should be, if one may use the word, refutable. Persuasion is not persuasion when it seeks to demand or command. Persuasion ceases to be rational, and to leave any room for the play of reason in those to whom it is addressed, when instead of begging for acceptance on the ground of the reason in it, it simply stands for acceptance on the ground of the power behind it. Persuasion allied to any form of force—to military formations of uniformed adherents, or to any form or method of intimidation—has ceased to be persuasion. Equally, persuasion allied to bribery loses its essence and ceases to be itself. If force appeals to our fears, bribery appeals to our lower passions and meaner interests; and both do violence to our rational nature.

These may be said to be the three main principles of political persuasion. They are limits as well as principles (indeed every principle of action is by its nature a limit on action); but there is still a further limit to be added. Political persuasion by individuals or groups must always respect and move within the fundamental limits which are set, first by the system of public order and next, by the ideas of social decency cherished by the general community. Persuasion has a large range; but there are things beyond its range. Respect for the system of public order sets a limit to persuasion intended or likely to incite others to alter by violence the established system of government, or to promote disorder and crime. Respect for the ideas of social decency cherished by the general community sets a limit to persuasion intended or likely to bring sexual and general morality into discredit. It is true that persuasion of the latter order is hardly, in the strict sense, political persuasion. But the general morality of a country is so closely linked with its

system of public order that an attempt to discredit the one is likely to affect the other.

There is, indeed, a case to be made in favour of a government attempting some measure of political persuasion. Government becomes more and more complicated; it affects the life of the individual at more and more points. On this ground there is something to be said for the appointment of public relations officers by government departments who will explain the policies and give information about the action of the departments with which they are concerned. But such a function would properly be a function of explanation and information and not a function of political persuasion. The aim should be to say what is being done, exactly as it is being done—but not to defend it, or to extol it, or to suggest that it is something admirable which ought to redound to the credit of government and to secure its continuance in office. This is a difficult and delicate matter, which needs to be closely watched.

It is so easy to slide from explanation and information given by government officials into the organisation of a general system of political persuasion conducted by the government. That is a slippery slope. "Government publicity" may be in its measure good; but the measure needs to be carefully set and rigorously observed. Otherwise there may be a slippery descent from "government publicity" into what is called propaganda; and government propaganda is the beginning of the end of democracy. It inserts a heavy and a dangerous weight, of a unique character, into the process of multiple persuasion.

Governments in these days have a general command of supplies of paper; they have a great power of advertising in the press; they have connections which vary from country to country, with systems of broadcasting. Governments have, at the moment, a giant's strength if they enter the field of political persuasion. The more they confine themselves strictly to explanation and information and the more they eschew political persuasion, the greater will be the service they render to the true and proper working of our Western system of democracy.

A LETTER FROM LONDON

(From Our Correspondent)

LONDON: Last week held a lot of excitement for Londoners. First, we witnessed the gigantic struggle for supremacy between Cruiser-weight champion of the World, Freddie Mills, and British Heavy-weight champion, Bruce Woodcock, who has been having a streak of bad luck, ever since his disastrous fight with American champion, Joe Baksi, when he was sent to hospital with a broken jaw and serious eye injuries. After several months of medical care and rest, Woodcock faced American Lee Savold a few months ago and obtained a very unconvincing victory. Rumour had it that Woodcock would never be the same man again in the ring. But, last week, Woodcock thrashed tough and dogged Freddie Mills, who did not quite make the count in the 14th round. Betting odds were severely against Woodcock, but the British sporting public and the critics are now in rhapsodies over the champion's comeback. However, the real test, they say, will be when Woodcock faces the American fighter. The big question is, "Will Woodcock overcome his inferiority complex against a Yankee?" His next big fight is, once again, against Lee Savold, who is confident that he will defeat Woodcock this time, in spite of Woodcock's new coat of varnish.

The next great, and one might say, national event, was the running of the Epsom Derby. This year there was no outstanding favourite, and the stakes, with over £14,000 to the winner, were the highest ever. Just before the great day, there was much excitement over the "Drakes"—Amour and Val—the best French candidates in the field, owned by M. Volterra, half-share owner in last year's Derby winner, My Love. There was much worry in the hearts of British race-goers. Ever since the war, French horses have been consistently carrying off the blue ribands of the English turf. English bloodstock has only just recovered from the effects of the war, and this year, on Derby day there seemed every chance that a British horse might carry off the trophy of the year. As it was, Nimbus just

survived the gruelling test on the track and Britain came smiling through. But all honours of the day went to Amour Drake, who finished with a rattling run. The prophets, including the Aga Khan, are now unanimous in proclaiming Amour Drake a sure bet for the St. Leger.

Whitsun week always comes as a great relief in the dull drudgery of the average Londoner. Families plan months ahead as to how they will spend Whitsun, and during these three or four days, half of London is "out of town." But, this year, Londoners were forced to plan a Holiday at Home. The uncertain weather predicted by the forecasters had something to do with it, but, more than that, was the Railway Strike that hung threateningly over all holiday-makers. London museums and the Zoo, cinema houses and theatres and even the Serpentine and the Tower of London enjoyed the biggest boom in years. The weather prophets were put to shame—the weather was so fine, and the sun shone down from a "hot and coppery sky." The ice-cream vendors had a roaring trade.

Never was more ballyhoo printed in the British daily press than over the recent wedding of Rita Hayworth to Aly Khan, in the south of France. Similes and metaphors flourished luxuriantly, as writers went into hysterics over Rita's smile, and Aly's swimming pool, into which several hundred gallons of orange blossom perfume had been tipped. Though it is several days since all this blurb appeared on the front pages in thick black type, I cannot resist quoting from two London dailies generally representing two opposite points of view. First, the *Sunday Express* (Conservative): "Not only has Rita become a princess—which other Hollywood girls have done before her—but she has become the daughter-in-law of a god—which no other star of the films has ever done." Then, the *Daily Worker* (Communist): **Headline: RITA HOOKS HIM AS VIOLINS PLAY: "Amid an unprecedented concentration of generals, millionaires,**

society dames, eastern despots, eleven dispossessed princes and princesses, Rita Hayworth finally got her man yesterday.... The guests drank several hundred bottles of champagne at three bars, while seven fiddlers in white coats wandered around the grounds of Aly's sumptuous villa, playing 'La Vie en Rose', Aly's favourite tune."

Europe and America are becoming more and more air-minded these days. Pan-Americans have started a new luxury service on their giant Stratocruiser Clipper flying between London and New York in 13 hours. For an extra £6-13s. over the standard single

fare of £87, travellers are given private sleeping berths, a seven course dinner, with "free cocktails, free vintage champagne and free liqueurs" thrown in, and the next morning served with breakfast in bed! Meanwhile, rumour has it that British air services are intending to replace their stewardesses with men. The air-hostesses have no one to blame but themselves, for this hostile attitude of the big air companies towards the employment of women. After a training which costs the company £250, the girls get married after a few flights, and leave. Moreover, the big companies say, women passengers prefer men!

AUROBINDO ASHRAM: A REPLY

By SAMIR KANTA GUPTA

A writer styled 'Sumitra,' has come forward to spit venom against Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry. We will try to point out some of the glaring errors into which our new messiah has fallen.

"Since 1927, Sri Aurobindo has become the mystic par excellence, for no outsider can say what he truly thinks or what is the true nature of his personal life."

Why this particular date has been chosen is not explained by the writer. It is indeed revelatory to us that all of a sudden in 1927 Sri Aurobindo became a mystic. And then, no outsider can say what Sri Aurobindo truly thinks? There are his books, and quite a lot of them, widely known throughout the world. Besides there are journals which constantly present before the public his views on various matters, both mundane and spiritual.

"He lives in a sealed upper floor of the main Ashram building, where closed shutters indicate his presence."

The critic may have mistaken a lumber room for Sri Aurobindo's. For Sri Aurobindo's room is, though it is on the first floor, neither sealed nor are the shutters at his windows always closed. In fact Sri Aurobindo's room is wide open for those who go for business, and some of his disciples.

"He is not of this world nor interested in its proceedings."

The sentence though put into the mouth of an ashramite is in truth against the very fundamental principle of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. His concern is with this world. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy has strongly rejected the idea of escape from this world and enjoying a peace in other-worldliness.

It is not true to say that the Ashram buys up every house whenever it is let for sale. The Ashram has few houses of its own; most are rented. And even the number of these is gradually shrinking. The houseowners who are the local inhabitants earn a good sum of money out of these rented premises. Again the Ashram is the largest tax payer.

The writer says that only one house was built by the Ashram. The Ashram has built three to four new houses and some more are being built or thoroughly remodelled—all these at places where formerly there stood nothing at all or dilapidated constructions. Of course the Ashram has taken the lead in many directions—in healthy sports and in creations of artistic nature. But then for all these it had to depend entirely on itself. It must be remembered in this connection that the Ashram is not a social service institution, it receives no pecuniary grants from the Government, nor does it raise subscriptions from the public. Its means are

limited and hardly sufficient for itself. In the midst of a colossal apathy, indifference, nay, even hostility, the Ashram stands like a model of beauty, orderliness and neatness. It is for the others to emulate it, strengthen its hands and not disparage.

"Actually, the Ashram contributes nothing but politics to local life.... The language of the Ashram has now become French."

Another ignorant remark. First, the Ashram has nothing to do with politics: it was never and is not a political institution. From the beginning it has carefully kept itself aloof from all sorts of political activities and political parties; even political discussions of any kind are discouraged in the Ashram. Talk of the Ashram supporting the cause of French imperialism is purposeful propaganda calculated to lower the growing prestige of the Ashram. And the bogey of "independent spiritual empire" is a fantasy of imagination nourished only in the fertile brain of our critic.

As to the other point, the fact is that French is spoken or read by the smallest number of inmates, and that also for the charm of the language, while the majority freely express themselves through English, Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati, Tamil, etc. There is, strictly speaking, no official language of the Ashram. In the Ashram school itself all languages are taught with equal care and interest.

The author paints the Ashramites as bond-slaves, hypnotised creatures. Yet almost in the same breath he says: People are free to attend meditation or not, they can leave the Ashram at any time if they so choose.

"The Ashramites were enthusiastic participators in the Bastille Day procession of the French Gov-

ernment and were absent from the funeral cortege that the whole population of Pondicherry joined when Gandhiji was assassinated."

The truth is that not a few of the Ashramites were present when the last rites of the departed leader were performed on the sea shore. They even co-operated with the Congress volunteers and wore black badges given to them. And Sri Aurobindo's message after Gandhiji's death is known to the entire nation.

Lastly, about the Mother. She is revered and respected even beyond the seas. Her writings which fill up several volumes are a perennial source of joy and inspiration to all.

The Mother does not think herself a 'French lady.' Her parentage, her extraordinary course of life, her outlook, her long association with India and the East—all go to prove that she is no less Indian than we ourselves. Her message to the nation on the eve of India's independence is an eloquent testimony of her profound love for it:

"O our Mother, O Soul of India. Mother who hast never forsaken thy children even in the darkest days of depression, even when they turned away from thy voice, served other masters and denied thee, now when they have arisen and the light is on thy face in this dawn of thy liberation, in this great hour we salute thee. Guide us so that the horizon of freedom opening before us may be also a horizon of true greatness and of thy true life in the community of nations. Guide us so that we may be always on the side of great ideals and show to men thy true visage, as a leader in the ways of the spirit and a friend and helper of all the peoples."

Our mental superiority over the animals is perhaps largely due to the fact that we never develop certain characteristics found in most adult animals. Our behaviour is less determined by instinct, that is to say, inborn reaction patterns, and we are more teachable. A large proportion of mankind, after a more or less human childhood, become almost unteachable. They are sure of everything. They know what is right in politics, religion, art and human behaviour. They are the pillars of Church and State. Perhaps they are a social necessity. But they have grown out of a large part of their humanity. And I sometimes feel that it would be more appropriate if they were hairy all over.—J. B. S. HALDANE.

STUDY AFTER THREE MONTHS

By POTHAN JOSEPH

IT was when Dr. Rajendra Prasad told the Constituent Assembly on June 15 that the House stood adjourned for five weeks that I started wondering how much progress had been made, because frankly speaking, my study of the day-to-day proceedings in New Delhi had slackened, and except for a glance at the reports from a sense of duty, my interest was reserved for the complete publication of the Constitution when I could at leisure, and with the aid of lawyer friends, peruse the clauses. We have reached a stage when the Constituent Assembly has dealt with three-fourths of the Constitution, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad has told us that during the current interval the Members will be busy studying certain complex problems in the relationship between the Centre and the States.

Mr. Frank Anthony had declared in the House that the Articles under consideration provided a Lawyer's Paradise, and the daily jumble of sophisticated speeches on the Supreme Court and allied subjects kept me away from the habit of absorbed reading. After all, a newspaperman has to wade through columns of printed matter, pleasant and unpleasant at the risk of eye-strain, which, of course, is an occupational risk. The dispute whether the Governor of a province or State should be nominated or elected roused human interest, because there were to be nine comfortable berths for tired veterans, although to me it was not clear why as in American States the elected Chief of the Executive could not discharge the functions of the Prime Minister while bearing the name Governor of the State. Soon after that discussion in the House, the Members were in the jungle of legalisms again, and I believe the lay reader looked at his morning paper to see if there was any excitement created in the debate by the Ginger Group led by Professor K. T. Shah. Not that there was the slightest hope of any independent view unsupported during backstage proceedings being ever carried, because while party-machine functions there is no chance for con-

scientious voting. Through the device of the secret ballot. When a member complained that he was tied down by the orders of the Chief Whip of the Congress Party, the President said that it was his responsibility to face the consequences of his commitments, but the President did not offer protection to him from ex-communication from the party or other punitive action jeopardizing his future career. Since there was semaphore-voting, hardly any occasion arose for a lobby-division; otherwise proceedings might have been slightly highlighted, if not positively technicoloured, to attract the attention of the public. Furthermore, there was no point in studying the pros and cons of an issue, and then writing pontifically about it for the simple reason that by the time one's independent opinion appeared in print, the Constituent Assembly had long ago flitted past the question without the benefit of one's learned advice. It would be like hobbling after the Punjab mail.

On one occasion it was stated in the papers that the Constituent Assembly had smartly sped its way through 20 Articles at a sitting, a performance which many considered as a rare feat carrying the country nearer the goal of a perfected Constitution. Before judges, lawyers have been known to argue together for days on the significance and interpretation of a comma, but here India's Constituent Assembly had disposed of 20 Articles in one day at the cost of Rs. 45 per head for the day's attendance without even the exertion of raising a hand in token of concurrence. I sometimes look for the progress made by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in Karachi, and I find we are far ahead of the sister-Dominion. While we have decided to name ourselves a Republic in the shade of the Commonwealth with the King in the mystic union of head and symbol, Pakistan has not yet adopted any definite attitude in her preamble; indeed, I observe that only at the end of 1950 the Karachi Constituent Assembly would be able to tackle the

formula that eludes them, they mean-while being content with the subjunctive invocation passed last year beginning with "In the name of Allah the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful." In the Constitution of India the mention of God has so far stood eliminated, but there may be a rush of after-thoughts in the clauses at the last moment seeing the intention is to finalize the Constitution by October 2, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday and have it full blast by January 26, Remembrance Day. The Irish Constitution mentions God, but the Constituent Assembly fought shy of the designation when in January they rose in thankfulness for the Kashmir cease-fire and bowed in reverence towards the "Source of All Energy," an expression supposed to be highly emblematic of India being a Secular State with no theological strings. Eire chose Easter Day for the launching of her Republic since it was the anniversary of the Easter Rebellion of 1916. In October, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is booked for his mission to the United States, and he would naturally prefer to make his bow after the passing of the Constitution. Another straw in

the wind is the subdued controversy as to who should assume the office of President, the present Governor-General or the President of the Constituent Assembly; for it must be remembered that between the enactment and the first elections there will be a gap calling for a presidential functionary.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad has deprecated any talk of rivalry between himself and the present Governor-General, but all the same the people in their secular obsession are bound to speculate since we emerge from the woods of constitution-making with only one-fourth of the way to make, we shall in another three months be able to reconstruct for the layman's understanding the Constitution under which Free India shall live, move and have her being; the text will be ready in English and possibly an official translation in Hindi and Urdu. Until then most of us shall feel ourselves wandering as if in a forest, a mighty maze without a plan. Piecemeal study of the clauses passed and of the conditions still to be fulfilled, is not only a baffling but a wasteful effort.

PHILIPPINE PUPPETS AND PENDERGASTS

By ANDREW ROTH

MANILA: These last weeks it has been rather easy to learn things about the flamboyant ruling group of politicians who give the Filipino Government its distinctive flavour. As a result of a battle for power within the dominant Liberal Party in preparation for the November elections, President Elpidio Quirino and former party boss and Senate leader Jose Avelino have been hurling at each other heavily documented charges of corruption. Documents demonstrate that the President has padded his expense accounts by charging the Government for all manner of entertainments and gifts for his family and supporters as well as fantastic purchases for his official residence. The extravagance which has caught the public eye has been his purchase of a luxurious U. S. \$2,500 bed for his use in Malacanan Palace.

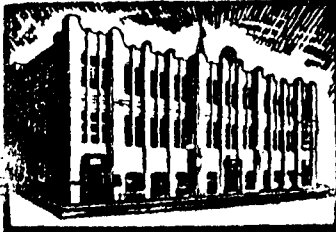
His opponent, Jose Avelino—whose acknowledged motto is "In politics everything goes"—is shown to have amassed a fortune—on which he did not pay income tax—by having a dummy corporation buy war surplus from the Government at preferential prices and sell it in the open market. "This is just a fight over a division of the spoils," commented one experienced newsman, "and when it comes to spoils, Filipino politicians are ten times as grasping as the Tammany or Pendergast machines ever were!"

If they were competing for the title of the "most corrupt politicians in Asia," Messrs Quirino and Avelino would have considerable competition in China, Japan and Siam. However they have fewer competitors for the title of "most willing puppets." When, in March, Republican leader Harold Stassen proposed a Pacific Alliance as a "MacArthur Plan to parallel Europe's Marshall Plan," President Quirino immediately climbed on the handwagon. Apparently the name MacArthur was enough.

The willingness of the Philippines' current leaders to be America's economic dependents was clear from the

replies of President Quirino and Jose Avelino to my queries as to whether they were satisfied with the workings of the Philippines Trade Act (the so-called "Bell Act") which was enacted by the U. S. Congress in 1946 and forced upon the Philippines as a condition for receiving largescale rehabilitation aid. Under this Act the peso is tied to the dollar and can only be changed with the permission of the U. S. President. American goods are permitted to enter the Philippines duty free and the Philippines are compelled to charge on non-American goods as high import tariffs as the U. S. does. It also provides for "parity," i.e. until 1974 Americans have equal rights with Filipinos in the development of the country's resources. This required an amendment to the constitution, which had provided that sixty percent of any enterprise must be owned by Filipinos. So anxious were the present Filipino leaders to become an American colony that they refused to seat seven leftist legislators—who were sure to vote against this amendment—in order to jam it through. In exchange for these concessions Philippines products (with maximum quotas on some of them) are given free entrance to the U.S. for eight years, after which duties are to increase five percent each year.

In an interview, President Quirino—who bears the seal of approval of General MacArthur—expressed himself as being perfectly happy about this economic dependence on the U. S. If anything, he wants to be even more dependent. His opponent, Jose Avelino, was even more emphatic, saying that present trade relations should be extended when they expire. He has hopes that the Philippines will become an important advance distribution point for U. S. products in the Far East and added: "I think that American military bases will be needed in the Philippines all the time." He has no objection to the U. S. having extra-territorial rights within these bases.

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Both Quirino and Avelino express themselves as happy about Americans having equal rights to exploit the Philippines' resources, claiming that this attracts large investments of American capital to develop the country. Actually, there has been very little American investment because there is little inducement for an American manufacturer to build a plant here when he can ship his products in duty-free. Both Quirino and Avelino expressed ignorance of the fact that U. S. capital had only begun seriously to build plants in Canada after it became necessary to surmount Empire tariff walls.

The explanation for this peculiar economic mentality on the part of the dominant Filipino economic interests and their political spokesmen is historical. The dominant class which emerged during the 300 years of Spanish rule was the Spanish or part-Spanish owners of large estates. During the last half-century they became wedded economically to the U. S. as producers of export crops for the American market. Thus, in 1938 the four principal export crops—sugar, coconuts, abaca (Manila hemp) and tobacco—accounted for more than forty percent of the total cultivated area. Although the "Republic" is an agricultural country, Filipino economic overlords have concentrated so much on export crops that it does not grow enough food to feed itself.

During the last half century American and Filipino economic interests have interlaced in other ways. By 1941 the U. S. had over \$200,000,000 of private investments in the Philippines—over half of the total foreign investment in the Philippines and one-

fourth of the U. S. investments in the Far East. Wealthy Filipinos who went into business frequently became the junior partners or agents (compradores) of big American firms. Prewar, the Philippines sold five-sixths of its exports in the U. S. and bought upwards of three-fourths of its imports there.

These economic ties were not enough to stop the movement toward independence formalized in the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934. This called for independence by 1946. It resulted in part from the agitation of the *Nacionalista Party*, partly from the anti-colonial bent of the Roosevelt administration. But it was influenced in no small measure by the fact that the U. S. investment in the Philippines was small (one percent of all overseas investment) while important U. S. interests, particularly sugar-beet and sugar-cane growers, wanted to have competing Philippines products outside the American tariff barrier. In 1946 U. S. economic interests in the Philippines were able to jam through the Philippine Trade Act which once again made the Philippines an economic dependency of the U. S.

"This country is absolutely defenceless against an American depression," a worried economist stated. Fully seventy percent of its exports go to the U. S. and any slump would slash them. Furthermore, American war damage payments, which cover the Philippines' 48% import deficit, will taper off in 1950 and are not likely to continue if the U. S. is in difficult economic straits. "The Philippines has a date with the wolf in 1950" is the way one observer has put it.

"MANY AN UNFORTUNATE, WEARY OF BREATH—"

A grim and alarming epidemic of suicide is raging all over the country.

During the last two weeks, more suicides have been reported in the Press than at any other time that I can remember during twenty years of regular newspaper-reading. At this rate India might come to have a higher suicide rate than even Japan where *hara-kiri* is accepted as an honourable way out for frustrated lovers and politicians who have lost 'face'.

If it came to that, it would not be any thing to be proud of for an Indian. Frequency of suicides (even more than murders) is a symptom of the collective ill health of a society. It is more than a symptom. It is an indictment and a challenge—an indictment of a moral, social economic system which drives human beings to self-destruction, and a challenge to our sense of humanity and social justice. One does not casually or light-heartedly take such a fatal decision; few have the nerve (or, according to some, the lack of nerve) to kill themselves. Nor are all suicides reported in the press. For every case of suicide one reads about, perhaps there are *two* that have gone un-reported, five who tried to commit suicide but did not succeed or somehow changed their minds at the last fateful moment, and *hundreds* who *felt* like committing suicide!

The cases of suicide we have read about recently, therefore, are symptomatic of a grave social malady, of heart-breaking economic stresses, murderous social taboos, insufferable domestic situations, unbearable humiliations, and unspeakable tortures of the mind and soul. They also bespeak something more—a general atmosphere of insecurity and a sense of callous social neglect, of all-round lack of sympathy and understanding, of an eclipse of humanity itself.

Those who have died shall not live again, *cannot* be brought back to life.

But they would not have died entirely in vain if even now we take warning and realize the grim and evil circumstances that drive human beings like you and me, may be with weaker nerves or more confused minds, into the arms of Death!

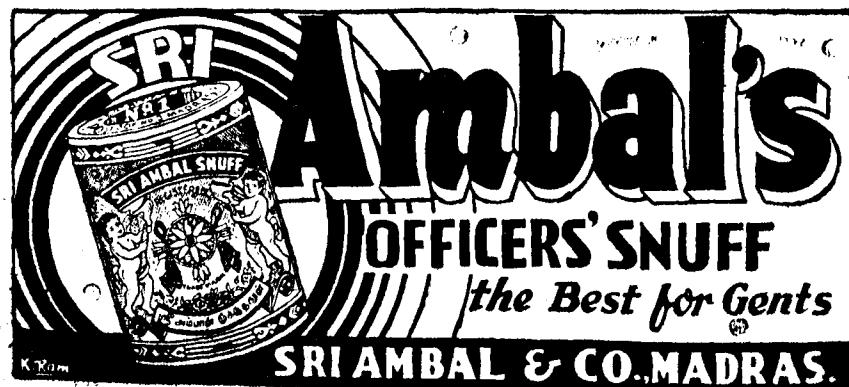
VICTIMS OF EXAMINATIONS

I have been trying to analyse the circumstances of some of the reported suicides and to see if there is a grim pattern, or sequence, in their incidence.

The most tragic and grimly spectacular, of course, was the case of the sixteen-year old Bombay school-boy who had failed in the S.L.C. examination and climbed to the top of the University clock-tower to hurl himself down from there. I have tried to imagine what were his thoughts as he made that final, fatal and nevertheless laborious ascent through the dark, spiral stairs in the tower? Why did he decide to end his life? Was it just the sense of failure, or was it the fear of facing ridicule and humiliation? Had his sensitive, boyish ego been mortally injured by paternal wrath? Or was he ill in body and mind, liable to have fits of depression and hysteria? And, if so, what were the causes of such an abnormal psychology in a boy of sixteen who should have been buoyant and lively, full of the joy of living? How many hundreds or thousands of other boys are likewise afflicted? And what can be done to cure them?

Each case raises similarly disturbing questions.

On the same day as the case cited above, another boy hanged himself for the identical reason—he, too, had failed in the same examination. In this instance, however, economic reasons also seem to have been involved. The victim was a 20-year old worker, an assistant in a local firm, who earned his living during the day and then went to a Night School. One can imagine the strain that must have been, the hopes of material self-im-



provement that he must have had if he passed, and the terrible shock that news of failure must have produced!

A few days later, two similar cases were reported from Madras. One of them died after taking poison, another swallowed powdered glass and was taken to hospital. The former left behind a letter to his father saying that since he could not be of any use to the family he had decided to end his life.

This letter provides an important clue to the mental state that produced these suicides. These young men, on the threshold of life, decided that they could not be of any use (to themselves, their families or to the world) **SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY HAD FAILED IN AN EXAMINATION.** They were victims of the mechanical, murderous examination system. (In some cases, just one or two marks might have made all the difference between life and death. Or, may be, it was a fatal clerical error in tabulating the marks, as in the case of the Bombay girl who was erroneously declared failed in the B.Sc. examination and successfully demanded a re-check). They were killed by the belief that parents and teachers help to inculcate that on the success or failure in an examination depends one's success or failure in life itself.

All sensible modern educationists are agreed that the present system of examinations, with its emphasis on answering question papers instead of judging the over-all intellectual capacity of the student, are hopelessly out-of-date. The anachronism has now turned a blood-thirsty goddess demanding human sacrifice!

This system must be scrapped and, what is more important, the students must be made to take interest in knowledge for its own sake, not as a means of passing examinations and securing degrees. They must be cured of the irrational dread of failure and taught that life can be still interesting, useful and exciting. But *can* it be done in a world of economic injustice and privation, in which a certificate or a degree often represents the only (though illusory) hope of securing a job and livelihood?

KILLED BY ECONOMIC SYSTEM

There are other suicides, arising

directly from social and domestic mal-adjustments. Chronic ill health, specially when coupled with poverty and lack of sympathy from the relations, has claimed many lives. In Bangalore (where as many as seven cases of suicide were reported within a few days) two sick women killed themselves by pouring kerosene on the saree and setting it on fire. Every now and then one hears of frustrated young lovers and harassed daughters-in-law ending their lives. Unemployment has driven many to kill themselves. These are not to be dismissed as cases of "temporary insanity," as the coroners often do. Each one of them constitutes a grim exposure and denunciation of society and the economic system.

An occasional millionaire confronted with sudden bankruptcy, may shoot or poison himself, but it is true enough that the incidence of suicides is greater among the middle class and the poor than among the well-to-do. Directly or indirectly, poverty is the cause of many a suicide. And yet not all suicides can be ascribed to economic or social causes. There is the recent case of the former political worker, for instance, who drowned himself "as he was driven to desperation by a scandal spread against him."

PROBING THE CAUSES

If the epidemic of suicides has to be stopped not only the economic system and social institutions have to be probed and investigated, but collective and individual psychology, too, has to be analysed.

After all, many a destitute continues to live, despite economic privations. Thousands fail in examinations every year and carry on without committing or even contemplating suicide. Many a frustrated lover gets over his disappointment. The few who do give way to despair and end their lives—**WHY DO THEY?** What weakens the will to live in their particular cases? What directs their thoughts in the direction of self-destruction? Is it lack of sympathy and understanding in their surroundings, or is it mental derangement? Psychologists must study and answer these questions, for they impinge upon the mental health of our people.

Again, why are there more cases of suicide in one country than another, more at one particular time than another? In Germany the Hitler regime produced a crop of suicides. In America the 'cold war' and the atom bomb scare is taking toll of many lives, as sensitive human beings take the desperate plunge. Is the recent epidemic of suicides in India ascribable to any one factor or a combination of circumstances? The feeling of insecurity caused by economic crisis? Rising prices and falling wages? The hang-over of the inter-communal massacres and the up-rooting of millions? Or all of them?

These suicides are not to be dismissed as "human interest" news items to be displayed in a 'box' on the front-page and then forgotten. They are a symptom of a wide-spread social and psychological canker that appears to be gnawing at the collective vitals of our nation.

Economically, socially, mentally physically, we are not well. We must be fully diagnosed before we can hope for a cure.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Like Upton Sinclair's play, **GIANT'S STRENGTH** (already reviewed in this column some months ago), Aldous Huxley's new short novel, **APE AND ESSENCE** (Chatto and Windus, London, 7s. 6d.) takes an imaginative peep into the atom-blasted future of the world. But their approach is different. Symbolically enough, Huxley begins his story on the day of Gandhiji's assassination. It is well known that Huxley has been deeply moved by Indian philosophy, by the ethics of non-violence, and by the personality of the Mahatma. But, his recent interest in Yoga notwithstanding, Huxley remains the sophisticated, blase and clever 'young' man who was once over-fond of shocking his readers by his (sometimes self-conscious and deliberately) unorthodox statements—e.g. his notorious blasphemy that the Taj Mahal was the ugliest building in the world. The Yogi and the Cynic have combined to conjure a horrible dream of the future which Huxley unfolds in the form of a scenario for a would-be film which some mysterious, misanthrope author, William Tallis, had sent to a Hollywood studio and then

died. Huxley the humanist imagines that the atom bomb would lead to the destruction of the world and, worse still, to the complete de-humanisation of man (the few survivors worshipping Devil and Hate, instead of worshipping God and Love). Huxley the sophisticated author invents a clever plot, invests it with ironically grim and humorous and amorous situations, and rounds up the fable with a moral—Love and humanity (symbolized by Doctor Poola and Loola) *instinctively* challenging the forces of evil and triumphing over them on an individualist basis. Every one who reads it will be amused by it but it is doubtful if he will be helped by Humanist Huxley's metaphysical mumbo-jumbo of escapist individualism bordering on pacifist anarchy to understand or resist the forces that are threatening to atomize the world. Disdaining to analyse the political, much less the economic background of atom warfare, Huxley takes refuge in the defeatist, fatalist, reactionary view that "Ends are apeshosen; only the means are man's"—the line which inspired the title of the novel. He is welcome to his own brand of escapism but he seems to equate it with Gandhi-ism which is a slander. For the whole life of the Mahatma was a negation of Huxley's notorious ivory-tower escapism and cynical contempt for the people. The Mahatma said, "I refuse to suspect human nature. It will, is bound to, respond to any noble and friendly action" and he said, "If I could be face to face with the Buddha I should not hesitate to ask him why he did not teach the gospel of work in preference to one of contemplation," and spent all life working and struggling for freedom and justice, sharing the joys and sorrows of his fellow-beings, while Huxley's hero, Tallis, hangs a sign-board on his compound wall which seems to sum up the ivory-tower philosophy of recluses like Huxley whose humanism is really anti-man:

"The leech's kiss, the squid's embrace,
"The prurient ape's defiling touch:
"And do you like the human race?"
"No, not much."
"THIS MEANS YOU, KEEP OUT."

STRAWS IN THE WIND?

"WASHINGTON: United States Government economists believe the country's unemployment figure may go on climbing—perhaps to a point near five million. More than three million people are already out of jobs."

"LAKE SUCCESS: India has served notice that she cannot sign the proposed International Covenant on Human Rights if it included either a Soviet or Australian provision guaranteeing the "right to work" to every one."

"CALCUTTA: Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Founder-President of the Socialist Republican Party, was declared elected to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly from the South Calcutta constituency. He polled 19,030 votes against the Congress candidate, Mr. Suresh Chandra Das, who secured 5,780 votes. Three other candidates lost their deposits."

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

"POONA: The first batch of graduates from the Poona University includes a 54-year old candidate, Mr. Vireshwar Trimbak Chitale, who passed the B. A. examination. Mr. Chitale who holds the post of Deputy Assistant Controller in the Military Accounts, passed his Intermediate examination in 1925."

"BOMBAY: Fourteen persons travelling on foot-board by Khandwa Passenger coming to Bombay are reported to have been killed when the Calcutta Mail via Nagpur brushed past them. The Khandwa Passenger as usual was overcrowded and there was no space even in the first class compartments.... An eye-witness says that the space between the rails at the particular spot was too narrow, thus causing the serious accident."

—Free Press Journal.

"LUDHIANA: A member of the East Punjab Legislative Assembly is included in the group of businessmen recently arrested on charges of black-marketing."

INDIA AND THE COMMONWEALTH

By Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN

FOR a long time legal experts had expressed grave doubts whether a Republic can still remain in the Commonwealth. Even after the passing of the Statute of Westminster, allegiance to the King and recognition of the Crown as the Head of the Commonwealth were accepted as the basis of association. But as happens with all British institutions, the concept of the Commonwealth has also grown more by conventions than by any statutory provision. Ever since the loss of the American colonies, the English people have realised that the old concept of Empire cannot hold together the vast possessions over whose destinies the British nation presided.

Canada being (almost) the oldest colony was given self-government early in the 19th century. Lord Durham's Report made it possible for a self-governing Dominion almost independent of the mother country to come into being. Then followed the recognition of Australia and New Zealand as self-governing units, and in their case although independent of the mother country in internal affairs, allegiance to the Crown and the desire to help the mother country in her trouble, remained unaltered.

The South African War and its victorious conclusion brought in a new element. The older Dominions were kith and kin of the mother country (except for the French element in Canada concentrated mainly in Quebec). South Africa with its vast population of European origin, though not really British, and its strong Africaans section, created new problems. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman felt that the conferment of self-government on the Boer Republics would make them more attached to the ideal of Commonwealth unity. That hope was certainly borne out by the fact that both Field Marshal Smuts and General Botha remained loyal to the Commonwealth. This proved indeed a valuable asset in the First World War. Right through that

war, Field Marshal Smuts was recognised as a great elder statesman whose advice was always sought by the British Government of the day and whose services were utilized in many missions. Thus he was practically a member of the War Cabinet of Mr. Lloyd George during those dark days.

The end of the First Great War had thrown into the melting pot all concepts of union and the newly formed League of Nations pointed the way towards a World Government. But the old ideas of balance of power persisted and gradually gained ground in the relations between States, so that the League ideal lost the great opportunity of bearing fruit. Hence it became all the more important for the British Commonwealth to show the way as to how in any crisis, different Governments can act together and pool their resources. The Balfour Declaration of 1926 forwarded a new concept of Commonwealth, the outstanding feature of which was that it recognised the self-governing Dominions as being quite independent of each other, though associated together in mutual bonds of friendship. This led to the passing of the Statute of Westminster which gave statutory recognition to the independent status of individual Dominions. The King was the King of all the Dominions and the Governments of these Dominions acted in his name though in matters of internal government the advice of the Ministers of the country concerned was all that mattered without any reference to the British Government as such. It is because of this concept that Eire was able to remain natural right through the Second World War. Even in the case of South Africa it was only the personality of Field Marshal Smuts which brought that country into the war by a narrow majority. So it was clearly by convention that the original concept was modified and each Dominion was truly free to decide its own foreign policy.

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Now has come an even more modified concept of the Commonwealth ideal. The recognition of India, Pakistan and Ceylon as Dominions brought within the Commonwealth fold people who were not in any way European. India declared her objective of being an independent Republic. Eire had already severed her connection with the Commonwealth. But the interests of world peace demanded that some link should continue between the Commonwealth countries. The declaration at the end of the Prime Ministers' Conference in London last March is really the outcome of this new ideal. It has now been made clear that India, though a sovereign Republic still remains part of the Commonwealth with no allegiance to the Crown as such. The President of the future Indian Republic will act for India in all matters. But the King is recognised as a symbol of the association of India with this Commonwealth.

Great problems of dual citizenship arise out of this novel decision and the future alone can show in what way this problem will solve itself. But the one great feature of the present situation is that the Commonwealth tie still endures and there is no doubt that it will be a source of great

strength in maintaining future world peace.

Despite the fears repeatedly voiced in the name of technical legal obstacles involved in such an arrangement, the far-sighted vision of contemporary statesmen particularly the two Prime Ministers, Pandit Nehru and Mr. Attlee, has succeeded in establishing a new comradeship of independent Dominions, a comradeship so vitally necessary in these sad and troublous times. Though India and Pakistan are still baffled by many of the post-partition problems, there is no doubt that the recent decision will help in more ways than one. Let us hope that this will be the forerunner for the establishment of a World Government in keeping with the ideals of our master Gandhiji who stood for world peace. In these circumstances to be suspicious or to wrongly imagine that India has attached herself to any BLOC would be not only pessimistic but suicidal. There is a contribution to world peace which Gandhiji's India alone is competent to make and it is to this concord among nations that India is pledged to-day. That is the only way any one interested in the right international relations can view this new association of a Republic in a Commonwealth.

....I am not at all clear in my mind as to the best way of passing from the idea of world government to the fact of it. The difficulties which have already arisen in regard to implementing the Benelux union and the larger Western Union show how hard it is to reconcile long-range with short-range goods. In the long-range world union is obviously desirable and indeed essential; but in the short-range its realisation must entail great hardships on so many people (e. g. closing of redundant factories, shifting of workers from one job or place to other locations etc.) that is hardly credible that, if put to the vote by the democratic process, the project would go through. The rationalisation of an area divided into nations was attempted by Hitler—with enormous cost in human suffering and discomfort. The cost of unification could obviously be lowered, but probably not eliminated. Will people, in peacetime, accept short-range suffering for the sake of long-range goods which, it may be, they themselves will not enjoy? That is the question. I don't know the answer.—ALDOUS HUXLEY

Fourteen victims of rheumatic arthritis, who only a few months ago were severely crippled, are now able to walk normally. The seeming miracle was accomplished by a new drug called Compound E. It was developed after long research in the United States by scientists of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and the pharmaceutical firm of Merck & Company of Rahway, New Jersey.

In each patient, the drug relaxed stiff and painful muscles and joints. The patients said it gave them a sense of well-being.

CONFERENCES AND INFERENCES

By 'A HOUSEWIFE'

FRANKLY, it is not *about* any conference I want to write, so don't be misled by the title, because though dozens are being held every day all over the world, I am entirely ignorant of their 'inside' stories, the inuendos in the statements made, the story between the lines, the ulterior motives, the calling of bluffs which is really the important part of all these peace-making efforts. I don't know anything about them except what I read in the papers which is there for everybody to read, so to speak. A friend of mine whose husband is a Legislative Assembly member said the other day one must not believe anything these papers say, especially about conferences and such like, and I asked why and she said what happens behind scenes is often different from what is handed to the press with smiles and airs of candour. How is one to know, I ask you, how is one to know what happens behind scenes? I suppose Walter Lippman knows and Sefton Delmer and Drew Pearson and Andrew Roth and people like that, but people like me and the girl living next door who teaches in a convent nearabouts here, what do we know? The Foreign Ministers, people whom we know only through their pictures in the papers, they announce they are going to hold a conference and the whole world comes to report it. One day passes by and then two and then three and suddenly we hear things aren't looking so good and before we have time to feel properly worried, there is the news that the conference is finished, the Foreign Ministers are going to attend a last dinner before going back to their homes and that is the last we hear of it all. Frankly, it has me worried. What happens at these conferences? Bevin wants peace, Schuman wants peace, Acheson wants peace and so does Vyshinsky. But at these conferences none of them are willing to give in one single inch and each suspects the other all the time. Somebody has said it may take one to make a quarrel, but it takes two to make friends. It certainly seems as if it takes four to make peace.

I don't know if you have noticed

one thing. When the first World War ended, all that we could think of was that the war was over and we had won and all that the fighting men wanted to do was to put away their uniforms and take up life again where they had left it four years before. But even before this last war ended, politicians and diplomats began to talk of a third world war and all that had to be done to prevent it as if it was some dreadful machination of the Devil against which we had to guard ourselves and not something which we made ourselves. It can't be just the atom bomb which has put the fear of war into us. It must be that the last war killed many more of our illusions than we thought and changed our sense of values—of death, of life, religion, morality and all—more fundamentally than we could help and that is one reason why we are finding it difficult to live in a warless world and must needs talk about a third world war, like a person who even after coming out of an anaesthetic stays drowsy and sleepy some hours.

But I was talking about conferences. I am not a politician but the way I see it is this. I agree with Mr. Herbert Evatt. He has said this, that "this war has shown, more clearly perhaps than any other in history, that peace-making does not begin or end with a formal conference." There must be something more to it, what it is we are all in our own little ways trying to find out. Take America, Russia and Britain, for example. Can you count the number of times these have sat round conference tables, beginning with Potsdam and Yalta? They made decisions about almost every country which participated in the war.

Take Japan, for instance. The Big Four returned Formosa, Manchuria and others to China. Now it looks as if that decision has not paid dividends, because it is going to the Russians or at least the Communists and the Western Powers don't like the way that plan has worked out. They decided Japan's ability to make war must be killed. Now that almost the whole of China has fallen to the Reds, I dare say the Americans are wishing

they hadn't decided that Japan was to be militarily so easily conquerable. They decided to keep Japan just self-supporting and now America is finding Japan such a liability; she is wondering how she could not have foreseen that to keep a people at a low economic level is the surest way of inviting in the Communists. Understand what I mean? We all make mistakes, and Big people make Big mistakes. The decisions at Potsdam regarding Japan have not worked out right for everybody. Not only about Japan. But about Korea also. They said Korea would shortly be independent. And now the Russians are sitting in the north and the Americans in the south, each wanting the other to quit first. And the large bell at Seoul—the world's second largest, they say, the first being the one at the Kremlin—used on special national occasions, is beginning to rust through lack of use.

I wish I didn't feel so discouraged about everything but I look at the map of Europe that my little boy learns his geography by and I ask myself will these countries have the same colours next year? The Potsdam Conference made all the arrangements for the future of these countries, but something went wrong with the execution of these decisions. Not only the Potsdam Conference. Take the Moscow Conference, for another example. It resolved to establish Austria as a sovereign, independent state, didn't it? And afterwards, the deputies of the Foreign Ministers met twice, and what happened? Nothing, I tell you, nothing. They shook hands and said how sorry they were that they couldn't agree but they really must hurry and catch their planes and go home. You can't convince me the Moscow Conference was any more successful than the Potsdam Conference, can you? If people make promises or decisions, they must carry them out, or why make promises and decisions?

I am one of those people quite interested in politics, though even my husband tells me it is not the sort of subject women would ever understand about the problem of Atomic Energy. Do you know the Second World War was the finest example of the futility of making decisions at conferences? Every country which

fought the war broke every one of the "fair rules" that the League of Nations had drawn up for the conduct of war—as for example, about not bombing non-military targets, not using submarines against merchant vessels and not using certain types of weapons. So victory in the war was at the risk of a breach of an old agreement. And is anyone sorry? Oh, no. When the instincts for justice and self-preservation clash, I have found it so in big things and small, it is self-preservation which wins and that with not much difficulty. Such is human nature. But if the world is run on compromise with human conscience, who is to set up the moral values of the world? And why hold conferences and pretend we are doing it?

What I am trying to say is this, that the conferences of the Atomic Commission which dragged on for months on end didn't achieve anything, after all. We heard much talk about Unilateral Disarmament, Periodicity of Inspection and International Control. And now far from atomic energy being controlled, we see atomic villages springing up all over the world. And because Russia would not see the American point of view with regard to Atomic Energy, the Western Powers refused to see the Russian view-point at the Danube Conference. They cancel each other, you see?

I might have taken the example of Germany even at the beginning to prove my point better. This Conference they are holding in Paris is the fifth or sixth in the series. Within the last three years the Foreign Ministers have scurried from Paris to London to Moscow and back to Paris trying to find peace somewhere without its first touching their hearts. And did they find it? Did they? My goodness, there were three months last year when the Berlin blockade was on, when I was afraid to open the newspaper in the morning afraid of what I might see. How Europe and America escaped war that time is still a wonder to me. The way the U. S. and the U. S. S. R. broke the Potsdam decisions right and left was a delight to see. Potsdam said Germany was to have a single economy. But the Western sectors couldn't wait. They just had to have a currency all for themselves. As for reparations, they

had decided that just so much was to be taken out of Germany as would enable her to stand on her own feet, economically. But did the Russians pay heed to it? No. Why, they have carted away huge chunks of machinery to Russia, do you know? And what about the frontier changes which, according to Potsdam, had to await the peace settlement? There has been no peace settlement yet, but plenty of frontier changes by both the East and West. And, of course, the Berlin blockade was the most unlawful breach of all.

The papers tell us agreement has been reached this time in Paris over Germany. To some extent, that is. They haven't agreed on the political and economic unity of Germany—which is the most important thing to my way of thinking—but about everything else they are going to follow a "live and let live" arrangement. It all sounds menacingly vague. Almost as if what the Russians are trying to do is to play for time and hope things will be delayed long enough for them to settle matters in South-East Asia. This conference hardly solves anything except the problem of the blockade.

Please don't think I am persisting in seeing only the dark side of things, because I am as anxious as you are to think the world is going to have real peace at last. I am a peace-loving citizen and I don't want war. Why

should I? I have a husband who is doing fine in the textile business and I have two little children just growing up and I hope to build a house of mine own some day soon. Why should I think about war? But I hate to be made to think constantly about war by disillusioned politicians. And I don't like these fluctuations in the international temperature. I have found another thing. I have found that these fluctuations are most violent just before and just after international peace conferences and so I sat down and tried to puzzle it out all by myself and I have come to the conclusion, most reluctantly and sadly, that the conferences which have been held one after the other since the war ended, have not helped one whit to make people more friendly towards each other. And even if conferences are successful, it is a gamble if the parties will abide by the decisions or not. Yes, I am quite disillusioned about conferences and the things they can achieve. And I have nothing but sympathy for the poor, simple French woman who stood next to Sefton Delmer in the gallery at the conference in Paris. "Bah," she said, as the Soviet limousine drew up before the Rose Palace, "what is news in France these days? Rita Hayworth says 'Oui' and Vyshinsky says 'Non.' Remember the old catch phrase, "Whom the Gods have determined to destroy they first drive mad"? These conferences are certainly driving me mad.

One of the reasons why our times are dangerous is that we have all been taught to worship our nation, our flag, our own past history. Man may safely worship only God; the First Commandment is also the first law of growth for individuals and for societies. When we break it and idolise our past, we fail.

If a pat solution to the problem of world unity were possible, we could pay our scholars to find it. But if—as is true—the problem demands a spiritual change in modern man, we cannot hand the task over to any civil service class. Each of us has to do the job himself. That is a disconcerting prospect, but it is by a spiritual rebirth that every great civilisation has reached maturity.

One of the first things we shall have to learn, if we want this spiritual transformation, is to cease worshipping the pet idols of our day—machinery, our national flag, economics, science itself. The more we have accomplished to date with the help of these man-made devices, the harder it will be for us to outgrow them. The Rich Man has peculiar difficulties in entering into the Kingdom of Heaven in all ages. Those who belong to highly successful nationalities will find it especially difficult to surrender patriotism in order to found a world state.—ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION

By M. M. ISMAIL

TO a very pertinent and fundamental question put by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Constituent Assembly to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, in the course of the discussion on the powers of the President of the Indian Republic under the new Constitution on the 23rd May 1949, enquiring whether there was any specific provision in the Constitution to the effect that the President was bound to accept the advice of the Council of Ministers, all that the learned Law Minister could answer was that "the President can and will never be able to act independently of the Council of Ministers." Dr. Ambedkar did not indicate his authority for making such a categorical statement. The truth is, that the eminent men entrusted with the responsibility of drafting the Constitution did not pay proper attention to the fact that the Indian Constitution is to be a written one and that the authority for any such proposition will have to be sought within the four corners of the provisions of the Constitution. The mere assertion on the part of Dr. Ambedkar that "the President of India would be quite different in conception from the President of the United States" is no substitute for a specific provision in the Constitution compelling the President to accept the advice of the Council of Ministers in the discharge of his functions. If the members of the Drafting Committee have conceived of the position of the President of India as analogous to that of the King of England in being merely a constitutional head, they cannot afford to overlook the further fact that the English Constitution is an unwritten one and the position of the King as mere constitutional head has not been determined by any Act of Parliament but only by gradually-evolved conventions. It cannot be said that the framers would have thought that the bare omission to confer discretionary powers on the President of India would itself impose a constitutional obligation on the

President to accept the advice of the Council of Ministers under all circumstances as is evident from the fact that in the case of the Governors of the States it has been provided in Para 3 of the Draft Instrument of Instructions that "In all matters within the scope of the executive power of the State, save in relation to functions which he is required by or under this Constitution to exercise in his discretion, the Governor shall, in the exercise of the powers conferred upon him, be guided by the advice of his Ministers." As it is, there is no provision in the Draft Constitution providing for the President acting only on the advice of his Ministers and Dr. Ambedkar has stated that an Instrument of Instructions to the President also is intended to be provided. It remains to be seen what such an instrument will be like.

A similar lack of certainty and clarity is noticeable with regard to the position of the Governors of the States also. Defending the provision for the nomination of Governors by the President Dr. Ambedkar repeatedly pointed out that the Governor is to be a purely constitutional head. He declared, "Today, it seems to me, if the Constitution remains in principle the same as we intend it to be, namely, that the Governor should be a purely constitutional Governor, it is quite immaterial whether he is nominated or elected. . . . It was also felt that the powers of the Governor were so limited, so nominal and so ornamental that probably very few would come forward to stand for election. . . . But, the other argument, namely, whether it was necessary to have a purely ornamental functionary elected at so much cost and trouble, remained." Thus it would seem that the basis of the provision for the nomination of the Governor by the President is the fundamental assumption that the Governor is to be merely a figurehead imparting an element of comparative continuity to the administration of the State in the background of a fre-

quently-changing Ministry dependent upon the fluctuating strength of the parties in the legislatures. But the tone has changed completely and the conception of the Governor underwent a violent metamorphosis when Article 143 laying down that "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except in so far as he is by or under this Constitution required to exercise his functions or any of them in his discretion" came to be discussed. Replying to the debate on this article Dr. Ambedkar said "We do not want to invest the President with any discretionary power. We do not want to invest the Governor with such powers. The Provincial Governments are required to work in subordination to the Central Government. In order to see that they do act in subordination to the Central Government, the Governors will reserve certain powers, to allow the President the opportunity to see that the rules under which the Provincial Governments are supposed to act, according to the Constitution, in subordination to the Central Government, are observed." Thus it is clear that the Governor is not only not a purely constitutional head or an ornamental functionary as described by Dr. Ambedkar the previous day, but also a ruling head with vast discretionary powers.

When some members of the Constituent Assembly took objection to the latter part of the article, it was pointed out to them that the article in itself was innocuous but the real issue was "what are the powers with which the Governor is going to be endowed" and that that issue was not before the House. If that is the real position, the correct procedure would be to decide first whether the Governor should have any discretionary powers at all and if so what those powers should be and then to exclude the ministerial responsibility with regard to those powers. That procedure was not adopted. Probably when the articles dealing with the discretionary powers of the Governor come to be discussed, the House will be told, in the true spirit of hide and seek, in view of the latter part of Article 143 which had been already accepted by the House, that the provisions dealing

with the discretionary powers must find a place in the Constitution.

The important matters in which the Governor is to act in his discretion are:—

- (1) the appointment and dismissal of Ministers under Article 144;
- (2) Summoning and dissolving Legislative Assemblies (Article 153);
- (3) Giving or withholding assent to a bill passed by the Legislature or returning the bill for reconsideration where the legislature consists of only one house or reserving the bill for the consideration of the President (Article 175);
- (4) Proclamation of emergency, suspension of the Constitution and the assumption of the Executive and the Legislature functions by the Governor himself (Article 188).

In all these matters, the Governor, acts otherwise than on the advice of his Ministers. Then, is there a check on the Governor in the exercise of these vast, vital and tremendous discretionary powers? "The Governor under the Constitution has no functions which he can discharge by himself," said Dr. Ambedkar. That would suggest that the Governor in the exercise of these powers will be under the control of the President whose creature he is. But, except in the last case of the Proclamation of Emergency there is no specific provision in the Constitution laying down that whenever the Governor acts in his discretion he should be under the general control of the President unless it be asserted that as the Governor is appointed by the President and holds office during his pleasure it follows by implication that the Governor will always be under the general control of the President. It was provided in the Government of India Act, 1935, that whenever the Governor was acting in his discretion or exercising his individual judgment he was under the general control of the Governor-General in his discretion, who in turn was acting under the control of the Secretary of State for India in England. In the absence of a specific provision to that effect in the new Constitution, the possibility of the Governor of a State in the exercise of

the vital and paramount functions like appointing and dismissing his Ministers, summoning and dissolving the Legislative Assembly and withholding his assent to a bill passed by the Legislature, acting arbitrarily and independently of both the Ministers—because he is authorised to act in such a way—and the President—because he is not bound to consult him—cannot be ruled out. Therefore, once the two premises that the Governor of a State should be nominated by the President and that he should be endowed with discretionary powers are accepted, it is not merely desirable but absolutely essential that there should be included an article in the Constitution providing for the control of the President over the Governor whenever the latter acts in his discretion under the Constitution.

When originally the Constituent Assembly decided to have the Governors of the States elected by the people of the State, Article 137 was inserted in the Constitution providing for the impeachment of the Governor for violation of the Constitution by the Legislature of the State. Now that it has been decided that the Governor should be nominated by the President, the above article has been dropped by the Constituent Assembly. One is at a loss to understand by what specious arguments the Assembly persuaded itself to believe that such an article is not necessary in view of the Governor being nominated. On the other hand, only when the Governor is to be nominated by the President, such an article can have real and vital significance. Already the conferment of discretionary powers on the Governor has constituted a substantial subtraction from even the limited content of provincial autonomy that was sought to be provided for in the Constitution originally. In addition to this, if the Legislature of the Province is to have no influence at all over the tenure of office of the Governor appointed by the President and holding office during his pleasure, the content of provincial autonomy becomes not merely curtailed but totally

nullified and negated and the provinces are reduced to the position of a municipality or a district board.

The possibility of the party in power at the Centre being different from the party in power in the province cannot be ruled out. And also, in the background of power politics in our country which are still characterised by ignorance, prejudice and mutual animosity, the possible attempt of the former to eliminate the latter through its constitutional control over the Governor cannot be dismissed as a mere theoretical speculation. Under such circumstances, the danger of unscrupulous party-men at the Centre imposing an unwanted Governor on an unwilling and opposing province will become a terrible reality. Even a cautious and careful newspaper like the "Hindu" of Madras overlooked this contingency when it declared in the course of its leading article on 2nd June 1949 that "But, actually under the decision which the Constituent Assembly has now finally taken, the choice of Governor would be made not by the President off his own bat but under the advice of the popular Union Cabinet. The choice would therefore be no less representative than if it had been made by the President in consultation with the Legislature of the State concerned." A real safeguard against this grave danger must be provided for by conferring a power on the State Legislature to remove from his office, the Governor in whose appointment the Legislature has no voice, whenever he acts against the spirit of the Constitution and against the wishes of the people of the State. Therefore it is hoped that the Constituent Assembly will reconsider its decision and pass Article 137. Clause (2) of the article providing for a notice of the resolution seeking to impeach the Governor to be given in writing signed by not less than thirty members of the Assembly and the resolution to be passed by not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the Assembly will be a sufficient safeguard against the abuse of such power by the State Legislature.

The belligerent husband demanded: "I want to know once and for all who is the boss in this house."
The wife replied: "You will be much happier if you don't try to find out."

HONOUR TO AN ASTRONOMER

AN invitation to deliver the Russell lecture is the highest honour that America can bestow on an astronomer. This unique acknowledgment of distinction has now been accorded to Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, the internationally-known uranologist who has been engaged in active astronomical research at the Yerkes Observatory at Chicago for the last dozen years. The Russell lecture was inaugurated by Henry Norris Russell of Princeton Observatory (after whom it was named) in 1936. Mr. Walter Adams, Director of the Mount Wilson Observatory gave the second lecture in 1947. The third in this distinguished series was scheduled to be delivered on June 21 by our eminent countryman. The subject of his lecture was announced as "Turbulence"—a physical theory of astrophysical interest.

Dr. Chandrasekhar, son of Sri C. Subrahmanya Iyer, Retired Accountant-General and nephew of Sir C. V. Raman, the primate scientist of India whose discoveries in the fields of Light and the Structure of Crystals have been acclaimed all over the world, was born in Lahore on Oct. 19, 1910. He studied in the Presidency College where he took his Master's Degree scoring the highest marks in the history of the Madras University. Even while an undergraduate of eighteen, he wrote of certain original investigations in Astrophysics which he had undertaken and his papers were published in "The Indian Journal of Physics," the "Proceedings of the Royal Society of London," and "The Physical Review" of America. In 1930 he was awarded a scholarship by the Madras Government to prosecute higher studies at Cambridge. At this venerable domicile of learning his native scientific brilliance met with imitative recognition by the award of the coveted "Sheep-Shanks" prize for Astrophysical research. At this university, he worked under such notable personalities as Professors Fowler, Dirac and Milne, running up in the vacation to pursue his studies at the Göttingen University in Germany under Prof. Max Born and after Cambridge for a year at Copenhagen under the guidance of Mr. Niels Bohr. While in Cambridge he contributed

regularly to the "Proceedings of the Royal Society of London" and the "Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society." It would be almost impossible to mention all the awards and prizes and studentships that were conferred on him during this time—they would make up a list longer than the list of ships in the Iliad! Suffice it to say, he was elected a Fellow of Trinity College in 1933, a distinction which was referred to in the warmest terms in Lord Rutherford's address (read by Sir James Jeans) at the Jubilee session of the Indian Science Congress at Calcutta in 1938. For three years after that he spent most of his time delivering lectures at Leige, Leningrad, Moscow, Harvard and Chicago, attending on special invitation during this period the Conference of the International Astronomical Union at Paris. He married during a brief visit to India in 1936 Srimathi Lalitha whom he had known as a junior student in his Presidency College days and almost immediately afterwards joined the Yerkes Observatory at Chicago as a Research Associate under Dr. Struve. In a little more than a year, he was promoted as Assistant Professor of Astrophysics and about three years later as Associate Professor. In July, 1943, he attained the position of Distinguished Service Professor of Astrophysics at the Yerkes Observatory. About this time he was granted the degree of Sc. D., Cambridge, England, for important research work and in 1944 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, London. His paper on "New Methods in Stellar Dynamics" was crowned in 1942 by the award of the Cressy Morrison Prize by the New York Academy of Sciences. And at home, the Andhra University, at its annual convocation, awarded him the Sir C. R. Reddi National Prize for 1945 given to a scientist of international repute, the first recipient of the prize being his own illustrious uncle.

Dr. Chandrasekhar has so far published about half a dozen books and innumerable papers on Mathematical Astrophysics, which is his special field of study and research. Stellar Atmospheres, Stellar Construction, White Dwarfs, and Galactic Dynamics. Of his first book "An Introduction To

The Study Of Stellar Structure," which appeared in 1939 as a monograph issued by the University of Chicago Press, an American astronomer writes: "In the new volume he has blended his own researches and those of others in a well-rounded book, which should, for many years to come, be 'must' reading for every prospective student of galactic structure and dynamics. . . . This book should exert a profound influence on the future developments in the field of galactic dynamics." In this and two other major treatises he has published, *"The principles of Stellar Dynamics"* and *"Stochastic Problems in Physics and Astronomy"* he treats exhaustively every aspect of stellar structure and motions of the galaxy and star clusters.

In the midst of this documentary of his brilliant achievement, a few words about his personal life would not be remiss. His boyhood and early youth were spent in a home with a father who was a pioneer in the mathematical study of Carnatic music and a writer of no mean distinction, and a gallant mother who, bed-ridden and dying, yet permitted with a blessing her son to sail beyond the seas in the pursuit of his knowledge. His father's library stacked with books on Mathematics first kindled in the boy the enthusiasm for this branch of study. While in his teens and at a stage of very impressionable youth, he met Prof. Heisenberg of Germany who visited Madras at that time and young Chandrasekhar's passion for the study of science was further strengthened by this meeting. Sri

Purasu Balakrishnan has recorded in *Triveni* an adolescent confession of the young prodigy; how as a school-boy he used to go to the beach alone and prostrate himself on the sands and pray that one day he might be like Newton! His name has in fact found a place in the galaxy of genius at whose head stand Newton and Einstein and Sir C. V. Raman and Prof. Ramanujam. Even after attaining fame and renown, Chandrasekhar remains what he was before—earnest, eager, warm with enthusiasm for pursuit of knowledge and with the humility which is the best grace of greatness. Sri Balakrishnan tells us that when the widow of the late Prof. Ramanujam visited him during his 1936 visit to India, he introduced her to his sisters and after making that shy lady feel at home remarked that her husband's name was held in infinite esteem even across the seas, adding that "the other scientists here are worth only the dust on his feet." His days at Yerkes have been busy and full and in his letters written from there, we find this enthusiasm and humility shining across the lines as he talks of the quiet of Williams Bay ruffled only by "the exhilaration of having found something new" or the "saddening effect of realising one's own shortcomings relative to the giants." Again, of the Institute for Advanced Study-School of Mathematics at Princeton, New Jersey, where he lectured as a visiting Professor for three months in 1941, he writes: "It is a terrifying place. To be in the same institute as Einstein, Weyl, Paulie and others is a privilege, but terrifying all the same!"

A manufacturer, unable to get a machine to run properly although his best mechanics had tried their skill on it, called in an expert to fix that machine. The expert came, looked and listened for about two minutes, tightened a certain screw, and the machine ran smoothly. The expert departed, leaving a bill for Rs. 50.

The, manufacturer, astonished at such a prize for five minutes' work, wrote and demanded an itemized statement. He received the following:

Rs	0	8	0
	49	8	0
	50	0	0

AMERICAN MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

By MARY WILLARD

JUNE, the month of roses, is the traditional month for weddings in the United States. More marriages occur in that month than in any other. Probably no other social custom in the United States is carried out with so much ceremony, involving so many time-honored traditions, as the American wedding. It is usually as large and as elaborate as the family can afford. Since the United States is a melting pot of many peoples, American weddings include customs that had their origins long ago in nations now referred to as "the old country."

Most American couples take a honeymoon, even though it is brief. Some couples travel by train or airplane, but the automobile is the favoured method of transportation. As the couple leave the bride's home, the family and friends frequently shower them with rice and throw an old shoe after them for good luck.

Engagements in the United States are announced anywhere from a few days to a year in advance of the wedding. The diamond is the favoured stone for the engagement ring. The man usually gives one to his intended wife if he can afford it. She wears it, like the wedding ring, on the fourth finger of her left hand. After the marriage she wears both the rings on this finger. Nearly every married woman wears a wedding ring. In the last 25 years the number of men who wear wedding rings has been increasing, but this practice is not universal.

In most cases, the bride's parents pay all the expenses of the wedding except the flowers for the bride and her attendants. These are provided by the bridegroom, who also pays the clergyman. As in many countries, parents may influence young people in America in the selection of their mates, but there is no legal or traditional basis for enforcing the parents' wishes.

The parental type of marriage contract known in many countries (stipulating, for example, the dowry the bride brings to her husband), is not known in the United States. Young people of legal age wishing to marry may do so without parental consent.

The marriage may be a civil as well as a religious rite. A license is required, which may be obtained in the city hall or the seat of the county government. The laws of the 48 states governing marriage, vary very considerably. Some states require that the girl be 18 years of age, others 21, before she is free to marry without her parents' consent. Some states require a health examination before issuing the license; others require a waiting period of from one to five days before the license is issued. Some states have no requirements except the payment of a small fee.

The civil marriage ceremony may be performed by a judge, or in some states by a justice of the peace, clerk of the court or other local official. Religious ceremonies may be performed in a church, a home or at the home of the Clergyman, depending upon the religious customs and the wishes of the couple.

Weddings in Roman Catholic churches are held before noon. In the eastern states, 4 or 4:30 in the afternoon is a fashionable hour for church or home weddings. In the southern and middle western states, evening weddings are popular.

The number of marriages in the United States has steadily increased since 1939. The peak year was 1946, when there were 2,291,045 marriages. The number has dropped a little below 2,000,000 in the last two years, and in 1948 there were about 1,815,000 marriages.

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Letters To The Editor

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

The H.R.E. Bill: State Endowments?

Strange are the grounds advanced in support of our State taking over the administration of temples and maths and their endowments.

Dr. Rajan argues that 'they were a government of the people and these institutions were institutions of the people.' This argument ignores a number of fundamental considerations. This is a claim for the State to a jurisdiction which is out of all keeping with modern political philosophy and with the professed faith of the Congress. Our State is one which is purposely designed as a secular one and it is incompetent to deal with religion and religious institutions.

Mr. R. Surya Rao, supporting the State's assumption of the 'management of religious institutions directly,' says that 'no State in the world had endowed the institutions with such large landed properties.... gifted from public properties.' At best, this may justify the State administering the endowments; it cannot excuse the State controlling the institutions themselves, including the rituals in them. That 'State' which endowed the properties sought no control over their management and vested the control in those interested in the institutions; this State can have no right to do what that State expressly disclaimed. A secular State of Hindus and others can be no heir to a State that was deeply religious and exclusively Hindu and wholly temple-minded. Gifts having come to these institutions from the kings and not from the State, the proper course, if Mr. Surya Rao's argument holds, is to create kings now and put them in control. These kings knew what Mr. Surya Rao does not even suspect, the offering of the humblest is as sanctified and as important as the offering of the mightiest and the highest. Epigraphical records of the donations to the great Tirumalai-Tirupati temples from the beginning of Vijayanagara times are 733 in number, evidencing, practically, as many gifts. Not a little illuminating it is to classify the sources from which these gifts came. Figuring out the percentages, the results may be summed up thus: from the temple 'servants' themselves, 21; from the general public, 43; from the Queens and members of the family of the Chief Ministers, 4.5; from the king, 6.5; from others who perhaps acted for the king, 25. The percentage of donations from the 'State' is so low as 31.5, while the percentage from poor preceptors, Brahmans and scholars is 16.5, and the percentage from impecuni-

ous temple-servants 21. Let us turn to the ~~temple~~ relative to another temple, Tirukannapuram (Tanjore District). Out of 44 epigraphs, 15 are indefinite as to the donor; 4 record donations from kings, 2 from temple-servants and 23 from others. Has not the commonalty greatly exceeded the king—the 'State'—in the steadfastness of its devotion to the temples and in the exercise of liberality?

If Dr. Rajan and his supporters wish to lay hands on these endowments for purposes other than religious, let it not be on a pretence that the funds came from the State or from a secular public.

T. G. ARAVAMUTHAN.

Integration of Cochin and Travancore.

The integration of Cochin and Travancore will create not only confusion in the administration of the Union, but also discontent among the people. The majority of the people in both the States are against the integration. The only people who actually support the integration are the Ministers of Cochin and Travancore and the only Malayalee Minister of the Madras Cabinet. These Ministers and some office-bearers of the Congress organisation support the integration for obvious reasons.

The authorities who are keen on bringing about the integration have lost sight of the practical difficulties. The people of one State dislike the people of the other State in their heart of hearts. Already agitation has been started among the lawyers, the vociferous section of the community, regarding the location of the headquarters of the Union Government and the High Court. As for educational matters, students in Cochin are against affiliation with the Travancore University. The integration is also opposed by the Tamils of Travancore.

The best way to solve the problem will be for the respective States to merge with the neighbouring districts of Madras Province.

The argument in favour of integration that one State is better than two States will not hold good, especially when Alkya Kerala is a fantastic, illogical and impracticable political problem. Creation of linguistic provinces which was a political weapon against the British bureaucracy in India cannot hold water now, as it has become a thing of the past.

A plebiscite will easily open the eyes of the authorities before they proceed further in the matter.

AMBAT KOPPU MENON

Madura.