

KRIYA

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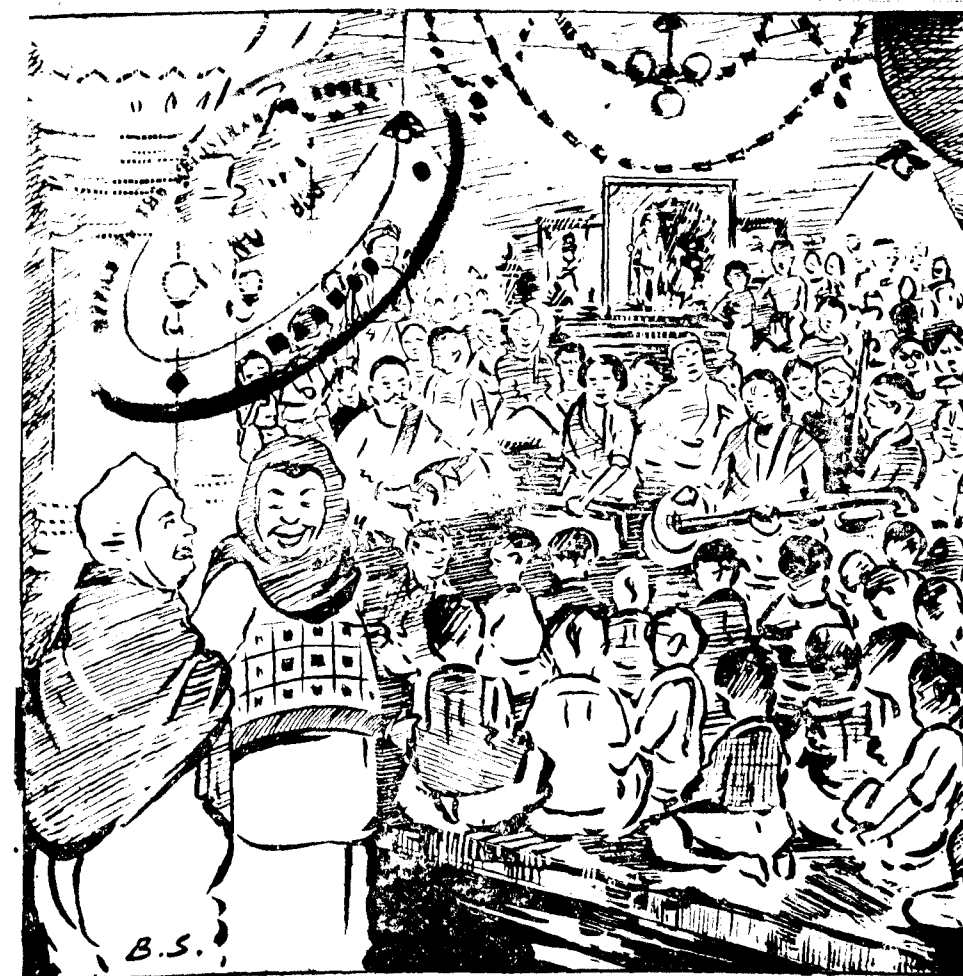
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KRIYA

Vol. I. No. 7]

DECEMBER, 1953

[Annas 4



"It is heartening to find such a big crowd attending bhajan. The Dasar is working hard for the revival of bhakti in Tamil Nad."

"... I will tell you the secret! They are going to distribute Bengal grām prasād to-day!"



Paramahansa Omkara Swami



K R I Y A

(Prop. & Editor: S. A. A. RAMAIAH, M.A.)

*"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek,
turn to him the other also"*

—Jesus Christ.

Vol. I]

DECEMBER, 1953

[No. 7

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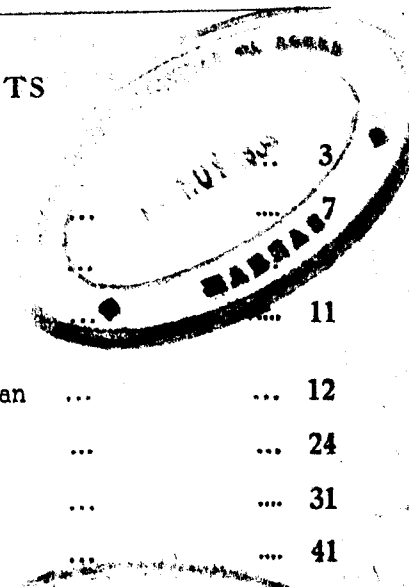
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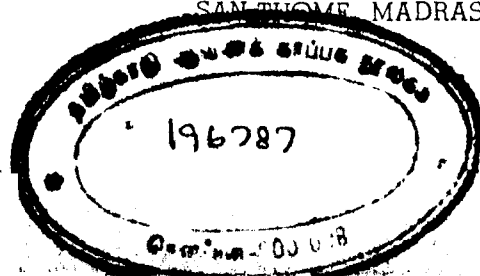
News:—The Dawn of Knowledge Institute (Jnanodaya Manram) of Paramahansa Omkara Swami at Balaram Pillai Gardens, Arcot Road, Kodambakkam, Madras-24 proposes to hold an UNIVERSAL PEACE CONFERENCE on Thai Pusam Day, January 19, 1954. All religious organisations are requested to send their representatives and all are cordially invited to attend. 3000 persons may be fed on that day.

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MOWNA TAPAS

MOWNA TAPAS is silent meditation without external activities. This is apparently easy but really not so. To control the mind and make it flow like a stream of oil towards God is not a joke. Mental purity, that is the freedom of the mind from deep-rooted desires and consequent mastery of the same, is essential; otherwise if one is forced to do the same through circumstances then the consequences are almost invariably tragic. To give a concrete instance a Canadian lady, too fond of her son, imprisoned him in a room to prevent conscription during the last war. The door was plastered and, but for a hole through which she threw daily his quota of food, there was no means of access. When the authorities came to take the young man for military service they were told that he had left home for a foreign land. Years rolled past and long after the war was over the mother confessed, when she was about to enter a hospital for treatment, that her son was in the cell. The police rushed and opened the room which was obviously in an awful state. Thank Babaji! the man with a long beard and hair was alive but his reaction to this enforced rigorous imprisonment was none too happy. An Indian yogi would have emerged as a saint and siddha but this specimen of material civilisation was found to be MENTALLY UNSOUND. Hence the reader should appreciate the glory of mowna tapas for which one should be mentally and physically fit with a well-defined mystic goal.

TRICOLOUR
PLATE

Paramahansa Omkara Swami (Vide illustration in second cover page) is an eminent mystic for he is capable of rising to the level of mowna

tapas. Frequently the writer had heard him say that he wanted to withdraw from this life of external activities and go somewhere for tapas and sadhana leaving his Dawn of Knowledge Institute in the charge of his devotees. Finally Sri Kannappa Mudaliar suggested that he may do tapas like Kali Kambuliwalla and the saint adapted the idea for a different purpose.

The Dawn of Knowledge talks delivered every Sunday and announced in the newspapers, were suspended and instead the secretary was entrusted with the task of holding the weekly Sunday meetings by reading the books of the saint and doing bhajan. In the newly constructed Temple at Balaram Pillai Garden, Via Arcot Road, Kodambakkam, Madras-24 there is a special, small, underground chamber just beneath the dais and altar. It is meant for meditation and Paramahansa Omkara Swami entered the same for a mowna tapas of 90 days (roughly two mandalas) duration as announced in this magazine [Vide KRIYA, Vol. I, No. 3, August 1953 page No. 3]. The saint was fed on milk daily by a resident devotee and he dwelt in that chamber with a small, open entrance all the twenty-four hours lost in scaling the Everest of BLISS oblivious of the havoc wrought to his physical frame by mosquitos and other gnats. His devotees, local and mofussil, streamed in for his darshan as usual and some refused to go without seeing him. Under these circumstances the saint was forced by their love to see him by peeping through the dark entrance to get a glimpse of his **STHULA SHAREER** (physical body) sitting still in meditation. He flatly refused to come out and the entrance to the chamber was made more inaccessible by a bamboo partition. Specified hours were fixed for the above darshan and this period was later reduced.

Thus the mowna tapas went on gaily and was due to end on Mahalaya Amavasai, Wednesday,

October 7, 1953. It is remarkable to hear the saint confess later that he wept like a child on the night of Tuesday (6—10—53) with tears trickling down his cheeks at the prospects of his having to resume his life of external activities from the next day. This great adwaita Vedanti wished he could go on wading in the SEA of BLISS which would have ultimately led to Mahasamadhi but Divine Grace had a different plan in view. The writer fervently hopes that Paramahansa Omkara Swami will one day become a Siddhanthi. It is no use of making a subtle distinction between God and His creation after Self-Realisation. God exists everywhere and one should try to divinise and make immortal the physical frame, the temple of the eternal Soul, as is being done by siddhanthis. For this purpose he may frequently withdraw from the life of external activities and meditate with a vow of silence at Jnanodaya Manram itself. This is not mere fiction as seen in saints like the late Sri Aurobindo and Paramahansa Yogananda Giri succeeding to a certain extent. Their divine bodies did not start decomposing after 6 hours of clinical death as it happens in the case of ordinary imperfect folk and this strange phenomenon was a mighty challenge to modern science. Where others have failed Sathguru Kriya Babaji of the Himalayas has succeeded. He mastered the physical plane of existence probably through a hatha yogic technique (Kriya) and now has lived for over 1750 years laughing at the limitations of time and space. He is now a siddha like his great guru, Agasthya Maharishi and can materialise anywhere He likes and give darshan to His chosen disciples. He is looked upon as an Avatar (Incarnation) of Subramania, the Lord of Tapas and Renunciation (Palani Andavar). So tapas is a natural trait of Babaji Nagaraj, the Kriya Mulaguru and after renunciation in His twenties He sailed from a port in the Calcutta region and went to the power-

ful shrine of Kathirgama in Ceylon which was then itself a well-known pilgrimage centre of Lord Subramania. There He spent about 18 months in tapas and contemplation (Vide Tricolour Plate) to analyse threadbare the various systems of Indian philosophy. He understood fully their high-lights and inadequacy as well. Later He met His destined Guru at Courtallam and attained divine perfection in the Himalayas. Hope Paramahansa Omkara Swami will follow the footsteps of Kriya Yogeswarar Babaji Nagaraj to become a Yoga Siddha and serve God in Man till eternity.

The reluctant saint of Kodambakkam felt that his physical frame had yet to render some more service and he came out half-heartedly on 7-10-53 to carry out a full programme of poor-feeding, bhajan, discourse etc. The event having been given due publicity in handbills attracted large crowds and the termination of the 90-days' Mowna Tapas of Paramahansa Omkara Swami was a grand success.

Navarathri was celebrated at his Inanodaya Manram, Kodambakkam and on Vijaya Dasami day (Ninth night of Dasara) the devotees went to Thiruvannamur associated with the sadhan of Paramahansa Omkara Swami. On November 28th Saturday he is due to visit Kriya Babaji Sangah, 3, Dr, Alagappa Chettiar Road, Vepery, Madras-7 to entertain the weekly meeting of devotees with his melodious bhajan and talk. There is talk of a Universal Peace Conference at his Dawn of Knowledge Institute (Inanodaya Manram) of Kodambakkam in 1954 with poor-feeding for 3000 persons. After this conference Paramahansa Omkara Swami may go on a North Indian tour on the invitation of a devotee in Madhya Pradesh. He proposes to visit Kashmir and Western India as well. If there is scope he likes to extend it

into a world tour to preach the Gospel of AUM, that is, propagate Truth as he puts it. He is conversant with four languages, English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. Some more books may be published in the near future. All glory to Paramahansa Omkara Swami and his mission! Jai Parashakti!! Jai Babaji!!!

S. A. A. RAMAIAH

Laugh Awhile

"Father, I prefer the beautiful girl to the rich one".

"My boy, don't forget that she is the daughter of a make-up-expert".

✕ ✕ ✕

Wife: "Our watch-dog does not bark at all. What to do?"

Husband: "Then better hang a board, 'Beware of Dog'."

✕ ✕ ✕

"Why is your family doctor occupying part of your residence? Is your son, suffering from T. B., serious?"

"No, he is O. K. through Babaji's grace. The doctor has come to clear fees' arrears without paying rent".

✕ ✕ ✕

"I can't manage my five children at home".

"What is your profession?"

"Teacher"

"I!"

✕ ✕ ✕

Uninvited Aunt: "In spite of my advising you, you are going on manufacturing children. It is a month since I came to help your wife in confinement. For the last four days I don't get sleep."

Poor Nephew: "For the last one month I don't get sleep".

✕ ✕ ✕

"How did you get over your dysentery? May I have the address of the doctor?"

"Certainly, but don't give my address to him."

✕ ✕ ✕

"I attend only your concerts"

"That's nice. May I know why you avoid other musical entertainments?"

"Who is to be crushed by the unmanageable crowds?"

✕ ✕ ✕

Master: "Tom, why have you discontinued your studies? What are you doing now?"

Tom: "I'm with my brother, Sir."

Master: "What is your brother?"

Tom: "Unemployed."

✕ ✕ ✕

Guest: "How much should I pay you?"

Taxi driver: "Anything you like."

Guest: "That's nice."

Taxi driver: "The balance I'll collect from your host!"

✕ ✕ ✕

A person dashed into the doctor's house at an untimely hour and appealed:

"Please come at once, A patient has fainted and attempts to revive him have failed so far."

"Give me first a hundred-rupee note."

"Thank you for the remedy, doctor! If I shout out this piece of news to the patient he may get up."

✕ ✕ ✕

"Nowadays music has entered many families."

"Why! it has scattered many too!!"

✕ ✕ ✕

NEWS AND NOTES

T. K. C. honoured :—Sri. T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, better known as T. K. C., is a familiar figure in the firmament of modern Tamil literature. Breaking away from the orthodox dryas dust exposition of ancient Tamil works he shines as a first-rate connoisseur spreading to all those who come in contact with him, the infection of loving and enjoying Tamil literature. He resides at Courtallam, Via Tenkasi, South India, in the sacred region sanctified by the presence of the great siddha, Aqasthya Maharishi who, as the reader knows, initiated Kriya Babaji into the mysteries of Yoga at Shakti Peetam in the same area. In the first half of 1953 a group of Kriya devotees who had gone on a pilgrimage to this holy spot called on the Tamil savant for Kalai Darshan (divine glimpse of art) after Swami Darshan (glimpse of God) in the Shiva temple of the place. His hair had grown grey in rendering service to his mother-tongue and the stalwart figure whom the editor had seen a decade back was now thin and frail worn out by age and illness. But in this state too he was bubbling with so much vital enthusiasm and humour as to put to shame a youth of twenty. In spite of his ill-health he entertained the party with a literary feast lasting about an hour supplemented soon after by tasty dinner!

T. K. C. has popularised Tamil poetry in general and has done special research in the Ramayana of Kambar, the Prince of Tamil poets. So far he has completed his commentaries on two parts of Kamba Ramayana—Bala Kandam and Ayodya Kandam which were announced and approved at a public function, known in these parts as Arangetram, on 31-10-53 at Sethu Castle, Courtallam. The Tamil Connoisseur, aged 73, was taken in a procession along with his

friend, Rajaji, the first Minister of Madras State, who presided over the day's function.

There was prayer by Kothamangalam Subbu followed by Sri. K. V. Al. M. Ramanathan Chettiar who welcomed the gathering on behalf of the reception committee. As suggested by the latter T. K. C. was adorned by a gold-laced cloth by C. Rajagopalachari and poets like Desikavinayagam Pillai with speakers including Dr. Alagappa Chettiar, S. S. Vasan, P. T. Rajan, Sa. Ganesan, S. Maharaja Pillai, Rajaji etc. paid glowing tributes to Sri. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar who was visibly moved in acknowledging the same. The heads of a number of Tamil monasteries sent their blessings with gifts and total collections to the tune of Rs. 8,001 for the publication of his works were announced.

Nagapattinam:—The excavations of the Archaeological Survey of India has thrown a flood of light on the South Indian port of Nagapattinam. Tamil literature speaks of the ancient glory of this port, the present name of which is traced to Nikama. The earliest find at this place is the inscription on the pedestal of a bronze image found in March, 1856 along with four images in a brick chamber.

In the 13th century there was a non-violent religious upheaval. Hindus, particularly Saivites and Vaishnavaites, were leading a very active life carrying on a flourishing trade with Thailand and other S. E. Asian countries. The finds in Nagapattinam are similar to those of Thailand. During this era of prosperity Hindus practised their characteristic ideal of religious harmony and Buddhism flourished in a congenial atmosphere with a Chinese king building at Nagapattinam a Buddhist Vihar (Temple) for the use of Chinese traders. Marco Polo visited this port during this period.

The World of Science

Britain's oldest tree is reported to be near Hertford a giant oak 60 feet high with a girth of 23.5 feet. Its age is probably about 900 years.

✕ ✕ ✕

Coelacanth (the fish with arms) is very rare and was believed till December last to be extinct for millions of years. The one caught near Comoro Islands was sent to Prof. Smith, the African Ichthyologist, for study and the latest from the same area has been flown to the Institute of Scientific Research, Tananarana, Madagascar.

✕ ✕ ✕

It is reported that there is a freak plaintain tree about 15 feet high in a garden belonging to S. K. B. B. Patasala in Katcheri Road, Mylapore, Madras-4, South India. Its bunch of bananas sprouts from the MIDDLE OF ITS TRUNK at a height of about 5 feet from the ground. One theory advanced to explain this unusual phenomenon is that the top of the tree is probably injured and the stem (with a consequent sprouting of bananas) has emerged from a weak spot. [October 1953].

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IN WESTERN TIBET

A JOURNEY TO LEH

By V. T. Neelakantan

A vivid and absorbing narrative of a journey to a picturesque spot.

Earthly Paradise

THE months of April, May and June in the valley of Kashmir are ideal, probably the nearest approach to earthly paradise, in climate, flowers and fruit. The green banks of the Jhelum, starred with iris, roses and flowers of every hue, and the tumble-down floral-roofed houses of Srinagar are too well-known to need description, though many must have felt like the Queen of Sheba "that the half had not been told" of its beauty and wonder.

But in July it is distinctly the Country of the dog-star, the fierce sun beats on the roofs of the house-boats, and the highbanks of the river exclude all air making life intolerable, so when a trip to Leh was suggested it sounded pleasing. The thought of cool air at the higher altitudes and the mystery of unknown country appealed strangely, and despite the warnings of friends as to the deleterious effect of rarefied air on a weak heart, etc., I took my boat up the Sind river to Gunderbal and made preparations.

An Illusion

The necessities for the journey are, firstly, a permit from the Political officer, then a tent and fittings and stores. I was told that food was procurable en route, but this proved an illusion. Sometimes fowls or a sheep could be bought, but nothing else that was

possible to eat. What applied to oneself applied to the servants, for the valley people live on rice which is not to be found on the hills. Equipped thus, with my two boatmen (stalwart Kabulis) who volunteered as servants, a coolie to assist them, and seven hill ponies (four for pack animals, two for the servants and one for myself) I started on the 250 miles to Leh, the Capital of Western Tibet.

This journey is divided into 19 marches, varying from 9 to 23½ miles, which may sound a trifling daily portion, but in a country where two miles an hour is good going it bears a different aspect altogether. There are resthouses at each Dak, but the chance of being forestalled makes a tent necessary and often more comfortable. Our first halt was at Kangan, where the bungalow was occupied and the tents were pitched under walnut trees. The weather looked threatening and torrents of rain fell in the night, which was spent in digging runnels round the tent. The next day meant the drying of bedding and belongings and on the next we reached Gagangir, where a resthouse was available.

Sylvan Character

So far the path ran through fertile valleys of meadows and paddyfields with chenar and walnut trees, and everywhere iris and wild roses, but after Gagangir the scene changes its sylvan character, and the track winds over rough boulders and land-slips of mud and trees, all helter-skelter, with the Sind river a rushing torrent until a steep climb brought us to the grassy plateau of Sonamerg. A collection of tumble-down huts, tenanted by Gujar herdsmen during the Summer, and a Serai (called by courtesy a resthouse), constitute all that is left of Sonamerg (the golden meadow), since the hillstation of Kashmir has been changed to the more accessible Gulmurg.

A nine miles march to Baltal at the foot of Zoji-la (La is Tibetan for 'Pass') and a good rest in the comfortable bungalow there prepared me for the ascent next day. This I did on foot and enjoyed much, for the Zoji in July is a veritable Garden of Eden for beauty, ever familiar flowers of English gardens, as well as alpine ones, were in masses on the slopes. Forget-me-nots were as a blue sea and borage as a sapphire Carpet. Midway up the pass was a terrible boggy of a glacier, a shining glissade of ice which looked impossible to cross, and only after seeing my ponies slowly pick up their way across I gathered courage and found the ice humpy enough to give foothold.

Patience and Perseverance

The other side of the pass is a gradual descent over fields of edelweiss to Matayun, a lovely spot, encircled by snow-topped hills. The ponies had to be changed at each **Dak**, as transport of their food is difficult, so good time was lost in rounding up fresh animals and their owners, by the Lambardar, with much abuse. However, with patience and perseverance, a start by 6-30 was possible, and on we went to Dras through a quagmire of mud and heavy rain.

The rain, melting the snow, brought down half a hillside with a sudden crack like thunder, the bits of rock rolling nearby to our feet. Every European-costumed person is believed by the natives to be possessed of medical powers, and I was constantly asked for medicine or treatment. It is as well, perhaps, not to carry too many drugs, for ignorance and the desire to assuage their ills might lead to disaster. However, a real Missionary Doctor was encamped at Dras and half the population of villages for miles around were squatting, awaiting his skill.

Sunless Defile

From Dras to Kharbu is 15 miles and the only objects of interest were two carved stones of the Hindu period, supposed to mark the site of a suttee. From Karbu to Kargil the route lies through a gorge between lofty sterile mountains, with the Dras river raging and roaring on its way to join the Indus, until the path opens up to the long strip of villages known as Kargil. After some hours spent in this narrow sunless defile, the green fields were enchanting.

Here the Suru river runs through, and a telegraph office and a small bazaar make the local people justifiably proud of Kargil. Here, too, is the frontier between Baltistan and Ladakh—a bridge over the river graded by sepoy, who examine passes—forming the boundary.

The Mahomedan country is now left behind, and the customary salutation "salaam" gives place to its Tibetan equivalent "Joo-leg". Ladakhi ponymen take the place of the sturdy little Baltis, and, oh! can one ever forget the discomfort of the Ladakhi saddle, a mere miniature towel rail, with a folded blanket laid on top?

Isolated Peak

After a steep climb on to a stormy plateau, and an equally steep descent, which I deemed safer to do on "Shank's pony" we reached Pashkyum, a lovely little valley of poplars and willows, with an old ruined Fort on an isolated peak.

A halt here, and we soon passed into a gorge of sandstone which lasted until Shergol, the first Tibetan Village, with its quaint Gompa (lamsery) honey-combed in the hillside, and a few miles further was the resthouse of Mulbec.

This march of $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles was the longest on the journey. Mulbec contains little of interest beyond a 20 foot figure of Chamla, cut in the rock, and between it and Bhot Karbu, the next halt, lies Namikala, 13,000 ft., an easy and uninteresting Pass, where the high altitude seemed to have no worse effect than quicker and shorter breaking, and any hurry was impossible for man or beast. The village of Bhot Karbu is in a valley flanked by a precipitous ridge on which the ruins of the old Fort and Palace of the kings of Ladakh were silhouetted against the evening sky.

In Red Robes

Next day crowds of Ladakhis were seen in holiday attire wending their way in one direction, and on enquiring it was found that a Skooshok (which means a Lama who has acquired holiness by reincarnation for hundreds of years) was holding a Court, nearby, and "would the stranger like to go and see him?" Curiosity dispelled all fatigue, though I discovered that "nearby" meant a trudge of three miles up a glen, where in a willow plantation, by a small stream, I joined the pilgrims. They opened up a way for me to a clearing where sat the holy man in red robes, under a red canopy, surrounded by his bodyguard of red lamas.

I felt I was an intruder but His Holiness beckoned me to sit down on a carpet on his left and returned my salutation. Dried apricots, raisins, and nuts were offered and conversation carried on by the aid of a lama who understood Urdu and then began a weird Tibetan dance.

First the men, then the women, gyrated slowly to an accompaniment of a droning chant and clapping of hands, all bending to the right as they advanced,

and to the left as they retreated, this was interspersed with singing and all was dignified, quaint and interesting with the exception of a somewhat unseemly **nautch** performed by a fat, but agile, **chokra**, as an entr'acte. I was told the evening would end in an oray of drinking "chang", a potent barley spirit to which all Ladakhis, male and female, are addicted.

A la Chinese

The Lamas wear a red petticoat with a red shawl thrown over the shoulder and on their clean-shaven heads, a red cap, with earflaps lined with sheep's wool. The same kind of cap (not unlike that of the Konkan Kolis) is also worn by the laity and the wool flaps when turned up resemble donkey's ears. This and a homespun frock, tied with a belt of cloth, from which dangles the Chaga (bag to hold flint and steel, inevitable in a country where matches are unknown) and a spoon constitute their winter and summer apparel. They all were pigtailed *a la Chinese*.

The women wear the same sort of frock, but in black, with a sash fringed with cowries and beads, their hair plaited in innumerable plaits and surmounted by the "Peyrak", a strip of leather about six inches wide, studded with turquoise, carnelians and jade, which is shaped over the head like the cobra's hood and hangs to the waist at the back.

Never Thought of

Some of these are very valuable, and the lady's wealth may be estimated by the stones she wears. A rough tanned sheepskin mantle slung on the shoulder completes their working dress; but on holiday occasions the more wealthy don a frock of dark blue or chocolate and red cloak fringed with silky goat's hair. The maker's name on the border enhances

its value apparently, for one worn by a proud dame, had "superfine—40 yards—made in Germany" in large letters along the hem. Washing of either body or clothes is never thought of. In winter it is too cold, in summer a waste of time!

Their religion is also comfortably lax. They pay a lithe in money or grain and dedicate any superfluous offspring to the lamasery to be made a lama or a nun. Beyond that, the saving of their souls is the business of the lamas who do their best by perpetual turning of prayer wheels, and reiteration of the invocation to Buddha: "Om Mani Padmi Hang."

After leaving Bhot Karan, the Foli-la, 13,400 ft. must be crossed and from the top of it a view is gained of the Karakoram range. The highest peak of these mountains which divide Baltistan from Chinese Turkestan, is 28,400 ft., the second highest in the world, known in the survey as K2.

Uncanny

A halt on this pass and then a descent of 2,000 ft., Lamayarn, through the weirdest of scenery, a narrow path along a dry-water course, with mountain and cliffs towering above, in fantastic shapes and spires, castles, turrets, dragons and inverted stalacites, the sides of the hills bright patches of amethyst, copperas green and yellow, make the whole effect uncanny. It seemed a combination of a drawing by Aubrey Beardsley a Lear Bakst ballet scene, only properly to be described by a Sindbad or a Gulliver. My Afghan boatman whispered, "Sahib, this is Jehannum," an apt simile which he may, perhaps, be able to verify later on.

Then to cap it all we came suddenly on Lamayarn, the quaintest human dovecot of a place, with

the lamasery buildings lining the top crags. The whole facade of the rocky hill is honey-combed with irregular windows, doors, and pillars, and small bridges span the chasms in nightmare fashion. It needed a pinch and a sight of the rushing below to make sure one was awake.

A visit to the lamasery proved most fascinating with its rabbit warren of little rooms and the temple raised high from a courtyard, decorated with paintings of Buddhas and demons. The lamas were polite and showed all their treasures.

A Little Bakshish

One room is devoted to the writing and storing of prayer schools for prayer wheels, another to idols and figures of Buddha, while the inner "sanctum" contains the musical instruments and paraphernalia of worship. The daily service was over, but a little **bakshish** produced a repetition of it. It seemed a deafening blaze of conches, shawms, drums and cymbals, mixed up with guttural intoning, a veritable Jazz band to the uninitiated. The Tibetans claim for their music a highly scientific basis, but a taste for it is probably a question of education and environment.

Leaving picturesque Lamayarn with regret, the rest of the marches held little interest. At Khalsi is a Mission, and a cantilever bridge guarded by an old Dogra Fort, also the road to Skardo, the capital of Baltistan, diverges here and makes another route back to Srinagar.

Dropped Carelessly

At intervals, are small strips of vegetation, looking as someone has remarked, as if they had been cut out with scissors from some other place and dropped carelessly among these hills. These green

patches are always barley which is the staple diet of the Ladakhis; poplars, willows and apricots, which ripen in these high altitudes and when dried are exported in large quantities. A thin green line winding along the hills marks the irrigation canals, tapped from the river higher up.

Wild flowers abound wherever there is vegetation—Scalion, Cranel's bill and most of the familiar field flowers of Europe, whilst patches of lavender, yellow belladonna, and traveller's joy cover the walls.

But in the rocky beds of the rivers only scrub Juniper is found and a prickly heather-like plant called boorsta which is used for fuel as it burns either green or dry. The mountains are absolutely devoid of vegetation, and the sun beats fiercely through the thin rarefied air with a rapidly falling temperature at night. Luckily, the small streams, flowing from their snowy source, provide at all times an iced drink.

Breeds Contempt

Caravans of pack animals, yaks, ponies, donkeys, sheep, goats, and any animal that can carry merchandise, are met with on the whole journey and keep the road lively. To meet a procession of yaks (evil-looking shaggy mixtures of buffalo and bison) on a narrow path of two feet six, with overhanging precipitous cliffs on one side and a drop of 1,000 ft. on the other is by no means a pleasant experience. However, with much yelling and gesticulation on the part of their owners and barking of dogs, it is negotiated, and familiarity soon breeds contempt of danger.

Salt, woven goods, and charas (hemp or bhang) are brought from Yarkand and Turkestan and all kinds of necessities taken in return. Since the war Yarkandis are not allowed beyond Leh and the merchandise is brought on by Ladakhis and Baltis.

The fine looking Yarkandis in their curious dress and all their pack animals make the large Serai at Leh a picturesque place.

Occasionally a post runner is met with, jingling his staff of iron rings to keep off wild animals or evil spirits. Each does a log-trot of 7 miles, delivers over his bag, and takes the return one. Their little shelters, mere Kennels of loose stones, are at required intervals.

Gharib People

All along our route were hundreds of Chorteus, Mams and Hlathos, piled with horns of beasts and flags, to propitiate evil spirits, and many rock inscriptions and drawings. Chorteus are Sarcophagi of Lamas and holy persons, whose bodies are burnt and the ashes kneaded with clay into small effigies, which are placed in the cavity of the Chorteus. These are called by the profane "potted lama". Mams are low walls of piled stones, roofed with flat stones inscribed with "Om Mani Padmi Hang" and rude drawings of Buddhas or animals. These often extend for a mile, and the Tibetan piously passes on their left. Needless to say my Afghans insisted on passing on the right. These "Sons of the Faithful" took a delight in inviting a "scrap", practically "trailing the tail of their coat" at every opportunity. Luckily, the Ladhakis are a gharib people, more prone to laughter than anger.

At last a milestone pointed 18 miles to Leh, and at two-thirds of this march, at the foot of the Leh plateau, lies Spitak; its Gompa on an acropolis and a resthouse are its principal features except the river Indus, which here flows more peacefully making a pleasant change from the road of the crashing foaming rivers that had been with us day and night.

A climb of 1,000 ft. in five miles, brought us to the picturesque gateway of Leh, which is said to be the highest town in the world, 11,500 ft. It certainly presents an imposing appearance, lying at the head of a small plateau, where low spurs of the hills converge, and the streams flowing from their melting snows, provide it with vegetation.

Gigantic Bee's Nest

High above the flatroofed houses stands out the Palace of the Gyalpos of Ladakh, with its in-leaning walls and quaint windows and chortens of the dead kings, it looks like a gigantic bee's nest hanging on the hillside, while higher still, on the crags behind, is the eyrelike Gompa.

Through the gateway one passes into the main street of Leh, a fine broad avenue lined with poplars with a bazaar on either side, where all sorts of conditions and humanity may be seen, and Hindustani, Kashmiri, Tibetan and Turkish are spoken as it is the meeting place of the three trade ranks.

The Presidency and the buildings of the Moravian Mission, in the grove of trees on the left, represent the European element. What wonderful people are these Missionaries; giving their brains and lives to teaching and healing of the poor, living on a mere pittance, eating the rough food produced locally, they work on bravely and cheerfully in that thin rarefied air!

The principal operations are for cataract or snow-blindness, and one can realise the joy of the poor peasants, after months of darkness at receiving their sight. No wonder it seems a miracle to them and the Doctor Saheb a Magician.

Quaint Little Bundles

The Ladakhis handle somewhat carelessly what the world considers "morals" and are sometimes a

sore trial to the religious side of the Mission but the children at the school, quaint little bundles of clothes, very dirty and very happy, as they sing lustily their hymns translated into Tibetan, give hope for a better future.

The Political officer and the Wazir Wazarat, who spend the summer months here, are the high authorities, and in spite of its cosmopolitan inhabitants there is little crime committed in Leh. The people of different races and creeds fraternise comfortably, sometimes inter-marrying, the offspring of these mixed alliance being called the Afghans.

The principal and indigenous amusement is polo played twice weekly, during the "season". The shops all shut at a fanfare of trumpets, kettle-drums, and a sort of bagpipe called surnais and the folk go forth to see the game.

Furore of Sound

The bands play throughout, rising to a crescendo of encouragement as either side nears a goal, and falling almost to a wall at every miss, finally a furore of sound when a goal is scored, and at the end of the play, members of the teams entertain the audience with a wrestling match or a Tibetan dance.

In a country where food is so scarce polyandry naturally prevails. A Tibetan woman marries two or more brothers of a family. If the eldest husband dies without offspring, she may discard the minor husbands and choose another from outside the family. If no son is born and a girl inherits, the heiress does not marry a family but chooses a consort, called a "magpa" who works for her. He may not divorce her except on very grave grounds but she may dismiss him and take another. It is truly a country where women's rights are well understood. A superfluous child is usually handed over to the lamasery.

RELIGIOUS HARMONY IN INDIA

Deepavali which started with crackers on 5-11-53 and culminated in lights on 20-11-53, was celebrated in a fitting manner by the Madras International Fellowship on November 10, 1953 at St. Mary's Hall, Armenian Street, Madras-1. Christians, Muslims and Hindus took part in the celebrations freely symbolic of the religious harmony which is characteristic of Indian culture.

The Minister for Prohibition, Srimathi Jothi Venkatachalam opened the proceedings by lighting on oil lamp and next there was 'Garbha Dance'. After a welcome by Sri. A. N. Parasuram there was an intellectual feast by different speakers:—

The Rt. Rev. Anthony Theodore, conveyed to the gathering the apologies of His Grace the Archbishop of Madras for not being able to be present. He said that the term "brotherhood" was more significant than "fellowship". We meet in the spirit of brothers of the family joining together. The International Fellowship should translate this sentiment into action. All their troubles were due to the lack of realisation that *all of them had a common origin.*

Maulvi Kazi Ghulam Muhammad Mahdi Khan spoke next and said that this function was a symbol of unity. *Deepavali was symbolic of the victory of light over darkness.*

Mr. P. Chenchiah said that the gathering showed that they had surpassed the communal idea and

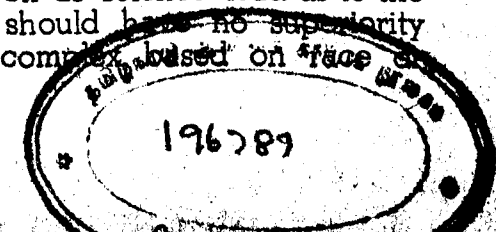
grasped the Indian idea. It gave them hope that they were on the threshold of an era in which Hindus, Muslims and Christians would come together and become Indians.

Then Sri. C. Rajagopalachari, the philosopher-statesman of India spoke with unusual humour and characteristic simplicity of exposition which held the audience spell-bound. After conveying the warmest Deepavali greetings of Sri. Prakasa, the Governor of Madras and his best wishes for their health and happiness he went on:—

It was a good thing that the International Fellowship had thought of bringing together so many different people in a solemn and festive manner as they had done. Rt. Rev. Theodore had stated that people had forgotten their common origin and hence so many difficulties had arisen. "There are two great motives in life. One is religion and the other is modern science. According to all religions, our common origin is our Father in Heaven. I think it is that common origin that the Rt. Rev. Bishop had referred to."

According to modern science they came from a slightly less advanced species than man. They all came from the monkey or the ape. "Let us remember our common great grandfather, that is, Mr. Monkey," (laughter). They could easily recognise this origin from their tendencies. In spite of all progress, every one of them, whether white, black, or brown, "has a little of the monkey in him, whatever appearance he may put on." "Let us be humble and do not imagine one is superior to another. The teachings of religion as well as science lead us to the same conclusion. We should have no superiority complex or inferiority complex based on race."

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territory in which we happen to be born or to live. We are alike equally either as children of God or as natural successors of the monkey. In either case, we are one and equal."

The Maulvi had brought truth a little nearer to them, on this occasion, when he had spoken so much about darkness and so much about light. In spite of all the lamps lighted on this and on previous Deepavalis, in spite of all the speeches made, they had this great delusion and could not get rid of it, namely, that religions were different and that some religions were different from some others. As the Maulvi Saheb had said "we light lamps on Deepavali day in India in order to remove a little of the darkness and a little of that delusion." Again, as he had said rightly "the darkness is inside us and not all the

Lamp of Love lamps of the world will bring light to us unless we light the lamp in our own hearts." "That lamp is not the lamp of knowledge, but the lamp of love, That alone can bring light into darkness. Any amount of knowledge will only add to the confusion unless we learn *that knowledge* which is true knowledge. Until we light that light of love in our hearts, this delusion will go on."

The dance performed earlier would have been nice if done on the thrashing ground of a village by village-girls. What they had witnessed was a kind of play-acting. In saying this he was not detracting from

Pristine Culture the good performance. In their efforts to bring light into their old culture and thereby light into the life of the nation, they must have reality and not play-acting. If they wanted to revive their old culture, they must go back to the country-side. When he saw illumination with electric lights for Deepavali he was depressed.

Deepavali consisted in human activity and not in inorganic illumination. Real lighting consisted of girls in the household or mothers of the family going round and lighting to the traditional way. Lighting lamps one by one gave joy. The difficulty was that they had lost the continuity of cultural understanding and participation. If they wished to revive the old culture, let them do it properly.

The International Fellowship was attempting to bring together different people following different creeds in India. They must bring all the people of India together, all the people of the world together, cultures together and races together.

Role of UNO The present gathering was the outcome of an all-out effort at unity. The UNO was also doing a great deal for this unity. There was no doubt that it had brought people together. But, they were inclined to be cynical and many of them thought that the UNO had done nothing. But, he would like to ask whether it was not a fact that the efforts at fellowship which had been made in America under the flag of the United Nations, had succeeded in putting off war? They had certainly succeeded in this whatever might be the bitterness of the language used, whatever might be the differences and dislikes and so on, and whatever might be the power politics.

Man was a curious animal who got satisfaction in quarrelling in words and then putting off the real quarrel with weapons. "So the UNO has succeeded in putting off that part of the illumination which we do not want, namely, war, and we must be thankful for it. In its small way, this organisation here is attempting to bring together communities and people who, for want of a proper understanding, have not realised the brotherhood of man inside India. Let me be more humble. The brotherhood of man has

been forgotten in Madras also. This Fellowship is trying to bring people together and make them see truth."

40 years ago their leaders in Madras had recognised that Deepavali festival was one which they should convert into a national festival. Every year on Deepavali day, a National Fund was collected and the proceeds utilised for starting national schools and national institutions. The previous generation had made this a national festival and every one joined in it. Quoting from Swami Sivananda's book on Hindu Festivals, Rajaji said that what was said by him supported his (Rajaji's) own thesis that festivals were older than religion. Religions came thereafter and caught hold of these festivals. According to Swami Sivananda, man got tired on account of hard work or monotonous action and wanted some change or something to cheer him up. These festivals made him cheerful and happy and gave him rest, relaxation, and peace. Observance of festivals went a long way to protect religion.

They could not afford to be intolerant. Intolerance was a crime and not to commit a crime was not a great virtue. It was not enough to be tolerant. What they wanted was more than that. Somehow or other in this part of the world a number of denominations had grown up rapidly in Hinduism, because in no country in the world had greater freedom of thought and expression been allowed than in India. On behalf of India he would make bold to say that from the oldest times, though law and order was preserved, "the greatest amount of freedom was given to people who wanted to preach and expound religious denominations."

In spite of respect for tradition and authority this freedom induced many denominations to come up. These denominations were propounded by very

great, eminent and pious men. Out of respect for the authors, grew the doctrine of mutual respect for all denominations. "So that from the earliest times in India it was recognised as the principle of Hindu religion that you must respect people of all religions." Hindu founders of religions were not satisfied with words; they went into the roots of things and propounded different theories. Yet, they began to respect one another. The cardinal principal of Hindu religion, as taught by the Gita and the Upanishads, was that "all ways led to God. It does not matter which way one walks. Regard the other man as equally good with you." Thus the doctrine of tolerance was made into a compulsory faith in Hinduism. It was not more tolerance; it was part of the faith itself. Hinduism had this adventitious advantage. The doctrine of tolerance was recognised as truth and wisdom long ago in India.

Other religions came into being later. Old pagan religions had also the same tolerance for different forms. But, when Islam and other religions came up, conviction of the mind was so strong, and the desire to spread truth among people was so strong, that it led them more easily into error by way of intolerance. Whereas the growth of a numerous number of denominations in India led to a recognition of the principle of equality, the very strong conviction of the Christians led them to feel: "I have got the lamp. Should I leave my brother in darkness? It is my bounden duty to take the lamp to my brother and show him the way." If Hindu religion had commanded them to recognise that all ways led to God, followers of the new faiths felt it their duty to spread their light. That strong desire had done very much good to the world. They could not understand the ways of Providence. He gave conviction of mind to some people who went about with

books, medicines, etc., among other people, because they felt they must carry the lamp of Christ to all people in that way. Therefore, they had to tolerate even the proselytising activities of certain religions. "If you are good and wise, it will have no effect on you. It will be like water on the duck's back. That is the attitude we should have towards all religions."

"Conviction of mind if accompanied by arrogance produces intolerance. If conviction of mind is accompanied by humility, it produces tolerance.

Toleration in Religion

If we have any conviction of mind with regard to religion, let us not add to it the poison of arrogance. Let us add to it the sugar of humility. Conviction is good milk. Add to it humility, it becomes very good milk.

So, religious conviction accompanied by humility will spread peace, prosperity and happiness in our country. If accompanied by arrogance, it will ruin the people and ruin you all."

The light of God was not reserved for any particular people. That was the philosophy of Deepavali. But, the real object of a festival was not philosophy but joy. Festival was a necessary thing for humanity like food. Joy was necessary for growth, for civilisation and for human happiness. Let them celebrate appropriate festivals in the old fashion by mixing with people. "Then, we can feel the real joy of our festivals."

Sarees, the beautiful Indian garments worn by ladies, were given to be distributed among the poor and Sri. P. N. Marthandam Pillai proposed a vote of thanks. The celebrations concluded with a programme of classical dances by the students of the Indian Institute of Fine Arts. It was verily a *Festival of Light and Joy*.

SIX YEARS AFTER

It is, perhaps, inevitable that in a country like India, still in the early stages of her independent career, politics should dominate the scene. By the very nature of prevailing circumstances the influence of the politician is all-pervading, and the pattern of progress in any sphere of national endeavour is inextricably linked up with the current political trends and tendencies. The general outlook of our political life and the policies pursued by the various parties and groups are factors, that for good or evil play a decisive role in shaping the destinies of the nation.

The Main Issue

Now the test to determine whether our political parties are functioning on the right lines or not lies in assessing their contribution to the fulfilment of national aspirations. That is the yard-stick to measure the usefulness or otherwise of all national activity and the main issue for consideration is whether the activities of our political parties are helping the country to attain the objectives embodied in the Constitution—a secular Democratic State and a social order based on principles of social and economic justice—which notwithstanding the differences of method and approach represent the goal the nation as a whole with few negligible exceptions, has in view.

Surveying the political scene after six years of freedom and after the country's experience of successfully conducting the biggest democratic election in history, one does not, it is extremely regrettable

ble, meet with a reassuring picture. It is, of course, true that in spite of the continued existence of communal political parties and the ever-present threat of communist totalitarianism, the general outlook of our political life is not contrary to the spirit of our aspirations, but it is also equally true that the political climate is not helpful towards the speedy attainment of the desired ends. The Indian political scene seems to be utterly devoid of any healthy dynamism, so indispensable if the country is to make up for the time lost and get over the lingering effects of crippling foreign rule. At the moment we seem to be dragging towards recovery at a snail's pace.

Principal Cause

The reason for such an unhappy state of affairs, however, is not far to seek. There are many factors responsible for it but the principal cause of this stagnation is the multiplicity of political parties, most of them loosely organised with no distinct ideals and objectives. The tendency seems to be to emphasise the separate existence of political parties rather than lay stress on ideological integrity, whilst internally there is in almost every political organisation a lack of solidarity and discipline, of unity and compactness, even after making due allowance for the functioning of the parties on democratic lines.

Take, for example, the Indian National Congress, the biggest and strongest political organisation in the country and the ruling party at the centre and in most of the States. Despite all the inherent strength of the Congress its weaknesses are obvious and it is an indisputable fact that the TOWERING PERSONALITY of Srijut Jawaharlal Nehru and his personal prestige are the main unifying and sustaining factors in the party. The facade of unity is deceptive: for there are within the Congress two, more or less, distinct sections; one whole-heartedly endorsing

Nehru's progressive idealism and the other, the orthodox section, which hardly relishes the policies of the Premier of India. It is either sentiment or expediency that induces the latter to reconcile themselves to the situation, but not without diverting Congress activities of imperative vitality and driving a wide gulf between Congress policies and practices, between promise and performance!

Ideological Uncertainty

The Praja Socialist party fares no better. Here the outstanding feature is ideological obscurity and despite the nomenclature there appears to be in the policies evolved by the party more of Sarvodaya making them hardly distinguishable from the Congress programme. The differences between the two parties are strictly speaking more accidental than fundamental and the most striking factor is the close ideological affinity between the cream of the Praja Socialist Party leadership and the Congress President (Srijut Jawaharlal Nehru). Internally, too, the affairs of the party are marred by faction politics and the Betul convention has demonstrated in no uncertain terms how sharply not only the rank and file but also the leaders are divided on basic issues. It is needless to say that under the circumstances the Praja Socialist Party is hardly equipped to function as the main opposition and the alternative to the Congress which is the avowed objective of the party. On the contrary the party today has to function in a fog of ideological uncertainty and its contribution to the political life of the country is in consequence rendered correspondingly ineffective.

Extending our survey a little further we encounter a number of communal organisations, holding identical views on political, economic and cultural issues and yet functioning as separate entities. What line of

distinction is it possible to draw, for instance, between the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh, the Ram Rajya Parishad or the R. S. S. except perhaps the personal prestige of their respective leaders? They have more than their communalism in common. Similar is the case with the motley crowd of leftist parties, sporting varying Marxist labels which are in essence the deviations of the communist movement in India. Their contribution to national political life is, perhaps, insignificant but they seem to be incapable of giving their policies a more rational outlook, torn as they are between the lure of the hammer and sickle and the luxury of independent existence. Even these comparatively small organisations have their internal troubles, a malady with which even the Communist Party, despite the rigid discipline and regimentation and subservience to the Cominform, is afflicted.

Lethargy and Despondency

The whole political set up, as we have seen, is stagnant and small wonder, then, that the country today finds itself in the grip of lethargy and despondency. To break this spell and stimulate speedy and orderly progress it is imperative to revitalise our political life and invest it with a greater sense of realism and purposefulness. The most important step in that direction is a realignment of political forces on the basis of a community of ideals and objectives, so as to eliminate the weakening factor of the multiplicity of parties and infuse in them ideological compactness and coherence.

In fact, the existence of so many parties is an anomaly since broadly speaking our political organisations may be classified into three distinct categories; the middle-of-the-way parties pledged to the establishment of a just social order through peaceful and democratic means, the communal

parties welded to a policy of cultural revivalism and the perpetuation of the existing social structure and lastly the apostle of Marxism, given to more revolutionary and extremist activities. This classification outlines the broad pattern on which our political parties ought *normally* to develop.

Barrier of Hesitancy

There are, however, no short cuts or easy methods to bring about such a situation except by giving extra impetus to the forces already active in this direction. Fortunately there are many forseeing elements in the country who are conscious of the necessity of reorganising our political life. The Nehru—Jay Prakash talks, albeit unsuccessful, the recent utterances of the Praja Socialist Party leaders and the negotiations for the amalgamation of some of leftist splinter groups, are a few of the many indications that the need to remedy the present situation is being, even though faintly, generally recognised. If nothing tangible has so far been achieved it is mainly because most of our politicians have not yet mustered sufficient courage to place the interests of the country above party loyalties. A bold and impressive step is needed to break this barrier of hesitancy so that the evolutionary forces may take their due course.

And what could be more appropriate than a Nehru-Jay Prakash partnership in the great and noble undertaking of building a NEW and GREATER INDIA? Much has been said on this subject of late but the decisive factor is not whether the Congress is in need to enter into coalition agreements with other parties nor the ill-conceived opposition to 'Co-operation' move from a section of the Praja Socialist Party. The crucial point apart from the willingness and the ability of the two leaders to work

together—and on both these there is not the slightest cause for apprehension—is whether a Congress-Praja Socialist Party alliance is dictated by the exigencies of the present situation and whether such an alliance would be in the interests of the country.

New Blood

Whilst it is true that the nation faces a grave emergency and that the Congress has working majorities in most of the legislatures, it is an indisputable fact that the Congress alone is incapable of effectively solving the problems confronting the country and only an arrangement closer to a national Government can adequately meet the situation but the establishment of a national Government would involve a compromise with the forces of communism and communalism. Congress-Praja Socialist Party alliance, leads to no complications; on the contrary the coming together of the two most respected and trusted leaders in the country will infuse a new sense of confidence into the masses and evoke their ready co-operation and enthusiasm in the nation-building activities. It will infuse the much-needed new blood in the administrative circles and it must be admitted that the Praja Socialist Party leaders are second to none in their intellectual and political integrity and their patriotic fervour. Above all a Congress-Praja Socialist Party coalition will strengthen the democratic forces in the country against the dangers of communism and communalism and ensure orderly and speedy progress.

There will be no doubt many other beneficial effects of such an arrangement but we are here mainly interested in its repercussions on the general political life and these will be significant. In the first place it is a well-known fact that there are both within the Congress and the Praja-Socialist Party

uncompromising opponents of the coalition move and it may be presumed with a reasonable degree of certainty that if the coalition move bears fruit, the orthodox elements in the Congress who will be rendered innocuous as a result and the extremist groups in the Praja Socialist Party will leave the respective organisations in quest of more congenial surroundings. That will leave behind the hard core of the Congress and the Praja Socialist Party representing the cream of progressive but sober democratic elements active in our political life and what is more natural is to expect these elements to forge an united front on the basis of common ideological persuasions even if it entails winding up of both the Congress and the Praja Socialist Party.

Inevitable Outcome

Further more such an eventuality is bound to stimulate ideological sensitiveness in the other political organisations both of the right and the left and the process of polarisation will, undoubtedly, result in infusing our political life with a new vitality and sense of dynamism, by making the ruling party more alert and vigilant and mindful of its responsibilities and also sharpening the edges of the opposition. This will be the inevitable outcome of realignment of opposition groups on the basis of clear-cut ideologies and motives.

These and many other things (sic: Pakistan, Kashmir etc., etc.) deserve the immediate attention of Srijut Jawaharlal Nehru—The Man of the Hour—and he alone can solve them. *He is the one to deliver the goods.* Of his eminence at the bar we need say little. Speculations as to what he might have been if he only chose to have a career in the Bar are altogether beside the mark. For Nehru, like the stars, is self-effulgent and he will shed lustre any-

where and everywhere. He is not of those who become great by virtue of their office or association. Dean Inge used to say that climbing and creeping go together and the 'unconcern' is an index to his character and integrity. With some brass in his composition he could have made the most of that opportunity. But he is sensitive like the seismograph and unbending in his rectitude. There is about him, what Mathew Arnold used to call, a note of high seriousness. He has an inimitable dignity of bearing and a meticulous care in the use of words. The culture of forbears has not descended on him in vain.

No Prig

Yet he is no prig or dilettante revelling in argument and idle speculation. I have no doubt that he is often assailed by

Those obdurate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Failings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised.

But his ideas, like those of the Positivists, are always well-informed by a sure social and human purpose. He may have the scholar's appetite for the study of Kalidasa or Coleridge, but he is temperamentally of those who deal with affairs and men; hence his stern sense of reality and precision in utterance. For Jawahar is supremely free from the vices of most writers (East or West) viz: prolixity and mistiness—prolixity in style and mistiness of thought. His words, spoken or written, come straight with gentlemanly easy and grace. A man may pretend to be what he is not but his style will always betray him. The way Nehru makes his brief notes on the margin of a bulky document and the precision and conciseness with which

he expresses himself on knotty points of law or usage are evidences of a mind that attacks squarely and decides quickly.

The rest is smooth sailing. He unravels the most complex dispute with disarming simplicity, without any of those artifices which more often confuse than illuminate the issue. Nor is he of that species that make *the worse appear the better reason*! Hence his great power of advocacy—an advocacy that goes home without any of your claptrap declamation or purple patches of redundant rhetoric. But the legal mind has its perils. If my memory serves me right—and I have no reason to doubt it—I think it was Carlyle who drew a distinction between the linear and the cubical mind. Specialisation tends to narrowness and the lure of subtlety warps the judgment and loses the grasp of fundamentals. Gandhiji once complained of the strange behaviour of his lawyer-friends. Whilst questions of life and death for the nation (according to him) were at stake, they wasted their time over frivolous inanities of no more than technical interest. In their passion for disputation they were raising points of order or asking for adjournments. These, indeed, have their value in gaining a point over your adversary: but vital problems of social and moral import, involving the foundations of one's belief or the destiny of nations are not to be trifled with in this petti-fogging spirit. With Nehru, subtlety of mind and legal acumen are the means and not the end. He brings to bear upon problems a cubical mind and his study of the humanities and the social sciences saves him from the narrowness of specialisation and endows his understanding with a synthetic grasp of fundamentals.

Too Sensitive

Jawahar's gifts are, however, of a character that would preclude him from dominating a situation. For

one thing he is too sensitive for a dramatic pose; and his keen sense of humour would forbid him from thinking that he is born to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm. He shuns the limelight and has little love for the colourful and picturesque so dear to the mass mind. Admirable as these traits are, not of such are the masterful man made.

And today when politics threaten to be amateurish, the need for clear-headed and cautious lead is imperative. There is, of course, the inevitable factor of men (basking in the sunshine as veritable 'Show Boys') complacently plodding for mere security. But you have to conserve what is gained, and when the boundaries are set right, it is to men of means and competence like Nehru that we instinctively turn for guidance. For we know better than to scoff at 'the bad old-days of the lawyer-politician', realising as I do that what little public life there is in the country is of their making. Nehru in the role of a social reformer is an impressive figure and must count with his people. His pedigree, (I don't mean the *degree*) and I don't think he cares to use them) and discipline predispose him to a reverent attitude to the past. By temperament Jawahar has a tender regard for tradition and the continuity of things.

Dead Weight

Well, it is easy enough to go wandering over sea and land from Timbuctoo to Kamatchkatka, eat what you like, mate with whom you please and thrill your neighbours with mock heroics. He has seen it all and he knows, too, that there is no hope for a people chained inexorably to cumbrous old customs which, whatever their origin or advantage once, are now but a dead weight against all progress. Hence his plea for a re-adjustment of old habits to new ideas.

(Continued in next page)

BOOK REVIEWS

COLLISION OF EAST AND WEST. By Herryman Maurer. [Published by Henry Regnery Company, 20, West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, 4 Illinois. Pages 352. Price 4.50 dollars.]

MR. Herryman Maurer's latest book 'Collision of East and West' is a timely publication because at this very moment the whole of the East is in flux. From Manchuria to Malaya a great upheaval is taking place, in some cases between warring factions within national boundaries and in others between communist and nationalist groups on one side and the Western Powers on the other. The international dispute over Korea, the Tokyo riots directed against American military personnel and civilians, the socialisation of material and human resources in Mao Tse's China, the provocative statements issued from Taipeh, the Viet Minh struggle

(Continued from previous page)

Nehru is essentially a committee man. Those who watched him during the Commonwealth Ministers meeting at London were struck with his amazing capacity for handling men and affairs, his powers of rallying those opposed to him in conviction and bringing them all within the fold by his sweet reasonableness and persuasive eloquence. The writer has a notion that the Commonwealth Ministers were so struck with his ability and earnestness that they had then and there decided that Nehru, so far as in them lay, should be the leader for Asia! India must forge ahead on the economic front; she must succeed in liquidating hunger, poverty and unemployment within a few years. Anybody who comes in the way of her progress will have to go. And Jawahar is the Man of the Hour.

V. T. N.

against the forces of Bao Dai and France, the failure of the Briggs plan in Malaya and Hukbalahap movement in the Phillipines are all signs of the unrest which prevails in the East. The book under review attempts to trace the causes of the conflicts which are taking place.

The author believes that the cultural collision of the East and West is largely at the bottom of the violent upheavals that have rocked China, Japan and Korea. Unfortunately the brilliant analysis has been confined only to countries bordering on the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan. Neither the important group of nations that comprise South East Asia has been brought about within the ambit of this study nor has even a passing reference been made to India.

From these remarks it may be taken that the title of the book does not give a true indication of its scope. Some part of the first 100 pages, which are in the nature of an introduction to the subject proper and which incidentally make rather dull reading, could have been utilised to widen the field of enquiry.

To understand the basic causes of the conflict between the East and West it is necessary to follow Mr. Maurer as he investigates with a masterly touch the political, social and cultural movements which have taken place since the turn of the century and more particularly during the last decade. At the outset it must be stated that the author is no apologist either for the West or for the East. He is a student of public affairs, knows the Far East intimately and passes on his views in an impartial and balanced way.

Through the pages of this scholarly treatise we are introduced to the various qualities of head and heart of the people of China, Japan and Korea. Then

we are given an insight into the motives that brought the British, Russians and later the Americans into this corner of the Globe. We are told that with the appearance of Western nations on the Far Eastern scene came an influx of Western ideas, some of which were assimilated as happened in the case of the adaptable Japanese and most of which were rejected by the conservative Chinese. For several decades there followed a cultural meeting of the West and the East. Mr. Maurer has done well to spend much time in giving the social, cultural and religious background of the Chinese and the Japanese for it is in the light of these facts that we are able to judge the reactions to the influx of Western ideas that arrived in the wake of trade and conquest.

From the sixth chapter entitled 'Japan Meets the West' and onwards the interest of the reader begins to get stimulated. Though we may not subscribe to all the views of the author on the events which took place between 1937 and 1947, there will be general agreement with his final summing up. Whilst referring to the remarkable mutual interchange of ideas that took place between China and India in the past Mr. Maurer poses the question as to what went wrong in the recent meeting of East and West. He is of the view that 'the mistake that threw the cultural meeting of East and West into an intense cultural-collision was the mistake of treating Eastern peoples not straight-forwardly as persons who are valuable in themselves but rather as units of population which can be used as means to some greater end! Students of Far Eastern affairs would do well to ponder over this statement—a statement made by a scholar who has drunk deep at the well of Eastern philosophy and to whose credit stand two excellent monographs on Lao Tse and Gandhiji under the titles of 'The Old Fellow' and 'The Great Soul.'

ADVENTURES IN TWO WORLDS. By Dr. A. Cronin. [Published by Messrs Victor Gollanez Ltd 14, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London. Page 288. Price 16 Sh.]

TO attempt to introduce a novelist of Dr. A. I. Cronin's stature to a present-day reader might almost smack of impudence. His first five books starting with 'Hatter's Castle' and ending with 'The Citadel'—that terrible indictment of the medical profession in the person of the general practitioner—have gone through an average of 22 impressions. These were followed in quick succession by those popular novels 'The Keys of the Kingdom', 'The Green Years', 'Shannan's Way' and 'Spanish Gardener'. Having said this much I will now pick up his latest work 'Adventures In Two Worlds'—the two worlds being those of medicine and letters. As you should have already guessed by this time this volume, which bears a portrait of the Doctor on the dust cover, is his autobiography. It is customary for all great men to leave behind them a record of their struggle and success. But, unlike the orthodox type of autobiography, this one provides little direct information about the man. If you want to know Cronin intimately you will have to pick up fragmentary information from all the 41 chapters of this book—each chapter being in the nature of a short story.

Dr. Cronin's life as a Doctor and as a novelist is marked by one outstanding characteristic, the ability to observe and appreciate heroism in everyday life. Neither does he move about in gilded palaces: nor does he hanker after the company of intellectuals. His domain is the lonely West Highlands of Scotland, the dreary mining town of Wales and the rundown quarter of Bayswater in London. But where Somerset Maugham would have noticed only garbage, Dr. Cronin discovers human virtues of such rare

vantage that he is unable to resist the temptation of swapping a stethoscope for a pen.

It might interest those with a liking for meticulous details that Dr. Cronin once served as a ship's doctor on board the 'Ranaganji' bound for Calcutta from Liverpool. He recounts in his inimitable style the story of an Indian serang, Hasan, who acted as a Quarter-Master on the ship. Only a Cronin could have done full justice to the heights of heroism reached by this simple seaman, who beneath an unprepossessing exterior reveals a heart of gold. In this chapter Cronin makes a slight slip when he describes Hasan reading aloud a short passage from Ramayana whilst two of his comrades are buried at sea. (Palpably Dr. Cronin meant a passage from the Koran!)

The 41 chapters of Dr. Cronin's book are many short stories held together by the thinnest of threads—the life and personality of the author himself. The pages of this book reveal a world of Wordsworthian simplicity—of hard work and honesty, of faith and loyalty, very different from the scandals that form the stock-in-trade of the average short story writer. Dr. Cronin is a kindly man who has no perception of any failings save his own. And yet, somehow, all unconsciously and quite indirectly there emerges from this series of vignettes the portrait of a doctor whom it would be a privilege to know in the flesh.

The book as a whole is brimming with dramatic situations. Every chapter throbs with life and each bears the stamp of a recontent. The Doctor's Scotch and Irish ancestry makes itself felt in the doggedness with which he climbs the ladder of life and in the fine sense of humour which lights up all that he writes. It will not at all be surprising if 'Adventures In Two Worlds' turns out to be the best seller of the year.

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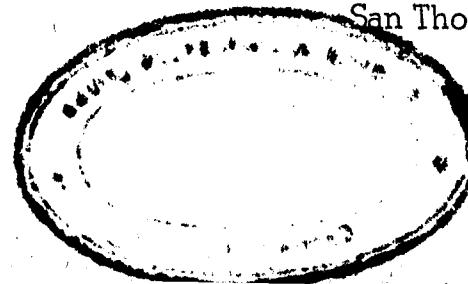
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