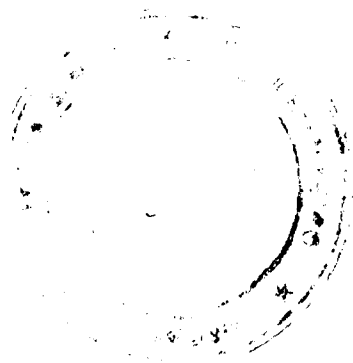




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SWATANTRA



SWATANTRA

VOL. VII. NO. 30.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1952.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL COMMENTS	3
SOTTO VOCE—By Vighneswara	5
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS	7
AN APPALLING LEGACY OF THE PARTITION—By A Special Correspondent	9
LITERARY TRADITIONS IN INDIA—By Krishna Chaitanya	11
ANOMALIES OF KASHMIR POLICY—From A Correspondent	15
ART OF SREEMATI DEVI	17
LIFE WITH AN ARTIST—By Mrs. Roy Chowdhuri	20
THE SECOND MARRIAGE—(Short Story)—By "Viswamitra"	24
INDIAN PUBLICITY IN CEYLON—By V. Subramanian	28
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS—By C. V. H. Rao	30
BLACK AFRICA'S LIBERATION STRUGGLE—By S. Datlin	33
THE FIFTH TAMIL FESTIVAL—By A Correspondent	35
FREE TRADE IN KNOWLEDGE	37
AFTER MOSSADEGH, THE DELUGE—By P. G. Krishnayya	39
HONOLULU TALKS AND ASIAN PEACE CONFERENCE—By K. G. Sivaswamy	40
SIDELIGHTS—By Saka	42
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	48

PAGE

30-7
29-6
28-5
27-4
26-3
25-2
24-1

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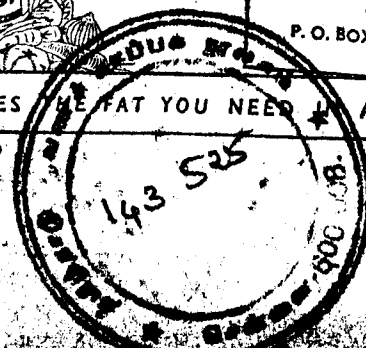
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ISSUED
WEEKLY

THE TANJORE ORDINANCE

THE explanatory statement on the Tanjore Ordinance promulgated by the C. R. Ministry last week, points out that out of fear of land reforms several pattadars in the district "have refused to renew lease agreements with their usual tenants and displaced them" and that the relations between mirasdars and tenants have become strained in consequence. In order to ease the strained relations the Ordinance confers occupancy rights on the tenants for a period of five years and gives them several other privileges. It is noteworthy that the gravity of the Tanjore agrarian situation was pressed on the notice of the Government primarily by the Communists in the State legislature. The Communists pleaded for an ordinance, and the Chief Minister parried, pleading that no ordinance could be issued while the legislature was in session. This answer was interpreted by the Communists as an admission that the ordinance of their pleading would be forthcoming when the objection raised by the Chief Minister ceased to be operative. And so it has turned out to be. The publication of the Ordinance has synchronised with the termination of the session of the legislature.

The Communists cannot be blamed for appropriating the Ordinance, as they have lost no time in doing, as a feather in their cap. It is not in Tanjore only that relations between land-lords and tenants are unsatisfactory. They are unsatisfactory practically throughout the State. But whereas in Tanjore, the Communists have brought the prevalent agrarian discontent well to the fore

through demonstrations in the locality, agitation in the press and speeches in the legislature, no comparable service of like vigour and virility was rendered to tenants elsewhere by any other party. Had the Chief Minister been a man of vision he would have taken advantage of Communist pressure to spread redress over the whole tenantry in the State, and not merely that section whose difficulties have been particularly brought to the limelight by the Communists. But it is to be feared the Chief Minister is more interested in scoring little debating points in forensic encounters with his critics, and indulging in piecemeal placations of the troublesome to purchase peace, than bent on well-planned measures in consultation with the legislature for ensuring substantial improvement in the economic condition of sufferers in all districts without discrimination. The other day at the Tamil Festival he deliberately went out of his way to narrow down the sphere of his utility by identifying himself with one particular warring unit in a controversy, whereas it should have been his privilege to act judicially and pacify passions and not rouse belligerency by playing the partisan. The administrative head of a multi-lingual State can ill afford to identify himself too exclusively with the battles of any of its linguistic units against the others, and when he does so he will be guilty of using administrative power held in trust for all in favour of one limited favoured section. This is as undesirable a form of misappropriation of power as any other, and those

succumbing to its lure will find their prestige progressively diminishing, however auspicious the start of their careers.

With the Tanjore Ordinance, C. R. has passed on the initiative in the framing of agrarian policy to his bitterly advertised public enemy No. 1, the Communists. It is the Communists whom the tenants of Tanjore will thank for the privileges accruing to them under the Ordinance. Nor will the Communists be slow to assimilate the lesson of their Tanjore triumph. We shall witness a series of intensified local agitations producing glorified local chieftains to wrest agrarian redress from the Chief Minister and compel him into ordinances after ordinance to mock the sovereignty of the legislature and the sanctity of the democracy which that sovereignty is incessantly boosted to enshrine.

Terrorism In Malaya

The Malaya Government have ordered the destruction of a whole village by way of punishment to the inhabitants for failing to give information about the murder of a Government official. Four years ago a state of emergency was proclaimed in Malaya and a campaign to round up the Communists began. In these four years, even according to the Singapore Correspondent of the *London Times* who certainly cannot be accused of pro-Communist bias, 7,700 people have been killed, and thousands more wounded, tortured and mutilated; extensive damage has been inflicted on the country's economy; "entire communities have been evacuated to facilitate military operations and the lives of millions reduced to a dreary existence by curfew, food control and other regulations impinging upon personal liberty." Particularly since the advent of General Templer on the scene in the spring of 1951, the military offensive has been stiffened and Communist casualties

have further mounted up. General Templer is generally compared with the late Marshal de Lattre de Tassigny of France and is credited with the same dramatic and pyrotechnic personality. He has now called on the military headquarters to forego their Wednesday half-holidays and give more time to the duties of the campaign. Simultaneously with the fury of redoubled military energy to hunt down the Communists, General Templer has been active with a programme of agrarian and social reform to woo the people, in particular the Chinese, back from Communist influence to loyalty to the Government. Yet the Communists seem to be as far from being suppressed as ever. According to *The Times* Correspondent they are "as strong as ever and apparently there was an unlimited number of young Malaysians to fill the gaps in their ranks. The reason for this seems to be that in the very fury of their campaign to put down the Communists the British authorities have destroyed the basis for free functioning of political parties with the result that now there is no alternative to Communism in Malaya except acceptance of the colonial regime. In the atmosphere of police and military supervision surrounding the emergency regulations it has become impossible to find any new political party and young men in Malaya are left with only the Communist Party to attract them and absorb their energies. Poverty is generally supposed to be the main cause of mass support to Communism but Malaya is a materially prosperous country. The sure defence against Communism is resistance by a loyal people, but the loyalty of the people shows no disposition to rally round an autocratic administration, militarily ruthless. Hence it is that we find Communism making the greatest advance just in those countries where the administrative drive against it is most terrific. The British Government, especially under Mr. Churchill, have become a back number in the world's affairs as they

have signally failed to realise that there can be no military solution to the political and economic problems

created and released by elemental forces like Communism and Nationalism.

Sotto Voce

THISTLES AND NETTLES



THE Chief Minister of Madras is an old hand at Ordinance-fabrication. When his friends gate-crashed into the Meenakshi temple, regarding it as a pious duty to hoodwink the authorities in the interests of Harijan soul-saving, he loyally shielded them from the wrath of the law. The new ethic thus sown has sprouted like dragon's teeth. But the perfect cynicism that has launched the Tanjore Ordinance might have made even the "August heroes" hold their breath. As for the great tribunes of the people from Surendranath to Sapru, who thundered against the lawless laws of the Britisher,—well, they are mercifully dead.

The Chief Minister, like an elderly Corydon out to make a conquest of a particularly frisky Phyllis, has been paying court to Mr. Ramamurti with an anxious complaisance which others not in the game found slightly ridiculous. The Communist spins a hair-raising tale of evicted tenants and starving families. "I do not ask for justice; but in the name of humanity I appeal for a slight abatement of the tyranny of the Tanjore mirasdar here and now." And the Chief Minister, touched by the moderation and sweet reasonableness of his Enemy No. 1, gushes with gratitude and makes a sporting offer on the spot.

With a sidelong look at the mystified legislature he promises young Phyllis that he will send the nagging old woman into a trance and then

they could have a romp together. And the Communist is delighted, naturally, to find that already, at the first preliminary flourish on his horn of duplicity, the walls of bourgeois Jericho have developed a deep crack. As for our sovereign legislature, it may have thought that, in comparison with its sworn servant's calm proposal to usurp its function, young Henry trying the crown on, as he thought unobserved, when the old king lay dying, was a model of propriety. But, if it did, it kept its thoughts to itself and dutifully inhaled the chloroform.

Rajagopalachariar offers the agrarian economy of Tanjore a stout hempen rope to hang itself with and calls it the cord of unity. The Congress fuhrers have harboured an age-long grudge against the Tanjore mirasdar; the student of abnormal psychology will not find it difficult to understand this. When the Congress was down and out the mirasdar filled its coffers, gave it his vote, beat up mass support for it—in a word helped it to power and influence: and nobody likes to be reminded of what he owes to another. An even graver offence of the mirasdar is that he has not easily succumbed to the mass hypnosis by which the Congress rules.

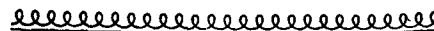
The Tanjore mirasdar is almost the last remnant of the middle class in this country. And totalitarianism has notoriously no affection for that historic bulwark against tyranny. C. R.

in particular has long fixed his baleful eye on this obstinately independent class. Some years ago he prescribed euthanasia for it. "Let the Government take all Tanjore agricultural land on lease and farm it direct: the owner can live on his rents and devote himself to soul-culture." He no doubt added *sotto voce*, "In due course the poor functionless thing will wither away." Starvation was too near a reality for anybody to heed his siren voice then. But at long last his opportunity has come.

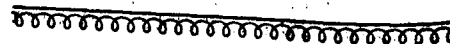
The formula, conceived in ignorance and developed with characteristic lack of candour, is essentially simple. Reduce rents, raise wages, increase taxes, declare the mirasidar redundant as well as obsolescent, and the grateful kisan will see to it that Congress Raj lasts for ever. The mirasidar, if he has any self-respect left in him, will hang himself on the nearest tree. But perhaps it will not pan out so nicely as all that; others, particularly the Communist-Black-Shirt axis, may have other plans for the future. But the Congress, like the Britisher in his last days, takes refuge in the security provided by a comfortably dense imagination. And C. R. serene in the conviction of having fended off Revolution, descends on Tanjore to savour his triumph as Caesar descended on Gaul.

But the tragic reality cannot be hidden in a mist of clever words. For every tenant restored there will be a tenant displaced; and hatred is far more purposive than gratitude. In villages where not a ripple of discontent was heard greed and rivalry will raise their hydra heads. The Revenue Courts will break down under the avalanche of suits: the lawyers recall with gratitude how C. R.'s thoughtful Debt Relief Act was a god-send in a lean time. Having neither cash nor credit the hodman turned hereditary occupant will go about his work with rather more fecklessness than usual. The "granary of the South" which has attracted the destructive envy of the carpet-bagger may come to grow not only thistles—on which asses can feed—but also nettles for a whip.

VIGHNESWARA.



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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

THE fight for freedom of expression is an unremitting struggle against authority and at no stage and under no conditions can the press, in a free country, rest content with being a mouthpiece of the Government; indeed, one may go so far as to say that the natural function of the press is to be in opposition, and the most that can be conceded is that it is non-party, bringing an unshackled attitude to bear on the questions of the day.

These reflections are peculiarly relevant in a country which has recently won freedom, in which struggle the press has played no mean part. The question is whether, in imitation of the fighters for freedom who have become persons of authority, the press can afford to become, in practice, a limb of Government, whatever the past and however popular the Government.

The history of British journalism is a pointer to correct conclusions. *The March of Journalism* by Harold Herd (George Allen & Unwin, 21 sh.) is a short but nevertheless adequately documented account of the press in Britain, and a perusal of the book leaves one with a feeling of admiration for the doughty champions of free expression that have built up its tradition.

It is significant that authority has always been against a free press, and this criticism holds against authority of every kind, whether it be a despotic king or an elected minister. During the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries, practically every other printer and editor appear to have suffered imprisonment for expressing views distasteful to the Government of the day. This list of village Hampdens is formidable. The Government resorted to indirect influences through the post office, imposition of stamp duties and the like, but the press still forged ahead. "A man had better make his son a tinker than a printer", said John Almon who was several times prosecuted. "The law of libel is unwritten, uncertain and indefinable. It is sometimes what the king or queen pleases. Sometimes what the minister pleases; sometimes what the Attorney-General pleases."

There was one notorious series of prosecutions in 1781 which resulted in heavy punishments for six newspapers which had published a single paragraph that offended the Russian ambassador. It is curious that the press had to fight for the right to report parliamentary proceedings, and that the earlier opposition to a free press came from elected members of Parliament who had attained to power. It shows that an elected Parliament and a democracy based on popular franchise are not, *ipso facto*, a guarantee of a free press, and that the vigilance in favour of free expression has to be kept up whatever Government is in power. This is a lesson that would bear repetition ad nauseum.

In 1852 *The Times* in a leading article brought out this aspect of the functions of a paper with a clarity that still retains its freshness. It said: "The press lives by disclosures; whatever passes into its keeping becomes a part of the knowledge and history of our times; it is daily and for ever appealing to the enlightened force of public opinion—anticipating, if possible, the march of events—standing between the present and the future, and extending its survey to the horizon of the world. *The statesman's duty is precisely the reverse*. He cautiously guards from the public eye the information by which his actions and opinions are regulated. He reserves his judgment on passing events till the last moment and then he records it in obscure and conventional language; he strictly confines himself, if he be wise, to the practical interests of his own country or to those bearing immediately upon it; he hazards no rash surmises as to the future; and he concentrates in his own transactions all that power which the press seeks to diffuse over the world. The duty of the one is to speak; of the other to be silent."

In other words the press is not necessarily free in a free country and has to keep up a continuous fight for its freedom. Another editorial in 1858 emphasizes the importance of such freedom being complete and not partial. "Liberty of thought and speech is the very air which an Eng-

lishman breathes from his birth; he could not understand living in another atmosphere. Nor when you once allow this liberty can you restrict the range of its subjects. The principle must have free exercise or it dies. It would be fatal to say, 'Discuss home matters but not foreign ones.' A press so confined would lack the inspiration of that universal sympathy which is necessary to sustain its spirit."

A third lesson is the need for dynamics. The emergence of the *Daily Mail* was a revolution. The new journalism had a greater appeal, for it dealt with a wider range of human interests, instead of, as before, confining information and commentary to politics. With rigid conscientiousness newspapers continued to give the public a heavy overdose of politics every day and to neglect almost entirely the lighter interests of life. Typical would be a page report of a speech headed simply with the name of the politician making it." It does not alter the situation if the third person is used instead of the first and the quotation marks avoided.

Finally, the Royal Commission which enquired into the finance, control, management and ownership of

the press pointed out certain salutary features of the British press. First, it is generally free from corruption; second, the direct influence of advertisers on the policy of newspapers is negligible; on the contrary the press is alert to any such attempts by advertisers and ready on all occasions to repulse them; third, there is nothing approaching monopoly in the press as a whole, the largest single aggregation in one ownership accounting only for 17.18 per cent; fourth, in answer to the major question 'Do any other factors in the control, management or ownership of the press or of the news agencies or any external influences operating upon those concerned in control, management or ownership militate against the free expression of opinion and the accurate presentation of news?', that there was scope for improvement but that "we do not see the solution in any form of State control of the press. We prefer to seek the means of maintaining the free expression of opinion and the greatest practicable accuracy in the presentation of news and generally, a proper relationship between the press and society, primarily in the press itself."

AN APPALLING LEGACY OF THE PARTITION

By A Special Correspondent

WE have all heard the adage of the law being an ass. It can sometimes be worse, and operate against all the civilised values of which legal process, contrasted to the supremacy of brute force, is itself one.

Many in the South may not be aware of what is perhaps the most shocking instance, in India since freedom, of the letter of the law operating to the advantage and protection of a criminal section of society. It is the judgment of the East Punjab High Court, last June, holding the Abducted Women (Recovery and Restoration) Act of 1949 to be unconstitutional.

The South was left almost untouched by the communal savagery which attended the country's partition and independence. Planned abduction of women on a large scale was part of this savagery. Muslim women fleeing to Pakistan were seized, violated and sold as chattel by Hindus and Sikhs in the border provinces. Hindu women in Pakistan territory were similarly subjected to barbarous treatment by Muslims.

The thousands of women held by abductors on either side of the border were among the appalling legacies of partition. The fate of the women left behind was as poignant as the condition of the destitute among the refugees who managed to cross the border alive. As soon as the chaos of partition settled down to a semblance of order the two Governments took the obvious step of jointly organising a search for the abducted women for restoration to their relatives. The Act of 1949 provided for the removal of suspected victims in India to camps where they were sought to be restored to normalcy from their abject, shock-ridden condition, and given the option of going to Pakistan to their relatives or returning to the alleged abductor. Almost all, of course, of the 16,836 women recovered in India upto June 30, 1952, wished to and were enabled to join their families in Pakistan. In the same period

Pakistan recovered and restored 8,206 abducted women to India.

It was essential to remove the victims from their 'homes' if they were at all to make their own choice, free from the intimidation of the abductor and the hostile atmosphere of the surrounding community consisting of his co-religionists. It was also necessary to prohibit movement of the women outside the camps, if they were to be saved from re-abduction. These steps could not be taken under the ordinary law, which was why a special Act was passed. But the Act was drafted in the light of the Government of India Act of 1935, the authorities expecting at the time that the work of recovery would be completed before the new Constitution came into force.

But the work has not proved easy, and while many thousands have been recovered by the Search Service Bureau run by Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai and her band of workers under the auspices of the External Affairs Ministry, it is clear that there are thousands more still in bondage. Meanwhile the Constitution has come into force, and certain men from whose homes suspected victims were removed have successfully invoked the Fundamental Rights to invalidate the Act and bring the work of recovery to an end.

The East Punjab High Court held that the Act was 'ultra vires' on the ground, among others, that it removed the abducted woman's right, guaranteed by Article 19 (1) (g) of the Constitution, "to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business," and that it did not conform to Article 22 which provides that no person who is arrested shall be detained beyond 24 hours without being produced before a magistrate. The learned judges did not accept the contention of Mr. Daphtary, counsel for Government, that a suspected victim of abduction removed from a suspected abductor's home and taken to a detention camp could not be treated

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The court's decision may seem perverse to the lay man, and one does not have to be a Pakistani to sympathise with the comment of *Dawn* that "Seldom in effect has judicial authority in any country claiming to be civilised thus condoned the blackest villiany and harboured the most abandoned type of criminal... Perverse and outrageous are the words for a logic under which women torn forcibly and fraudulently from their homes and relatives can be construed as full-fledged citizens of the land of their bondage and sorrow." But it is well to remember that the making or unmaking of policies is not the function of courts. In the words of Lord Macnaghten, quoted by Justice Harnam Singh in the present judgment, "A judicial tribunal has nothing to do with the policy of any Act which it may be called upon to interpret. That may be a matter for private judgment. The duty of the court, and its only duty, is to expound the language of the Act in accordance with the settled rules of construction."

The coming into force of the Constitution has not affected the Evacuee Property legislation, which also deviates from the Fundamental Rights provisions, since it has been placed on the protected list of Acts in the Constitution itself. The result is that the ultimate restoration of property to refugees remains possible, but not the restoration of abducted women to their rightful husbands or parents.

This situation cannot be blamed

either on the East Punjab High Court or the Constitution, being merely the result of the fact that the 1949 Act was not put on the protected list. An appeal against the High Court's judgment is pending with the Supreme Court, but the judgment may only be confirmed and in any case recovery work cannot remain suspended in India until a Supreme Court judgment, while similar work continues in Pakistan which has no new Constitution and Fundamental Rights. The suspension of official recovery efforts in India since June cannot but affect the pace of the work in Pakistan.

The Government of India therefore decided last week to revive the work by issuing an ordinance which will be free from the legal defects of the original Act. This is a decision dictated by bare humanity. But what shall we think of those, some of them in high places, who wanted the recovery work to remain ended with the Act, and opposed the enactment of new legislation? It was a shock for me to find the editor of the *Hindustan Times* permitting the following to appear in the weekly column by 'Insaf': "The vast organisation engaged in recovery work has a natural vested interest in the continuance of the work on which lakhs have been spent and which provides employment to a large number of them and political power and patronage in the hands of a few." There was more about how, for the social workers of 'fanatic zeal' to win the argument, "all that was necessary was for the vast Gestapo (not in the Nazi sense) to arrange for a few affected parties to shed tears to melt the heart of the powers that be."

LITERARY TRADITIONS IN INDIA

By KRISHNA CHAITANYA

ALTHOUGH it is generally known that ancient India had a developed literature, the continuity of literary traditions, after the classical age was over and modern vernaculars began to develop, is not always realised. Just as Spanish, Italian and French developed out of Latin stock, the languages of North India have evolved from a Sanskritic stock and the languages of the Peninsula from a Dravidian origin, and are today different from each other in the diversity and wealth of their literature.

It is impossible to give here details of all these continuous literary traditions but a bird's eye view of the evolution of Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and Malayalam literatures will perhaps convey something of the variety of India's literary traditions. Hindi and Tamil have been chosen because they are closest to Sanskrit and the ancient Dravidian language from which the numerous languages of the North and the Peninsula are respectively derived. Urdu has been selected because it is the product of the mingling of indigenous Hindu traditions with influences which came from the Muslim world of the Near East. And Malayalam literature is the product of the cross-fertilization of Sanskritic and Dravidian influences and has some interesting features worth noting.

The literature of Hindi, whose dialects are spoken in Rajputana, Delhi, the United Provinces, Central India and Bihar, has its beginning in ballads and romantic tales dating back to the seventh century. But its classical phase was reached with the devotional literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The product of a deep and widely shared faith, this literature transcended all social barriers. Kabir was a weaver, Raidas a shoe-maker, Dhanna a peasant, Sadana a butcher, Sena a barber, Nam Deva a tailor, Tulsidas a Brahmin and Meera a princess.

This religious literature falls into

two categories: mystic and epic. Kabir and Meera belong to the first tradition and Surdas and Tulsidas to the second. Kabir called his own poetry the *Awry Flute*, for its strains were not of this earth. In intimate contact with spiritual realities, his verse synthesised Islam and Hinduism and proclaimed the unity of God while remaining homely and using similes from common life. The succinct finality of his couplets have made proverbs of many of them. The two hundred lyrics of Meera show the emotional absorption of Kabir's intellectual realisation of the deep yearning of the human soul for God. The intensity of her verse often recalls Sappho.

Coming to the epic tradition, blind Surdas sang of Krishna in Brajabhasha, an exquisitely musical dialect. In his affection for Krishna, the poet forgot that he was a divine incarnation and the most attractive quality of his verse is its amorous tenderness, which is at its finest when he describes the pranks of the infant Krishna and the love episodes of Krishna and Radha. Of a different temperament was Tulsidas, the devotee of Rama, the other divine incarnation. Gifted with a keen sense of humour, forceful and entertaining in his dialogues, penetrating in his study of human types, Tulsidas was a master of narrative art, and handled short and long Hindi metres with superb skill and appropriateness.

In spite of the patronage of Akbar, Hindi literature declined during the later days of the Moghul Empire and its subsequent renaissance was a fruit of the contact with the West. With Maithili Saran Gupta, one of the most revered of contemporary poets, who has already celebrated his Golden Jubilee, the reaction to the impact of the West took the form of a romantic nostalgia for the heroic past. This lone survivor of the epic tradition was however the first to use modernised Hindi and to break away from archaic diction and forms. A lofty idealism



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is the fundamental trait of his poetry, which has again and again held up the ideal of the unity of mankind.

Suryakant Tripathi Nirala, unlike Gupta, has passed through many phases. A classicist in his mythological poems, a mystic who has studied Hindu and Sufi traditions, a romantic poet in his poems on the strength and sweetness of human sentiments, Nirala has today realised his mission as the advocacy of a humane socialist creed. His recent poetry, written in a simple and telling style, occasionally displaying the keen edge of satire, preaches no narrow party politics but draws its inspiration from the deeper levels of human nature, its need for companionship and its responsiveness to pity.

The novel as an art form is a gift from the West. After clumsy experiments in the bizarre, it came to maturity with Prem Chand, who recalls Dickens in the abundance of his creations. His characters belong to all classes of society and his work has caught the heady inspiration of the fight for national liberation and recorded many of its vicissitudes. In contrast, the preoccupations of the undoubtedly brilliant writers like Jainendra and Ila Chandra Joshi are with the problems raised by the individual's ego. But the intense sincerity of writers like Vatsyayana and Yashpal have brought them back to the fold of the common people, to the realisation that individuality is not lost when one identifies one's destiny with that of society.

Probably no other two languages in the world show such intimate affinity as Hindi and Urdu. Since it developed out of the native spoken dialect, Urdu shares its stock of basic words with Hindi. But while Hindi retained the Sanskrit script, Urdu took over the Arabic and for the further enrichment of its vocabulary and literary forms it turned to the Muslim traditions of the Near East. Moghul patronage explained this development and today, it continues to be the medium of distinguished writers, both Hindu and Muslim.

The association with the life of the courts seem to have arrested the development of the language in the early days, for the beautiful shell of

lyrical and elegiac verse, taken over from Persian poetry, often contained no real personal experience. The development of the *mushaira*, an institution which resembled the French salons of the seventeenth century, further prevented vitalising contacts. The *mushairas* were gatherings of the refined, where poets recited their flowery pieces and were applauded with decorum. Since recitation was the mode of communication, the poet had to rely upon felicity of phrase and simplicity of thought if he had to flourish. And though men like Wali and Mir Taqui Mir often strike a personal note, for a strong lyrical tradition we have to wait until the nineteenth century.

Urdu literature came of age with Ghalib (1796-1865). A pleasure-loving temperament caught in the mesh of worldly troubles, Ghalib expressed himself in a style which brings him close to the English metaphysical poets like John Donne. His pessimism and philosophical bias are brought out by these verses:

"Before the seed was laid
And flesh encumbered my poor
soul,
When all was naught but nothing-
ness,
Then unto God was I in his ubi-
quity.
But living now, a body circums-
cribed
His glory left behind in trailing
clouds
Existence lost me all, I am un-
done."

But in his letters, which mark the beginning of Urdu prose, Ghalib reveals himself as a genial and lovable personality. The style is simple and forceful, humour enlivens even sad recollections and scattered among the letters are literary appreciations which reveal a keen critical insight.

Hali (1837-1914) marks the transition from the older and fully personal poetry to the modern mood which is intensely preoccupied with the social milieu. He broods over the decline of Muslim fortunes, criticises social evils, demands the restoration of woman to equality of status with

man and satirises the social parasites:

"O holy man, all worldly goods
abjured

Would it were meet, abjure hypo-
crisy too!"

Sir Mohammed Iqbal, who died in 1938, is the greatest writer Muslim India has produced in recent years. An intense awareness—of nature, of contemporary society, of the movements of history—characterises his writings. The power of the strong sun of India and the might of its turbulent rivers come to life in his poetry, which is equally sensitive to nature in her tranquil moments. But the problems of contemporary life, and especially the reconstruction of Islam were his main preoccupations. He noted the enormous rapidity with which the world of Islam was spiritually moving towards the West. He saw nothing wrong in this as the philosophers of Islam had in the past also received inspiration from Greek thought and had in turn inspired the European renaissance. But he gave the warning that the dazzling exterior of European culture might arrest this process of assimilation and the true inwardness of that culture might never be reached. Iqbal's philosophy of personality was derived from a positive reconstruction of the message of Nietzsche. While Nietzsche or at any rate his German interpreters emphasized the great rights of the Superman, Iqbal stressed his greater obligation to society.

The Urdu poet of today has "other uses for poetry than those over love" as Faiz would say: Faiz's vitriolic poems *Mongrels* and Ehsan Danish's *Labourer's Child* reveal the intense social preoccupations of this new poetry, whose most authentic voice is, perhaps, Josh Malihabadi. Profoundly conscious of the social maladjustments from which incalculable human suffering takes its origin, Josh's poetry is charged with sorrow but is not content with leaving the blame on God and fate. Its denunciation of misery as a calamity, resulting from inhumanity and exploitation, provides it with a dynamic and social programme.

Tamil, the language of more than eighteen million people living in the State of Madras, dates back to the

highly developed Dravidian civilization of pre-Aryan times. Its recorded literature, which has been judged to be "more polished than Greek and more copious than Latin," falls into four main periods.

The early writings, often termed the literature of the Academy, because its entire mass of about 2,500 poems, contributed by nearly 500 poets, was written under the auspices of an academy of critics and scholars, belong to the first millennium of the Christian era. The bulk of these poems are heroic pieces sung by minstrels in banquet halls and they share the tumultuous vitality of Norse sagas. But there are also a few idylls of a quieter tone, which throw light on the arts and manners, the feasts and festivals and the daily lives of the people. But the greatest treasure of this phase is the didactic verse of Thiruvalluvar. Inspired by humanism, its ethical precepts recognise the justness of man's desire for his portion of worldly pleasures, while upholding the transcendental nature of his ultimate destiny.

Close on four centuries of sluggish literary activity separate the period of the Academy from the period of the reign of the Pallavas, which saw the most glorious development of this civilization in commerce, colonial expansion, art, poetry and architecture. The Pallava age is the period of devotional lyrics. The poets fall into two groups, the Nayanars who praised Lord Siva and the Alvars who sang of Vishnu, among the greatest of the latter being Perialwar and his daughter Andal. Andal's poetry resembles in its intensity the best poetry of Catholic mysticism in Europe.

In the epic period that followed the Pallava age, the expansion of the Tamil empire under Rajendra in the eleventh century gave the impetus for a revival of the early heroic tradition, while the increasing contact with Sanskrit culture shifted the accent from the saga of heroes to the saga of divine incarnations. Thus Kamban, whose *Ramayana* equals in greatness the Sanskrit original of Valmiki, sees in the story of Rama loyalty to the ideal of manliness and at the same time the working of the divine mission to establish justice on earth.

Ascetic treatises, preaching other-worldliness, reflecting and further accentuating the diminished vitality of the people, bridge the gulf from the epic age to the renaissance of the modern period, almost entirely the fruit of the contact with the West. Some idea of the influence of the West can be gathered from the fact that Father Beschi, the Italian Jesuit, is acknowledged to be the father of modern Tamil prose. In fashioning out a prose for political and scientific discussion, in the structure of the short story and the novel, the debt to the West is incalculable. It is in the poetic tradition that continuity with the past is still strong. The work of Pattinathar and Ramalinga Swamikal recalls the devotional intensity of the Nayanars and in the work of the late Bharathi, the greatest Tamil poet of the twentieth century, the lofty ethical idealism of Thiruvalluvar and the lyrical intensity of Perialwar fuse with an intense love for the country to yield a poetry exalting the purer type of patriotism.

Some very interesting features characterise the literature of Malayalam, the language of eleven and half million people inhabiting the western coast of the Indian peninsula. Though Dravidian in origin, Malayalam has taken over the fuller alphabet of Sanskrit and the cross fertilisation of Tamilian and Sanskritic influences has yielded rich advantages for the language, especially in poetry, which now possesses the rhetorical complex metrical mould derived from Sanskrit and the sensuous, lyrical verse-forms of Tamil derivation,

which are actually sung as melodies. Secondly, while the fountainheads of the literatures of the other languages are formed by devotional writings, here we find two great figures, the intensely devout Ezhuthachan, praising gods and god-like men and the brilliant, sophisticated Nambiar, who debunked gods and men with god-like pretensions. Nambiar's legacy has been an alert critical awareness, which prevented the growth of all false enthusiasms. These people thus escaped the dangers of cultural insularity by learning not to take themselves too seriously and they have made heroic efforts to keep in touch with literary developments in other regions in India and in foreign countries. The fact that this part of India has the highest record in education has helped in this endeavour. We find the most diverse influences at work here: the neurosis of Strindberg and Baudelaire, the deep yearning for peace of Maeterlinck, the warm humanity of Li Tai Po and the rugged manliness of Whitman. The critical ability of the people guides the correct assimilation of these foreign influences and the renaissance in Kerala promises to be the most eclectic and catholic of all the regional awakenings. Christianity and Islam in this part of the world are as ancient as the faiths themselves and a process of synthesis has been at work through the slow centuries with the result that today some of the best critics of the Hindu devotional literature of the past are Christians and profoundly moving pieces like *Mary Magdalene* and *Tree of Life of Calvary* have come from the pen of Hindus. —Copyright—N.N.F.

Never was the need for alert and vigorously independent journalism greater than today. In this age of uncertainty and crumbling faith and moral nihilism—of old political heresies revived in delusive new forms, of evil masquerading as good—the journalist has the urgent task of defending the spiritual values of civilization and keeping the conception of freedom clear and untarnished. The Press has many enemies, open and unavowed; it has many highly critical friends, too. It cannot be taken for granted in the kind of world we are living in that the march of journalism will continue uninterrupted. The price of journalistic liberty, as of all human freedoms, is eternal vigilance—to defend this hard-won liberty not only by resisting encroachments but by the steady improvement of standards that provides the surest armour of a free institution. —Harold Herd.

ANOMALIES OF KASHMIR POLICY

From A Correspondent

THE discussions that are now taking place in Geneva and the elucidation that is offered by the Defence Minister with reference to their scope and especially his statement that it will not be within the purview of the Geneva Conference to deal with the proceedings and the decision of the Kashmir Constituent Assembly must give rise to many fundamental searchings of the heart. It is true that the work of the Kashmere Constituent Assembly enjoys the position which, in the language of the law, is called *lis pendens*. The undertaking both by the Government of India and by those who are responsible for the Kashmere administration that the ultimate fate of Kashmere will be settled only by means of and after a plebiscite, renders the Constituent Assembly itself a provisional and tentative legislative organ and its decisions, whatever they may be, will be subject to final revision. But whatever the theory may be, in practice, the Constituent Assembly has arrogated to itself a supreme or sovereign jurisdiction and the statement of the Deputy Chief Minister in the Assembly that Kashmere will never consent to occupy the same position as the Schedule B. States is only a pointer; and above all, the forcible ejection of the Ruler and the choice of Sardar has in his place has set the seal on the pretensions of the Constituent Assembly to be the sole and final arbiter of the country's destiny. It is most unfortunate that the Government of India did not use its influence to prevent or at least postpone these crucial decisions until after the disposal of the plebiscite question.

Let us consider the facts from a detached and dispassionate point of view. Before the Independence of India was proclaimed there was a certain measure of what is called sovereignty which differed from State to State but which was admitted in theory by the British Government though often infringed in practice. But Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has un-

equivocally declared himself against all monarchical ideas and his views on this subject are well known. Nevertheless, the Congress Government not only admitted but acted on the basis of the Ruler's sovereignty when they accepted Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to India. If the Maharaja was not a sovereign and the accredited representative of the State who could deal with the fortunes and the future of the State, such an accession would be futile and by such an accession India could have gained no rights. If the present trend of opinion in the Kashmere Constituent Assembly were the correct one, the sovereignty of the people should have been invoked for bringing about such an accession and India would have no right to treat Kashmere as an integral part of this country without an expression by the people, namely, by an antecedent plebiscite.

What has now happened is that the unfriends of India and the shrewd advocates of Pakistan may and probably would argue that the Government of India took advantage of a legal doctrine, namely, the sovereignty of the Ruler of Kashmere for the purpose of procuring an accession because they were then afraid of the results of a plebiscite. Having procured that accession, there is no getting rid of the person whom they used as an agent for the purpose and they are, by means of the resolutions of the Constituent Assembly and the presence of their army, persuading or intimidating the people of Kashmere to give a plebiscite in their favour, such a plebiscite being founded on the theory that the sovereign alone can dispose of the fate of the country. It is a thousand pities that these anomalies and inconsistencies did not present themselves to the authorities in Delhi and that they did not persuade an impulsive and over-enthusiastic person like Sheikh Abdullah to await the results of the plebiscite before abolishing monarchy.



YASODA AND KRISHNA

—By Y. G. Srimati

ART OF SREEMATI DEVI

TRIBUTES BY C. R. AND ROY CHOWDHURI

Sri C. Rajagopalachari, Chief Minister, Madras, opened an exhibition of the paintings of Miss Y. G. Srimati at the Museum Theatre last Sunday. Sri Devi Prasad Roy Chowdhuri, Principal of the School of Arts, introduced the work of the artist to the public in a felicitous speech.

After Sri Chowdhuri had spoken, the Chief Minister complimented him on his speech and said he had expressed his own thoughts. "It is a very rare thing for me to say so," he added, "but today I am in the position of being able to say that I endorse everything he said. He has today given you an example of how one should express himself truthfully without any kind of inhibition or fear or flattery whatsoever. His is a speech not merely to be heard with the ear but one to be read over again with the eye and the mind."

Taking the Chief Minister at his word, we reproduce below the full text of Sri Devi Prasad Roy Chowdhuri's address:

EVERY form of art reveals a symbol of beauty. The symbol is the outcome of a sincere search and hard labour. The search is initiated by a strong emotion which is always in urgent need of satisfying a purpose. The purpose aims at a serious project which is a revelation of truth, I mean the truth that underlies the created form, it is the inherent quality. The difficult task of search, discovery and release is not accomplished without effort but we often come across such an expression as "effortless execution". Usually it comes from the pen of over enthusiastic connoisseurs or critics in the making. The expression is intended to lay emphasis on mastery of technique. However well meaning the remark might be, it loses its objective and value if false understanding sits on judgment and explanation. It is so indeed when self-constituted critics become desperately ambitious to be artistically bent and intellectually arbitrary.

The expression "effortless" is applicable only to technique because technique stands for a language which is the vehicle that conveys the expression. In the circumstances the load, the distance and the time required to cover the destination have to be adjusted according to the capacity of the carrier.

I am constrained to say that many critics, particularly of the new order, do not even know which part of a

painting is called technique, how the one is distinct from the other, or why a particular treatment is necessary for a particular theme. Let us compare this aspect with the language we use every day for our exchange of thoughts. The language of our daily use has also its different stages which convey meaning according to the capacity of an individual's knowledge and power of pressing his point of view. For instance, a child's thought and expression will be different from that of an adult and the adult who has cultivated language to be intelligible on an intellectual level will be different from an adult who had not had the benefit of education in this direction. Therefore the understanding of language and what purpose it is going to serve is desirable before an analysis is indulged in. But the current of the day has swept away this common sense.

I presume this unfortunate condition has come to stay on account of a sudden rush for quick cultural attainment. In consequence of which, the enthusiasts of the class I have mentioned find no time or patience to study how a picture is made. The indifference towards proper understanding of values does not count much so long as some quotations from any article on the modern trend of art find a place in their so-called learned treatises.

Criticism, as I understand it, in its true sense, is an interpretation of

facts as they exist in the patterns, with such suggestions as would be constructive and would be helpful for a progressive outlook and not merely supporting a propaganda just because it happens to be a raging fashion of the day. To get at the correct attitude one has to be prepared to face labour and limit expression to the capacity of one's knowledge. But labour and knowledge do not go well where a quick survey has to be made on impressions which are gained superficially to meet the demands of the press as otherwise their news value is lost. So haste takes the place of speed and the result is frustration.

Sense of responsibility under such circumstances is considerably reduced, if not completely disowned. The consequence is a catastrophe as I have already said. Either the artist is boosted up to a dizzy height just to collapse for want of stamina to fit in with the honour thrust upon him, or he is condemned by a sweeping remark which effectively crushes his work that might have taken months or years to complete. The wrong thus done in both the cases gets no chance for a fair trial because of the cultivated indifference and lack of interest of the public. It is strange that even a cricket or a hockey player is privileged to defend himself if such a situation arose, but, alas, the artist who feels for the masses and speaks on their behalf is left at the mercy of these irresponsible critics. This, in spite of the fact that telling stories of the joys and sorrows of life through the medium of art lends no little service to the understanding of humanity. Therefore we cannot but accept the artist's contribution as a great asset that reinforces the strength of the pillars on which grows the structure of civilisation. Despite this fact, he remains a condemned being and the pursuit of his religion is considered to be an extravagance in luxury.

It has not come to the light yet, that the vocation of an artist is nothing short of a sadhana, a ybga for which every bit of energy has to be harnessed and concentration accentuated often to meet failures which succeed each other to lead to the path of success. The path goes beyond from one destination to another and so on continues the

search. It is something like swimming in the midst of an immeasurable ocean. Approaching the shore remains only a hope.

We can conclude from this that the genius in this sphere is not born, but he is made as the result of hard struggle. As such, what appears to be effortless or simple on the surface, is really a concealment of labour and complications. Simplicity also in its illusive presentation is nothing other than a sum total of complications which is most intriguing. The illusive effect is the outcome of a serious thinking to avoid a clash between the unwanted and the indispensable; each of which is arrogant and insists on staying on in a disorderly manner. To establish harmony in such an atmosphere, requires a thorough grip of the subject.

The principle is not confined to picture making alone, but it also applies to sculpture, literature, music, dancing and architecture. Each of the creative arts has a composition of its own. And in each sphere the arrangement is condensed to the bare essential by eliminating the jarring elements. Otherwise the disturbing factors do create a discord which is not the function of art since art stands for harmony and joy.

A well arranged pattern therefore cannot be accomplished by a beginner, or those who delight in reckless experiments for a successful chaos. The care-free attempts of a beginner I do not mean the innocent child, but the experienced grown-up, have a tendency to be carried away by the strong emotion which stresses all importance to the subject without considering how the contents of the subject will have to be revealed. There is again the boosted one who takes for granted that he is an artist. He is a menace to the cause of progress since his belief leads to a conviction and the conviction begets contagion which adds to the number of conceits. In the circumstances the question of a reference to the facts of nature which can tell the truth does not arise, since reliance on truth threatens a cure. They thrive on ignorance when it is bliss; hence folk is taken as wisdom. The works of these artists excite curiosity on account of a following made by pro-

paganda just because their achievement is a challenge to the convention, or because it is something queer. The project has a vested interest which is an exploitation of the artists on the one side and self-glorification of the interested on the other.

The whole question cut short would mean that one must know where to stop. This is where discipline comes in, which is subjected to severe restrictions imposed by the medium and also the limitations of personal experience. But discipline and sadhana have been done away with by the fanatic domination of unassimilated modernism borrowed from the West in order to make simplicity an easy affair. No doubt, the objective has been gained since the pictures composed by cubes and cones or so-called dashing strokes create complicated puzzles, and the puzzles are placed on such an intellectual plane or abstract themes as could be hardly understood even by one who is prepared to extend a liberal attitude towards the new movement. Whatever sort of sympathy one may wish to extend, in this respect, the reactions of truth and falsehood remain opposed to each other, that is to say, a puzzle capable of giving a headache can never be converted into a picture that radiates joy.

In this tumult of life where pride is eclipsed by vanity and haste joins aimless speed to arrive at nowhere, one feels a great relief to come in contact with the works of Sreemati Devi. She has all the best assets to grow and I do hope she will. Patience is her main hold and perseverance is her stimulating force. Combined with these rare qualities that an artist must possess, she has the gift to take any amount of pains to satisfy her mission which is motivated by religious trends and supported by conventions of traditional technique.

I am glad to say that despite the presence of the strong sentimental aspect of religion Sreemati Devi has not failed to pay due attention to the pattern that translated her subject matter into a visual form. It is indeed a difficult performance as one is apt to be carried away by the devotional aspect which often ignores the aesthetic delight that the form

beautiful can give. It would not be out of place if I mention that out of millions who visit temples very few see the beauty of the shrine. Beauty, as such, needs entirely a different approach which may be associated with Bhakthi but absolute Bhakthi does not depend on this form or that to meet its objective, since the quality of the form to be worshipped is built up in imagination which would work even if the form were not visible; or devoid of aesthetic appeal.

She has chosen wash and tempera as her medium for the execution of her works. The effect is influenced by the Rajput, Moghul and Ajanta, the last being the dominating one in respect of form and colour scheme as well. The arrangement of colours has a musical quality. It is no wonder that it should have been so, because, in my opinion, her musical attainment excels her graphic expressions. It is due to the fact that the form of art created by the artist would reflect on her whole being.

Coming back to the arrangement of colour, I should say it is sober and a source of relief to the eyes and the mind when contrasted with the effect produced by the ultra-modernists. The colours of their choice are hardly good to their neighbours. They are restless and scream till they shake your healthy nerves and force them to succumb to a physical pain.

Sreemati Devi could have been easily recognised as a genius for the amount of pains she takes to see the minutest details carried out in order, and the arrangements of the composition balanced to the best of her knowledge.

But details too have their dangerous elements since all of them do not make for profit unless they are filtered. This is where a scientific training is required but she could not go through rigid discipline for not being able to work under a master. She is entirely self-taught and extremely shy. This modesty prevented her from exhibiting her works before the public earlier. But for the gentle and continuous persuasion of her brother, Mr. Duraiswamy, this exhibition would not have been possible.

LIFE WITH AN ARTIST

By Mrs. ROY CHOWDHURI

BEFORE I start recounting how I learnt the lesson of living with an artist, I feel it incumbent to tell of the making of the man who educated me on this line.

Sri Deviprosad Roy Chowdhury to whom my thanks are due spent his childhood in the midst of immense luxury. Both his parents descended from old zamindars of Bengal. His mother was the only daughter of the Late Maharajah of Tajhat—(Rangpur) and was for a long time the only child of the Maharajah. Her parents therefore doted on her and even after her marriage she spent the greater part of the year at Tajhat. The story runs that a special pool was made for her to swim and play with gold mohars.

Such was the atmosphere in which the child Deviprosad's character was moulded. It is no wonder therefore that he learnt to command from the age when other children were taught to obey. Later this quality developed into a part of his nature.

His inclination towards art showed its signs from a very early age but it received no encouragement from the family.

The Durga Puja used to be celebrated with great pomp at Tajhat. Arrangements were made for all sorts of amusements and crowds of people from different village flocked in to take part in the festival. The spacious compound of the Maharaja's huge building used to be studded with tents for circus company, theatres, dancers, musicians, magicians, etc. Little Deviprosad wandered from tent to tent but the one who attracted his attention most was the artisan who gave shape and colour to the goddess Durga. Untiringly he sat and watched. The artisan's vanity was touched by finding such a keen admirer of his skill and he gave the boy some clay to play with. Deviprosad's heart bounced up with joy. His fingers were itching for this opportunity. As soon as the workman left the place for his midday rest the boy started on his experiments. He

modelled a cobra and left it at the back of the idol. When the artisan came back to his work and found the venomous reptile ready for a bite, he screamed for help. Though he was ashamed when he discovered his mistake, he was pleased with the workmanship of the child artist and congratulated him unstintedly.

Deviprosad's paternal grandfather was a great scholar in Sanskrit. When Deviprosad was sent to school, he became the leader of a gang. The routine work of the school made no impression in this child of nature. He grunted and sweated under the pressure of its weary life. He found no joy in the books that were prescribed. Some sort of diversion was therefore absolutely necessary for him and he found that in mischief of all sorts. He put marbles under the legs of the chair of his class teacher but was near by to save him from a fall. He tied a grasshopper with the shikha (tuft of hair) of his pundit while he was dozing. He made it a point to occupy a seat at the back bench where he kept some wet clay in strict concealment. According to the fancy of the moment he would select one or other from the class as his model, no matter whether he was a teacher or a student and make a study of his head accentuating the peculiarities of his features while the lesson was in full swing. None of his class mates dared expose his secret. Who would dare to risk his displeasure and bear the consequences? One day Deviprosad became so absorbed in his work on the clay that he did not notice the approach of his tutor until he stood beside him. The master stared at the clay model of his own image and then looked daggers at the artist. The subdued noise of choked laughter emerged from all parts of the room. This increased the irritation of the teacher and he resolved to teach the culprit a good lesson for his daring misdeed. As a rule, the headmaster acted as the Chief Justice in this sort of serious cases. But luck favoured our little artist for the time being. The headmaster was not in

his room. The case therefore had to be postponed for some future hearing. In the meanwhile the boy realized that it would no more be possible for him to continue with his creative hobby within the four walls of his class room. Under the circumstances he decided to depend on his instinct for guidance, in other words, he resolved to evade the institution which failed to instil any interest in him. He chose the Wellington Square which was just a stone's throw from his school, as his favourite haunt. Here, under the shade of a tree he modelled and remodelled all sorts of birds and beasts to his heart's content. This attracted quite a large crowd. Their number increased every day. The little artist was happy and proud. With so many spectators at his side he felt himself important. But alas, such happiness could not continue for long. The bribe that he gave to the gate keeper was not sufficient to keep him quiet for an indefinite period of time. The incident was reported to the headmaster and the delinquent was summoned to appear before the judge. Another case of serious offence was added to the already existing one. Naturally the punishment could not be expected to be a light one. After being whipped to the satisfaction of the judge and the jury he was ordered to stand on a bench in the open terrace for one whole week during the tiffin period. The aristocrat in Deviprosad revolted against this humiliation. He was on the lookout for an opportunity to make good his escape. He knocked the watchman down during an unguarded moment and before the fellow could recover from the shock he fled from the vicinity of his prison house determined never to return again.

A few days after this incident, Deviprosad's father received a letter from the authorities of the school regretting their inability to take the responsibility of such an unmanageable boy. He called his son, showed him the letter and then followed a policy of non-cooperation. This proved much more effective than any severe punishment. The boy felt so dejected at such treatment from his dearly beloved Babuji, as he called him, that of his own accord he went to his school with the proposal of joining some

other school. Forthwith he was admitted into the South Suburban School of Bhawanipore. For a considerable period of time he remained a changed person. The spirit of competition and the new atmosphere gave him an impetus to study and in spite of his special aversion for certain subjects he managed to secure his promotion from class to class till he reached the Matric, supposed to be the gateway to the university. But the monotony of the school life made him reckless at times. He felt that he needed a change. He discovered a small circus company very near the school, spoke to the manager, pleased him by his cycle tricks and got admitted there to act as a clown with the remuneration of Rs. 30 per month. His reputation as a circus player spread so rapidly that to save his skin as well as his good name he had to resign the post and revert to his regular student life.

Being upto mischief is perhaps a part of the life of a student, specially if he is a boy. One particular day the boys of Deviprosad's group were detained by the teacher of the optional class. This of course was not appreciated by the students. They were aware of the teacher's weak point, he could not teach effectively unless the door of the class room was shut. A proposal came from somewhere to unhinge the door of the class room and was carried unanimously. But who should do it? The only capable person was Deviprosad. He jumped at the suggestion but on one condition only—that the other boys would be on guard to give the danger signal if there be need for it. This was agreed upon and the work started. But when after neatly finishing his job he proudly looked round towards his colleagues there was not one to be seen. As he was going down he came in close contact with the most ferocious of teachers, the assistant headmaster, at the stair case. He realised at once the cause of the sudden disappearance of the guards from their posts.

In spite of no definite proof against him Deviprosad was marked as the culprit. There was none so daring and strong as he. He was summoned to the library to pay the penalty. That was the time when the boys came to select their books. The place was

crowded with students and teachers. When Deviprosad entered, all eyes were turned towards him. He was ordered to stretch his hand, and swish went the whip, once, twice, thrice. Streaks of red lines were visible on his palm. He bit his lip but did not withdraw his hand. When blood oozed out from the wound, the teacher took compassion and ordered for the first aid box. Deviprosad declined to accept the offer of help with a short "thanks, not necessary." A bitter smile lingered on his lips. He ordered the peon to bring his books down from his class room. It was a command meant to be obeyed and the peon did as he was bid. In the presence of a dumbstruck audience he made a bonfire of his books and then marched off bidding a final goodbye to his school life.

He confessed everything to his father when he arrived at home and said he had decided to take up art seriously. His father heaved a sigh but did not like to hamper the career of a grown up boy by forcing his own convictions on him.

His grandfather on the other hand was unforgiving, when he learned that a member of his family had decided to become a professional artist. This was beyond the family tradition! His relatives from both sides rose up in arms against the idea. But the boy was firm in his resolution. The father was expected to sever all connection with the son for lowering the prestige of his family.

They miscalculated the ties of affection between the two. The result was that both father and son were treated as untouchables by their people. Undaunted the boy marched forward towards his goal. Like Ekalavya of the epic Deviprosad chose his guru before he had the opportunity of meeting him. One fine morning he took courage and went straight to the residence of the late Abinendranath Tagore, who had given a new impetus to art and artists. The impatient boy waited patiently before he could get the chance of a regular interview. Abinendranath was evidently impressed by the specimens of his work, for he allowed Deviprosad to enlist himself as one of his disciples. Getting inspirations from his great guru the young artist began to make rapid

progress. Soon his pictures found a place in the art exhibitions and won the best prizes. But Deviprosad was not content. Something was oppressing his mind. He discovered the gulf that separated the art of the West from that of the East. He had learnt the technique of one, why remain ignorant about the other? He must master the science of the Western art as well. Once more he was in search of a guru and found one in Mr. Boya, an Italian master, under whom he learnt art for about three years. To please the master and assimilate his technique no work was too mean for this seeker of knowledge—from cleaning the guru's brushes to sweeping his room. After he had completed his course and was painting pictures in Western styles in his own quarters, one day he felt the desire to present one of his works to his teacher. But when he went to the premises of his master, he found the door locked. It hurt his sensitive mind to learn that the Italian had left India for good without even saying goodbye to his pupil.

Deviprosad's search for learning still remained unsatisfied. He felt there was yet another sphere which he had not touched. The image of the artisan whom he imitated in his childhood came back to his mind's eye. Once more he was in need of a guru and he found one in Sri Hiron-moy Roy Chowdhury of Lucknow. This gentleman not only knew how to guide his pupil but was also gifted with the rare quality of appreciating a fellow artist to the extent of admitting his superiority even though the person in question was his own pupil. When Deviprosad felt he had acquired sufficient knowledge in the science of sculpture he ventured to make a study of his father's head. His mother thoroughly disapproved of the work. "Does your father look like that?" she asked, and then added "It looks as if the burden of the whole world is on his shoulders. Could you not portray him in a brighter mood?" The sensitive temperament of the artist could not bear this ruthless criticism. He threw the head down from its pedestal. A few days after this his guru came and saw the head which was still lying on the floor. Is that your work, my boy? he asked and added, "In that case you have nothing

more to learn from me." The portrait which he executed while still a student was later published in the Studio (London) and was acclaimed as a very fine piece of work in sculpture.

As Deviprosad progressed in the study of sculpture, his struggle for existence became harder. Both his and his father's allowances were stopped by his unsympathetic grand parent. He would not have borne this injustice meekly had it not been for his father. His mother he had lost. It pained him to see his father suffer for his sake. He started selling his pictures like a hawker. But there was very little demand for such works of art at that time. The amount that it fetched was not enough to fill two hungry stomachs. He must secure a permanent job somehow, which would give him a stable income. After a long search he got the job of an assistant (colour grinder) to a scene painter with the meagre remuneration of Rs. 75 per month. But when the scene painter found that his assistant was more skilled in the work than he himself he got nervous and managed to secure his dismissal under some pretext.

The spirit of the young artist was not to be curbed by these adversities. He had faith in his own ability and was determined to succeed in his chosen path.

The late Sri Ashutosh Mukherjee was then Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University. He went to him and begged for the job of a drill master, or any other post of that type in some school. The great scholar looked at him with surprise. "Don't you belong to the Chowdhury family of Bhawanipore," he asked, and when the artist answered in the affirmative

he said "you want the job of a school master? Have you quarrelled with your people?" Shortly after this a drawing master's post was created in the Mitra Institution of Calcutta, where Sri Deviprosad was installed with the small pittance of Rs. 40 per month.

Two of his friends of whom I have often heard my husband speak with tender gratefulness are Sri K. N. Chatterji and Sri Asoke Chatterjee, the two sons of Sri Ramananda Chatterji, the late Editor of the *Modern Review*. These two brothers appreciated Deviprosad and his art and helped him during this difficult period by purchasing his pictures, finding buyers for them and giving publicity to his works. With the artist's indomitable will and the help of his friends and admirers, he was soon able to establish himself as one of the leading young artists of Bengal and created a demand for his pictures in the art loving world. Though small, yet with a steady income at his command he was able to buy the necessary equipment for his work. His pictures began to sell and he received orders for painting portraits. His average income soon rose to about Rs. 500 per month. It was at this period that Sri Deviprosad was introduced into our family. When he came and stood on the threshold of our house, he looked more like a soldier than a struggling artist. I must admit that I was impressed by his manly structure though I did not fail to notice the peculiar traits in his character—Over frank, over sensitive and overbearing. It was with this man that Fate sealed my destiny. I was married to Sri Deviprosad Roy Chowdhury on the 27th of Feb. 1929.

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THE SECOND MARRIAGE

By "Viswamitra"

I wonder if you know the district of Tanjore, in the south, where the canals thread their way like the lines on a man's hand, and the evenings are redolent with the scent of the rice fields. When the rice is formed the fields turn from green to yellow and they bend with the slightest breeze. The inhabitants of the district are full of wit and cynical refinement, and enjoy the subtle cruelties and cheatings that they practice on one another and are so exclusive that they refer to the denizens of Trichinopoly, about thirty miles away, as "southerners". The typical product of the district is the landholder, well fed, with a palate capable of detecting micromatic excesses or deficiencies of this or that ingredient; well dressed, in a glaring fashion in a dhoti of black and lace peacock-eye border, and when at home, using a diamond thread towel as a large handkerchief; in debt, as a rule, but leaving the worry of repayment to the creditor; using morality as a convenient and generally accepted pose and appreciating the social necessity of concealing vice at least as much as the green fruit is hidden by the green leaf on the tree; with a broad appreciation of the ridiculous, and of sarcastic talk that normally commenced with a vulgar exclamation that had lost its sting and significance by dint of usage; indulging in demonstrative religiosity; decadent in a "fin de siècle" sense, but still containing the seeds of eminence; given to grumbling but not really worrying; and generally pleased with life.

Rama Subramaniam was rather a subdued specimen of his kind. He was an only son and interrupted his studies early in life to help his ageing father in the management of his properties, and once having returned to the village, became a person of some importance and persuaded himself that there was no purpose in conti-

nuing his studies. He was known in the village and among his friends as "Rasu" which was an abbreviation of his long name. His was a reasonably prosperous and uneventful life, and he married and begot children, permitted himself a mild diversion from monogamy once in a while, played cards for small stakes, performed religious ceremonies with scrupulous care, took the family to Tirupati and Rameswaram, had no serious illness to complain of, and by the time he approached his fortieth year, was filling out in the middle regions and around the neck. In his youth he had gloried in a sumptuous tuft of hair, but as time wore on he deliberately curtailed its dimensions, though, unlike his sons, he did not desire to lop it off. Neither he nor any one who knew him expected anything else than that he would grow old peacefully, and die surrounded by his family.

But it was not to be. One day his wife complained of an excruciating pain in the stomach. Being village born and bred, she had not bothered to mention her earlier attacks to anyone and had carried on her household work in a spirit of stoicism not uncommon among women of her kind till the attack became too severe to be suffered in silence. Rasu rushed her to the Government hospital in the nearest town where her complaint was diagnosed as a ruptured appendix. She did not survive the night. Her funeral was performed with due ceremony and the villagers, while they consoled with Rasu, praised him for his devotion to her and remarked on the splendid way in which he celebrated every rite calculated to facilitate the passage of the departed soul into the other world. For sometime thereafter he was moody and uncomfortable. He had taken his wife too much for granted while she had been alive, and he felt somewhat lost at this sud-

den bereavement. The placid progress of his life had been rudely arrested and he felt that something had gone out of the savour of existence. But he took his grief in his stride, refrained from openly indulging it, and being, like most persons of his class, gifted with powers of easy recovery, soon settled down to a life which was rather lonesome but bearable, as long as the crops did not fail.

But forty years of good living die hard. Abstinence, he knew, was for the adolescents. In age one should practise continence, a certain moderation that made for good health but at the same time, even the scriptures enjoined that a householder should perform his duties as a husband, till a stage came, later in life, when asceticism would beckon to the soul. He began to be assailed by doubts whether he was fulfilling his duty and "Dharma" by practising his single wretchedness. Surely he could not presume to know more than the ancients. At the same time he had no wish to yield to the flesh summarily and run after professional women. He had put all that behind him. "Thank God" he said to himself "I am not that kind of a dog." He enjoyed the sensation of moral force but lay behind the remark. It was not, however, always possible to indulge in such cool analysis. The ladies who bathed in the river, technically guarding their respectability by winding one end of the saree just once round them upset him. The village housewives who returned from the river with wet clothes clinging to their contours upset him. The girls who carried pitchers on their head filled with water from the well, with both their hands raised to catch the vessel upset him. The servant maid who bent down to sweep the floor upset him. The sturdy women who stooped down and transplanted paddy upset him. Sometimes he perspired, sometimes he palpitated and sometimes his heart seemed to fall down and he had the feeling that something inside him was dying independently.

It was not as if he lacked encouragement to marry again and settle down. Every kind of inducement was offered to him. "Persons with thirty five

velis* of land do not grow on trees" was the general consensus of opinion. It was pointed out to him by a revered old gentleman that his children required a mother and that the goddess Lakshmi would not stay in a house where there was no wife to wear the "kunkum" on the forehead and light the lamp in the evening. The priest himself said that there were several religious rites for which the presence of a lawfully wedded wife was indispensable. An old aunt put the point more directly. "What is forty? It is no age at all. Your cousin was born when your uncle was fifty." She heaved a sigh as she said this, recollecting her life with her late husband who, by all accounts, had been a bad hat. The field also was wide. There were widows who were still in their prime with girls of "marriageable age" and both mother and daughter were prepared to come and set up house and relieve him of his household worries. There were poor girls who were educated and would be thankful for two square meals a day. There were indigent fathers who could not afford to get their daughters married in time and were rearing them for just this kind of chance market. But Rasu warded them off. He thought that he would look foolish, celebrating his own marriage in the village where everyone knew him. He said to himself that a middle aged fool was worse than an old fool.

Two years or so passed in this way. His defences were slowly wearing down. Then one day an old school fellow of his, who was employed in a business firm in the city, came to visit him. Rasu had not seen him for quite a few years, but they started talking about old times, and Rasu, after two years of loneliness, found a strange comfort in his company. He pressed him to stay on for a few days, saying that it was like old times to see him again. Gradually and by stages Rasu told him about his wife's death, the numerous offers for a second marriage, his reluctance to take a young wife and his disinclination to go astray. Rasu's friend was an unsentimental and practical person who combined the native shrewdness of his class with the acquired

*a "veli" is a little over 6 acres.

survival qualities of the city businessman. He bluntly told Rasu that he was doing no good to himself by shutting himself away in the country and brooding over his predicament. 'You come with me to the city. You can look around and if you come across a poor and respectable girl there is no reason on earth why you should not get married quietly. You need not take the village by storm and you need not perform a meaningless self-sacrifice.' Sound sense, every word of it, thought Rasu, but he wanted time to think. "By all means think it over", said his friend. "Life is still before you." The more he thought about it the more he felt that he should follow his friend's advice. The fact was that he needed some one to just give a push and start him off along a course that he had already mapped out and all but followed. So when the time came for his friend to depart, Rasu, with simulated determination said that he would come too. Within a week he had settled down in the new surroundings of a middle class home in a suburb of Madras. He paid his way in several indirect but none the less substantial ways and soon became quite a favourite with his friend's family.

In the city of Madras the struggle for life is keen and the devil invariably takes the hindmost and one man plays many parts for the sake of a living. One such was the priest who officiated at religious functions in Rasu's friend's house. He was, besides being a priest, a small scale merchant dealing in curry powder, pappadams, sacred ash from Palni, scented sticks, cheap books of prayers and psalms and similar articles that accorded with his main profession. He was also a marriage broker. When he saw Rasu and learnt from careful questioning that he was an eligible widower, he took the matter on hand without any delay. One evening he turned up beaming with good news and entered with the characteristic announcement that by God's grace "the fruit has slipped and fallen into the milk." There was a friend of his, another priest, and he was the officiating priest in a house in George Town, and in that house there were living a widow and her daughter. He went and saw the girl. "Don't think I am exaggerating" he said "but the

girl is unbelievably beautiful. But for their poverty she would have been married years ago. It will be an ideal match. Anyway nothing is lost by our having a look." This last remark seemed reasonable enough, and accordingly a visit was arranged.

Rasu was feeling self conscious and uneasy. He did not quite fall in with this programme of hunting and searching. But his reluctance did not prevent him from dressing up in the approved style of his class on the day proposed for the visit. His dhoti was milk white but with only a thin black border, but his "upper cloth" which he had carelessly thrown over his shoulders, was resplendent with gold lace and shone like a snake, and he also wore a loose "jubba" of shimmering silk. He had shaved and reshaved his face till it was smooth even if one rubbed it upwards from the chin. He had also applied on his hair, the manly perfume of "swag" which is reputed to have recaptured to the Emperor Shah Jahan the intimacy of an untouched virgin. It was about five in the afternoon when Rasu and his friend set out to see the bride, and the long shadows of the yellow evening were fading into a noisy and grey dusk in the heart of the city when they reached George Town. They were escorted to a narrow street that took off from a main thoroughfare. It was a dark lane, malodorous, and strewn with garbage, and the house they entered was even darker. It was full of people, young and old. They were taken upstairs, to the first floor. As they entered a girl who had been conversing with a white robed widow hurriedly got up and disappeared through a door at the far end of the hall. The widow rose in haste, unrolled an old mat, spread it on the floor and asked the visitors to take their seat. She also placed before them a tray of pan. It was a cracked tin tray from which the paint had peeled off in places. The areca nuts were solid pebbles and the lime was spread on an old betel leaf. Rasu took in the situation at a glance. They had stumbled on the lowest kind of middle class slum. Poverty was advertising itself with banners and a brass band. The widow was slim and looked ill fed. She may have been about forty or forty five. She stood near the

window and spoke to the two priests in a stage whisper so as to preserve the conventions. "Ask them to chew pan" she said and then went to the door through which the girl had disappeared earlier and thrust one of her hands in. The hand came out holding a smoking hurricane lantern which she deposited on the floor. The priest and his colleague told her to ask the girl to come out and show herself. The widow went in and came out leading the girl. The girl stood near the door. She hung her head down and was looking at her toes. Rasu was filled with strange, pursuing emotions. The girl was probably in the region of the early twenties, was just tall enough to show off her curves and stood there dumb and bewildered like a captive deer.

"She is shy" said the widow. "Naturally" said the priest. Rasu was smitten. He thought that this was fate, that he should have waited all these years and then be directed to this poor home. He chuckled at the thought that they would no longer be poor. Not much was said and in a few minutes they took their leave.

The two priests accompanied Rasu and his friend back. The second priest said that he did not know them very well but that the gentleman who was living in the ground floor had told him that they belonged to the west coast and that the girl's father who had been a poor school master had died two or three years before. They had a little money and the girl, it seems, was anxious to study and was not keen on marriage. Later that night, Rasu told his friend that the marriage should be performed quietly. The priest suggested that it could be done without any fuss in a temple about fifteen miles to the south of the city.

And thus it came about that Rasu got married a second time. There was just a little feast in his friend's

house. No one, no one at all, least of all Rasu's children, knew of the marriage. It had been decided that Rasu and his wife should go to Courtallam for a few days. A first class 'coupe' had been booked.

As they sat facing each other in the compartment neither Rasu nor the girl knew what to say. Rasu opened his silver pan container and slowly started to chew betel. As he was screwing out a ball of tobacco the girl suddenly said "Ayyar, give me some tobacco." Rasu sat bolt upright. He thought he had not heard aright. He asked her "Did you speak?" The girl smiled. She had a captivating smile. One corner of her mouth upcurled and exposed six or seven pearl white teeth. She then put her hand out and helped herself to pan. "Do you chew tobacco?" asked Rasu in a far off voice. "I never used to" she replied "but after my child was born I took to it to keep down my nerves." "Your child" Rasu heard himself saying "What do you mean, your child? Are you already married?" The girl permitted herself a light laugh. "I never said I was married, did I?" she said. A strange silence prevailed in the compartment. Rasu was, to say the least of it, utterly amazed. A sardonic sense of humour penetrated through his confusion and he thought that it was strange that it should be second hand on both sides. The girl broke the silence. "Ayyar" she said, and Rasu flinched at this manner of addressing him, "Ayyar," where is the shaven Brahmin widow who introduced me to you?" This was the last straw.

We may draw a discreet veil over the processes of Rasu's disentanglement from the unfortunate adventure. He returned to his village. As he got down an old villager accosted him.

"You have been away for so long, we were wondering. Why, you are thinner and look tired."

"It is the heat" replied Rasu.

Like many new communities the people of Israel seem to be tough, hospitable, friendly and a bit brash. I was going to take a long distance bus trip one day from Tel Aviv. When I arrived at the terminal to catch the bus I was greeted by an elderly man with a notebook who explained that he was taking down everybody's name in order of arrival so that we need not stand in a queue. Sure enough, when the bus came in he read out his little list and we all climbed in in an orderly fashion. He explained, when he got in himself, he was not an official, just a fellow-passenger with a good idea.—Barbara Strachey in BBC broadcast.

INDIAN PUBLICITY IN CEYLON

By V. SUBRAMANIAN

THE August 15th issue of the *Ceylon Observer* and an earlier issue of *Ceylon Daily News* contained a special supplement on Pakistan, and Radio Ceylon on the night of August 15th broadcast a special programme on Pakistan, "our near neighbour." No one of the English dailies nor Radio Ceylon took much note of India on August 15th; which is the independence day of Pakistan as well as India.

The reasons for this perverse publicity are mainly two. The first is that, for political reasons, a section of the English Press, and Radio Ceylon, (a Government Department) do indulge in playing up Pakistan and often make no bones about it. Nearly three years ago, Sir John Kotelawala, the Transport Minister, declared that Ceylon as a last resort would rather federate with Pakistan than India. For some time during 1950, I could see photographs of the ruins of Taxila, the university centre, supplied by the Pakistan embassy, exhibited right in the sanctum of the Tooth Temple of Kandy. I wonder how many Buddhists in Ceylon are aware of the fact that the universities of Nalanda and Taxila were sacked by Muhammad of Ghori and his general Bhaktyar Khilji, who top the list of Mujahids, held high in Pakistani minds.

This pro-Pakistan publicity is not entirely due to love of Pakistan; in fact the main reason is a subconscious desire to play down India, her nearest and powerful neighbour. I know for a fact that some at least in Ceylon Government circles have this affliction. But the Ceylon newspapers, especially the *Lake House* dailies, have during the last year only taken to the new tune. In addition to the blackout of news about the Ceylon Indian Congress satyagraha, there is a noticeable tendency not to give publicity to Indian news.

There is nothing which India or the Indian High Commissioner's office in Colombo can do about the handling of Indian news by the independent press of Ceylon or the Government-

owned broadcasting organization, unless there is obvious falsehood or total misrepresentation. Even regarding the general trend of events and sentiments which lead to such a news policy, the Indian High Commissioner can do little. In fairness to the Ceylon papers it must be said that they generally concentrate more on local news, so that little room is left for Indian news.

But it is a fact that towards the general neglect of Indian news and Indian achievements, the Indian High Commissioner's office has contributed as much as the Ceylon Press and the Ceylon Government. If Pakistan is called Ceylon's near neighbour, without India even being mentioned, the Indian High Commissioner's office has to bear part of the blame, especially when this is not the first time that Pakistan has got ahead of India. Both inside the Colombo Exhibition as well as in the publicity material found in the Ceylon Press in connection with it, Pakistan did better than India.

A look at the Indian and Pakistan High Commissioner's offices in Colombo will give anybody the obvious reason. The showroom owned by the Pakistan Embassy on the ground floor of Gaffoor Buildings in Fort Area, Colombo, is by any standard, well arranged, attractive and impressive. It has the best products of Pakistan, its lace work carpets, pottery, sports goods, all exhibited to the best advantage in the most conspicuous portion of the building. By contrast, the Indian High Commissioner's office has no show-room at all. But what is worse is that the location of the Indian High Commissioner's office within the same Gaffoor Building is generally found out by interested people by inquiry at the Pakistan show-room!

That is only one part of the story of muddling. The Indian High Commissioner's office is not only inconspicuous by the side of Pakistan's show-room. But, many eager inquirers, and interested students who manage to

get into the High Commissioner's office, mostly turn away disappointed from there. There is, indeed, an apology for a reading room and a reference library. One can find some important Indian dailies and weeklies on the table there and one cannot say that the selection is either representative or exhaustive. This is not such a great handicap, since independently of the High Commissioner's office, most of the leading Indian papers and magazines have a moderate circulation in Colombo. But the reference library contains barely a thousand books; and the material could both easily be improved and enlarged. One hears that the Ceylon Press rarely makes use of any reference books in the Indian Embassy in Colombo. No wonder.

Besides the poorly equipped reading room and reference library, the embassy has some good photographs and reproductions, useful for students of Indian art. But the arrangement of material is so haphazard on the whole that little use is made of it by those who would like to. Quite recently a friend of mine, who had to give a series of talks on Indian paintings over Radio Ceylon, approached the Indian High Commissioner's office for material. The reproductions and photographs necessary were all there, unclassified; and nobody there could do anything more than lay them out before him. They could neither sell copies to him nor allow him to take copies. He returned in disgust and said that while the American and British embassies loaded one with material before one had begun asking for it, it was an unmitigated misfortune that he should find such stark neglect in the Indian Embassy, when people like him were prepared to do all they could to get publicity for Indian art.

Without beating about the bush, the point is that our High Commissioner's office has not organized Indian publicity properly. Even with regard to the excellent documentary films they have and with a decent film unit, they rarely go out of Colombo to give shows freely, as do the American or British Embassies. They have neither a dynamo nor an operator for the unit, and programmes are shown in places other than Colombo have to be arranged by other interested Indians. But, all told, our

film unit is the best part of our badly organized publicity in Ceylon. Of course, there is no information officer as such in the Indian Embassy. The net result is that to many Ceylonese India is known mainly as the home of the 'swarms' of illegal immigrants paraded everyday before them. Buddha and Mahinda, Gandhi and Nehru are names, venerated and respected, but the country that gave them birth is not known in great detail.

Preoccupation with the voting rights of Ceylon Indians is all right. But diplomatic conventions set severe limits to what the Indian Foreign Ministry or the High Commissioner can do in the matter. However, in the matter of better publicity for India—the field is unlimited, and at present almost unexploited. One reason given for this by officials is that India is so well known in Ceylon through unofficial channels that official publicity is just wasteful duplication. This is a shortsighted policy. Organized official publicity only can penetrate certain regions, for example, promotion of tourist industry. It has its limits no doubt. No publicity official can do what an independent journalist can do in certain respects. Ceylon is probably better known to Indian reading public through men like Vijayatunga or Tambimuttu, than through any number of pamphlets from the Ceylon High Commissioner's office in India. Also, official publicity material is never kindly treated by the Press in general, whether it comes from the Indian or Ceylon High Commissioner. But if the material supplied is fundamentally good and non-political, it will definitely form the background material for related subjects.

Besides the Press of Ceylon, the people of Ceylon can be quite easily reached directly for the country is small. A good show-room, a better library and reading room, more organized publicity and a well equipped film unit, all these will do a lot to bring India closer to the average Ceylonese at least in Colombo. Whatever be the wastage of money on Indian embassies in other capitals, in Colombo Indian publicity does suffer from lack of funds. One gets the same answer for all complaints from the embassy officials and the answer is that they cannot afford it.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

By C. V. H. RAO

THE community development projects programme that is proposed to be executed by the Government of India and the State Governments under the provisions of the Indo-American Technical Cooperation Agreement, will soon get under way. As a programme for the rehabilitation and development of the rural areas on an extensive scale, it fulfils admirably one of the basic requirements of the country in the economic sphere. Nothing is so important and nothing so beneficial as the restoration of Indian villages and village economy to the prosperous conditions that once constituted their distinguishing feature, while nothing is so complex an undertaking as it can prove to be. The complexity arises from the large number of villages to be tackled and the conditions of chronic backwardness that have to be rooted out. The large financial outlay needed for the task and the extent of human effort, co-operation and goodwill that have to be marshalled for the purpose are also likely to prove forbidding.

Rural community development schemes are not entirely new to India. In a number of States considerable progress has been already made with schemes for rural welfare. But what the community projects seek to do is to harness the basic need for village amelioration to the larger issue of national progress and advancement. They seek to achieve these objectives through the adoption of techniques and methodologies evolved in an advanced country like the U. S. A. The TCA helps by paving the way for the inflow of these techniques and methodologies into India and also facilitates the financing of the schemes through the American contribution to the pool of funds allocated for the purpose by the Government of India. The actual execution of the projects will be an entirely Indian undertaking, and success therein would depend very largely on the extent to which Indian efforts on the directional side are synthesised

and integrated and the extent of the cooperation and enthusiasm evoked among the rural populations.

The fundamental aim of the projects is to inspire sizable rural communities, represented by groups of 250 to 300 villages with the desire for self-improvement, and thereby to promote the development of agriculture, which is the basic village industry and to augment food production. Since fruitful human effort is dependent on the environmental conditions under which the people live, it seeks also to improve rural sanitation and public health and generally to ameliorate living conditions. Inherent in it is an attempt to apply modern technological and scientific developments in the agricultural sphere and in the sphere of public health, which is essential to render economic prosperity a living reality. In the ultimate analysis, it is a programme which seeks to make India self-sufficient in food and the Indian villager economically better off and the Indian villages better and healthier places to live in than before. It envisions an India with a prosperous countryside, with that prosperity radiating to other spheres too.

The community development project programme is now an integral part of India's five year plan. Whether consciously intended or not, the sequel of its successful implementation should be the elimination of the glaring disparities between urban and rural life by bringing to the latter the benefits of public health measures, of land improvement and soil conservation methods, of good communications and of a higher standard of living generally. The separating line between the rural and urban areas in India so far as amenities and conveniences of life are concerned, is a present conspicuously marked. India's rural folk suffer from a certain backward complex, it is attributable to this phenomenon. To it is also attributable the progressively increasing drift from villages to towns of educated and intelligent young men of

agricultural families, which has resulted in devitalising rural life and economy without in any way bettering urban life. When, however, the principal rural industry, namely, agriculture, begins to yield an adequate return for the time, effort and money expended on making land richer and more fruitful and with a noticeable improvement in conditions of living and health the complex will disappear. The rural population will develop a feeling of self-respect, individual and communal, which will be to the lasting good of the nation.

Thus whatever the origin of the community projects idea be, it could be moulded into an Indian programme and into an Indian scheme for India's benefit. The broadening of the horizon of the villager's mind and the inculcation of the spirit of self-consciousness, which results from it, would be great national assets. It should be borne in mind at the same time that in formulating the details of the programme and in its execution, there should be no attempt violently to disturb the basic structure and of our village life and organization. Let it be remembered that India's spirit lives in the villages, and its preservation unscathed is a supreme need, though it can be transformed by a judicious and careful grafting on it of progressive ideas borrowed from American or other countries, where progress in that direction has been significant. Wherever indigenous methods of farming, sowing, manuring, watering the crops and so on, on the one hand, and removing the festering sores of disease and illness, on the other, can be usefully improved by the use of better manures and fertilisers, better tilling processes, better seed and better methods of fighting diseases like the use of DDT, BCG, and so on, for example, there should be no hesitation to adopt them. But essentially, the village life of the country, with its inter-dependence among the various component units, its family organisation and its communal life, should be conserved and not swept away in a wave of new and to some extent unfamiliar ideas. In working the community projects scheme, the prime motive force should be to remove the existing imbalance between the rural and urban conditions and to sow the seeds of a higher stan-

dard of living over a wider and more expensive field. An integration of the activities under the community development projects and the rural welfare schemes already under execution in the various States to maximise results seems highly desirable.

The Planning Commission, the State Governments, the community project officers and village workers at different levels would, it is hoped, keep these fundamental considerations, in mind. We should wholeheartedly welcome the preparedness of America to give not only financial aid but technical aid and also lend the services of experts in the execution of the projects under the TCA. It is an example of the fruitfulness of international cooperation generally and Indo-American cooperation specifically. Even so, the programme should be an Indian programme, its details being in conformity with Indian traditions and Indian requirements.

A criticism commonly directed against the American interest in community projects and the financial assistance America is giving for this implementation demands attention. The predominantly agricultural bias in these projects is considered a result of America's intention to keep down India as an agricultural country and her disinclination to see India advancing industrially. Some kind of self-interest on her part is read into U. S. aid for these projects and for the promotion of India's agricultural economy generally. This kind of feeling is neither just nor warranted. It is overwhelmingly agreed that our villages require resuscitation and our rural economy strengthening. It is also agreed that India's current great handicap is food shortage and that her basic need is to increase food production so as to obviate continued dependence on foreign countries for the supply of an essential requirement like foodgrains. Once our agricultural industry becomes a profitable avocation and once Indian village life is brightened up as the sequel to the economic prosperity of the cultivator, India's standards of living will go up and industrialisation will automatically follow to provide the demands of the population.

The striking of a suitable balance between industrialisation and agricul-

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ture is undoubtedly essential. But since first things should come first, a substantial augmentation of agricultural production and every other measure contributing to it should be given top priority. It is, therefore, not an American design that is responsible for the agricultural bias in the community projects, but India's own urgent and fundamental need. It is a bias which in fact, is inherent in India's Five Year Plan which has been drafted by India's Planning Commission and not by any extra-neous agency. It is inherent in the carefully formulated provisions of the Technical Cooperation Agreement to which the Government of India is a signatory with the U. S. In any event, it is a betrayal of an inferiority complex to consider that some outside agency or country is trying to impose something unwanted on us, as if the Indian Government and people are susceptible to such imposition. A fact not generally known or adequately publicised is that out of an estimated cost of Rs. 38.33 crores on the 55 projects presently to be taken up, the U. S. Government contribution will be Rs. 4 crores while that of the Government of India will be Rs. 34.33 crores.

The community projects scheme, therefore, deserves the fullest cooperation and support of all patriotic Indians; what is desiderated is a lively public interest which would ensure the proper climate for the success of the scheme to enable the country to derive the maximum advantage from the energy and money being expended thereon. Mr. Horace C. Holmes, the American Point Four expert, whose work in connection with the Etawah community project has drawn high praise and is the seed which later flowered into the full blown community project idea, has, for instance, referred to some basic factors which contribute to its success. The first is that those entrusted with their execution should possess a thorough knowledge of the tasks they have to accomplish. Not all the personnel selected can be said to be mentally, physically or intellectually suited to the efficient discharge of their responsibility. Many may be called but only a few can be said to be competent to answer the call and prove themselves successful village workers.

It is expected that, though not in respect of the initial batch of officers, at least in respect of future batches of project officers or workers to be selected, this criterion of temperamental fitness for rural work would be looked for. Evocation of villagers' co-operation, which is the bedrock foundation for the efficient execution of the projects, can be effectively manipulated only when the officer concerned inspired spontaneous confidence in the villagers by his previous antecedents and training. The training of a number of officers would become necessary as the 55 initial projects grow into more and as the area of operations is extended. A cummingling of the efforts of honorary workers with those of paid staff, so as not only to increase the number of workers available but also to illustrate that community service need not in all cases be a paid job, is also a necessary ingredient of success.

Secondly, a careful evaluation of the immediate and urgent needs of the rural communities involved in development is indispensable. If a village or group of villages wants an adult education centre or a drainage scheme or a tractor for common use that need must be fulfilled. There is no use providing them with something else.

Thirdly, the proneness to under-rate the natural intelligence of the villagers and their natural aptitude for a hereditary occupation like agriculture should be given up. The average cultivator has a practical knowledge of tilling, sowing, manuring and harvesting, which many agricultural experts cannot claim. This fact was strikingly illustrated from an episode connected with the Nilokheri training centre, where the project officers found themselves confronted with a village lambardar, who told them that they in the village knew how to wield a spade much better than any trainee could, but what they wanted was water for irrigating the fields. The traditional skill and knowledge of the villagers has to be channelled into new methods of cultivation, use of modern fertilisers and manures and so on.

The 55 community projects which

are included in the initial programme are only the beginning. More such projects will indeed be undertaken, possibly with India's own resources, probably with U. S. aid, which would presumably continue for some years to come. On the other hand ample experience will be gained by Indian technicians in these projects and also experience of both their drawbacks and excellences, which would facilitate adjustments or modifications.

Among the rural population the function of collective enthusiasm for self-development and co-operative activity for communal welfare would serve as a means of extending the scope of the scheme. A new era of economic progress of the rural parts thus opens out. Let us also hope that it will help strengthen the foundations of a true village democracy broad-based on economic progress and prosperity.

BLACK AFRICA'S LIBERATION STRUGGLE

By S. DATLIN

BBLACK Africa is the name given to a large section of the African continent lying to the South of Sahara. It is broken up into many territories which have been appropriated by Britain, France, Belgium and other West European States. Big monopolist firms of these States seized all the mineral wealth and the best lands of Black Africa and are rapaciously pumping the raw materials and food out of them. The native inhabitants are deprived of elementary human rights and have been subjected to brutal and humiliating exploitation by the colonialists.

The living standards of the Africans is extremely low. In Northern Rhodesia, a British colony, a dark skinned miner receives a twenty third part of what a European miner receives for the same work. In Belgian Congo, a Negro worker receives 7-15 francs a day, the cost of one or two match boxes.

The imperialists have for a long time kept their colonies in Black Africa in strict isolation from the outside world. Nobody was to know about the crimes perpetrated there in the interests of the super profits pocketed by the capitalist monopolists. The slave owning colonialists try to preserve the primitive conditions of existence of the native Africans in order to perpetuate their domination over them. But these attempts were futile.

In recent years, Black Africa became the arena of organised mass

action against colonial regimes. French West and Equatorial Africa, the Union of South Africa, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya are the chief centres of the struggle. A powerful people's organisation, the Democratic Union of Africa, appeared in 1946 in French West Africa and Equatorial Africa which covers 14 colonial territories. It has over a million members—representatives of all sections of the native population, people of diverse political views, religious convictions and origins. All these have taken a stand against the colonial regime and for national liberation have joined this organisation.

The democratic Union of Africa publishes several newspapers which are widely circulated among the Africans. It struggles for an increase of the local prices on agricultural produce being bought from Africans for export, for an increase in wages and salaries. The Union supported the big railwaymen's strike in West Africa in 1947-48, which embraced 20,000 and lasted five months.

The Abidjan Congress of the Democratic Union of Africa held in 1949 authorised the leadership of the Union to co-ordinate its political activities with the representatives of the French people's movement. Seared by the big scale of this movement the French Government launched brutal repression against it. In Ivory Coast, where the Democratic Union finds staunch support, the authorities provoked a number of sanguinary clashes as a

result of which dozens of Africans were killed and wounded. This was followed by mass arrests of leaders and functionaries of the Democratic Union of Africa. Over a thousand people were thrown into prison. In February 1950, the French Council of Ministers actually declared the Democratic Union of Africa illegal. Police terror is raging in French Black Africa to this day. It is now several months since a trial has been in progress in Abidjan of this organisation's 400 functionaries who for the past two years have been subjected to inhuman tortures in the dungeons of the High Commissioner, Bechard. But the population did not submit to the imperialists. In answer to these provocations, it organises huge protest meetings, demonstrations, mass strikes and boycotts French goods.

The liberation struggle is gaining momentum in the British Union of South Africa. The semi-fascist Government of Malan inspired by the Wall Street and City (London) bankers, has excluded from Public life all the non-European inhabitants of the country (9 million people out of a total of 11 million) banned political parties and introduced an undisguised slave owning system. The working class in the Union of South Africa numbers about two million people. Of this number over 200,000 African workers are organised in trade unions and they have rich experience in strikes and struggles. There exist a number of mass organisations in the country which are waging a struggle for democratic freedom, and reforms in the country. All these parties are fearlessly exposing the policy of the fascists and are tirelessly propagating the idea of equality absolute, of all races and the right of the African and coloured peoples to freedom and independence.

In the Gold Coast, a British colony, the People's Party headed by Kwam Nkrumah, is in the front ranks of fighters against colonial oppression. In the elections to the local Parliament held in the Gold Coast, last February, almost all the African electors voter for the People's Party; it received 34 seats out of 38. Among those elected was Nkrumah. It is true that Parliament in the Gold Coast

does not possess real power in the colony. Nevertheless, the elections signify an important defeat for the colonialists. They showed that the Africans are fully determined to achieve independence.

In Nigeria, another British colony numbering 25 million inhabitants, the national liberation struggle is developing under the leadership of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons and the National Federation of Labour. The miners' strike in Enugu, held in November 1949, contributed largely to the unification of the country's working people in the struggle against imperialism. This strike had a tragic end for the strikers—many of them were shot by the police. But this bloody reprisal gave a new impetus to the liberation struggle. A third of the workers is united in trade unions most of which are affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The movement for democratic reforms in Black Africa is now spreading everywhere down to such closed colonies as the Belgian and Portuguese, as the small British protectorate of Bechuanaland, Basutoland, Swaziland and others. Underground people's organisations are functioning in Belgian Congo in conditions which remind one of a concentration camp. The Peasant League of Basutoland, the Association of Tanganyika Africans, the National Congress of Niassaland and the youth organisations most of which are affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth, are developing the liberation struggle in their countries.

Great masses of people have come into motion in all corners of Black Africa. They realise that they have the right to dispose of their own destiny, their land and its mineral resources, that they possess incalculable creative forces to make the best use of this right.

For the colonial peoples, peace is inseparable from freedom. The peoples of the African countries joining the international peace front understand that they can achieve liberation from imperialist oppression and the Apartheid of Dr. Malan and his henchmen only in the united struggle of all the peoples of the world.—I.P.S.

THE FIFTH TAMIL FESTIVAL

By A Correspondent

NOT quite unexpectedly, for the third time during the month, Rajaji twitted the pressmen in the front row, while he declared open the Tamil Festival in Madras on the 23rd. He had been indulging in a friendly and clever banter on Madras City and the Tamils. Then he said, that all this was fun while he said it, but when it appeared in black print, it assumed ghostlike proportions and a sinister significance. Not unexpectedly, that portion of his speech and his remarks on the press formed front page news in most city dailies.

It is true that even a word to word accurate report in the press, might give an entirely different significance, —different from the original speech—when taken out of its atmosphere. But Rajaji's remedy, namely, that the pressmen should get into the spirit of the speech and then report, is ridiculous. It is none of their business to play 'Bhashyakara' to all speakers. It is at least part of their business to catch them napping. It would be more reasonable for statesmen to make a more careful study of their statements before they make it.

Rajaji carried the audience with him all the time he spoke. His pleasant raillery, his gift for the clever anecdote, all these lent a keen interest to his speech. But on calm reflection, one begins to set less store by his cleverness. He seems to tell off everybody, friend and foe alike. On Tamil script reform, he said that he advocated it with C. R. Srinivasan, but his present attitude is more confusing than ever. On another technical matter his statement, unfortunately supported partly by even the impeccable T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, was positively misleading. He eulogized the unchanging quality of Tamil. If he referred to the style, then he has yet to prove that present day Tamil is less different from Sangam Tamil,—then present day English from Chaucer's,—which is highly doubtful. If he refers to the script, one can boldly say Tamil script

has changed much more during the ages, than the Roman. As a whole his speech was absolutely devoid of a single good point on the cultural side.

One can certainly endorse some people's opinion that C. R. has practised emotional repression as a fine art. Meeting his old and trusted friend T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar after years, one must say that he never betrayed any effusiveness or even warmth, at the reunion. On the 24th night he was watching the Tamil play 'Avvaiyar' staged by T. K. S. brothers. While all other worthies, his own Finance Minister included, let themselves go,—he sat impassive, sphinxlike.

The opening ceremony on the 23rd was remarkable for the extremely patient and cultured way in which the audience listened to the President, T. V. K. The speech was, as usual, remarkable for its chaste style and thought-provoking content. Tamil language cannot spread all over the world but Tamil thought and Tamil culture ought to and will. Tamil language will grow not in quantity, but in quality. What is the central thread of Tamil literature all these centuries? It was love-unhindered by any man-made restrictions. No other people had elevated pure love to such a pitch as the ancient Tamils—and no other people had classified and studied love deeply as the Tamils of old. Eventually the world will be one,—when unhindered love, as described by ancient Tamils had full sway. The Tamils were the first to speak of "one world" long before Christ and Buddha. "Any place is my place—and all are my kith and kin" declared a Tamil poet centuries before Christ.

The chairman of the reception committee, Sri M. Bhakthavatsalam made a very scholarly speech—and referred to the many great Tamil scholars and poets born in and around Madras. As C. R. observed, he made one feel as if all Tamil culture and literature was concentrated in the Madras area for

ages. The opening ceremony was a success in every way—in the good arrangements—and in the very cultured behaviour of the big audience all the time.

The three sections,—the sculpture and painting section, the astronomy section and the art and literature section—were presided over respectively by Sri S. Natesan, Minister of Posts and Tele Communications, Ceylon, E. T. Rajeswari Ammal and Dr. Subbaroyan, who deputized for P. T. Rajan. The speeches delivered by the various speakers during the two days were most of them remarkable for content and style and originality. But what is more remarkable and heartening was the way the audience listened to and enjoyed the speeches. It is a thing for Tamils to be proud of—not that there are enough scholars and speakers who can discuss intricacies of art and literature interestingly—for we find them in many other languages—but that we can find a big Tamil audience enjoying the speeches as if they were themselves taking part in the discussion. Even in music—as well as literature—the taste of the average Tamil is sufficiently refined for the really good artist to flourish without playing down to the rabble. Signs of improvement are not lacking even in the film world.

A good example of the exacting taste of the Tamil audience was provided in the three night programmes on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th. Kumari Kamala's dancing on the 22nd night, and the play 'Avvaiyar' on 24th night, were both unqualified successes; while the play "The Vow of Sivakami" on the 23rd night was a qualified success. This was because the play is inherently difficult to stage—and it was staged by amateurs. As usual, the monstrosity of a male playing the title role of the heroine detracted very much from the effect in spite of fairly good acting. Secondly, the historical atmosphere could not be properly captured without careful study and experiment, which are generally beyond the scope of amateurs. The actor who played the role of Bhikku Naganandi did very well. That the audience had a high taste and sympathetically critical attitude, was evident when next day, Professor Srinivasa Raghavan made references to

the present day Tamil drama in his speech.

The Festival was well attended—the audience for dramas and the opening ceremony reaching a quarter lakh—and even for the most technical speeches not less than 2000; but the thing to be proud of was its quality and attitude. The dais contained a good cross section of Tamil scholars and Tamil lovers—but they were drawn from every walk of life like politics, the judiciary, teaching, journalism—and from other countries also, like Ceylon. This gave practical proof of T. V. K.'s claim that the core of Tamil culture was universal love; a point which was elaborated at greater length by Dr. T. P. Meenakshi Sundaram with various examples from Tamil literature. There were the usual absentees—people of the Dravida Kazhagam—but it is difficult to say at present as to who is responsible for this. Sri Bhakthavatsalam said that Tamil literature transcended the limits of religion. The cream of it is made of contributions from Buddhists, Jains, Hindus, Christians and Muslims. I fail to see why it should not embrace in its fold men with no religion at all if they have a real contribution to make—and if they would observe the rules of the game. Bertrand Russell is an atheist but the Nobel prize committee and the academies of which he is a member feel it an honour to honour him. In fact the cream of European academies at present is mostly agnostic if not entirely atheistic.

The six prizes for the best books in each of the six fields, went to some well known authors. The Tamil Academy at present restricts itself to giving prizes for published books. I wish it would undertake to republish cheaper editions like Penguins. Besides the lectures in the Festival, if a permanent sub-committee, elected each year, would carry out some research or co-ordination work during the year, it would be another achievement. The Tamil Encyclopaedia will be a good achievement on these lines but it has a restricted object. The Tamil Academy members will have also to get into their fold men of all shades of opinion before they can substantiate their claim to the universal love declared as the core of Tamil culture by scholars.

FREE TRADE IN KNOWLEDGE

UNIQUE UNESCO MOVE

The current number of the Courier contains an article by Mr. Philip L. Soljak, entitled: "Unesco's Free Trade in Knowledge". It tells how 165,000,000 persons in eleven countries are already enjoying the benefits of the Unesco-sponsored international agreement to abolish import duties on books, works of art, and other educational, scientific and cultural materials. A condensed version of the article is given below:

A few years ago, a well-known scientist received a letter inviting him to attend an important conference in a foreign country. He accepted the invitation and a few days later packed his suitcase and boarded a train for his destination.

While he was noting down some of the things he hoped to reveal to his colleagues, his train pulled to a halt at the frontier.

There, he became so terribly embroiled in customs formalities over an educational film he had brought along that he left it in disgust at the frontier post!

On May 21 of this year, ten countries agreed that this sort of thing will no longer happen at their frontiers. On that day, Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations, declared: "I hereby proclaim the entry into force of the Unesco Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials."

He was presiding at a ceremony at UN headquarters in New York to mark the first day of operation of the Unesco treaty which abolishes import duties on books and periodicals, works of art, educational films, scientific equipment, articles for the blind, and many other materials which are vitally important for the educational and scientific progress of nations.

So far, the treaty affects 165,000,000 people in 11 countries. It went into force on May 21 when Sweden became the 10th nation to ratify the agreement. An additional 19 countries have signed too, and many of their

ratifications are expected in the months ahead.*

The *Times* of London has described the new treaty—which is the first to come into operation under Unesco's auspices—as "an admirable step backwards into a more sensible world." It is a "step backwards" in the sense that customs barriers to knowledge are a 20th century innovation. A hundred years ago, it was quite easy to get books from abroad or send them to other countries. Transport by sailing ships was slower than today but free trade was the general rule. Customs officials nearly everywhere paid no attention to book parcels, and educational materials moved around the world unhampered by duties, taxes and other obstacles. Some Governments even made special arrangements to make sure that trade in these materials would not be obstructed. In 1860, for example, the United Kingdom and France signed a treaty providing for free untaxed trade in books.

Then came the First World War. Governments adopted tariffs and licensing systems to limit trade to "essential" goods and most educational articles suffered. The economic depression of the 1930's brought many new restrictions in the form of import quotas and currency and export regulations. With the Second World War and the big disruption of shipping, commerce and industry, came the final blow to the free trade system.

Educational materials, which were needed more than ever before, suffered more than most commodities.

* In addition to Sweden the ten original adherents are: Cambodia, Ceylon, Egypt, Israel, Laos, Monaco, Pakistan, Thailand and Yugoslavia, Vietnam became eleventh participant.

The 19 countries which have signed but not yet ratified. Afghanistan, Belgium, Bolivia, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Books, paintings, music, science equipment were caught up in the web of restrictions along with other products. Today, trade restrictions to knowledge exist everywhere.

These were summarized last year by Unesco in a closely set volume of 167 pages entitled *Trade Barriers to Knowledge*. It shows that more than 50 countries impose duties and an assortment of other taxes on the importation of books. By some strange logic, certain countries tax imported film by the foot, others tax sculpture or paintings or maps by the pound—like refrigerated beef. Science equipment is taxed as high as 40 per cent of its value.

Trade Barriers to Knowledge reveals many strange practices. Thus, for example, the customs laws of Czechoslovakia provide that wood or metal statues can enter duty-free provided they are "not less than life size," while stone statues are not subject to duty if they weigh more than 11 lbs. In the United States, printed music, maps and charts can enter duty-free if they are more than 20 years old. In Iceland, ordinary gramophone records pay an 11 per cent import tax, but those used for foreign language study pay 14 per cent—three per cent higher!

Recently, a university professor wrote a letter to Unesco explaining that because of the new, heavy import duties charged by his country, an essential textbook had become so expensive that his students could not afford to buy it any more.

Here are some specific examples of what the Unesco treaty means for the student, teacher, artist, scientist and the average person generally in the eleven countries which have ratified it.

The agreement prevents future duties from being levied on books, magazines and newspapers in most countries where they already enter duty-free. But in Sweden and Yugoslavia books will now be cheaper. A duty amounting to \$0.19 a kilo (2.2 lbs.) on illustrated books and children's picture books will end in Sweden. Yugoslavia will abolish import duties ranging from \$0.26 to \$0.33 a kilo on books in the Yugoslav languages as well as on magazines and manuscripts.

Swedish school teachers now save \$0.29 a kilo formerly imposed on certain imported maps and charts. The saving on these articles to Yugoslav educators runs from \$0.09 to \$0.18 a kilogram.

When a 300-metre (980-foot) educational or scientific film enters Pakistan, Thailand or Yugoslavia, it is no longer subjected to duties amounting to \$19.60, \$1.57 and \$1.12 respectively in these countries. The saving on the same length of newsreel is \$24.00 in Ceylon, \$19.60 in Pakistan and \$28.56 in Israel.

Research workers and science teachers in Pakistan, where science is mobilized in a vast national development plan, are spared a 30 per cent customs levy on imported equipment. Swedish scientists will save 15 per cent as a result of the treaty. These duties often ran into hundreds of dollars for a single instrument.

Most of the revenue derived by Governments from such duties is relatively small anyway. As the *Manchester Guardian* has said, "No country would suffer economic disaster if most of these regulations were swept away." In reality, no Governments ever wanted to cripple education with its customs laws. They were prepared to drop their barriers, but some kind of international machinery was needed to provide them with a way of doing so. This Unesco has done.

The Unesco treaty was opened for signature in November 1950. Since then, in addition to the eleven countries which have now ratified, 19 nations have signed the agreement. Most of them are now seeking ratification by their parliaments.

The pact has received widespread support from the world press, from official agencies and voluntary groups. The *Manchester Guardian* declared that "there is no reason for criss-crossing the world with barriers against the spread of knowledge." Some 20 international non-Governmental organizations have also endorsed the pact. The International Federation of Newspaper Editors and Publishers and the International Exchange Committee (a free trade body) have urged their national associations to support ratification. So also have the League of Red Cross Societies and the International Council of Women.

AFTER MOSSADEGH, THE DELUGE

By P. G. KRISHNAYYA

WASHINGTON: The danger in Iran is now rated "desperate" by the State Department. The danger, is, of course, the capture of Iran by Iran's Communist-controlled Tudeh party, which would drastically alter the world balance of power in favour of the Soviet Union. The problem of dealing effectively with this danger is so immensely difficult that it has already split the American Government from top to bottom, and threatens to cause an open break on Middle Eastern policy between U. S. A. and Great Britain.

In order to deal with the danger, the State Department has actually proposed Anglo-American economic support for the regime of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh, to the British Foreign Office. The British Cabinet is now anxiously discussing this American proposal. It goes without saying that the notion of supporting Mossadegh, the very symbol of Middle Eastern nationalism and hatred of Britain, is hardly welcome to the British. But what has happened very recently in Iran explains why the American proposal has been made.

Since the ignominious collapse of the short-lived regime of former Premier Ahmed Qavam a few weeks ago, the only remaining visible alternative to Mossadegh in Iran is a wrinkled old man with a long beard and a permanent grin, the Mullah Kashani. Kashani wants to turn the Iranian clock back all the way to the fifteenth century, transforming Iran into a Moslem theocracy ruled by the Mullah Kashani. His chief instrument to this end is the Fedayan Islam, a "Murder, Inc." consisting of the slum-dwelling bully-boys and priestly assassins. But in order to gain power, Kashani is perfectly willing to ally himself with the Communist Tudeh Party. He did just this when the Fedayan Islam and the Tudeh together rioted bloodily in the streets to force Qavam out of power. Qavam went to the palace to plead

with the Shah to call out the army. The Shah was afraid to do so—one exasperated diplomat in Tehran was heard to observe, "When they took out the Shah's appendix a few months back they must have taken out the guts with it." After four days of power Qavam fled for his life and Mossadegh came back. Instantly, Kashani took full credit for this outcome. He dictated his own election as President of the Iranian Parliament, and he is so powerful that Mossadegh is now in danger of becoming a mere captive of this ignorant and bloodthirsty old man.

This is the real reason for Mossadegh's demand for dictatorial powers and martial law. Mossadegh and Kashani have long been joined in an uneasy alliance, because Kashani's thugs have been useful in putting the fear of God into Mossadegh's opponents. But Mossadegh has long suspected Kashani's real purpose—about four months ago he even promised the Shah to kick Kashani out of the country. And now Mossadegh badly needs the means to control Kashani—and Kashani's Communist allies. Kashani professes to be anti-Communist, but he often talks something very close to the straight Moscow line, as he did to one of the reporters in Iran last autumn. He says airily of the Communists, "I will chew them up and then swallow them and spit out the parts I don't want." Observers on the spot have no doubt at all that the Communists would ultimately do the swallowing. Meanwhile, Kashani and his fanatical Moslem followers are preparing the way for the Communists, busily stirring the peasants and the slum-dwellers to a mood of revolt. Kashani is, in brief, the very prototype of a Middle East Kerensky.

Yet Mossadegh's regime is in immediate danger of economic chaos and disintegration. If it collapses, the way will be open for Kashani—and Kashani's unswallowable allies. This prospect recently caused the State Department policy makers to study

carefully the probable consequences of a Communist capture of Iran. They decided that it "could not be tolerated." Communist control of Iran would make up the Soviet oil deficits and give the Soviets an almost unchallengeable position in the strategically vital Middle East.

At the same time the Joint Chiefs of Staff also considered Iran. They had a good look at American world commitments and they ruled that no American forces could be spared to prevent an internal Communist seizure of Iran. This left the American Government saying that a Communist capture of Iran could not be tolerated but that nothing much would be done to prevent it. The planners were reduced to considering such helpless expedients as covert support of the Iranian tribesmen, in case the Communists took power. The

conclusion was obvious. The total economic collapse of the Mossadegh regime cannot be allowed to happen, simply because the alternative would almost certainly be a great deal worse than Mossadegh. Hence the proposal to the British.

The probable British reaction may be judged from the fact that British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden recently protested angrily to Secretary of State Dean Acheson against the American Point 4 programme in Iran, on the grounds that the programme strengthened the villainous Mossadegh. Moreover, the British have perfectly solid ground for complaint against past American policy in Iran. But as things stand, there is surely logic in the American view that it is more important to keep Iran out of Soviet hands than to pay off old scores against Mossadegh.

HONOLULU TALKS AND ASIAN PEACE

By K. G. SIVASWAMY

THE U. S. policy of containing Communism in Asia by rearming Japan after the San Francisco Peace Treaty of September, 1951 has led to the following consequences.

The new national police reserve of 75,000 in Japan which will be shortly increased to 1,10,000 with machine guns, mortars, tanks and artillery is no less than a little standing army. The Central Education Minister has been empowered to appoint presidents of state universities.

The Peace Maintenance Law recently enacted can be used widely against civil liberties. A Bill has been submitted to the Diet for the appointment by the Metropolitan Governor of the heads of 23 wards of Tokyo, who since the occupation were elected, thus dedemocratizing local self-government. A programme of mobilising youths for economic development has been approved at a meeting of Parliamentary Vice Ministers. It is said of this programme that it is designed to train youth for the State unlike in Nazi Germany where they were trained for the party. War-

like toys are flooding the market. Old martial tunes are more in vogue. The parties in Japan have the definite aim of building nationalism round the Emperor, some expressing an Asian bias, and many an extreme right policy. One lakh and sixty nine thousand war time leaders have been restored to public life. The new revision policy adopted after the recall of General MacArthur has included complete freedom for the former militarists and professors and teachers of the extreme right. All these policies have strengthened anti-Communist groups but they have also resulted in reviving Japanese militarists and the Zaibatsu industrialists. The U. S. A., under the security agreement, got not only twenty bases in addition to Okinawa, more than what she got in West Europe under the Atlantic Treaty, but the right to use communications and public services, to conduct military manoeuvres, and to make surveys of any part of Japan. The American forces have also many privileges and exemptions from taxes.

The U. S. A. relies on the ageold hatred of Japan to Russia to achieve this policy. Dr. Evatt, ex-Foreign Minister of Australia and ex-President of the General Assembly, U. N. O., condemned the Japanese Peace Treaty as "an open and unashamed abandonment of all standards of international justice". He said it was a delusion to think that rearmed Japan would act solely in the interest of Western democracies." Australia and New Zealand had therefore to be pacified by another pact by the U. S. A. offering military protection. The U. K. wanted to avoid creating more hostility for itself from the Asiatic countries, by attending the Honolulu Conference. For, Australia which is one of the homelands of U. K. where six lakhs of British citizens have migrated after the war, can be depended upon to protect British interests.

India has stood against the formation of any anti-Soviet block in the Pacific. As regards Indo-China, the Government of India sent a note as early as November, 1949 that "the success of French military operations would take decades and half a million troops to regain control of the territories at present under the Indo-Chinese Nationalists." Holding such views, nothing now remains for India to do except recognising Vietnam, as Yugoslavia did long ago. Of Malaya, F. G. Cornell, an Oxford Professor who has visited the country twice says that the British hope to create an anti-Communist democratic Malayan State was an "egocentric illusion of ageing European colonial empires desperately striving to accommodate themselves to a world hostile to colonialism."

India has definitely condemned colonial rule. She has disapproved of Formosa being protected by an American fleet. She has refused to

attend the San Francisco Conference to sign the Japanese Peace Treaty. She has taken a definite stand in Korea that the U. N. army should not cross the 38th parallel. She has condemned the bombing of bases on the other side of the Yalu river. She has urged China's representation in the U. N. She abstained in the U. N. O. from declaring China an aggressor. She declined to co-operate in the Pacific security regional pact proposed by the President of the Philippines.

The Chinese are 1 million in Indo-China, 2.8 million in Malaya, 3 million in Thailand, 3 lakhs in Burma, 2 million in Indonesia, and 2½ lakhs in the Philippines. Mao-Tse Tung knows how not to antagonise the Chinese capitalists, blackmarketeers, and rich businessmen in all these areas. The Chinese Embassy in all these States cultivates good relations with the local people.

Either out of self-interest, fear, neighbourhood ties, or attachment to the new social order, Asiatic countries are bound to recognise the Chinese Republic. Independent Nation States in Asia can only be delayed but not prevented from emergence. A democratic set-up of varying degrees with a slant towards dictatorship is bound to prevail in these States in order to solve food and employment problems. The smaller the middle class the greater will be this slant.

India's policy is sound. By her very neutrality she has prevented a world war. She is however unwilling to lead the Asian bloc as that might prejudice her neutrality in the view of either the U. S. or the Soviet Union. Her neutrality arises out of her weakness and not strength. She has her internal problems. But India in line with her traditional policy will certainly stand out in the future against any American aggression in the Pacific.

The woman typist is one of the latest subjects of research in Sweden. The leading fact to emerge about her is that, while the ordinary typewriter requires the slightest tap of fourteen ounces to depress a key efficiently, she generally uses a sledge-hammer blow of sixteen pounds. . . . To judge from articles in Britain's daily Press and magazines, wastage of physical effort in day-to-day jobs is a peculiarly feminine foible. Sit down while you string the beans, is a seasonal cry; reorganize your kitchen so that you do not walk an unnecessary ten miles a day. Going-it too hard at anything is generally conceded to be the mark of the enthusiastic amateur.—THE STATESMAN.

SIDELIGHTS :

SSRIMATI DURGABAI was appointed a member of the Planning Commission and placed in charge of the social services, but she found out very soon that there was no provision of finance made to cover her branch of work in the Commission. As her mind works in straight lines and not in zig-zag puzzles it did not take her long to realise that without money no planning as a member of the Planning Commission was worth attempting. She lost no time in approaching the authorities concerned and argued thuswise: "Without proper finance I cannot justify my appointment to this post. Either enable me to justify it by giving the finance, or leave me out." Such forthrightness, being unusual with new entrants to high offices, hit its mark. Durgabai got a good start with a few crores placed at her disposal, and she has been going about the country seeking to discover means for making the best use of them.

* * *

Pandit Nehru is often called a Hamlet and an escapist, but the real fact of the matter is that he has far too much work to do, and in the pressure of unlimited problems on his limited time many things are attempted and few completely done. But Pandit Nehru has an invincible honesty of purpose as the guardian of the national interests, and he will not resent trouble given to him in pursuit of any plan or measure pertaining to any such interest. Nehru's escapism is an inverted form of the ineffectiveness of many of the colleagues and lieutenants through whom his work has to be done. They play the courtier to please him and unpleasant responsibilities get evaded. Nehru needs a trouble-giver pledged to the public interest to be impelled into the highest achievement of which his dynamic zeal and soaring ambition for national glory and greatness are potentially capable of flowering into. Such a trouble-giver, armed with all the might of a tireless energy and a fearless conscience, is Srimati Durgabai. She is merciless in the tax on time and effort she levies on her-

self and on all others inviting her co-operation in any common plan of work. She will give no rest to the Prime Minister and that is just what he needs to give of his best.

* * *

Durgabai is indefatigable. C. R. also is indefatigable, but his is an individual indefatigability. Durgabai combines with indefatigable individual painstakingness, the gift of inspiring her fellow-workers with something of the tempo of her own restless consecration to the service of public institutions. Disparity between means and ends is the usual refuge of the faint-hearted when they are defeated in the struggle of life after having set their hands to some high purpose. But Durgabai is never disheartened by fear or failure and is always undaunted. She has the Gandhian gift of turning ordinary clay into heroic moulds. The Andhra Mahila Sabha is a significant monument to her capacity for multi-purpose benefaction through economy of husbanding without multiplicity of organisation. Few realise perhaps the enormous variety of services concentrated within the boundaries of the Sabha's activity. It provides schooling for girls. It teaches handicrafts. It grooms girls unable to go to college for the degree examinations of the Benares University. It has established a hostel for girls. It runs a press. It publishes a monthly magazine and affords opportunities to aspirants to journalism among women. It has a hospital and a home for the training of nurses under its care.

* * *

Even in the Sahara, Durgabai will find something to do and discover a band of kindred spirits to enrich life with activity. The Bharat Sevak Samaj could not have found a more intrepid monitor. I wish C. R. had not foisted Sri Bhaktavatsalam on the Samaj. Association with a controversial figure of a none too savoury reputation is not likely to give to the fortunes of the Samaj in Tamil Nadu the drive and the fillip to which it is entitled by virtue of its excellent objectives. Of all the displaced

Ministers Sri Bhaktavatsalam is the one most rebellious against the ill fate that has overtaken him, the one least likely to submit tamely to being put on the shelf. He may be reckoned the most dangerous to the regime that has supplanted him as his proclivity for intrigue is most notorious. It might have been thought, from the tactical point of view, that the pinning down of a potential mischief-maker to an occupation leaving no surplus energy for intrigue is a master-stroke of policy worthy of support if only in the interest of the steadiness of the provincial administration.

* * *

There are two sides to the question raised by C. R. as to who owns Madras. To say that the Tamils own it in a Tamil gathering like the Tamil Festival will obviously please and will be greeted with cheers and thrilled excitement, and it is of course mathe-

matically correct. But it is not in conformity with the highest principles of the Constitution. Every inch of this land of ours belongs to nobody in particular and all in unison. It is not a worthy part to play for a national leader to emphasise exclusiveness of possession in national assets to the detriment of the integrating objectives of the new Republic as envisaged in the Constitution. Those who flourish the Gita in public as an emblem of God-fearing piety have a further duty. Did not Suka say in Bhagavatam:

Noticing the kings concerned only with victories over herself, this Earth laughs at them, "Oh, these kings, playthings of Death, wish to conquer me".

"On my account kings dispute 'This Earth is wholly mine, O fool, and not yours', and in rivalry they kill one another and lay down their own lives."

—SAKA.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

By "SOIL CONSERVATIONIST"

THE Chief Minister of a major State is reported to have stated recently that the activity of a community project comprises merely the coordinated effort of the various departments. He seems to imply that there is nothing novel about the American discovery of such coordinated activity and the American aid will therefore have to be taken for what it is worth. If this is the measure of understanding of a community project prevalent among the Administrators of these projects, then the American aid in India might go the way it had gone in old China.

We have been observing the collective effort of the various Governmental organs during the last five or six years in the food production drive and we are awfully aware of the results. We are also too well aware of the function of these organs in the eradication of floods and famines in the country. The departments of agriculture and irrigation have been in existence in this country almost a

century and a half and it is the result of their supreme effort effectively cemented with that of the omnibus revenue department that led the country to the present economic level. Under the famine code a collector could be endowed with almost dictatorial powers with the functions of all the departments in the district vested in him. He can coordinate and command all the services. With such supreme powers of coordination, collectors have come and gone, but the recurring mass affliction of famine and floods is ever on the increase.

What could not be achieved with such concentrated power is now sought to be done through Development Committees consisting of various heterogeneous elements of official and non-official hierarchy at the state, district and taluq levels. Our experience with these committees is like this. They indulge in unending discussions on matters or schemes sponsored by interested and influential men of the place and ultimately some recom-

recommendations are sent to Government which are hardly implemented by the various departments for one reason or the other. Matters get stuck up at some level and the committee's recommendations, unwholesome as they are, remain their only solid achievements for gloating in the press and on the platform. The Rayalaseema Development Committee has been functioning for the past four or five years. It could neither plan for averting the disastrous famine in Rayalaseema nor did it attempt to capitalize the colossal relief expenditure for eradicating the famine once for all. It does not require an expensive committee to recommend the construction of major river valley projects which are beyond the reach of the national exchequer at the moment, nor to boost up the schemes meant to serve sectarian and vested interests. Could this Development Committee go to each village, study the problems of each watershed group, piece by piece and bit by bit, and plan for the integrated development of the resources of the region with the land, water and men as the basic elements and with operational programmes self-supporting or at least paying their way through, clearly blue-printed for effective and immediate execution through the harnessed common will of the common men? Solid results cannot be achieved by these committees meeting once in a way sitting around a heavily loaded tea table in a collector's bungalow or a municipal office, with the clerks putting up papers, speaking airily over unbaked or half-baked schemes and projects and finally recording some irresponsible resolutions.

A community project of the American variety and the development committee of the Indian model are therefore poles asunder. In the arena of material prosperity, a community project is a scientific discovery of the Americans to which they owe their high standard of living. It is not with mere physical association but through chemical combination under set conditions that hydrogen and oxygen produce water. Committees formed for the physical contact

of officials and non-officials at different levels cannot plan, much less execute, for mass scale material prosperity. Mass prosperity cannot be built up by paper planning by heterogeneous elements imbued with no common purpose.

In a community programme every watershed of a region is disintegrated, the land and water resources thoroughly examined and improvements designed and the people of the watershed, not merely the few elite of the place, are contacted and their problems discussed in a heart to heart give and take manner, and on the basis of such a thorough investigation, an integrated system of development of each or a group of watersheds according to their relative size is blue-printed. Based upon these, action programmes are commenced with the complete association of the inhabitants and with their own local resources, assisted by a minimum of state aid in the form of finance and materials. The common man is taken into confidence and all the planning and execution is done with his complete concurrence at every stage. A community project is therefore a thoroughly democratic institution wherein the top experts and the bottom operatives sit along with the people or walk with them in the watershed, discuss their land and other rural problems, plan and blue-print on the spot, and also execute forthwith with the people themselves as the main operatives. Convinced of the efficacy of the programme in which they themselves have taken a leading role with the assistance of the experts, the people will contribute the major part of the finance, and whatever balance is required, it is promptly contributed by the governmental credit agency without much fuss or delay. The whole programme is worked out and executed in all its details by a single operative agency endowed with the requisite powers, finance and the technical know-how. It is time that we discarded these so-called development committees which invoke the least popular faith or enthusiasm and could therefore achieve pretty little.

A cow. This is how the so-called tenants are taking advantage of the meaningless promises and trouble the landlords without paying rent and without delivering possession of lands. Are these the tenants who should be given protection? The troubles given by the mighty tenants to their landlords, especially those belonging to minority communities, widows and others, are innumerable.

So the aim of the Government should be only to help the poor and not the so-called tenants. The only way to benefit the poor is to assign some Government lands and ryots' lands for fair price and bring pressure on the rich to part with their lands in favour of the poor. This only can bring economic equality.

S. V. VARADA RAO.

Ulavapadu.

Socialist Somersaults

Aruna Asaf Ali has declared that the Socialists had become the fifth columnists of the bourgeoisie. Of late, their policies have become disruptive of the Opposition in the post-election legislatures, much to the safety of the Congress, which represents the vested interests.

The Socialist Party, itself lacking a rigid discipline, is today making consistent efforts to get up an alliance with the equally indisciplined Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMP).

Envious of the growing popularity of the Communist Party, the Socialist leadership is now desperately adopting policies to promote its own selfish ends rather than for the good of the masses. It wants to rule the country with impracticable policies. It wants either the Congress or the Socialists to rule. In the last elections, they set up candidates in almost all constituencies with the full knowledge that there would not be any chance for them to win; and by doing so they split up the opposition to the Congress. They openly said they did not want any party other than theirs to take the credit of defeating the Congress. They supported the Congress where they did not set up any candidates.

The Socialist Party has done enough in the working class movement. It broke the solidarity of the working masses by forming the Hind Mazdoor Sabha as a parallel organisation to the All-India Trade Union Congress. It divided the student unity by sponsoring the Students Congress, which is now defunct, as a rival to the mighty All-India Students' Federation. And today, it is making Herculean efforts to split the powerful opposition, born after the general elections under adult franchise. They are successfully trapping the weak-kneed M. P. P.

Thanks to the leadership of the Socialists, the vested interests and the

exploiting class, whom it professes to fight are today happy. The Socialists have a matchless technique. They raise the tempo of the workers to a high pitch, and suddenly bring it down to a zero point making the workers helpless and prostrate before their bosses. The leadership gets confused, and knows not what to do at the actual time of action.

Today, the Socialist Party is leaving no stone unturned to regain the little following they had had before the general elections. Its leaders, J. P. Narain, has recently ended a 21-day self-purification fast. In Bombay and Poona, it led a movement of food Satyagrahas. Some satyagrahis were jailed or fined, and then the movement ended. Attempts were made in Hyderabad to collect a few people for such a movement, but there was no response.

With the municipal elections fast approaching, the Socialists in Andhra have geared up their work, concentrating their activities between Bhimavaram and Vijayawada. They have joined an impotent movement for the Andhra State, launched by Swami Sitaram. Socialist Satyagrahis are moving in batches in trains without tickets, and this ticketless travel being ignored by the authorities, they do not know what to do. They are going round the Government offices demanding the Andhra State without knowing that it is not the officers there that deliver the goods.

Unfortunately for the Socialists, there is no Socialist movement in Tamil Nad. Their party's future is bleak there.

R. R. GIDUGU.

What Is Liberalism?

It is easy to rouse the passion of the masses and engage them to do destructive acts. It is difficult to discipline them to do constructive work. Any despotic ruler can maintain law and order by using the forces at his command. But it is difficult to cater even justice to all classes of people. But the aim of liberalism is to work for progress through the constructive acts of the masses. Liberal democracy will survive only if it succeeds in establishing a real partnership between the toiling masses and the intelligentsia. Sentiment of the masses is generally in favour of liberalism. But when the liberals try to rule the masses with the exclusive support of the vested interests and when the legitimate rights of the former are suppressed by governmental coercion, the masses are forced to join hands with the extremists. An analysis of the recent political trends in South India would reveal that the masses had preferred even anarchists as their representatives to others. A coalition of the extreme left and the extreme right is not a gain to liberalism, but a death-blow to

it. The Indian Communists say that they desire to work with people who follow the principles of liberal democracy. But in practice they choose to be in the company of reactionaries. True liberals are not interested in power politics. They are interested in the welfare of the common people and in safeguarding the civil rights of citizens.

In essence, there is no difference between humanism and liberalism.

C. V. RAJAGOPALACHARI.

Famine Relief And Red Tape

The Government is not combating effectively famine in Rayalaseema. One Minister or the other is touring Rayalaseema and yet no one seems to have found the solution. The Government's gruel centres have become centres for breeding idleness. The deserving are not given gruel but they need not have any grievance. The gruel is so bad that it is causing even unknown diseases. We have heard of the Government's intention to give loans, but those who distribute them, are unsympathetic and red tape is there. In some taluqs like Madanapalli, Vayalpad and Punganur the authorities have not disbursed as much money as has been spent on the staff. Why not the Government, instead of having a separate staff for this purpose, authorise the cooperative societies already in existence to take up the work of granting loans? The Government is giving loans to people who have property. What about those who have no property? Does it not occur to the Government that they should at least be provided with work to enable them to earn their livelihood.

P. NARAYANA REDDI.

Madanapalli.

Why Not A Small-Investors' Loan?

Regarding the loan floated by the Madras Government, a District Collector said that more important than the amount subscribed was the number of persons who contributed to it. It is because of this we could without doubt say that in this admittedly rash venture of Rajaji, there were motives more important than money. He sought an indication of the backing he had. Though the loan was a big success, the point that much of it came from the rich or the District Boards, and in four and five digit figures, cannot be ignored.

This "spontaneous and sincere rally of the moneyed class around the banner" as we have called it, is not what Rajaji wanted. In his characteristic manner, as a step next to that of the vote of confidence secured in the Legislature, he wanted a vote of confidence in the enlarged sphere—the State. The sentence of his thanksgiving statement referred "particular

to the great hearts of the small investors. I disagree with you when you say the rich contributed "everything in the power to make the loan a resounding success to advertise to one and all the creditworthiness of its distinguished protagonist." I want to see what you will do if Rajaji floats another loan limiting individual contributions to a hundred rupees.

C. SUDARSANAM.

Electricity Bills

There is a need for modifying the design of the electricity bills sent to the consumers in the City. The type used is very small and in a faded green colour, the letters are hardly visible. The details furnished therein should be understandable even to ordinary men. The bills and the methods were different when a private company was supplying electricity and Government management should not mean all-round deterioration.

P. V. SRINIVASAN.

Medical Concession

Under the recent liberalisation of the medical aid rules, low-paid Government servants are sought to be given the benefit of exemption from payment of diet charges and the cost of special and expensive drugs, which previously they themselves had to pay for. This should be welcomed only on the principle that charity, though done niggardly, should be encouraged and accepted. It is, however, noteworthy that there is no guarantee that a diseased Government servant would be admitted to a hospital as of right. There is also no indication that he would be given preference over others in the matter of admission. It is not clear whether high-priced and indispensable medicines would be secured at State cost and administered to a patient even though they are not in the hospital but can be had in the open market.

The Madras scheme must be compared with the Contributory Health Service for Government Staff of the Union Government. Under the Union scheme, all forms of medical treatment, domiciliary and institutional, are made available to all classes of Government servants for a small graded monthly contribution. As many as fifty medical attendants, including several women doctors, have been set apart for solely attending to the needs of the Government employees at Delhi. These doctors are allowed no private practice, so that they can devote their whole time in serving the employees of the Government. Of course they are compensated for loss of private practice.

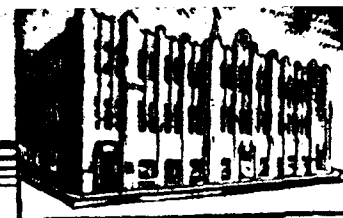
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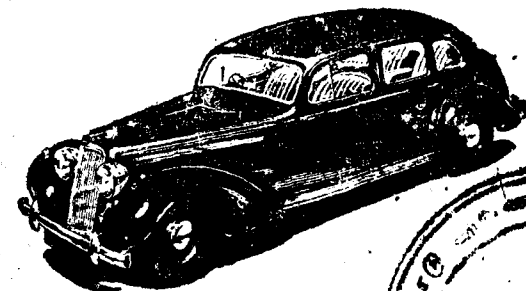
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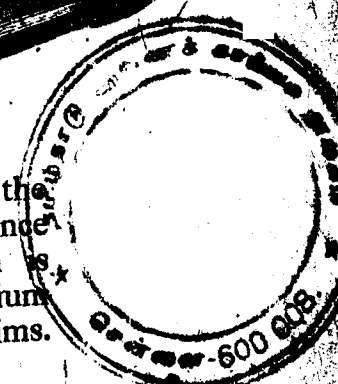
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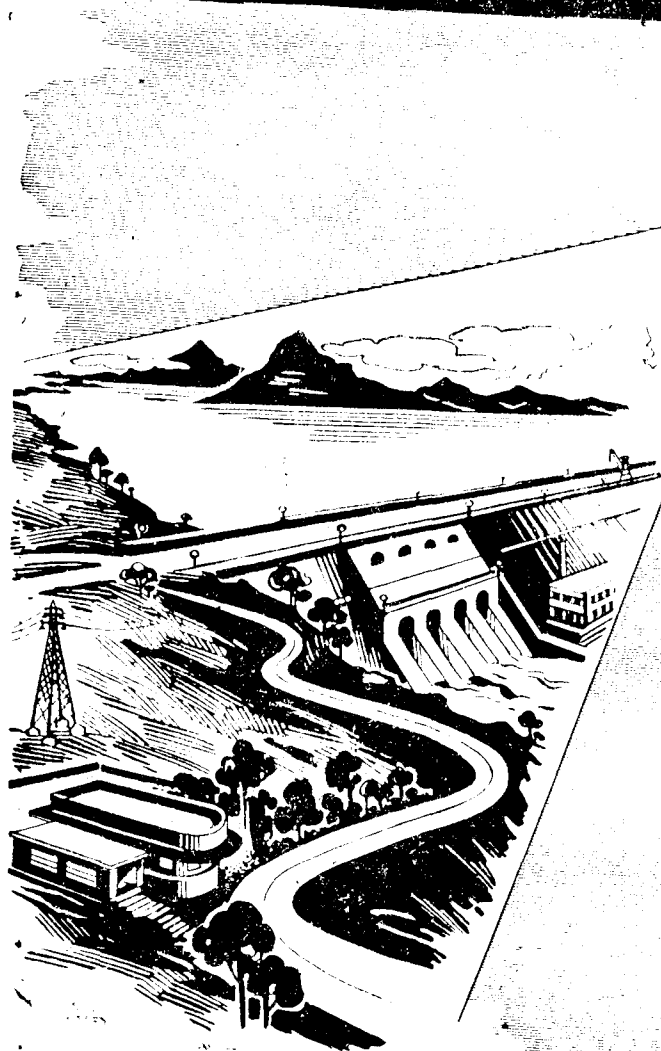


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