

121

Quintana.

101 X 100 (100)

1955

100

51  
on 2, 146  
14. 5. 15. 15.

9567

1119

# SWATANTRA

1089  
2-55



# COTTON YARNS

OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS

FOR HANDLOOM, POWERLOOM & HOSIERY FACTORIES

## MADURA MILLS CO., LTD.,

PHONE: 250 (5 LINES) — MADURAI — TELEGRAMS: "HARVEY"  
S. INDIA

MILLS AT

MADURAI, TUTICORIN AND AMBASAMUDRAM

5,00,000 Spindles

Counts up to 80s

We Supply:

WARP YARNS, COMBED YARNS

HOSIERY YARNS

WARP, CHEESE AND HANK YARNS

SINGLE AND FOLDED

SPECIALITIES:

Yarns for the Manufacture of

ROPES—HEALDS—CANVAS—TAPE

BELTING DUCK · TYRE CORD FABRIC ·  
SEWING THREAD

MULTI-PLY & CORD YARNS

Managers:

## A. & F. HARVEY LTD.,

PANDYAN BUILDING

PHONE: 250 (5 LINES) — MADURAI — TELEGRAMS: "HARVEY"  
S. INDIA

# SWATANTRA

On Sale Every Saturday

Vol. X. March 5, 1955. No. 5.

## CONTENTS

|                                         | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------------|------|
| EDITORIAL                               | 3    |
| SOTTO VOCE                              | 5    |
| SIDELIGHTS                              | 6    |
| MODERN INDIA'S CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT     | 8    |
| ELEMENTAL SPELL                         | 10   |
| "OVER A. I. R."                         | 11   |
| "I AM GLAD TO INFORM YOU . . ."         | 13   |
| AN AMERICAN VOTARY OF INDIAN DANCE      | 15   |
| TWO WEEKS IN TITOLAND                   | 17   |
| "MOST FASCINATING MAN"                  | 20   |
| SPRING IN THE COUNTRY                   | 22   |
| RETURN                                  | 24   |
| SONNET                                  | 24   |
| HEAVY WEATHER ABOUT A PICTURE POST CARD | 25   |
| G. O. M. OF TAMIL                       | 27   |
| DEBRIS                                  | 29   |
| GHALIB AND HIS POETRY                   | 33   |
| NEW BOOKS                               | 35   |
| LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS         | 39   |
| PATTERN OF LAND HOLDINGS                | 42   |
| FILMS                                   | 44   |
| CORRESPONDENCE                          | 46   |
| Vighneswara                             | 3    |
| Saka                                    | 5    |
| Manas                                   | 8    |
| V. Dhurandhar                           | 10   |
| M. Krishnan                             | 11   |
| H. R. V.                                | 13   |
| Jaiboy Joseph                           | 15   |
| Douglas Blanchard                       | 17   |
| P. G. Krishnayya                        | 20   |
| M. Krishnan                             | 22   |
| M. C. S.                                | 24   |
| Irene Coates                            | 24   |
| Essen                                   | 25   |
| V. Subramanian                          | 27   |
| A. Bhadrhiri                            | 29   |
| M. A. Rasheed                           | 33   |
| C. S. Rangaswamy, Jr.                   | 35   |
| B. T. Seshadriachariar                  | 39   |
| V. P. Sathe                             | 42   |

### ON THE COVER:

Sri M. Bhakthavatsalam who inaugurated the National Hockey Championship meeting the Madras Team.

All communications should be addressed to the Editor, SWATANTRA, 2 Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras 4. Manuscripts for publication should be typewritten on one side of the paper only and must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. The editor cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

Subscription rates (including postage); for one year: Inland Rs. 20; Foreign, £1-16sh., or \$8; Half-year: Inland, Rs. 10; Foreign, 18sh., or \$4.

Advertisement rates can be obtained on application to the Manager.

Cut along this line

### SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Make certain that you get your copy of SWATANTRA regularly by completing this form and posting it to the address boxed to the right

To:  
The Manager,  
SWATANTRA,  
2, Brodies Road,  
MYLAPORE : MADRAS 4.

I enclose remittance of Rs. 20; £1-16sh.; \$8 for one year's subscription (or) Rs. 10; 18sh.; \$4 for a half-year, including postage.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

# For All Aches and Pains AMRUTANJAN

**IS THE PAIN BALM**



**AT YOUR SERVICE  
SINCE - 1893**

**AMRUTANJAN LIMITED  
MADRAS  
BOMBAY CALCUTTA**

## SWATANTRA

Vol. X.

MARCH 5 SATURDAY 1955

No. 5

### MISTY MILLENNIUM

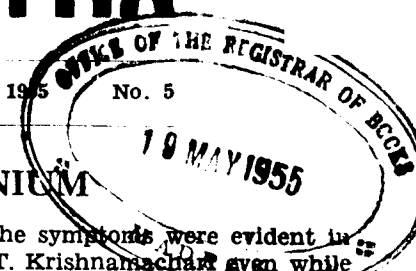
IT is six weeks since Congress leaders at Avadi tried to capture public imagination by a vague eloquence about a phantasmic socialistic state into which they hoped to transform the country in course of time. We were told it was a dynamic ideal which needed to be sought by dynamic thinking and dynamic pursuit. Sorely needing something tangible to pin our faiths on among the plethora of nebulous generalisations and incoherent appeals to the people to stand together and cooperate and sacrifice, we have patiently waited for the issue of some kind of a sketchy outline, however incomplete, round which we could build our hopes. So far no such consideration has been shown. Nor has the Government admitted, by the strategy of complete omission of all mention of the subject, that the socialistic state was the creation of the frenzy of the moment, the baseless fabric of a vision, as it were, and the sooner the public forgot about it the less embarrassing for all concerned. Pandit Nehru, the high priest of the new cult, still rises in Parliament and in a spirit of divine afflatus waxes eloquent on this social and political vision that he among all men has been chosen to see. And he still continues to be obscure and unintelligible. The whole thing has by now acquired a mysterious, almost mystic aspect.

What is really alarming, however, is that apparently the infection of vague, romantic thinking has spread to at least two of his Cabinet Minis-

ters. The symptoms were evident in Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari even while he was here for the annual Congress. He spoke of forces to be generated in the course of the remaining two years of the life of the present Ministry which would create 12 million new jobs. Where and how these forces were to be generated and how they were to be stemmed was left to the public imagination which could not, unfortunately, rise to the mystery.

The second to catch the infection is Pandit Pant, who has declaimed to the members of the Lok Sabha that any doubts about the socialistic pattern were entirely due to lack of knowledge of the economic developments in the country. The question that confronts us, he said, is not so much of increased production as of increased opportunities of consumption and that what we need today is proper and equitable distribution, thus fortifying himself against probable accusations of omission by using all the three key words of all economic planning in any country.

At Avadi all that we gathered was that basic industries were to be nationalised. Last week Pandit Nehru vouchsafed that what we aim at is an egalitarian society. This is the first new word that we have heard on the subject in six weeks. But *egalitarian* means *equalitarian*, which leaves us very much where we were before. Pandit Nehru said his picture of a socialistic pattern is a distant picture of a happy society of everyone having opportunities and no one dominating over the other.



It is thus, admittedly, such stuff as dreams are made of. In a statesman of lesser status and popularity and loveliness we would have been forced to call it loose and unsubstantial thinking. The INTUC has suggested a programme of equitable distribution, land reforms, promotion of village industries, price stability, rationalisation of industries and nationalisation of natural resources, industrial peace and the introduction of basic education. Even this, high falutin and hackneyed as the words are, does at least not make us feel that we are living entirely in a fool's paradise.

In the mind of Pandit Nehru the socialistic pattern and the Welfare State go together. But it seems as if a great many other people including some State Ministers are mixing up two separate things, namely, the welfare activities of any government worth its name, and a Welfare State. Welfare or social services are not all that is implied by a Welfare State. Indeed, the recognition of a certain amount of responsibility towards its citizens in the matter of the provision of amenities and utility services is implicit in all government. Governments differ only upon the extent and degree of these services. The body proper of the Welfare State is, not the social services but the kind of economic planning which makes the establishment of these services possible. And economic planning would include questions of employment, industry, taxation, land and private property. It is about these basic and fundamental questions that we feel the Government is maintaining an exasperating notional idealism.

This will not do at all. We are not unused to confused and inconsistent postulations from Cabinet levels. But the impression is growing with each session of Parliament that our leaders themselves are not quite clear in their heads what

exactly they mean or intend to do about this socialistic baby that Pandit Nehru has delivered. In government, unlike in marriage, one needs above all the courage of one's convictions and one cannot impress the people indefinitely merely by one's ability to conjure up visions or make romantic speeches heavy with dedication. We do not expect that even Pandit Nehru can produce his socialistic state like the rabbit out of the hat. We are only too well aware that it will perhaps take a generation for the economic fabric of a country to be thus changed. This transformation, we are also aware, cannot be a continuous process. Every flood, every drought and every war will interrupt it and perhaps put it back a few years. Great Britain appointed its first factory inspectors in 1833. The socialisation of that country is still not quite complete. But the goal and the path and perhaps even the method were clearly admitted by successive governments, not all of the same colour.

What we want is not even fixed and immutable definitions, for all planning, whether for a family or a nation, must inevitably accommodate compromises and circumventions and take into account the texture of mind of succeeding planners. But having committed themselves to this Utopia the Government can no longer take refuge in vague and mystifying generalisations. It is not likely, of course, that any plan made on a national basis would meet with approval and acclaim from all sides for it stands to reason that in a country economically mismanaged for a century and a half as India has been, one sector cannot benefit except at the expense of another.

At this stage a basic blue-print for public enlightenment is inescapable. Why not get it over with, Pandit Nehru, and let the storm blow itself out? It is even likely that somebody will be able to improve on the blue-print.

# Sotto Voce

KESKAR TAMES THE SHREW



DR. KESKAR (whom I have not met) is by all accounts a most superior person, quite a George Nathaniel Curzon, in fact. It may be an apocryphal account which credited a fond parent with the admiring exclamation, in the presence of a chance acquaintance, "Oh! my son is a very clever man"; but if it is not true, it deserves to be true. Lady Simon, as she contemplated the beatific excellence of her partner in life, delivered herself of a similar sentiment when bombarded for 'copy' by importunate reporters on landing in India. It is even more difficult to be a hero to one's near relatives than to one's valet.

If these superior persons suffer from the blight of intellectual sterility, that does not seem to interfere with their success in life. Dr. Keskar has reason to congratulate himself that, like John Brown's soul and unlike Dr. Lohia, he is marching on. He and the stormy petrel of Indian Socialism have more than their whilom tenure of the office of Congress Secretary in common. They both set up for being connoisseurs of the arts, and they have a pretty taste for dictatorship. But while Lohia's cleverness has landed him plump in the wilderness Dr. Keskar's has planted him securely where he can play with the push-button.

With infinite *sang froid* he lays down the law for the Press, the radio and the film. He may be expected to deal in the same masterful way with television when it comes. It is true that he knows practically nothing of any of these media of publicity from the inside; and I have not heard it

claimed for a Sorbonne doctorate that it endows the recipient with second sight. But in Swaraj India we have a proper contempt for base earth-grubbing knowledge; we value only the divinatorial power that is currently believed to go with the empty mind. The Press Commission, for example, was composed of men most of whom did not know what a newspaper was. But they knew what was good for it. And so does Dr. Keskar.

Look at the suave assurance with which he drove through the Rajya Sabha his one-clause Bill which brings the Greek gift of trade unionism to working journalists. Less than two hours sufficed for the Elders to give their enthusiastic support to the Bill. The only discordant note was struck by Dr. Kunzru. With a life-long Liberal's respect for the freedom of the Press, he urged that journalism being a learned profession with standards and traditions of its own, a special type of machinery for protection of journalists' rights should be set up, very different in character and functions from the trade union that serves the needs of manual labour.

Dr. Keskar promptly snubbed the veteran. "One should not be afraid of trade unionism," he pompously declared. He went on to point out, rather superfluously, that even the best paid people could have a trade union. Perhaps he did not realise the irony of asking journalists to follow the fashion set by those who earned larger wages. Measuring men's worth by the silver yard-stick is far worse snobbery than clinging

(Continued on page 7)

# SIDELIGHTS ::

**T**HE Communists have been routed in the Andhra elections. The organising genius of Sri S. K. Patil has no doubt had its share in bringing about the rout. But main credit for it must be given to the wisdom and perspicacity of the voters. It is evident they have realised the gravity of the Communist peril and in the attempt to avert it got over the normal justifiable aversion to Congress misrule in the State. If the Communists had won to the extent of being able to form a Ministry, their first attack would have been on the ten per cent or so of the rich in everybody's eye, in a legislative programme of rapacious expropriation completely devoid of any vestige of compensation. It would have thrilled the millions of the have-nots. But it would also have been checked and blocked by the Governor's veto or the Centre's interdict on the ground of its incompatibility with a fundamental provision of the Constitution. At that very moment the Communists would have got established as martyred heroes whose labour of love on behalf of the masses was being spoiled by Congress vested interests, the class war would become hot and bitter, ninety per cent of the population would vibrate with devotion to the Communists, and there would no more be any chance for the Congress in an election.

All the consequential evils of a Communist victory in Andhra have been halted for the time being. But for the time being only. The next five years will be really the most fateful years for the Congress and country. With no Opposition to speak of in the legislature, with a steam-roller majority, and no Press at all within the boundaries of the State, the Ministry to be formed in Andhra would be most comfortably placed for undiluted autocracy subject to none of the checks and inhibitions which a continuous barrage of criticism from powerful and effective reflectors of public opinion is

apt to induce in the deeds and judgments of the wielders of political power. It is just the situation that offers the widest prospects for misrule and is fraught with the greatest danger to the ruling party of falling out of the goodwill of the electorate, a situation inviting those mad and irresistible convulsions of mass passion which so frequently in recent years have in China and other parts of the world destroyed seemingly impregnable Governments, substituting the revolutionary regimes of their most inveterate opponents in their place.

Despite the present sensational electoral victory, the future of the Congress in Andhra clouded not only by the perilous consequences of "no Opposition" in the legislature, but also by the immediate certainty of bitter squabbles among far too many uncompromising aspirants for supremacy in a war of power politics that must have started already. The cohesive force that held together the incorrigibly discordant leaders and parties that constituted the Congress United Front was their common fear of the return of the Communists as the strongest party at the polls. That cohesive force operates no longer. I expect a break-up now of all the component units that combined so successfully for the common advantage to win the elections. It will mean a turmoil of virtually chaotic rivalries for every post and office in the offing, not behind the scenes as on occasions of crisis in Tamil Nadu, but as in the Andhra way, on public platforms, in the columns of the Press, in bar rooms and in street fights. Sri Rajagopalachari was brought in as Chief Minister of Madras to avert Congress defeat in consequence of the risky position then of the Congress in the legislature as against the Communists. There seems to me now to be greater need in Andhra for bringing in a competent leader from outside the legislature to tackle the far more

difficult consequences of the Congress victory that has wiped out the Communist Opposition. Dr. Pattabhi and Sri V. V. Giri are the only two outside the State legislature that deserve to be considered for the Andhra leadership. Dr. Pattabhi has reached an age when he will be more useful in retirement from active political life or in comparatively light assignments like the Governorship he is now adorning. Sri Giri has two bright feathers in his cap—the loyalty with which he stood by Sri Prakasam in the struggle for leadership in Madras State, and the intrepidity he revealed when he resigned from the Union Cabinet rather than continue in office at the sacrifice of a principle which he valued. Sri Giri's moorings, however, are not in State politics but in inter-State activities. He has no strong personal party position in the State legislature. Nor has he Rajaji's gifts of manipulation and brilliant forensic sophistry to make up for the disadvantages of an inadequate party following. He will do well, and bet-

ter than others in the field, if he gets there; but to get there, he has not the self-propelling power of Sri Rajagopalachari's variegated talents and capacities.

No Andhra member in the new legislature measures up in character to the post of Chief Minister. Some blatant blemish revealed in the past rises up against every possible aspirant, proclaiming him unsuitable. It is not a choice of the best that is possible, but reconciliation with the second best. Setting aside all likes and dislikes of a personal nature, and viewing the issue wholly from the standpoint of the public and the State interest, my vote would go to Sri Gopala Reddi. He has experience, ability, capacity for work and a certain quality of fairness. If the reverses he has suffered have chastened him out of nepotism and vanity and the companionship of undesirable characters, he would make a good Chief Minister and prove himself, yet, competent to render signal service to the nation and the State. **SARA**

(Continued from page 5)

to the status of a learned profession, of which the new journalistic proletariat clamouring for unionism accuse those journalists who, like Dr. Kunzru, remember they have public responsibilities which cannot be easily reconciled with clock-watching and parading with the hammer and sickle.

A glorified mechanic may draw a thousand rupees and call himself an engineer, but he remains a mechanic at heart and finds no difficulty in ganging up under a union boss. But a journalist who regards himself as in no way different from a typesetter is no journalist at all. Mr. Kingsley Martin, while in Madras, observed that most journalists employed on Britain's popular newspapers were really of this kind and could not be ranked as members of a profession. But in India things have not yet come to that pass, however strenuously Dr. Keskar and his friends of I. F. W. J. may pretend otherwise.

The Minister for Information was

gracious enough to recognise, if but obliquely, the existence of "a small section of working journalists" who were opposed to trade unionism. He was even ready to grant the possibility of setting up a type of machinery for journalists other than that provided in the Industrial Disputes Act, which would be more satisfactory and do better justice. But the "vast majority" of working journalists, it seems, wanted trade unionism. And so unionism must be foisted on everybody, including those who did not want it. And Dr. Keskar was not sorry, either, that he had to do it. Journalists could not be allowed to have a special machinery for settling disputes, as that would elevate them into a special class—"which had not been done in the case of any industrial section." In other words journalists must be herded with the proletariat willy nilly, regimented and disciplined by an all-wise State lest they should get ideas above themselves. And that is democracy as Dr. Keskar understands it. **VIGNESWARA**

# MODERN INDIA'S CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

## "It Will Exercise Increasing Influence Throughout The World"

*"The significant place in world affairs held today by India is not entirely accounted for by the fact that there are nearly four hundred million Indians," writes Manas, the American journal of independent inquiry, concerned with study of the principles which move world society. It holds that "the civilized world is bound to honour riches of the mind, whenever they appear."*

*The Manas article, which is of considerable interest to Indian readers, is reproduced below:*

AT the turn of the century, a man who was as distinguished in philosophy and general understanding as he was in literature, Lafcadio Hearn, told his students in the University of Tokyo that Japan's best hope of gaining the sympathy and friendship of the world was through literature. He gave some examples of how great writers have served as civilizing influences, winning world-wide respect for the cultures in which they emerged.

While Hearn had in mind the literature of the imagination—stories and poetry—his counsel, it seems to us, has the greatest importance. For the civilized world is bound to honour riches of the mind, wherever they appear. The significant place in world affairs held today by India is not entirely accounted for by the fact that there are nearly four hundred million Indians. An Indian spokesman is listened to carefully for several reasons. First, he is a countryman of M. K. Gandhi, who won world fame as the inventor of the techniques of mass non-violence, and as one who imparted *credibility* to the idea that morality and truth may exercise an actual power over human affairs. The Indian spokesman also enjoys a kind of association with the author of *Toward Freedom* and *Glimpses of World History*, books which reveal both the integrity and comprehensive intellectuality of India's Prime Minister Nehru. Finally, a growing number of people in the West are impressed

by the philosophical splendour of India's past. One who has read India's epics, who has even a little familiarity with *The Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Upanishads*, and knows that Gautama Buddha built his great religious reform on the foundations of Indian religion, cannot help but anticipate finding at least the flavour of these greatneses of the past in modern Indian expressions.

What, then, is happening in India in respect to the creation of a national literature of the present age? We cannot possibly answer this question, which would involve at least months, possibly years, of reading; nor are we persuaded that the time has come to pursue such an investigation. We suspect that a generation at least should pass before any serious attempt is made to measure the synthesis of ancient with modern culture—which is almost the same as saying synthesis of Eastern and Western culture—taking place in India. The making of culture is something more than a simple act of the will; it results from slow growth and draws into its processes countless nuances of thought and feeling. What we should like to report on, is rather a definite trend in Indian thought—a trend which gives at least an indication of the direction of modern India's cultural development.

First of all it is the fact of marked self-consciousness. A useful measure of cultural self-consciousness is found in the capacity of a people to cope with an alien or foreign culture.

While it would be silly to suggest that India has suffered the impact of Western imperialism without loss of equilibrium, the thing of historic importance is that there have been Indians and are Indians who see what has happened to them as a result of Western invasion. Both Gandhi and Nehru assimilated the fruits of a Western education. While Gandhi seemed to shed most of his Western learning as irrelevant to the work he set out to do, he did not abandon what he learned from Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy. He retained certain moral essences of Western thought. Nehru retained more—the themes of Western radicalism and the skeptical spirit of scientific inquiry. Both these men, at any rate, and doubtless others of whom we know little, knew what they were up against in their contest with the West. To know what you are up against—this is a phase of self-consciousness.

A second aspect of self-consciousness is the capacity for self-criticism. Before there can be authentic self-criticism, there must be considerable self-reliance and self-respect. The uncertain and insecure man fears to look at himself closely, lest he find weaknesses he does not know how to correct. Partisan nationalism and dogmatic religion are incapable of self-criticism because partisanship and dogma are marks of immaturity. It is gratifying, therefore, to find in an Indian newspaper, the *Hindu Weekly Review*, a full awareness of India's historical situation "between two cultures," and a clear appreciation of the problems which are involved. In the *Hindu* for August 30, a large book devoted to the history of Asia under the dominance of Western imperialism is discussed at some length. The reviewer speaks well of the book, as covering with great skill a long and difficult period of Asia's past, but observes in conclusion:

... it (the book, "Asia and Western Dominance," by K. M. Panikkar) has been conceived in the classical tradition of Western historiography and the grand style of the Western masters of the art, both of which presuppose a much larger agreement on facts and philosophy of a civilization than is pre-

sently visible in the Asian scene. Mr. Panikkar has an established reputation as historian, man of affairs and diplomat, has had intimate personal knowledge of the countries of Asia, has been close to the sources which decide the relations between these countries and is thus equipped to write the epitaph of Western imperialism. But an oriental or Asian culture or civilization as homogeneous and pervasive as that of Europe is the Westernized Asian's vision of the future; the absence of pan-Asianism as a fact or feeling in the centuries covered in the book deprives it of the unity which is essential to a history that is also a work of art and handicaps the author who wishes to evolve an organic story out of a mass of discrete data from several countries. It is also inevitable that an Asian author steeped in the Western tradition should betray on every page the dominance whose decay and disappearance he accepts and is prepared to record with relish.

HERE, centrally expressed, is the problem of creating a new literature and culture in India. Fundamentally, it is a problem of assimilating the best values of Western civilization and uniting them with those elements of India's ancestral culture which ought to survive in the modern world. All too often, the combination of the two lines of influence is an unattractive mixture of incompatibles rather than a synthesis of harmonizing contrasts. Gandhi, one may say, succeeded in spiritual synthesis, Nehru is valiantly attempting political synthesis, and India's scholars and learned men are busy with comparative discussions of Vedic tradition and Western sociology. The most appropriate comment, in effect to say that this is the process that is now going on. If it proceeds in a truly cosmopolitan spirit, without nationalist anxiety to be purely "Indian," and avoids uncertain imitation of the Western sort of maturity in the fields of science and technology, then we may surely hope for the flowering of a great new renaissance in the Eastern hemisphere—a renaissance that could bring new riches to all the world.

Especially interesting is the filtering process now being applied to both ancient and modern knowledge. The

following is said of a book on education:

The deep dissatisfaction with modern education, despite the reform in methodology, is so universal that one is compelled to ask whether the failure is not due to its preoccupation with the present and biological needs of man. In India, as the author rightly argues, the educational system which is an imitation of the Western system is an exotic, not having its roots in Indian Philosophy and no wonder it has not enabled its products to feel that sense of security and joy which is the outcome of an integrated development. According to the author (Dr. G. N. Kaul), "in India, man is primarily divine and his present physical and mental form is only a finite representation of his infinite stature . . . Again . . . does the author point out that "man always aspires to be what he is not. He aspires to his fullest development, which, according to the eternally accepted tenets of Indian thought of all shades, is divinity itself." . . . The author pleads for the evolution of a new school of Psychology based on this Indian view of life and he fervently believes that the world has come to a stage when a clearer understanding of this conception of life, with its message of hope, is needed.

**A** BOOK by C. Rajagopalachari, India's famous political leader, is a Vedantin tract in behalf of Hinduism, proposing that the only happiness for man lies in freedom from "the bonds of Karma, the unending chain of work and results," leading to reunion with the Supreme Spirit—*Sat*. "Enlightenment," according to C. R., "is not an intellectual state but a state of spiritual awakening which comes through moral rebuilding and is an overcoming of Maya, for it is not intellectual ignorance that blinds our vision but desires and attachments. The latter cause a wall to be raised between our understanding and the indwelling spirit." The first step toward emancipation is said to be "to develop the firm conviction that the *I* in us is entirely distinct from the body and the senses through which it functions."

A book dealing with "the Asian Revolution" is quoted as saying:

The ancient peoples of Asia are now turning to their ancestral religions with

a new hope. They realize that a cultural reintegration involves a religious reconstruction. They have become a very real force in the life and thought of the Asian people. But the modern Asian is keenly aware that religion can be a disastrous source of division within a nation and he is therefore anxious to avoid religious rivalry.

This, then, is a period of recovery for the ancient religious philosophies which have been in eclipse for so long, and of striving for cultural independence. It seems practically inevitable that this movement will exercise increasing influence throughout the world.



#### CORRECTION

Sri H. R. Vedanta Iengar writes:

An error has crept into my article "Organisation of Soviet Industry" as published in SWATANTRA of February 26, 1955. On page 18, second column, in the passage beginning with the words "A well known American economist, Seymour E. Harris, . . . has written: 'Over a period of twelve years (1928-40) individual output rose by 65% and real per capita income by 35% . . . etc.', the figures have been printed wrongly. The correct figures are 650% and 350%.

(Continued on page 14)

#### ELEMENTAL SPELL

In this sunswept hour  
Redolent of leaf and flower,  
Far away the lush green valley  
With an unflurried grace  
Bares its bosom delicately  
To the warm soporific embrace  
Of a poised infinity.

We who must wilt and cower  
Under the hard grind of humdrum life,  
The fever of evanescent loves,  
Yield to the magic of this hour  
With the spellbound leaf and flower.  
The sorcery of elements proves  
The ether for delirious strife.

Dizzy in a surge of peace immense,  
We cuddle in the arms of silence.

V. DHURANDHAR

## "... OVER A. I. R."

By M. KRISHNAN

**D**URING the first half of February I listened to few broadcasts, for I was busy with preparations for a holiday in the jungles. And during the latter half, when I was in places blessed with electricity, no receiving set was available; when I did succeed in getting hold of a radio run on a battery, the battery was needed for the jeep. However, I returned to civilization for the last three days of the month and, as a compensation for earlier lacks, was lent a very posh sort of radio, with a most intricate dial framed in chromium plate, eight valves and a dozen knobs and switches. Let me quote just half a sentence from the self-contained instruction book of this super *de luxe* model, to impress you with its performance potential—"seven tuned circuits, and a three section tuning condenser with a tuned radio frequency stage insuring maximum sensitivity and selectivity." That was the sort of the thing it was. Unfortunately, used to my own elementary set, I got hopelessly confused with this borrowed glory. Every time I turned it on, I got only Bombay, and if I tried harder, I got Melbourne, Toronto or a station which, I suspect, is Manila.

In the end, I appealed to the owner for help. But, incensed by this insult to the pride of his heart, he would only give me advice. His advice, though more colourfully worded, was to the effect that he thought that no man who was such a bloody fool that he couldn't operate this superhet had any right to indulge in views on A.I.R. programmes, or even broadcasts from Manila. It is always helpful to have outside opinion on one's critical faculties. I offer you my comments subject to the friendly remarks detailed above.



**I** HAD thought that Bombay was rather an austere sort of place in its creative expression. I don't know how I came by this impression, but it was there. Well, after listening to

Bombay so often in the past three days that impression has undergone a radical change. I heard quite a lot of delightful music from Bombay, much of it undoubtedly classical but sung in cultured and controlled voices, notable for tonal purity and rich expressiveness. I also heard the kind of music that appeals so powerfully to my plebeian senses, Bhav-geeta. These, too, were sung with a just appreciation of tonal purity and melody. I quite realise that art is not mere technical efficiency, but after listening so frequently to the music broadcast over southern stations, and now to Bombay, I do feel there is much to be said for a pleasant and well-trained voice in broadcast music.



**I** WAS no less lucky in the National Programme concerts I listened to this month. On February 5 I tuned into Kumar Gandharva's recital in the hope that, like other Gandharvas whom I had heard, this singer would treat me to light Maharashtrian music. Actually he was severely classical and Hindustani, and indulged in obscure *rags* like Malvati and Gauri-Basant (?). However, his singing was effortless, controlled and communicative and very pleasant on the ear.

The National Programme recital on February 26 was even more delightful to listen to. I have always liked Pannalal Ghosh, but have found the low, sonorous tone of his flute too dominant after the first half an hour—I mean, the music has been submerged in that particular tone of his distinctive instrument; I can only make myself clear by drawing a graphic parallel—it has been like looking at too many, dry-brush drawings, when one is apt to lose the vigour of the draughtsmanship in the vigour of the technique. This time, however, I missed nothing of Pannalal Ghosh's virtuosity. Particularly did I like his Yaman in slow tempo. It was

refreshing to tired limbs—that night I was physically utterly tired.

It was also on February 26 that I listened to the compositions of Papanasam Sivan sung by Srimathi K. Sankari Ammal from Madras. I could listen only to the first 25 minutes of this broadcast, for thereafter I switched on to Bombay (reception from which station was clearer) to listen to the National Programme. However, I heard my favourite song by this gifted composer. I have vivid recollections of hearing Papanasam Sivan sing his own compositions, some twenty years ago. I am afraid A.I.R. will not be

able to broadcast any programme of those compositions which can match that recollection.

★

I DID listen to a few more broadcasts last month but have nothing to say of them. However, I would like to add that what I have recently heard of broadcasts from Manilla (if it was Manilla) has made A.I.R. go up in my opinion. Radio Ceylon still the easier to pick up, though, in the remote countryside, and is equally popular in rural as in urban areas. It is their broadcasts of Indian cinema music that makes them so popular, of course.

### To Honour and Liberty:

#### An Invocation

By BHARATI

BRETHREN, the authorities have taken a vow to stop also your being shown the way for liberty by peaceful and lawful means. The way mentioned by us is not only beneficial to the people, but is also free from danger to the Government. But the English authorities have completely lost their sense. Afraid of those who throw bombs, they begin to strangle our Swadeshi movement. They have not understood that our movement has an adamant neck—a neck which cannot be broken even if cut by seventy crores of magical swords. Let them go their way. I have no anxiety about them. My heart burns only when I think of you. A race affected by never-ending poverty. A race which has lost its beauty. A race which is awkward to look at. A race which is clad in rags. A race which has no physical strength. A race which has no mental strength. A race which has no freedom. A race which does not realise its duty. A race which is sickly. A race which has no education. A race which has no science. A race which does not know worldly pleasures. A race which has no sculpture. A race which has no poetry. Alas! My heart burns. Are you not all of my blood? How can my mind brook to see you in this state? Is it for one day or two days? Is it one or two

persons? Brethren, have you forgotten the condition of our ancestors? Ah! Laziness yet? Internal dissensions still? Lethargy still? How are you going to live? Poor men! Disarmed men! Sickly men with short lives! Why do you style yourselves Hindus? Why should we who have no learning and sense have the dignity of being called the Aryan race? Why should we who have neither lustre nor strength nor valour nor liberty style ourselves Rama, Krishna and Arjuna and bring discredit to the names of those great men? Brethren, I will say only one word. It is doubtful whether I will have an opportunity to say it again. Therefore I prostrate at your feet and entreat you to impress this one word on your mind. That is, do not be discouraged whatever may happen. Do not forget the mother. Do not commit any unlawful deeds. Courage and determination—it is only these two which will save us. May every one do all that is possible to uplift the country. We should not refrain from doing anything, thinking that what we can do is only a little. Do not transgress just laws. Every possible effort should be made to remove unjust laws. The vow of Swadeshim should be kept up as long as there is life. Honour should be regarded as a great thing. We should always meditate on liberty. —From an old writing of Subrahmanya Bharati published 45 years ago in a journal, Suryodayam!

## "I AM GLAD TO INFORM YOU..."

By H. R. V.

EVERY year during the summer months of April-May, he was accompanying his boss to the Queen of Hill-Station and was enjoying 'paid holidays' for six to eight weeks at public expense. This was one of the few amenities which made his existence as a subordinate official on a meagre salary a little more bearable. While the rest of his fellow citizens in Bangalore puffed and sweated and wiped the perspiration from their brows and prayed for early rains, here he was 7000 feet or more above sea level, swathed in woollens and walking round the lake in Ooty or going to the Botanical Gardens after doing his daily chores of pen-pushing, quill-driving and file-pushing in the camp office. To be breathing the air of Ooty along with Rajas and Maharajas, Nawabs and Nizams, Dewans and Members of the Governor's and the Viceroy's Executive Councils gave him an exhilarating feeling of superiority over his fellow men in the plains below, and made him forget his financial status for the nonce.

But the summer of 1941 was different. He was not feeling on top of the world now. He was not feeling like a million dollars (as Wodehouse might say) this season. For the past few months he was more than ordinarily thoughtful. No, he was not worried about the way the world war was progressing. Hang it all, he did not care a rap which side won, though he dutifully wrote drafts about the urgency of promoting the Allies' war effort and similar stuff. He was intensely concerned about certain impending developments in the domestic environment. He thought and thought. At last he reconciled himself to the prospect of one more addition to the family. That would no doubt increase the strength of his family to six including himself and his patient, dutiful spouse. But it was too late to do anything about it. He remembered having read that in Germany addi-

tions to families were encouraged and subsidized by the State. Contrast this with the miserable country he was in where his modest representation for an increment in his pay had been sat upon by his boss, was pigeon-holed and was gathering dust. And yet he was obliged to make his own contribution to the war effort with his pen—was not the pen mightier than the sword and his pen mightier than the ordinary run of Secretariat pens? It was galling to be obliged to go on doing his bit behind the desk to defeat that fellow Hitler who had after all such splendid ideas about what the State should do about the population problem instead of leaving it to the concerned individuals to solve it as well as they could. This was free private enterprise with a vengeance indeed!

FOUR weeks passed. An air of resignation settled on him. At last on a fateful Wednesday morning while the Ooty sun was still struggling behind the Ooty mist, the postman handed him a letter bearing the Bangalore postmark. He recognized his nephew's handwriting on the cover. He had no doubt about the contents of the letter. He had expected the event to happen somewhere around that date. All that he cared to know was whether it was a boy or girl. Not that he was particular about which it was going to be, though he knew that he would be laying up more trouble for himself in the future if it turned out to be the latter. He slowly tore open the cover and began to read the letter. "My dear mama" the letter ran "I am glad to inform you that yesterday evening at 6 O'clock mathusri aunt gave birth to a pair of twin girls..."

His heart sank into his shoes. His head began to swim. The letter fell from his hand. A pair of twin girls! He had read occasional newspaper reports about twins, triplets, quartets (in his present state of mind he could

not say whether the correct English word was quartets or quadrupeds) being born to human beings and he had even seen the photograph of the "Dionne Quintuplets." But such phenomena occurred in far-off places. He had never imagined or dreamt in his most fantastic dream that anything on those lines could ever happen to him.

The whole day he felt queer. Everything seemed to have suddenly doubled itself in appearance in Ooty. The pen with which he did his hack-work, the ink-stand on his table, the turbaned and belted orderly who continually ran back and forth from the boss's chamber to the office with trayfuls of papers and files—all seemed to him to have become two-fold. His colleagues noticed that something had gone wrong with him and asked him why he was so absent-minded and vacant-looking and whether he had any disturbing news from home. He gave evasive answers about the Ooty air being somewhat vicious this season and about his feeling headache due to exposure the previous evening and so on.

He lay awake on his bed the whole night digesting the news conveyed by his nephew and haunted by the thought of two extra mouths where he had bargained for only one. True, he had made a representation for an advance increment. But that representation was made to his boss in this world, not to Lord Brahma in the other.

When he awoke next morning he felt somewhat more reconciled to the idea of twin offspring. He took his nephew's letter again to see the rest of its contents, especially to know how the mother was faring after this unexpected ordeal. As he read it over again, a knot appeared on his eyebrows and he muttered to himself in subdued rage—"Look at that idiot of a nephew! He says that he is 'glad to inform' me that I have begotten a pair of twins. He does not know what he is talking about. Glad indeed when two have arrived where only one was expected and would have been tolerated . . . or is my

nephew really pulling my leg and enjoying a joke at my expense?"

After a couple of days, he became more and more accustomed to the thought of his being the father of twins and felt himself equal to the embarrassment of sharing the news with one of his colleagues in whom he used to confide his private thoughts. One day he called his friend aside and handed him his nephew's letter. The friend read it and cried out his congratulations half-jestingly and half-enthusiastically. But he was cut short by the new father of twins. "None of that nonsense for me," he said. "What exasperates me is that you should be jumping to congratulate me while my idiotic nephew should be coolly writing to say that he is glad . . . Glad indeed! He and you do not seem to know your Mark Twain well enough—"Sufficient unto the day is one baby. As long as you are in your right mind, don't you ever pray for twins. Twins amount to a permanent riot . . . I never circled round the peepul tree praying for twins. And yet . . ."

THE friend replied: "Nor, I am afraid, do you know your Mark Twain well enough either. Does not Mark Twain go on to say—"And there is not any real difference between triplets and an insurrection?" Suppose triplets had been born to you instead of only twins. Or quartets or even Quins. What then? I am perfectly in order in congratulating, and your nephew quite right in feeling glad, that it is only twins and not any of the higher multiples."

(Continued from page 10)

not certainly 65% and 35%, which is nothing much to talk about for a country like Soviet Russia undergoing a process of forced industrialisation in a regimented economy. The remarkable thing is that in 12 years individual output rose by 6½ times or 650%, and per capita income by 3½ times or 350%. I have verified these figures once again with reference to the source.

## AN AMERICAN VOTARY OF INDIAN DANCE

By JAIBOY JOSEPH

THE Spartan recipe of hard work and healthful living is an invigorating staple for Miss Gina Blau, an ex-New York lawyer who has now become a votary of Bharata Natyam. For Gina the study of the 2,000 year tradition of Indian dance is a dream come true, one worth all the work and concentration required.

Gina's day is busy and intense. Up with the birds, she limbers up, dons her sari and fixes the bells on her toes as a preface to the daily dance tuition at the Indian Institute of Fine Arts, not far from the Y.M.C.A. hostel, Madras. Direction under the celebrated Bharata Natya teacher Pandanullur Chokkalinga Pillai to the syncopation of drums and veena occupies the biggest part of the morning. In the evenings she again goes through the motions of the ancient art. It all adds up to a rigorous schedule with spare hours reserved for enormous study and research. But Gina can take it as well as any local devotee of dance, because to her it is a religion. She says: "There is a correlation between Indian dance and Indian philosophy and art; in studying Indian dance one is studying an ancient culture."

Of all dances, east and west, Indian classical ballet appealed most to her because of "the strong, emotional response" it evoked. The first time Gina felt this response was when she beheld the breathtaking "Kartikaya" performed by Uday Shan-

kar who toured the United States in the thirties.

Born and bred in Manhattan, New York, Gina saw dances and dancers from the world over for whom invariably New York was the first port of call. Nevertheless, she could not bring herself to think of taking up dancing as a career. Instead she entered the New York Bar after her LLB at St. John's College. Maybe, she thought, she could be of service



Miss Gina Blau of Manhattan, a votary of Indian dance in Indian costume

to the poor and the needy by working for a legal aid society. But she just couldn't make it. True, she had legal acumen, and was full of wise saws and modern instances, but her dreams were always of dancing.

Gina did not miss opportunities to study the nuances of various types of ballet and dance. Says she: "For a while I even took lessons in Javanese dance from the virtuoso Raden Suwanto. Suwanto was a member of the East-West Association, New York, which Pearl Buck had helped to found. The Association would arrange lectures on the East and it was at one such lecture by Suwanto that I met him and persuaded him to teach me."

FROM the Javanese to the Indian dance was not a big step. Gina met Ragini Devi, the American dancer, who had successfully toured India partnered by Gopinath, and learned much from her. Ragini had just opened her dance school, the famous "Dance Theatre," on 57th Street which soon became the mecca of Indian dancing in America.

Gina was all keyed up for a visit to India, an undertaking not without sacrifice. The prospect of a nice, cosy job in a legal firm just a few blocks away from home conflicted with her ambition of journeying into the unknown in the pursuit of her dream—Bharata Natya.

Gina arrived in Madras in November 1954 and quickly joined classes.

Her teacher, pleased with swift progress, worked out choreography to suit her in set classical pieces. On the side, Gina mastered theory. In Manhattan she had bought the famous treatise of Bharata, the ancient sage of Indian dancing, "Natyasastra" or the science of dancing, as well as "Abinayadarpana" and "Tandavalakshana"—study of gestures and poses—by Nandikesvara, another ancient. With her new background of experiences, these books seemed to unfold many rich meanings. The month of December, the height of India's cultural season, found her attending numerous seminars devoted to dance.

Gina is also studying Tamil in order to understand the meanings of "padams," or snatches of songs to which the dances are set. She plans to learn Carnatic music as the music forms an integral part of the ballet. Her plans, within the means of her slender resources, also include visits to major Indian temples to synthesize her views of Indian dance, architecture, culture and painting.

Gina has evolved a personal philosophy which fits in with the tenets of Hinduism: she firmly believes that no event in the world is an accident and as such her coming to India must have a special purpose. The special purpose, as far as she can see, is the gaining of a tranquillity of mind through the fulfilment of a life-long ambition to study a much-loved art in the place of its birth.

## TWO WEEKS IN TITOLAND

*Pursuing his travels around Europe, Douglas Blanchard found his way into Yugoslavia, a land wooed by the West since Tito veered away from the Kremlin, but nonetheless still Communist-ruled.*

By DOUGLAS BLANCHARD

"FOR 1,000 years we were fighting.

For 10 years we have had real peace. See what we have done with those 10 years," said the young Communist student in Belgrade. Like all true Yugoslavia Communists, he was immensely proud of the gleaming new buildings you see everywhere in the Federal People's Republic, of the co-operative and collective farms, of the new superhighway, of the workers' committees that run their own factories and stores, of the new Yugo Hollywood just out of town, of the great new student city, of the streamlined air force and the new airlines, of the booming cities—of everything we saw.

I spent two weeks roaming around Tito's new nation. Never before have I had so many things happen to me in such a short time.

The question mark of Europe—that's what they've been calling Yugoslavia in 1954. One week it looked as though Tito was going to climb on the NATO bandwagon. A few days later he was making nasty remarks about U. S. anti-Communists. Moscow was wooing him with ever more attractive offers. The U. S. mission was doing ditto with more aid.

Yugoslavia is a big prize in the bingo game of the cold war. Its people are the toughest fighters in the world. If you want cold figures to prove it, just look at the record of the last war. Eleven per cent. of the population gave up their lives, compared with less than one per cent. in Britain, less than one half of one per cent. in Canada and about one-eighth of one per cent. in the U. S. Yet she tied up 14 German divisions, kept fighting when the odds seemed hopeless, finally drove the Germans and Italians from her soil and today is more powerful than ever before—whether you look at her

from the military or economical or numerical point of view. If she comes into NATO, the European defence of the Western world will be complete. Of course, the big question is: To what extent is Yugoslavia really part of the Western world?

Nobody knows all the answers to the complex Yugoslav puzzle. Not even Tito, because he came from only one of the six countries that make up the federal republic. Each of these countries has an atmosphere, a culture, problems and outlook of its own. There is Serbia, stretching along the Danube and Sava rivers, with its almost 7,000,000 citizens speaking a Slav language of their own. There is Alpine Slovenia in the north that looks like a chunk of old Austria—which it was up until a few years ago. There's Croatia with a German-looking landscape around Zagreb and a fjord-dotted coast like Norway's along the sunny Adriatic sea. Down south there is Montenegro with its 1,000 years of fighting for independence. There is Bosnia-Herzegovina, rich in forests and minerals and lakes and mountains. And there are lesser little countries.

THE whole conglomeration is ruled as a federal republic but each of the six people's republics has its own capital and its own government, its own little patriotism, its own language and traditions. There are plenty of Communist bureaucrats in Belgrade today who know less about Montenegro than I do because they've never even been there. There are plenty of Slovenes who know less about Serbia than I do, because they've never even seen the place. So the next time you hear some foreign correspondent talking about Yugoslavia as though it was a simple unit, take what he says with a grain of salt. Nobody knows Yugoslavia in all its details. The experts in Belgrade and its university are

### PATRUDU'S

# "BALASANJEEVINI"

Best Remedy for Infantile LIVER & SPLEEN Disorders

For free advice consult:

DR. PILLA PAPIAH PATRUDU & BROS.,

19, South Mada St., Mylapore, MADRAS-4. Phone: 85254.

Branch:

7, Sarangapani Koll East St., KUMBAKONAM.

(Enclose 2 Annas Stamps for Free Advice)

the first to admit it—off the record.  
**Policy Aimed at the Young**

That's why it's really a miracle in nation building Tito is achieving today. Maybe the old folks are still divided. But youth is being moulded in the same pattern in modern schools all the way from the Alps down to the Albanian border. You see the bronzed sailors from the fast-growing Yugoslav navy in mountain villages far from the sea. National air force bases are everywhere. The army is a model of patriotic indoctrination. It is said to be one of the biggest publishing enterprises in the nation. Cultural centres run by the party are everywhere. The sleek new Communist party buildings are in every town and city. The radio blares forth patriotic talks even in the secluded lovers' lanes of Belgrade's big Kalemegdan park, even in the rural bases, even on the secluded beaches for Adriatic sun worshippers, even at some soccer games.

**N**OBODY knows just how united the new federal republic is under Tito today. But there seems little doubt it is going to be solidly united with a national outlook under the Communist party when the school children and recruits of today grow up. That is how Communist planners operate. They aim at the citizens of tomorrow.

When you get off the plane at Belgrade airport the first thing you notice is a long row of big apartment buildings crowded with boys and girls—that is student city built by the students themselves. Next thing you notice is a series of vast concrete skeletons along the city's front doorway. Said my driver: "That's the big new government place they started to build—and then quit. That's the big new hotel they started to build—and quit." And so on. It was going to be New Belgrade—something like Stalin Allee in East Berlin—a showplace for the world. Today those vast ghost structures are the greatest eyesore found in any city in the world; a sort of showplace in reverse.

Everybody seems to have a different explanation—sinking sand, hard

times after the break with Moscow, a bigger bite than the Communist planners knew how to chew, sabotage. No matter what explanation you accept, the spectacle makes you wonder about the whole Tito set-up. The U. S. colony in Belgrade has a word for it—"slovenliness."

In theory, Yugoslavia is run from Bgrade. In theory, the seat of power is in the imposing Parliament building. In theory, it is the truest democracy in the world because law-making and executive powers are united in the federal people's assembly. It consists of two houses. One is the federal council, the majority of whose deputies are elected by ballot under universal suffrage. The rest are appointed from the six people's republics (the countries that make up Yugoslavia). The other house is the council of producers. Industrial workers elect some of these members, farmers others, handicraft workers still others.

"So you see, we have both political and economic democracy—we have freedom such as is found nowhere else in the world," said my Communist instructor.

"Baloney," I said. "Where's your opposition party?"

This started a long argument. The gist of his claim was that the workers elect their own factory councils who decide the policy of the Communist party so all that was necessary was to have the electors endorse the party. What could be more simple? I gave up. Like East Germany, Yugoslavia is a land of political make-believe. Tito runs the show—and everybody should know it by now.

#### Immense Riches Waiting

**H**E has some marvellous material to work with. The people labour hard for little. I don't think there is any other country in the world with such rich natural resources, having regard to its area. I saw rivers with immense water power potentials. Beside those rivers are some of the richest bauxite deposits in the world. So Yugoslavia should become one of the world's greatest producers of aluminium. Here the raw

material and the necessary power are side by side.

A visitor is astounded by the mineral riches of this newest and oldest land. Antimony—the richest in Europe. Mercury—potentially the richest in the world. Lead, zinc—some of the richest concentrations anywhere. Copper—already second place in Europe and the surface only scratched. Cobalt, tungsten, oil, gold, silver, asbestos, magnesium—to hear the engineers talk you'd think Yugoslavia was the Eldorado of tomorrow.

"Under American enterprise this Bosnia-Herzegovina area would give any mining district in the world a beating," a U. S. geologist from Pennsylvania told me in the mountains between Sarajevo and the Adriatic. "Under the present regime there's no telling just how fast it will be developed. But the riches are here waiting to be exploited. If Communism does the job properly, it will have nothing to worry about in economic matters in the future. But from what I can see in my short time here the Communists are too short-sighted and shiftless to be good promoters. What a clean-up Wall Street would make here if it had the chance."

That's just what the Communist students and intellectuals say they're out to prevent. They're in no hurry about minerals. They'll be just as good 40 years from now. Their exploitation is going to be handled by the people themselves through special committees of workers, say the Communists. And there is uranium in those mountains. It comes first. Yugoslav scientists are doing their own atomic research.

**I**F you want to take the grin off a Communist's face, just mention the farmers. They form the big rub for the Belgrade bureaucrats. They want to keep their own land. They want to live their own lives. They are as stubborn and independent as any Ontario back-concession Hiram. So Belgrade has had to backtrack on collectivization. It is going in more for co-operatives. I visited one at Saraj down in Macedonia with trim little whitewashed cottages in neat rows and a model barnyard and

farm buildings. Marketing and buying of supplies are done by co-operatives run by the state.

These peasants have their own homes and a bit of land. But there are big state-operated collectives, too. These grow large scale crops and bees. They have dairies and cotton production and communal living and are models of efficiency.

The trouble is, the average peasant doesn't give a hoot about efficiency. He likes to live his own life the same way as his forefathers, no matter how lazy and shiftless. That is how the Communists explain the slowdown in the five-year agricultural programme. I have an idea that those dissenting farmers are merely expressing in the economic sphere what a large proportion of Yugoslavs feel in the political sphere, namely, that there's more to life than any bureaucracy can give, no matter how well planned.

Walk down any Yugoslav street and things don't seem much different from any street in a capitalist country. Sure, old buildings are run down in most places and the poverty is appalling. But that is true of a lot of other European areas where there is not a trace of Communism. My Communist guides are quick to point out that the war wiped out about half of the country's industry, more than half of its agriculture, practically all of its mines, most of its railways and bridges, ruined its roads, destroyed tens of thousands of houses for a total war damage of \$47,000,000,000.

It took billions of U. S. dollars to pull Germany out of a much less appalling fix. Yugoslavia has had to pull herself out by her own bootstraps in the face of the hatred and hostility of the most heavily armed nation on earth—Soviet Russia, on which the whole Yugoslav economy used to depend. What have I to say to that? the Communists asked me. To which I replied: "It's a great country, all right. You're a great people. But I haven't seen anybody laugh here in two weeks."

What does Yugoslav Communism mean to the man in the street?

March 5 1955

Here's what they tell me. The people as a whole own all the means of production in industry, transportation, communications, commerce, banking, all minerals and forests—just about everything except some private agricultural holdings and some small individual handicraft shops. Go into any medium or large sized store and you find the place is run by the employees themselves with a "director" in charge who bows to the wishes of his lowliest hired hand as expressed in the managing committee. Maybe that system is good for the underdog in the merchandising business, but it gives the customer the short end of the deal. I usually found I got better service—and lower prices—by dropping around to the local farmers' street market.

You can offer no greater insult to a "director" than to call him "boss." I did that to a woman in charge of the best hotel I stayed at. She gave me a real bawling out and explained she was in the hands of her staff who gave her instructions. Which was just a lot of eyewash. She was the bossiest boss I've ever seen and that's why her hotel was so well run. She was a holy terror to every lazy and shiftless underdog in the place.

Sure, Tito is the boss. Talk to the men and women in the street and you find the big boss, Tito, has become a sort of remote mystery.

But he knows his armed forces. They get top priority and the old-time partisan fighters have gone highbrow. There are 15 schools now for the training of officers, four military academies, 25 other military schools and several indoctrination centres. Since the break with Russia a whole new armament industry has been built up. About \$2,000,000,000 has been spent on plants alone. And a new fleet is being rushed to completion in the naval shipyards you see along the Adriatic coast. You see military training everywhere. Army officers and airmen look as keen as any in the world. Scientific research centres in every university and city are giving a new look to the tough fighters who broke Hitler's back. Their sons are just as tough—and

infinitely better equipped. That's why Yugoslavia will be a marvellous prize for NATO—if it can get her—NNP

★

### "Most Fascinating Man" Hemingway

NEW YORK CITY. An American journal asked Marlene Dietrich: Who is the most fascinating man you have ever known?

She answered: Fascinating men! There are many to think about. It was many years ago on a transatlantic crossing on the Ile de France. I had come down to the dining salon to join a dinner party. As I approached the table the men rose and I was offered a chair, but I noticed that there were 12 people in the party. "Oh," I exclaimed, "I'm the 13th. You will excuse me if I don't join you, I'm superstitious about 13 at dinner, I'll join you later." I turned to leave, but my path was blocked by a large, trim man, who said: "Excuse me, I don't mean to intrude. But I'd be glad to be the fourteenth." That was Ernest Hemingway.

That was in 1934, and for 20 years we have been good friends. We do not see each other often, but we write, and his letters are funny and sad and compassionate and sometimes so overwhelming I could die. It is a great pity I must be selfish about them and cannot share them with the world, so wonderful are they. I do keep them in a fireproof strongbox in my apartment, for they are the only possessions that have real value for me. Sometimes I re-read them and enjoy them the way you enjoy certain classics, no matter how often you have read them.

For example, I spoke to him on the telephone just a few weeks ago. I live in New York, and he lives on a lovely old farm outside Havana, so the only way we can chat is by telephone. Ernest was alone in the house; he had finished writing for the day, and being a man who loves good conversation and treats it as an art, he wanted to talk. At one point

March 5 1955

SWATANTRA

21

he asked me what work plans I had, if any. I told him that I had just had a very lucrative offer from a Miami night club but I was undecided about whether to take it. "Why the indecision, daughter?" he said.

"Well," I answered, "I feel I should work, I should not waste my time, it's wrong. I think one appearance in London and one a year in Vegas is quite enough. However, I'm probably just pampering myself, so I've been trying to convince myself to take the offer." There was silence for a moment and I could visualize Ernest's beautiful face poised in thought. "Daughter," he said, "don't do what you sincerely don't want to do. Never confuse movement with action." Are those not words to carry with you forever? "Never confuse movement with action." In five words he gave me a whole philosophy.

That's the wonderful thing about Ernest—he kneels himself into his friend's problems. I know this is not good English, but I hope it conveys my feeling about his friendship. I honestly think that if more people had friends like Ernest there would be fewer analysts.

Ernest does this with the generosity of affection and knowledge, and with a powerful force that comes from a rare combination he possesses—intelligence of brain with intelligence of heart; to my mind, these are the ingredients of real courage.—P. G. Krishnayya.

★

### BIRDS VERSUS AIRCRAFT

WHAT can an air crew do when a bird as vast as an albatross is sitting on the runway? Christopher Serpell, BBC correspondent in the United States, said in a recent broadcast that the United States Air Force, is suffering from albatross trouble. It started during the last war when the Air Force developed Midway Island in the Pacific as a base. The albatross had had the same idea many years earlier and after long ocean flights used Midway for courtship and nesting. The albatross ignored the

huge alien metal birds and their pilots but the pilots could not ignore the Wandering Albatross, impressively named *Diomedea Exulans*, and now rechristened by them "mollymawk" or "gooney bird." They watched his majestic flight, with its twelve-foot wing spread, and were amused by his waddling gait on land, his grunts and squawks of greeting to his lady love and the clumsy dance with which he wooed her. The female albatross was improvident and had a habit of depositing a single chalky white egg just anywhere and, said Serpell, "G.I.s. were sometimes told off to remove the eggs from the runways and place them in the rough." Lately the entertainment value of the gooney birds has worn thin while their nuisance value has increased and, said Serpell, "They loaf about the airfield in an insolent manner, and their familiarity with aircraft has become contempt. They perch on incoming planes before the planes stop moving, and they stay there until after the take-off. Occasionally they crash into windscreens or propellers to the great danger of the pilots. And now jet planes are using the base, and someone has thought of the appalling possibility of a gooney bird being sucked into their intake: it's believed this would make the aircraft explode."

The Air Force has decided that the birds must go, a decision that the birds themselves are slow to appreciate. They cannot be shot as half Midway is a wild life refuge. Naturalists have suggested that the Air Force should transplant the entire colony by means of an air lift but admit at the same time that birds with a twelve-foot wing spread hardly need such assistance and their removal might well provide a splendid test of their homing instinct. The first measure to be tried is to destroy all eggs laid in the vicinity of the air strip. If this has no effect there are plans afoot to use electric current to shock them off the runways. "God save thee, ancient Air Force man, from the fiends that plague thee thus; why look'st thou so? With voltage low, I shot the albatross," parodied Serpell.

## SPRING IN THE COUNTRY

By M. KRISHNAN

THE great mango in whose shade I rest must be half a century old, perhaps a century old. It towered as loftily as it does today, and its outflung limbs were as robust and massive, thirteen years ago when I knew it first. Redundant, dark foliage still covers its crown, and its shade is cool and deep. How much have I changed in these years and how little this tree!

The sap still runs strongly in its aged, thick limbs, renewing the vigour and green of the shoots each year. There are no flowers, but soon, very soon, they will be unfurled. Spring opens in these parts somewhere about the first week of March, and by then the classical vernal banners, the profuse, yellow panicles of flowers, will be spread across the tree.

I know this intellectually, but how remote and hopeless the idea of spring seems just now! Only this mango, green in its maturity, and the stone well beyond the reach of its limbs, redeem the charred desolation about me. Every tree on the hill-side is bare and black, the grass is turned to ashes and the very earth is scorched and dark. The forest fires that raged across the outer hills last night, devouring the dry underbrush and suffusing the sky with a hot, angry red, have passed this way recently. You cannot know what desolation is till you have been on a Deccan hill-slope scorched by fire.

However, it is not only by intellect that you may know that spring will be here next week; you may perceive it emotionally. Beyond the hump of the farthest hill, in a patch licked even blacker by the flames, you may see a breath-taking proclamation of hope and vernal joy. There, two stunted trees grow side by side, their gnarled, misshapen branches black and groping upward, leafless and burnt. And from their swollen tips hang the most gracious and opulent flowers

one can see, great cups of pure, rich yellow with hearts of burnished gold. Those are yellow silk-cotton trees, earliest and loveliest of spring heralds. Few trees can stun one's senses so with the sheer, surprising beauty of their bloom.

But they are far away, beyond the hill and unseen. The mango above me is still in dark leaf and only a certain warmth and unrest in the dust-laden air tells of the coming spring. I can hear a koel somewhere in the tree—it has not yet found its voice and is stuttering incoherently. A thirsty jackal comes sneaking up, slinks down the steps of the well, and drinks. Suddenly he cocks his ears, bounds out and scurries away. It was not I that scared him, for I lay still and thick as a log, and am sure he never saw me.

WHAT sent him packing was the girl arriving with her brass water-pot. She, too, has not seen me. I like her free gait and the way she holds herself, and the supple young-strength of her body. A fine upstanding girl, and not bad-looking at all, now that I can see her face. I am no admirer of pretty delicacy. Give me grace with strength. This girl is quite near now, and I can see how superbly she is made. Rounded, clean limbs, not too frail a waist, and a proud set to her head and the heavy knot of hair. Her face isn't pretty, nor handsome, but there is charm enough in the frank eyes, the firm young line of jaw and cheek and the wide, up-curved mouth.

It is as I think over these things that it occurs to me, all at once, that it is the old tree that is still young, not I. I wonder if that is quite true, and as I am wondering the girl turns around and sees me. She almost drops her pot in her surprise, then puts it down and comes straight up to me.

"Hallo!" she says, "When did you come?"

I get up awkwardly from the earth,

handicapped by the numbness in a cramp-gripped foot and the dead leaves clinging to my clothes.

"Don't you know me? Why, you've clean forgotten me!" she says, not in reproach but as a matter of fact.

I can't place her, but it is only my foot that has gone to sleep; my logical brain still functions. In a split second I have reasoned out that this girl is probably twenty-two or so and that she must, therefore, have been seventeen five years ago when I left this place for good. This, however, does not help me. Even at gawky seventeen this youthful ebony Venus must have been quite easy to remember, and I just can't place her. I have met so many people here during the past few days who remembered me circumstantially, and asked after my domestic welfare with a polite display of detail, but, I am ashamed to confess, I had often only the haziest recollections of them. However my gallantry comes to my rescue, automatically.

"As if I can ever forget you!" I hear myself replying, in just the right tone of protest.

"Then tell me who am I?"

An unfair question, manifestly, and one that betrays the asker's immaturity and tactlessness. But luckily she answers it herself, before I can.

"Don't you remember your goatherd, Thippaga? Don't you remember his younger sister who used to take your goats grazing when Thippaga couldn't, for some reason? I am that younger sister."

Of course, I do remember. I have very clear recollections of Thippaga—a fine lad and an excellent goatherd. And I have no less vivid memories of a terrible little girl with a fuzzy mop and a serene indifference to her charges that used to take the goats out, when her brother was indisposed. I had always suspected her of stealing the soaked green gram rations of my milkers.

How idiotic of me not to have known this girl, but even now, even after her announcement of identity, I can see no resemblance to that lean, lazy little deputy goatherd. But strangely enough, I feel suddenly at ease.

"What a big, fine girl you have grown into!" I remark, sitting down on the rim of the well. "Naturally I couldn't spot you."

"I grew up on your bread."

That is mainly a conventionally polite remark, and partly comment on my having forgotten her—not at all a literal expression of gratitude. But I feel embarrassed and awkward once more. And before I know it, I have said, "No, not at all! It was the green gram."

LUCKILY she seems to miss the allusion altogether. We talk of this and that, and make enquiries about our respective families. Everyone, we tell each other, is doing fine, just fine. Only, Thippaga is married and has two daughters, and, of course, she too is married and has a six-month old child, a boy. I am even more surprised to hear of Thippaga's fatherhood than this last bit of news. However, I hide my surprise. I get up from the well, for it is now time to leave. In half an hour I am to leave this place, and resume my travels.

"You are staying with the big people, aren't you?" she asks.

I reply that I am, and then she wants to know when I will be free, in the evening, so that she and Thippaga can call on me with their children, to show them to me. I explain that I am leaving in half an hour, but that the next time I visit the place I will surely meet her husband, and son, and Thippaga's family—I intend that sincerely. However, she seems disappointed; she's really keen on my seeing her son.

Things are not made easier by the fact that in my ignorance of the language I have said "young" instead of "child" and she persists in harping on the word—"But I must show you my young."

I search furtively in my trouser pockets for the two-rupee note which I know is there, but cannot find it. Instead, I discover an eight anna bit and three annas in loose change. That is much too little, but I tell myself it is the sentiment that matters,

not the money, and hand over the coins to her.

"I'm sorry I have no money on me just now, but please accept this and buy your . . . your son . . . some little thing with it." I have, by now, remembered the right word for "son."

She is touched by the gesture, by my measly attempt at amends.

"Do you know, I used to cheat you regularly? I used to eat the green gram and then swear the goats did," she says in a penitent, small voice.

"Green gram is excellent stuff," I reply lightly, then bid her a formal good-bye and walk away. It is only after I have walked half a mile that I find the two-rupee note in my trouser pocket, just where it had been.

I DISLIKE psychological explanations, but I'm afraid there's one here. I believe I would have found that note at once, had green gram never been mentioned.

#### RETURN

TIME and again we come back to this spot,  
Familiar grass roots holding to the earth  
And vulnerable stone.

Over and again, though we have thought  
To find new worlds of estimate and fact,  
We stand once more where trees have yearly  
stretched

Their patient roots, feeding and being fed.

We pierce the upper air, feeling light-headed,  
Venturesome and free.

Devise a way to breathe when breath is gone,  
To see, when darkness strikes across our eyes.  
Daring we are, defiant and supreme!

Until the cycle ends, the heart rebels,  
The body aches to stand erect, or kneel  
Where moss is heavy on a bank of stone,  
And earth demands a microscopic part  
Of every life, before it pays in full  
The fragile bounty of fertility.

M. C. S.

#### SONNET

YESTERDAY I watched an elephant die  
On a crossing where bullocks and cars pass by;  
They seemed like insects in his small eye  
Assessing the trade they hoped so soon to ply.  
But suddenly they fled before his cry,  
Once and again once; miles of agony  
Worked along those roadway nerves till sky  
Re-echoed laughter trumpeted on high.

Enduring five hours he kept his ivory  
Pointed above, then let his body lie  
On its first bed, pillowing a fly  
Inside the vacant head. So must I  
Send my pain through the earth one day or die  
Like an ant, incidentally.

IRENE COATES

## HEAVY WEATHER ABOUT A PICTURE POST CARD

By ESSEN

IT happened one spring morning. The kannas had blossomed profusely. The marigolds provided an exquisite relief to the verdure of the garden. The sparrows chirped. All seemed well with the world. Gopalan the do-gooder sauntered in with a smile on his face and a sheaf of papers almost bursting the seams of his shirt pocket. I became defensively suspicious of the blighter's intentions. I knew of Gopalan's wide range of both honorary and remunerated occupations. He had been many things over a cycle of years. But I had not associated him among other things with Insurance. Nothing destroys the serenity of a Sunday morning more than a visitation by an insurance man who opens out his elegant brochures and talks his head off about quadruple benefits, college policies and child deferred insurance. In fact, when I first heard of the "child deferred policy" from an enterprising agent, I screamed that nothing better could happen to India than for children to be deferred and I was glad to hear that an insurance company had made a policy of it—till disillusion waited round the corner and I realised I had only embarrassed the agent by my ill-timed neo-Malthusian zeal.

To go back to Gopalan, my fears about his sheaf of papers were ill-founded. What I suspected to be insurance prospectuses were in fact an innocuous bundle of horoscopes. Being one of those modern editions of the horoscope-scattering fraternity of busybodies, he also carried photographs of the boys and girls concerned and these interesting likenesses of post-card-size formed appropriate schedules to the horoscopes he so purposefully dispensed. I had mentioned to Gopalan a week earlier that a young man of my acquaintance was matrimonially inclined. Here was Gopalan, a mobile

clearing-house of horoscopes of eligible prospects, come over to hand me the horoscope and photograph of his first cousin's daughter. I thanked Gopalan for his promptness in delivering the goods and tucked away the horoscope and photograph in my middle-sized pocket-book. The same evening I went to my astrologer and handed him the horoscope Gopalan had given me—for comparison with that of the boy which my astrologer had in his possession already. The photograph I retained in my pocket book. Astrologers as a race are not interested in photographs—except of course when they publish their own alongside of advertisements. My astrologer was particularly distrustful of photographs. He was so zealous a votary of astrology that he would not like any other consideration to prevail over occult factors. The aspects, the triangles, the benefic and malefic conjunctions should in his opinion be the sole determinants of marriage alliances. A photograph of a pretty girl is apt to predispose parties in her favour and if the horoscopes did not match, the parties sometimes steam-roll over astrological objections and get on with the alliance. So that it is natural that my astrologer should develop a repugnance to photographs and treat them as the devil's invention. I therefore took care to delink the photograph from the horoscope and retain the former in my pocket book. Pray do not get impatient with my pedestrian manner of elucidating a straightforward act of mine—in fact I wonder if I have succeeded in elucidating it to this day to the satisfaction of the only quarter where elucidation is material. Kindly therefore bear with me.

I forgot all about the pocket-book and its interesting contents. The evening following, my wife Neela was getting ready to attend one of those all-the-year-round benefit perform-

ances. The tickets for this had been dumped on us a week previous by an importunate and noisy deputation of girls. They did not give either of us a chance to shove a word in edgewise. They tore off two tickets and were entering our names on the counterfoils and were thanking us for allowing ourselves to be robbed, before I feebly muttered something about not being in station on the date of the show. They had heard all this and similar dodges before and were not disconcerted. In fact, when they left, they had hinted to us not to be ashamed of the customary evasions which formed a part of the defensive mechanism of these occasions. We were so used to being completely vanquished in these ticket-dumping campaigns that between Neela and I we had decided to rehash the stale and obsolete excuses about prior engagements, illness at home and expecting friends for tea at the precise hour of the show. We are still hoping our combined resources would shortly hit upon something effective to deal with these youthful blackmailers. While I fiddled with the tickets that were thus handed in, Neela rubbed it into me that but for her I should have just grinned, looked stupid and let myself in for those 25 rupee tickets against the 5 rupee ones she had so diligently compounded with the girls for and saved the family from financial ruin. There is a wide and colourful range of ideas on what would save the family from ruin and who saves it but I have always deferred to Neela's very clear opinions on the "Whats" and the "whos" in these matters. To come back to the tickets, I opened my pocket book and extracted the tickets for the show.

**A** LONG with the tickets came the picture post-card I had left there the day previous. The card dropped on the floor with the photograph side in full horizontal view. Neela had one good look at it and picked it up. She turned it over as if she expected the blank side to contain the name, address and affectionate greetings of the girl. She stared at the picture and then at me. She repeated this gruelling performance with her

X-ray eyes. I am not much of a brilliant conversationalist at the best of times. At this tense moment I started some disjointed twaddle about horoscopes and Gopalan. It was obvious she was not hearing me. I might have spared myself the incoherent explanation that followed. Neela observed acidly that it was lucky the picture post-card was dropped in our own drawing room. I might have dropped it in a public place. She said she did not expect me to behave like an overgrown college boy carrying film star pictures about me. I tried to say the picture was that of Gopalan's niece and not that of a film star. She was not going to stand feeble interruptions. She said "After a quarter century of married life, a middle-aged person like you must know better than carry picture post-cards of young girls in your pockets. I can understand a youngster doing it." I said boldly "I did not do it in my youth and if I did you would not have tolerated it." "Perhaps that is why you have started it in the middle age" she retorted with warmth. But it was important to get back to the origin of things and I tried to give it a fresh start. "You know Gopalan—he brought the picture along with his niece's horoscope." "I know Gopalan, don't I," Neela interposed pertly, "at any rate sufficiently to know that he is the sort that might be annexing horoscopes to picture post-cards of girls he carries in order to give it a veneer of respectability. I suppose he inducted you in this silly pastime." This seemed quite the limit in uncharitable constructions. I continued to offer battle. "Look, this is very unfair, you know Gopalan has brought about a dozen marriages in the last five years. Besides this, he also carries boys' pictures with their horoscopes in his pocket. You can't challenge the decency of his intentions." She was resourceful. "I suppose that makes his blind even more effective." I was not going to collapse. I held my ground. "You can come with me to the astrologer. You can see the horoscope I left there which came along with this picture." I shouted, but immediately felt my throat drying up. I remembered the

astrologer knew nothing of the picture or my detaching it from the horoscope and he might prove an embarrassing witness. Neela reminded me of the novel written by a woman novelist we both had read. John never spent late evenings at his club because his wife would not let him. But on club day he decided to defy the better half by staying on for cocktail and dance and came home at 10 a.m. next morning with a headache. With a feeling of hot coals heaped on his eyes, he was not particularly inventive and started a faltering explanation. Mrs. John declined to encourage him and said "John, you need not trouble to tell lies." Remonstrated John, "Nothing of the kind. I am telling you the bald truth." She replied calmly, "You are a liar. All men are liars." This was too much; he was not going to allow an indictment of the masculine race to go unchallenged. "What do you mean?" he shouted with warmth. She rushed to her table and brought a sheaf of telegrams. "I waited for you till 8 p.m. and thought you might have taken the occasion to visit one of your friends." She said with biting sarcasm "I sent telegrams to four of them asking if you were there. And here you have the replies." All the telegrams said "Yes, John is here"—from Bristol, from Southampton, from Leeds and from Manchester. John's eyes were wet with tears of gratitude to friends who could stand by him this way—who could take the risks of being found lying to save

him. Of course every friend knew the type of wife John had been blessed with and was not going to let him down on so critical an occasion. All the same, poor John was silenced by the sheaf of telegrams that provoked so sweeping an indictment from his wife. Neela had a fly-paper memory for all the drivel she ever read which can be annoying at times. I asked Neela "Wherefore the comparison—particularly when you were not the type Mrs. John was?" But then her point was that the story contained an interesting unmasking of masculine falsehoods. "Please do not throw some women novelists' trash at me" I pleaded.

The next day I sent for Gopalan and asked him to bring his niece to our place—in order finally to hammer the nonsense from Neela's head. Gopalan obliged. The niece was a spare-built girl of not very considerable stature and my wife took an instant liking to her—though she told me afterwards to my alarm that the photograph made her out to be very different. She bestirred herself about the marriage proposal of the girl and took a leading part in fixing it up. In three months the wedding came off. The girl is today blessed with a small family—and our wishes are that it stayed small.

Since then however I have firmly declined to carry picture post cards of girls with or without horoscopes attached in pocket books. Marriages are undoubtedly worth promoting—but without imperilling such married happiness as still obtains in this world.

## G. O. M. OF TAMIL

By V. SUBRAMANIAN

**D**OCTOR Swaminathier was twice blest; he was blest with a great and kind teacher and with loyal and talented students. This in part accounted for his achievements and their recognition.

His teacher Meenakshisundaram Pillai was a great scholar in the true Tamil tradition. His copious output

of Sthalapuranas, would have long ago been forgotten. Even his deep erudition in what were known as Tamil classics in his time might have impressed only his generation. But his kindness to his student Swaminathier made him live in the pages of a well documented if not so well arranged biography. To Swaminathier his teacher was a very great poet and very great scholar, besides being his kind guru. The first he was not and even his erudition was

severely limited by his being born before his student Swaminathier re-discovered and re-edited the great old classics of Tamil. But the most exaggerated imagery of his student is bare truth as regards his kindness to his students, and in particular to Swaminathier. One can see from what Swaminathier says about him, with characteristic restraint, that he was a great *kulapathi*.

To many of us, the indefatigable scholar Swaminathier was made a warm human personality mainly through his short essays and reminiscences, which appealed in *Kalai-magal*. If Iyer had been constantly kept before the Tamil public then as now—as few retiring scholars have had the good fortune to be—without any high pressure propaganda, this again is mainly due to his talented student, K. V. Jagannathan.

My memory of Swaminathier is made up of a few occasions, when I heard him preside and talk in college meetings. I received a mild shock when the old man wanted to know the caste of the student who brought him drinking water—for my mental image of him was somehow that of a very modern sophisticated college professor. I learnt only later that he was as far away from it as the musty manuscripts he collected.

It was as well that he had limitations—both natural as well as self-imposed. His lack of a working knowledge of Sanskrit and English, his utter lack of interest in the political turmoil (exhibitions of which gave mild shocks to quite a few) and his frequent refusals to stand up before insolent might (he was averse to having Bharati's congratulations to him read aloud)—all these probably were limitations imposed by his circumstances. To these he added some of his own making. He curbed his natural musical instincts—to devote his energies entirely to Tamil. He rarely used his skill in versification—a rather difficult thing for any Tamil scholar of those days.

All these saved both his time and energy and conserved them for the great task he had set for himself.

He achieved, single-handed, what nobody has achieved in Tamil literary history. The great Pope could recover only a portion of an old classic. C. W. Thamotharam Pillai added probably two to our stock. But Iyer has recovered at least a dozen major classics besides a large number of minor ones, portions of others and single stanzas. One cannot give the name of any scholar of the European renaissance who came near this gigantic achievement.

Of his patient labours he has given a vivid account in some of his short autobiographical essays. He planned to go to Tinnevely to collect manuscripts. On his way to the station he met with an accident by the turning of his cart. He just went on—probably his orthodoxy was less strong than his love of Tamil. His searches in the houses of old pandits in Tinnevely were fruitless. Disheartened he finally asked a pandit in Alwar *Tirunagari* whether he had any more. Yes; he had; but they were with his father-in-law with whom he was not on speaking terms. The old scholar would not be baffled so easily. Could not the pandit forget the old misunderstanding for the sake of Tamil? The pandit reluctantly went out to his father-in-law. Meanwhile Nammalwar's image was being taken out in procession and came that way. The old man prayed to the great saint who had brought into Tamil the Vedas. Would he not get him back the old Tamil classics? The procession passed and the moon shone forth and lo! there came the old pandit bearing some further manuscripts and on top of them was one called "The song of the lily" (*Mullaipattu*). The 'lily' that flowered in the moonlight brought tears of joy to the eyes of the old scholar.

Iyer's life was full of such labours. The reward came to him in the discovery of old classics and to us the reward is even more in the spirit of the classics the spirit of a carefree, strong simple people who had none of the inhibitions that a later age had come to associate with the Tamils.

## A Short Story

# DEBRIS

Suddenly he had opened his eyes and said . . . "You were imagining me dead, weren't you?"

By A. BHADRAGIRI

"WHY do you plague me so?" she had wanted to say to her dead father, but she couldn't get the words out; and with a scream she had woken up. Why had this dream, unvarying in its detail every time it occurred, suddenly come to possess her from the time it had become clear to her that she wanted back her once rejected lover?

She flung herself out of the bed and walked out of her room into the central hall. She went up to the foot of the stairs in the corner. This was where, in her dream, she was telling Anil that she was his—now, as her father was dead and no longer needed her. As she said it there had been a scraping noise on the stairs and she had sharply turned to find the figure of her dead father at the turning, tall, thin, gaunt, with his grey hair and wasted features, his lips parted in a mirthless grin. And she had tried to ask him, "Why do you plague me so?"

She started walking up the stairs; but after she went up a few steps a queer uneasiness gripped her and she walked down to the foot of the stairs and switched on the lamp lighting the stairs; and started going up again. She stood uncertainly for a moment at the turning, looking at a large portrait of her father on the wall, went up to the landing and into her father's room which she had not entered for the past few months since he had died. The place was dusty with cobwebs at the corners of the ceiling and with a faint smell of medicines. She went up to the large bed and sank down upon the sofa near it in which she had sat for interminable hours watching the old man, reading out to him when he would

have anything read out to him, and ever ready to fulfil his slightest need.

He had been ill for years with short periods of comparative health; and the major part of her life during these years had been spent in that close and confined atmosphere. It was during this period that she had met Anil; and they had found that they needed each other. But she knew from the beginning that she could never marry him.

Yet she could never bring herself to tell him that she could never belong to him. She knew that the old man would not live if she left him. He wanted her like a selfish child who wanted his mother all for himself. He had even become intolerant of Anil and had become very till whenever Anil came to visit her until she was forced to meet him without the old man's knowledge. And, she couldn't explain it to herself, she had come to need his need of her. But there were periods when she had resented her father's possession of her, periods of violent reaction. And when Anil came into her life, she had for a while thrown herself upon him with a strength of love derived from suffering and had bound him to her. But the initial phase of her love had not lasted long; it was followed on her part by an attitude including the extremes of torturing neglect and poignant tenderness. But she could never let go of Anil for he provided her certain vital compensations.

This uncertain relationship could not last long. It came on a certain afternoon when the old man was asleep and she was lying in Anil's arms completely oblivious of everything except his arms round her.

The old man started coughing and the cough broke the spell. Anil had got up and stood before her. His frame was quivering with an uncontrollable feeling and he was sputtering, "The devil's cough . . . The rumble of hell gates opening to take you in . . . I could feel your soul slipping through. I could feel your warm, pliant, sensitive body freezing into a corpse in my arms. I can't stand it! I ca-a-a-n't stand it!" The old man had started calling in his feeble, insistent voice, "Rupa, Rupa, Rupa." Anil had started to say, "I want to talk to you, Rupa." But Rupa had paid him no heed. She had got up and was walking away towards the sick man's room. Anil had walked down the steps and gone out, never to come back.

After Anil left her she had sat in the same chair by the sick man, nursing him, for three long years. Her loss of Anil she began to feel. She became preoccupied with her lost lover. And though she would never admit it to herself she had begun to hate the sick man. Rupa shivered as a certain incident came into her mind. One afternoon she had been reading to the old man and after a while he had closed his eyes and she thought he had dozed off. A white sheet was covering his body up to the neck and he was lying on his back, his head resting limp on the pillow. Rupa had laid the book aside and was staring at the old man's face, fascinated. Suddenly he had opened his eyes and said, "My dear, did I surprise that look in your eyes? You were imagining me dead, weren't you?"

★

ANIL threw away the book in his hands, rose from his chair, glanced at his watch and started pottering about the room in a restless, nervous manner. It was nearing seven and she would be there any moment. He moved over to the window and looked out. Heavy black clouds were massed along the horizon. He told himself that there would be a pouring rain. The faint dying light was oppressive. He had

always hated staying indoors during twilight; there was about this time of the day an indecision, an uncertainty, an unreality which was oppressive. There was during twilight neither the clarity of day nor the deep conviction of night; and it represented to him the uneasy pause between day and night . . .

He had been meeting Rupa again during the past few months. Every time he met her he found that his soul would not register her presence but had merely used her presence to more fully live in his memory of the springtime of her love long years ago. He had every time failed to connect the present with that past which dominated his mind . . . He switched on the light. He thought that the light was some relief . . . It was funny that every time he thought of her after she had left him it was not the face seen a few minutes ago that would stand in his mind but her portrait which she had given him years ago. It was not so funny after all . . . He had lived with that portrait for years . . . There was a knock on the door. She had come.

"Come in," he said.

She came and sat down. There was an oppressive silence which neither broke for some time.

"We have never before been alone together after our . . . reunion. Now, I have come. What shall we do—start making love again?"

"I don't think we need start afresh, my dear," Anil bantered. "We can start from where we left off years ago." After a minute, he said, "Shall we move to my den: the place where I work and sleep? We will do better, I should think, in rediscovering each other in my den than here."

As soon as she entered the den she caught sight of her portrait which she had given Anil years ago, standing on a little table at the head of the bed. Over the table was a mirror. She stood looking at the portrait for a while; and as she looked up she caught sight of her own face in the mirror.

"I didn't know I had changed such a lot, Anil," she said with an ex-

pression Anil thought did not belong to her. She came over to him, put her hands on his shoulder and looking up into his eyes, "You still love me?" Anil thought the face had changed and that the portrait shone through it.

"One never ceases to love if one has really loved once," he said with a faraway voice and added brusquely with a smile, "unless one should start hating; and I don't think I have made any particular effort to hate you."

The rain was pouring in sheets and there was a peel of thunder and the lights went out.

"I had better search for the candles," Anil mumbled. The next moment Rupa's body was pressing his and her lips were seeking his. She was shaking violently. Anil caught her firmly in his arms and steadied her. He fumbled for the candles in one of the drawers of his writing table. He lighted the two candles and placed them on either side of the portrait. He came back and sat beside Rupa on the bed. He lit a cigarette.

"Don't you think the portrait looks beautiful with these two candles burning on either side?"

"Yes, dear."

He leaned over, put his arm round her and drew her closer to him.

"This is an old pastime of mine, Rupa: this placing of lighted candles on the altar of my goddess. Religion of Love. I have worshipped you thus, often. I have many times lit candles and burnt incense at your altar and prayed and longed for you to come. I thought you would never come. But no, you have come. My prayers are answered."

Deep down within his self there was a voice that was telling him that he had always had her; that on those other occasions too, when he had sat facing the portrait with the two candles on either side, he had known fulfilment—or perhaps what he had known was a strange complex of longing and fulfilment. But he had never before experienced this

complex of longing and fulfilment as intensely as then, with Rupa by his side.

He rested his head on her lap and lay staring at the portrait. He gradually sank, through the years, into the past which held his mind all the time. As he felt the caressing fingers of Rupa stroking his hair, the present got obliterated; and he was no longer aware of the woman on whose lap he had his head. A powerful current was flowing from Rupa's body on to his vivifying memories of long ago. His body conducted the current without his being aware of it.

"Anil, Anil." He heard Rupa's importunate voice in which was the note of misgiving that the man so near her was not with her at all.

"Yes, darling." His voice was that of a man only half awake.

Suddenly the lights came and the room was flooded with brilliance. It hurt his eyes. He got up with a bound. There was a pained look in his face. The enchantment had ceased.

"Anil, put off the light. I don't like it."

"No, Rupa, let it be on." He lit a cigarette and sat down on a chair some distance from her, moodily puffing at his cigarette.

"Anil, come over here." He went over to her.

"What's wrong, Anil?"

"I think I have to tell you, Rupa. It's no use. I love you and . . . I don't. I am possessed by ghosts."

"Don't be silly, dear. What's it now? Some new feeling hasn't fitted into any of your theories of . . . would you call it . . . 'true relatedness'?"

"Rupa, please don't be hurt by what I'm going to say. When I am out of the haze of memories and meet you, there is no ecstasy. I am frightened at such times by the drabness I bring with me and my soul's lack of springiness. I am surprised you haven't noticed it. And whenever there is a sense of ecstasy, I'm not with you at all but . . . with ghosts . . . with memories of long

ago. I seem to have left behind my heart in some dark backward abysm of time."

"I do not, perhaps, excite you any longer, dear." She gave the words a sharpness that cut into Anil's abstraction.

"I thought you would understand. Can't you understand? You had no right to reject me in favour of that dying father of yours, that emotional sucker; and leave me at the mercy of an image, of a memory."

SHE did not say a word. She quietly walked over to the portrait. She blew out the two flickering flames of the dying candles. Then she took the portrait into her hands and dashed it against the floor and stamped upon it. Anil raised his face, then buried it in his hands, as he heard the splintering of glass.

"What right had you, you . . . ?" Anil shouted.

"Shut up, baby. Don't scream because you have lost one of your toys. And now, listen. Let me try to

knock some sense into that silly head of yours. I suppose I was not emotionally free when you first met me. You must have found me rather difficult to get on with. Perhaps you had no alternative to making an exit and we have suffered enough these years . . . But, Anil, even if I had completely given myself up to you, then, how long do you think the ecstasy you are treasuring in your mind, the ecstasy of the first flush of love would have lasted? Inevitably we would have had to slip into a less hectic relationship, like all other lovers. I do not mean that we would have descended into the abominable, drab, conventional, loveless state of a stable married couple. I only mean that the initial turbulence is always replaced by something, which I think, is more valuable, more beautiful and more subtle. Lord! Can't you spare me the recital of these banalities?"

"I know all that, Rupa. But when I left you the fact I had to come to terms with was that I could never have you. That makes all the difference. So, I suppose, all these years, I have been withdrawing myself from you, perhaps even learning desperately to hate you; and with all the strength of my love clinging to memories. You had no right to reject me when you did. These years, in between, the chasm, the chasm! I am not now emotionally free."

"Anil, you are right. I had no right to close any part of my heart to you when you asked for my heart. Can't you forgive me? It is true that we have lost something which cannot be recovered, something we could have had during these three years, something for which we will feel the poorer all our lives. But we need not lose each other. What I have lost during these years, I know, I cannot hope to have. I know I cannot fall in love again."

"Nor I, Rupa. You will be my only love."

"I had no right to reject you when I did. You have no right to reject me now, Anil. Won't you take me? We shall build upon the ruins. We must."

"It is no use, my dear." Anil said.

#### NEW BOOKS

Botteghe Oscure Vol. 14. An International Review of New Literature in English, French and Italian Edited by Marguerite Caetani Rs. 9-6 as

British Political Parties by R. T. McKenzie Rs. 22-8 as

Abraham Lincoln: A New Biography by Carl Sandburg

Rs. 33-12 as History and Orientalism, Edited by Denis Sinor Rs. 5-10 as

Conquest of Man: The Saga of Early Exploration and Discovery by Paul Herrmann Rs. 22-8 as

The Dictionary of World Literary Terms Edited by Joseph T. Shipley Rs. 22-8 as

The Scourge of Swastika: A Short History of Nazi War Crimes by Lord Russell of Liverpool Rs. 11-4 as

K. MAHADEVAN

82-A Royapettah High Road, MYLAPORE, MADRAS 4.

## GHALIB AND HIS POETRY

By M. A. RASHEED

MOST people in India know very little about Ghalib and his poetry. This is because he is an Urdu poet and his writings are in Urdu. He is one of our national poets and his writings are our national heritage. To know and to understand him is our national duty.

He is one of the greatest poets of Urdu literature. He was the first among the Urdu poets to revolutionize Urdu poetry and to separate it from the shackles of Persian literature. In the works of earlier writers there is the great influence of Persian poetry—the importance is to the language rather than to the thoughts. But Ghalib laid a new path. To him language is only a medium and nothing more. His poetry is full of human emotions, mystic insight and deep wisdom. Though many of his writings are in Persian and he was proud of Persian poetry, his Urdu writings alone won him his reputation.

The main feature of his poetry is brevity. His thoughts are compressed into short verses. This uniqueness distinguishes him from other Urdu poets. There is only a single volume of poetry in his name. His imagery in description and his selection of sweet sounding words are quite remarkable. There is not a single verse which does not contain a simile or a metaphor. His verses are full of an inexhaustible loveliness and charm. He resembles Shelley in this respect. Though he is as obscure as Robert Browning sometimes there is no ruggedness in his writing. His poetry is aesthetic and philosophical.

Ghalib was a shy, emotional and sentimental man. It is said that his poetry is an expression of his own self. He was a self-possessed introvert. In most of his verses there is a cross examination of his own self, and a grieving for the unkindness of mankind and of Providence. There is neither optimism nor pessimism but a total surrender to the will of

God. Naturally a poet's writings are usually coloured by the events of his own life and Ghalib was no exception. He was grieved to the extreme because of the unkindness of his fellowmen. He was receiving a meagre pension from the British Government for the services of his uncle in the Indian Army. During the Indian Mutiny, he was suspected of treason and his pension was stopped. He suffered very much, although the pension was restored later. The poetry written during this period is filled with an intense grief and remorse. The following verses are a true reflection of his state of mind and heart.

*Why does it not overflow with grief,*

*It is after all a heart and not a brick or stone,*

*We will shed a thousand tears;*

*Why should anybody trouble us.*

*Oh, ignorant heart, what happened to you?*

*At last what is the cure of this grief?*

*Though grief is life-consuming, there is no escape because it is a heart;*

*If there were no agonies of love, there would be the agonies of life.*

*In my creation lies a blemish inherent;*

*The fire of the lightning on the corn heap is the hot blood of the peasant.*

Because of his introvert nature Ghalib was confronted with the mysteries of the universe. He often went into mystic trance. There are many reflections of his mystical experiences in his poetry. He was a fatalist and he attributed everything to the will of God.

*The manifest, the manifesting and the manifest are really one.*

*I wonder on whose account this manifestation is.*

He had a clear understanding of the things around him and he discarded the conventional conceptions held about them. Regarding the conception of paradise he says:

*We know the reality, what the Paradise is,*

*But heart's content, it is a good idea.*

He resembles Robert Browning in this respect. He was also a mystic and he also discarded the conventional conceptions of his time. But the difference between them lies in the fact that Robert Browning was a mystic-philosopher whereas Ghalib was a mystic-saint. Robert Browning was analytical by nature. He reasoned out the achievement of his mystic realisation. But Ghalib was an extremist. He gave out the realisation as it came to him without any outer trappings. He was the lover of naked truth and did not want to taint it with worldly garbs.

*When there was nothing there was God;*

*If there were nothing there would be God.*

*I am deceived by this being;  
What would have been if I were not?*

Though Ghalib was a mystic he had no definite goal like the religious saints. He wrote what came to him. He did not think or brood over a topic. He says:

*From unknown these topics come to my mind;*

*The voice of the Pen is the voice of the Angel.*

In this respect he closely resembles Goethe. Both of them were saints. They pursued truth only for the sake of truth. Ghalib says:

*It is hidden what we think to be manifest;*

*They are yet dreaming who have awakened in a dream.*

Besides being a mystic poet he was a humanist also. He was aware of the psychological problems of human beings and put forth solutions for them.

*Grief flies away when one meets grief;*

*The troubles which fell on me were so many that all of them have become easy.*

He did not build any moral code for human ethics but his poetry is not devoid of moralistic reflections.

*Though it is difficult for everything to be easy;*

*It is not of avail for a man to be human.*

Ghalib can be ranked as one of the greatest poets of the world. He can be placed on a par with Goethe and Emerson. Because his writings are in Urdu alone he is not as popular as the other two. He is too tough to be translated. He stuffs such a vast meaning in a short verse that it will take a stanza of five or six lines to render it into plain language. Besides this there is a sort of dream-sequence in his verses. He employs symbolism and surrealism to compress the thoughts. There are so many popular idioms embodied in his verses that it is very difficult to find equivalents for them in other languages.

THE uniqueness which we see in his poetry is evident in his prose-writings also. Here also the brevity of expression is the chief characteristic. He seldom wrote essays. The letters written to his friends and his relatives is a very precious collection. It is a valuable treasure of Urdu literature. The letters are short, precise, witty and humorous. His conversation was often coloured with witty and humorous remarks. Some of his jokes and wits have become proverbial.

Small talk and gossip are not conversation . . . Conversation is an exchange of thought that leaves all parties to it a grain the wiser. It implies progress. Though it may begin anywhere, even in the realm of trivia, it should try to get somewhere and carry every one with it as it goes.

## New Books

DEAD MAN IN THE SILVER MARKET  
An Autobiographical Essay on National Prides

By Aubrey Menen  
Chatto and Windus, London  
8s 6d net

HERE is a man who has three native lands—England, Ireland, and India—and who says he can call



Aubrey Menen

them his own provided he paid his taxes. speaking thus from where he lives in peaceful retirement now, in the Italian Riviera. There are people who love the land of their birth, living in it and never leaving it; there are people who love it, living elsewhere, exiling themselves from it voluntarily—perhaps to love it the more—or by accident; and there are people who believing in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Man proclaim that this earth will be very heaven if humanity rejects its hubristic nationalism, its brainless racial hatreds and arrogances. This man with no less than three native lands seems to be a person out of the ordinary, considered from the vastness of his heritage, but when he says that—"To love the fields, or the hills, or the town in which you are born; to like your neighbours better than stran-

gers; to have a quicker sympathy with the people who speak your own language than with those who do not; to love and admire those people among whom you have chosen to make your own home, are virtues . . . that civilisation is unthinkable without them," he does not seem to be so out of the ordinary; he has but given expression to the trite adding no new meaning to it, and his crowning observation of all—"This love is patriotism"—does no credit to adult wisdom. "It is unfortunate," he continues, "that the most memorable phrase about it has been totally misunderstood. Samuel Johnson said it was the last refuge of the scoundrel, but two things should be remembered by anyone who quotes him. First, he says nothing in criticism of patriotism. Secondly Johnson was speaking of a political faction that he did not like. Those were the scoundrels and patriotism was their mask . . . Johnson did not say a patriot is a scoundrel, which is false, he said that some scoundrels may claim to be patriots, which is true." Which is involving sapience in syllogism and the author who does it is Aubrey Menen, who has made a name for himself with his novels, *The Prevalence of Witches*, *The Stumbling Stone*, *The Backward Bride*, *The Duke of Gallodoro*, and who, a year ago, in the complete grip of his daemon and consolidating his various gifts for wit, irony, satire, and sharp eye for character borne on the brisk rhythms of a simple, energetic prose style, achieved a remarkable smuttness in *Rama Retold*—intended as a parable!—in which he told the story of *The Ramayana*, of "Rama, a prince of India . . . who took his morals from the best moralists, and his politics from the most experienced poli-

ticians. As a result he was ruined, exiled, and disinherited, his wife was stolen from him and when he got her back he very nearly had to burn her alive from the highest of motives. In the teeth of the soundest and most reliable guidance from his moral and mental superiors, he finally recovered his country, his throne and his common sense." So did the Indian strain in Mr. Menen—the anglicized spelling of the Malayalam Menon—fulfil itself indecently; the other two strains are Irish and English, and in his latest book, *Dead Man in the Silver Market*, sub-titled *An Autobiographical Essay on National Prides*, (here again in an end chapter this perverse apologist drags in Rama), he speaks of all the three with a whole bellyful of his candour:

"My ancestors on my mother's side were brigands who infested a range of hills overlooking the Lake of Killarney, called Macgillicuddy's Reeks . . . My ancestors on my father's side are Nayars of Malabar, a tropical stretch of country in the South of India . . . They are to this day rigidly conscious of their class and strict in the observance of untouchability. They live by growing coconuts and grinding the faces of the poor, if by this it is understood that the operation takes place at the ritual distance of twenty feet from any member of the family."

Mr. Menen's father having run away from his kinsfolk and come to England married his mother; the former is praised for his doting affection and the latter for her sagacity—so much admired by her husband; and Mr. Menen himself has an English upbringing—thanks to the sagacity of his mother of which his father is never in doubt.

"If it should be thought that the idea of bringing up an Indo-Irish man as a Briton had something of the whimsical in it, I should say at once that in nineteen hundred and twelve it was nothing of the sort. The English were then masters of three-quarters of the earth, and in this three-quarters were both the Irish and the Indians. Had I been brought up as either of these I would have thought of the English as my equals and treated them as my masters. As an Englishman I was able to treat both the Irish and the Indians as my inferiors so long as I was careful to speak of them to their faces as my

equals. This formula was the basis of an astounding organization called the British Empire and remained so until the formula was finally understood by the subject races, when the British Empire somewhat hurriedly became the Commonwealth."

Mr. Menen's childhood is passed during the Keiser war—and he gives a colourful account of his schooldays, his popularity growing and declining and growing again, for towards the end of the war he was mistaken for a Turk because of his dark complexion and the "Turks were reported to be cutting off the testicles of their English prisoners," but nobody charged him with doing this, but because of his complexion he "was considered to have at least proclivities in that direction," and this hostility against him ceased when "Victory had been won and the Indians who had cut the throats of the Germans were to be seen in London, wearing the very knives with which they had done it."

At the age of twelve his paternal grandmother demands that he be brought to her and he is "incontinently taken half across the earth, from London to south of the town of Calicut." His mother accompanies him.

The Malabar scenes are drawn with great fidelity and after his grandmother "takes him in hand" Mr. Menen "never thought the English were perfect again." Here is the portrait of his grandmother, a formidable woman, with a withering contempt for Western civilisation and to whom the English are "incurably dirty in their personal habits." She is not rude to them but wishes them to keep their distance.

"My grandmother, like Michelangelo, had *terribilita*. She had a driving will: she would not be balked and whatever she did was designed to strike the spectator with awe. She was also something of a stick. She rarely spoke to anyone who was not of her own social station and she received them formally: that is to say, with her breasts completely bare. Even in her time women were growing lax about this custom in Malabar. But my grandmother insisted on it. She thought that married women who wore blouses and pretty saris

were Jezebels; in her view, a wife who dressed herself above her waist could only be aiming at adultery."

There is a proverb in Malayalam: To the Nayar's sword there is no sheath; to the Nayar woman's breasts there is no cover.

Mr. Menen refers to the fact of her mother being "ritually unclean," how she is kept isolated in a house far from the family mansion, to the many pin-pricks she is subjected to and which she avenges in her own way by setting up a free dispensary in the verandah of the building to which the peasants came flocking, and finally to the suggestion of his conversion to Hinduism by which alone he could lay claim to his ancestral coconuts which brought in annually a great amount of money, by "drinking one full cup of the urine of a cow," which he calls "magic potion." Of course he refuses to drink the cup which is neither the cheering nor the inebriating kind, and goes back to England with his mother. He doesn't, at this point, talk about the much-admired sagacity of his mother, but his father whom he has consulted about the conversion remarks:

"What is it that you object to? Is it drinking cow's urine that you don't like? Or becoming a Hindu?"

To which I replied that it was the cow and what went with it.

"You disappointed me," said my father. "If drinking the water of a cow is the most disgusting thing that you do in your life for the sake of money, you will be a singularly upright man. On the other hand, if you object to becoming a Hindu, then you are intelligent."

Mr. Menen never for once falters in his intelligence: and he applies it to the full in his views on the English oligarchy and the English gentleman caste which is one of the illusory adorations of the Indian. His adventures in princely India are quite lively but we have read livelier accounts of such in E. M. Forster's *The Hill of Devi*, and J. R. Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday*. And his depiction of India at the end of the British Raj is mere reportage and the incident of the shooting in the Silver Market

of Old Delhi is described with a facetiousness which is irrelevant as well. At the end of the book, before the Rama epilogue, he indulges in commonplace moralisings about love and virtue and being good and being bad, about false patriotism and man's loneliness in the ultimate, and it is all neither here nor there. The style deteriorates into a certain slickness and the erstwhile satire seems to lose its edge and slide towards the sentimental. And this author with no less than three native lands gives only a page and a quarter to Ireland in a book of 135 pages—a very, very poor portion indeed for Erin compared to what Albion and Bharat have got. Is it because his maternal grandmother who was a native of Killarney had died before he was born and was not a personality to him as his paternal grandmother, the aristocratic, grand matriarch of Malabar?

#### The Black City

By M. F. Caulfield

A Signet Book

The New American Library

New York, N. Y. 22

25 cents

**THE BLACK CITY** is obsessed by what is between Protestant and Catholic, between mongrel Briton and mongrel Irishman. The crude and bigoted lives that its people lead, both Orangemen and Catholics, battling out their implacable hatred for each other with fists and guns and incendiaries and riots, are a vivid demonstration of the harm and evil that organized religion can produce when it subordinates humanity to the greater glory of its particular church. There is a militant Catholic section in the Black City which is continually smouldering and crackling against Orange rule. The Catholic youth have black memories of Orangemen's atrocities, and they plant bombs on police-stations, break into banks and post-offices, and shoot and kill; so that Ireland might be free and honourable again. To the Orangemen, the Catholics are *insects*. Communists in reverse, superstitious barbarians who are bet-

ter exterminated. In this tragic clash of modern Ireland, individual happiness is something unknown. Mothers get their little ones dragged from their arms and killed, children witness the murder of their parents in cold blood, girls lose their lovers to the cruel call of the I. R. A., and women their husbands to the avenging wrath of the Black and Tans.

Out of this dramatic material, M. F. Caulfield fashions a readable, and sometimes exciting, story. He is detached and sardonic, but not contemptuous; his sense of futility and waste and evil is tempered by fellow-feeling for misguided men and women. The book provides that emotional pleasure which is infrequent in our world of bitter division and party alignment; the pleasure provided by a man who in the heat of the battle, can be in love with both sides and wish neither side defeat. Mr. Caulfield is also skilled as a narrator, his long training as a journalist enabling him to arrange dramatic details in interesting sequence.

There are also other well-done things in the book. The ding-dong struggle inside Hugh Kelley between natural kindness, the code of the I.R.A., and the desire to avenge his father to the hilt, for example. Or the losing battle for the heart of Kelley that Maura Nolan fights without knowing what forces are destroying her future. The importance and futility at once of the violence that both sides indulge in as righteous action—such as these compensate, partly, for our disappointment at an absence of character-drawing in depth.

#### Science in Our Lives

By Ritchie Calder

A Signet key Book

The New American Library

New York, N. Y. 22

35 cents

IT is reported of Oppenheimer when he saw the apocalyptic explosion of the first atom bomb at New Mexico that he was reminded of what the Lord says in *Bhagavad*

*Gita*: I am become Death, the shatterer of worlds. But scientists being human the responsibility for the stupendous potentialities of modern weapons of destruction which they create may be too much for them. Science has become a matter of social concern, an aspect of life of which the layman, members of other professions and the administrator can ill-afford to remain ignorant. Though the originators of modern science, as Mr. Calder so interestingly points out, were not specialists in the sense which that word has attained now, science has enlarged so much and its ramifications have become so great that even a minor branch of a special subject requires a life-time study. To bring out the interrelated aspects of science, and to dispel the queer notion of the incompatibility of the 'arts' and the 'sciences,' is an undertaking which would do credit to any science writer. Ritchie Calder succeeds pre-eminently in this attempt. His range is versatile, and with a descriptive power as vivid as it is accurate, he is able to convey to the reader in graphic terms the excitement, the thrill and the adventure of science.

*Science in Our Lives* treats science as a part of life and not as a species of jugglery. The expanding horizons of the scientist's vision, the ever new problems challenging solution, and the different approaches to scientific questions through the ages are treated by the author with a historical knowledge which is amazing. The scientist is not treated as an abstract, bloodless phenomenon, all intellect, but as a warm human being with the same interests and the same pursuits as any one of us.

Sensational discoveries like Radar and Penicillin are described, and in their narration the author brings out the way a scientist's mind works. It can be said of this book that it contains all the interesting and fascinating discoveries of science which lend excitement and charm to a study of science. Creative writing on scientific subjects for popular consumption is found at its best in this small volume.

## LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

By C. S. RANGASWAMY, Jr.

ONE of the things that we hear very often is that India possesses a tremendous potential wealth of man power. It is common to refer to the large numbers of the unemployed and the under-employed, and to indicate, next, that development endeavours in India would not suffer from an inadequacy of labour. Another statement as often made concerns what is said to be the low cost of labour in India. I have mentioned these two beliefs about labour in India; for, before we can understand the peculiar complexities in industrial relations with labour, we need first to appreciate that both the cheapness of labour and the abundance of labour are misconceptions.

It is not the level of wages which determines the cost of labour. From such a view point, labour could not but be reckoned inexpensive in India. It is productivity, rather, which forms the basis for determining costs. In this respect, Indian labour must be deemed to be, not inexpensive, but merely cheap. The other point, about the untapped resources of man power, stems from an exaggeration of unemployment. Such exaggeration is the result of overlooking what I would term the unemployables and those who, for whatever reasons, are by no means anxious to secure employment. Labour-management relations in this country have been subjected to approaches based, firstly, on the labour view that salaries are low and, secondly, on the management belief that labour is plentiful.

For, it is only in this light that we are able to appreciate labour conditions in India over the past many years. An undeniably long history of under-paid labour has been followed by the last quinquennium of speedy labour legislation by Government. It cannot be denied, I repeat, that, until a few years

ago, there was exploitation of labour. The accumulated resentment and grievances found their voice once India achieved independence. Such exploitation was possible so long as the employer believed that he could with facility obtain his requirements of labour and so long as the Government in power did little to set right such exploitation as did obtain. With independence, there was a popular Government with deeply felt sympathies for labour. The consequence has been a spate of labour legislation, such as has sought to do, in this country, in a brief span of five years what it took industrially advanced nations as long as half a century. Such quickening of labour legislation is not altogether to be welcomed. For, I believe that labour legislation must be a dynamic process and for all the elements and interests concerned. It should not merely consist in the arbitrary prescription of minimum wages and the like. As important is the side by side education of labour—the education of labour such as it can understand that further improvements in the individual worker's standard of living can come about only from greater productivity by the worker. Without such simultaneous education of labour, no increased production would result, but only added costs.

It is obvious that labour legislation should not be such as to endanger the very existence of an industry. Labour legislation, it must be made clear, is a two-way measure: it enjoins the management to give higher wages and to provide more amenities to its workers; at the same time, it must entail the co-operation of labour in increasing productivity in the larger national interests.

Management has grown to believe—and I hold the same view—that the

slice of the cake that comes to labour is already a large one. The portions of the others—of the shareholders, of management, and of the Government—can scarcely be reduced. If, therefore, labour wants a larger piece of cake in coming years, it can only be by increasing the size of the cake. To increase the size of the cake, what is necessary is an improvement in productivity.

Another factor which makes industrial relations with labour even more complex is the insistence on demands. We hear of labour demanding its rights and privileges. Surely, there is never the need for demanding a right or for insisting on a privilege. Rights and privileges have to be worked for, not to be struck for. In this regard, I may quote Mr. V. V. Giri, who said recently that labour can argue for its rights and privileges only after it has full knowledge of its duties and responsibilities. Labour legislation which merely stresses the rights and privileges that the management must provide for labour prevents the education of labour as regards its duties and responsibilities. I can understand it that there has been a great desire on the part of Government, if I might coin the word, to de-exploit labour. But it is doing labour no real good if it is not made clear that only the completion of duties and the acceptance of responsibilities can earn rights and privileges.

It is surely disturbing that we should, in recent years, have had many a complaint voiced that the belief that the cost of Indian labour was low is a myth. On the other hand, it is heartening to have heard from Mr. Giri that labour should pay greater heed to its duties and responsibilities before it fought for its rights and privileges. Even more reassuring was the earlier statement by Mr. Jai Prakash Narain that wage demands could and should be based only on greater productivity.

The time lost in strikes and the energy mis-spent in long drawn out arbitration are indeed at deplorably high levels. The number of man

days lost in August 1954 as a result of industrial disputes is as high as 314,945. Absenteeism has been losing roughly 10 per cent of man shifts scheduled to work. Absenteeism in the collieries was as high as 13.13 per cent in August 1954. We had a month long "Go-slow" strike at Calcutta Port. We had a lightning strike that disabled Bombay Port just about a month ago. These are facts to reckon with in industrial relations; and these are facts which are, or which should be, of considerable interest and importance to the Government. For, let us not forget the announced intention of a Socialistic State in India, in which the Government will figure more and more prominently as the employer of labour. So long as industrial disputes arose in the private sector, the scapegoat phrase that could be used was exploitation of labour. But, when Government themselves become the employer, can the national economy afford labour legislation of the variety that freely hands out rights and privileges. Personally, I am disposed to think that the labour legislation we have had in the first flush of freedom has quite completed the process of de-exploiting labour. It is necessary now to evolve a new policy towards labour such as can constructively improve industrial relations.

What must that new policy be? I do not, certainly, suggest that we should suddenly turn a deaf ear to the legitimate pleas for amelioration of labour conditions. It is important to remember that the key word in the next few years will be cooperation. Cooperation alone can enable the development and industrial progress that we wish for. Labour must work in harmony with management; management and labour must in concord strive for increasing production; and Government's attitude should be so fashioned that such a synthesis of effort will be possible. In effect, this means that we must now have a new species of labour legislation—one that will correlate progress in production achieved by labour to greater rights and

privileges for it. But progress must come first. There is an equal duty for management readily and gracefully to recognise the rights and privileges earned by labour. Labour time, management money and Government energy must all be synchronised towards achieving the industrial progress in India. Thereafter, each would earn its reward—of higher wages, of better profits, of greater production. If it is recognised on all sides that the key to tomorrow's India is cooperation, we should have little difficulty in doing away with the pinpricks that infest the industrial relations of today; and, therefore, we would be enabled to ensure the success of Indian endeavours for development.

FORCE is given to the importance of productivity by a fact about America. There are few in India, representing labour, management or Government, who know this fact.

We all are aware of the high level of wages, the variety of perquisites and the array of amenities that American labour is blessed with. But American labour earned those wages, perquisites and amenities. There is almost a guaranteed increase in productivity of three per cent from year to year. This margin is utilised by the management almost exclusively for research and for higher wages. I suggest that this is a lesson which we in India must learn. If Indian labour guarantees that 3 per cent improvement in productivity, and if management in its turn pays to labour what it has earned by work, we could create those industrial relations which would contribute towards the development of Indian industry. The key word is co-operation; and productivity the answer for improving industrial relations in India.—*Andhra Association Annual, Calcutta.*

## INDO COMMERCIAL BANK LIMITED

(Established 1932)

Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, K.C.S.I., D.C.L., (Oxon.)  
(Chairman)

OFFICES IN MADRAS CITY

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Road: Periamet; Triplicane;  
Mylapore; and Theagarayanagar.

### BRANCHES

Ambasamudram, Ambur (N. A. Dist.), Chidambaram, Cuddalore, Erode, Kancheepuram, Karaikudi, Kumbakonam, Mathurai, Mayavaram, Palghat, Pudukottah, Ramnad, Shiyali, Tanjore, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli Junction, Tirunelveli Town, Tiruchirappalli, Vellore, Vijayapuram, Villupuram & Virudhunagar.

### DEPOSIT RATES

Rates of interest on Deposits are as follows:

SAVINGS BANK: 2½% p.a.

MONTHLY DEPOSITS & CASH CERTIFICATES Will yield 4% to 4½% p.a. according to period

### FIXED DEPOSITS:

City: 3% p.a. for 1 year and 3½% p.a. for 2 years  
Mofussil: 3½% p.a. for 1 year and 3½% p.a. for 2 years.

S. KRISHNASWAMI,  
Secretary.

### Pattern of Land Holdings— No Need for Change

NO satisfactory reason or acceptable principle has been established for changing in any manner the existing pattern of land holdings.

Viewed as property, agricultural land must be put on the same footing as any other property. It is rather invidious that while the Government is keen on getting the public to invest in its loans and on paying with regularity the rate of interest promised and also on redeeming the bonds in time, they should think of expropriatory measures with reference to land only. On the ground that money is needed to finance the Five Year Plan or to satisfy the hunger of the masses for a higher standard of living, no Government has yet thought of expropriating cash deposits in banks or suggested that the return and the dividends declared on the shares in industrial undertakings should be limited to some arbitrary percentage. So long as private property is recognised by the State, no distinction should be made between one form of property and another.

Any interference with land holdings could be supported only upon principles of complete Socialism. The reasons very often given for introducing changes in the existing pattern of land holdings are two-fold. Firstly, it is stated that the land hunger of the people should be satisfied. Secondly, that the food production should be stepped up. What is the land hunger? Is it presumed that every villager desires to own some piece of agricultural property himself or that every villager wants to cultivate some agricultural property permanently. It has been statistically determined that agricultural property in India comes to nearly one acre per head. Any distribution of land without making any distinction between person and person even amongst those directly dependent upon land could give barely one acre per head.

It is really problematic whether food production could be increased by distribution of land with its necessary concomitant of fragmentation of

holdings. It would generally be accepted that to keep a fairly high standard of living 50 to 60 per cent of the total population should be employed in industrial undertakings. If this be the ultimate objective, a re-distribution of land now must necessarily be followed by consolidation of holdings when a high degree of industrialization is achieved. Secondly, if mechanisation of agriculture is also to be desired, the small holdings could not enable such a thing to be achieved. As a result, talks on collectivization on the Soviet pattern are mooted. One wonders why the State should go all the way to grant an acre or two of land to every cultivator, recognising in the very act private property, and then impose collectivization to establish large farms enabling mechanisation and increased production.

Conferring such holdings upon cultivators would necessarily mean establishing gigantic credit facilities for the use of small holders. The State will have to help the individual holder with capital on easy terms.

I feel that there is a way of achieving the highest standard of living. I suggest that every person over a particular limit of income should contribute a portion of his income to a national fund over a period of ten years. Similarly industrial undertakings producing necessary goods like textiles, etc., should also contribute a portion of their production. All agriculturist holdings over a minimum extent should also contribute a portion of their produce. With these and with the aid of the large population living in the villages, who are dependent upon seasonal work, new undertakings should be started and run. All such contributions will be repayable only after new undertakings had begun functioning efficiently and without interest. I feel further that as land is something that cannot be hidden, too much attention is directed to it, while other forms of wealth capable of being secreted easily are left out.—*Bu B. T. Seshadri-achariar, from a memorandum presented to the Tamil Nadu P. C. C. Committee on Land Reforms*

### Annual Exhibition of Paintings: Govt. School of Arts

THE fourth annual exhibition of paintings and sculptures by the Senior Students of the School of Arts and Crafts which is now on view at



Blossom Time

—An Exhibit

—C. Venu

the School premises is highly interesting in more ways than one. About 25 artists have contributed over 125 paintings and sculptures. The immediate impression produced by these exhibits is the high overall general standard of the exhibits. The artists have eschewed exotic as well as outworn schools of thought and expression and stick to the nurturing influences of the local life and inspiration and training obtained by them. It would be no exaggeration to say that the exhibition as a whole breathes a personality that has its roots in the soil of the South.

Coming to individual paintings, among the many good works that are on view the most outstanding

perhaps is the "Edge of the Workshop" by S. Murugesan. Here is a picture that is striking in its simplicity of treatment and the remarkable manner in which the artist has helped to convey the atmosphere of the 'no man's land' on the outskirts of any workshop, a stretch of desolate ground lying between the conflicting influences of man and nature. The factory looms behind in luminous silhouette (depicted with a knowledgeable absence of details) and here again the tragedy of man sacrificed to the machine is very powerfully suggested. It is evident that the artist has responded tremendously to the prevailing conditions of life around him. Mr. Murugesan has some other outstanding works to his credit among which the 'Head study' of a woman is indeed remarkable. Another artist who has very good work on display is R. Balaraman. 'Play Time' and 'Girl reading' are indeed very good works that help to reveal his control over the medium, and the pithy epigrammatic and highly effective style of his expression. S. Pichairaj is yet another artist who steals equal prominence. His picture 'The Hamlet' a landscape in oils is highly praiseworthy effort wherein he has revelled in sombre tones to produce a pleasing pattern along with representational values. "Boats" by the same artist is also noteworthy. Mr. G. P. Pillai makes a favourable impression with his picture 'The River Side' in oils, in which he has achieved a striking effect of luminosity with his greens and yellows. 'A peasant', a head study by the same artist is a good effort in which he has adopted a similar mode of expression but with a completely different subject. 'Blossom Time' by C. Venu is excellent for its sense of form and tonal value displayed. Mr. C. S. N. Patnaik has some good works on view among which 'Still Life' and 'Children with Toys' are especially noticeable. 'Nambudiri Women' by Vasudevan Nambudiri is an effective piece. In the commercial arts section Mr. T. J. Oommen has displayed some good works.

K. N. RAMACHANDRAN

## FILMS

By V. P. SATHE

A renowned distributor from the north who had recently released a very poignant, realistic film of contemporary life said that contrary to his expectations the picture did not appeal to the public and the very points which he had considered 'strong' in the picture proved to be its shortcomings. For, when he or rather his staff members tried to find out the reaction of the audience, they got a rebuff. The picture-goers said: "It is good, it is true. This has been happening everyday in our life, but we don't want to see the same things happening on the screen. We want to see something different."

It has been found that only the rich and the well-to-do people like the tales of common man's poverty and want; the common man does not want to be reminded of his poverty. He loves to see the opulence of the rich and as such he is essentially a votary of escapist entertainment. All that he expects in a motion picture is two hours of fun and some good music.

And as he typifies the majority of our audience the producers have to make 'escapist' pictures to please him. Even the good old box-office rule of identification of character does not seem to hold good any longer. The common man in the audience enjoys a picture in which he can identify himself with the hero emotionally and subjectively; to him the hero is a symbol of the unfulfilled dreams nurtured by him and not just his prototype suffering the same way as he does in life. Especially any picture dealing with the economic problem does not appeal to him. That is the experience of all distributors. And that experience indicates that the 'escapist'

films will continue to dominate our film production whatever the critics and the Ministers may say.

### Picture of the week

A typical example of escapist entertainment is provided by Hira Filmas' *Chandni Chowk* produced on a lavish scale with stars, ornate sets and slick production values. And yet *Chandni Chowk* has not proved the hit it was expected to be. The reason for it is that while the presentation has all the glamour the story-content is rather thin, lacking as it does in story, melodrama and suspense so essential to grip the audience.

The basis of the story is nothing new; its theme is worn out dealing as it does with the false pride of family lineage prevalent in the feudal aristocracy. And yet out of this very theme a powerful human drama could have been evolved had the characters of the hero, a poor but honest boy from a family which has no social status, and the villain who also comes from a family without status but who wants to buy family prestige with money, been presented in their correct social perspective. The villain, a rich contractor aspiring for the hand of the Nawab's daughter is presented more like a buffoon than a hard-bolled businessman that he should have been. The hero who readily agrees to pose as a Nawab to deceive the feudal father of the girl he loves, also appears to be a weakling. A boy like him should never have resorted to such tricks to win his beloved.

Moreover, as the whole story evolves out of the manipulations of a third man who is acting as the rich contractor's agent every situation appears to be forced and contrived. The running away of the hero after his identity is exposed, provides an excuse for a new setting and Egyptian dances on the one hand and the heroine's gazals on the other; but it does not add to the dramatic tenseness anyway. Only in the last sequence when the hero returns from Egypt only to find his wife,

taken for a widow, is being remarried to the villain, that the situation is cleverly handled and the suspense is kept right to the end. But for this sequence or the sequence in which the rich contractor and his agent are drugged by the former's sweetheart, the screenplay does not come upto I. S. Johar's old standard of *Afsana*.

But for this note of artificiality and incredibility which prevails throughout, *Chandni Chowk* is an entertaining picture noteworthy for slick direction by B. R. Chopra, competent photography by Keki Mistry, soothing music by Roshan and good portrayals by a star-studded cast with Kumar and Meena Kumari sharing the acting honours. Agha and Shekhar both suffer from poor characterization while Smriti Biswas makes an alluring Egyptian dancer. In the supporting cast Jeevan, Sundar, Yeshodhara Katju, Achala and Pratimadevi acquit themselves with the ease of professionals and Krishna Kumari looks charming as Laila.

The theme is however beautifully summed up by Kamil Rashid in his last dialogue spoken by Manmohan Krishna who says "that there is no greater family tradition than humanism and humanism has no tradition at all."

### Personality of the week

Raj Khosla who won plaudits for his direction of *Milap* will soon be starting an independent venture of his own. He will be one of the young band of enterprising and educated producers.

Though Raj hails from Punjab, he is essentially a product of Bombay. He has been educated in Bombay and graduated from St. Xavier's College. There was a time when like all unemployed college youth, he used to frequent the coffee-house and discuss the possibilities of joining the film industry. Later he joined All-India Radio as an announcer and also played a role in a picture

called *Rain Basera* which has not yet been released at least in Bombay.

And like many others who left the Radio and took to the films, Raj Khosla after working with A. I. R. and Radio Ceylon joined Navketan as an assistant to Guru Dutt when he was making *Baazi*. And it was only after working as an assistant for three years that Raj Khosla has become a director.

Those who know him for the last several years describe him as an intelligent, hard-working boy. Tall, lean, be-moustached, Raj is rather an unassuming person; and though educated, like Guru Dutt he believes primarily in entertainment and especially in the popularity of music. From Guru Dutt, he seems to have learnt the art of picturizing songs aptly; and he has a flair for outdoors.

Raj Khosla has great ambitions. But he is not one of those who boast much or even talk much. He prefers to realize his ambitions by hard work. Luckily for him he got a good opportunity first to direct a picture and now to produce a picture independently. It is to be hoped that like Guru Dutt he will avail of this opportunity and fulfil the expectations he has aroused.



Photograph shows Mr. and Mrs. Sam Broers on arrival in Bombay on the S. S. "Carthage" on February 25th. Mr. Broers is President of the Firestone International Company.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor welcomes letters on subjects of general interest or topics arising out of articles printed in SWATANTRA but reserves the right to abridge them.

### Neglect Of Andhra

Sir,—The "systematic victimisation" of Andhras referred to by one "aggrieved" in your correspondence column is not only with regard to recruitment to Railway service, but also in the matter of development of Railway lines and providing amenities to passengers, such as electrifying the stations, etc. But for the main lines constructed in order to connect Calcutta and Bombay with Madras, there are no remarkable branch lines covering the interior of the Andhra State, whereas one is astonished at the way in which a network of lines has been developed near Mayavaram and other places in the south. Recent additions are the Arantangi-Karalkudi line, the revived Madura-Bodinayakanur section, the projected Hasan-Mangalore line, the Quilon-Ernakulam section, the Shoranur-Nilambur line, and the Salem-Bangalore section which is under preliminary survey. For the second Five Year Plan, the Virudhunagar-Manamadura section has already been proposed, and it may materialise with the same pace with which the Salem-Bangalore line has been taken up for survey. But not one Railway line has been proposed for the Andhra area. Sometime ago I made an appeal to the authorities to examine the feasibility of connecting Avanigadda with Masulipatam, or Bezwada in the alternative with Bezwada via Pamarru and Ayyanki. Neither the Andhra Government nor the Centre seems to have taken any cognisance of the same. Similarly, there was a news-item in the papers that a Railway line is to be constructed connecting Ongole with Cuddapah. But no further news that the proposal has been accepted and will be included in the first Five Year Plan has come so far.

Regarding the conversion of the Gudur-Renigunta section into broad gauge, I suggest that the same conversion may well be extended to the Renigunta-Pakala section since Tirupati, which is a permanent pilgrim centre to be developed as a tourist centre by the Government of India will then be easily accessible by a system of "through carriage

ges and special trains in times of festival" from all broad gauge stations such as Bezwada and Madras.

In view of the fact that the Andhra State has been admittedly neglected in the matter of industrial development, I hope the Government of India would bestow more attention on it hereafter at least, especially in view of the golden promise of a "Socialistic pattern of society" where there could be no room for undue development of a particular area to the detriment of the underdeveloped.

V. P. DIKSHITULU

### Why Prohibition Was Repealed In U.S.A.

Sir,—The thought-provoking article of Major Raja Rao, published in your issue dated 19th February, is worth serious consideration by every honest and sane administrator. Prohibition was summarily repealed in U.S.A. in the same spectacular manner in which it had been introduced. It was repealed not because the U.S.A. lacked the proper instruments for its enforcement. The U.S.A. police was and is one of the world's most efficient and it could grapple successfully with every type of gangsterism. Nor was it because the movement had lacked the spiritual backing of a mahatma. "Pussyfoot" Johnson was the American edition of a Mahatma. He captured both the Senate and the President almost napping. It cannot be said, either, that the average American lacked those moral and spiritual qualities which Indians, particularly Congressmen, are supposed to possess in abundant measure. Prohibition in America was certainly not repealed for the reason that the President realized before it was too late that it presented a threat to the efficiency and honesty of the police force without which law, order and public security were bound to become more mockeries. Prohibition was scrapped because the President of the U.S.A. laid down the fundamental law of "safety first and Salvation next" as the supreme policy of the Government. Only a mad man would view the repeal of Prohibition in U.S.A. as a failure on the part of the Government or a triumph for the devil. But what about our country? If we are still to pursue this Prohibition programme, either on a provincial basis or on an all-India basis, the danger to the country's governance will be very great indeed.

C. T. SRINIVASAN

### Language Medium In The University

Sir,—The principle that the medium of instruction at the university level should be in the regional language has been universally accepted, though Indian universities have been chary of implementing it, on the plea that there are no suitable text books in the regional languages to replace the English ones. Most university students now depend upon the notes of their lecturers sold in the market. And the students rarely look into the standard text-books in English. Many do not know the names of well-known English text-books in their particular subject. Consequent on the steady fall in the standard of English in the high school and college classes, students shun standard text-books in English. Their poor acquaintance with the English language stands in the way of their reading and understanding the standard text-books in English. Is it any wonder, then, if the habit of reading standard text-books in English among Indian students has reached its nadir? The cause for this can be directly ascribed to the national demand to replace English with the vernacular medium in all stages, no less than to the quality of the teaching method and personnel. The argument that there are no suitable text-books in the regional languages is not the whole truth. There is something in our educational atmosphere which is responsible for the present sorry state of affairs. Deplorable as the situation is, it is the responsibility of educationists to find a solution for this problem.

The delay in introducing the vernacular medium for teaching non-science subjects cannot be justified any longer. The matter is simple. From the next academic year, professors of colleges teaching history, politics, economics, philosophy and other non-science subjects may be asked to prepare their lecture notes in the regional language and lecture to the students in that language. After the two or three year period, as the case may be, depending on the duration of the course, the notes of the professors can be examined by a committee and the best in each subject may be approved and awarded a prize as most suitable to serve as a text-book. This procedure may be continued for a period of five years. At the end of that period we shall have enough text books to choose from. As regards science subjects, so long as the dispute between the purists who are against using international scientific terminologies and those in favour of them, is not satisfactorily settled, the English medium will have to continue. Besides, the task of coining suitable scientific terms in the regional language

is one that cannot be done overnight. People who are keen on the language medium will have to adopt for the time being the international scientific terminology and review the position after a period of five years if they desire the regional language to be the medium for science courses as well. I feel that the English medium should continue for sometime yet to come.

South Indian universities should take early steps to introduce the language medium as far as history, politics, economics, philosophy and other non-science subjects are concerned.

S. R. VENKATA RAMAN

### Why Not Post Offices On Sundays?

Sir,—One of the achievements we had after the attainment of Independence is that OUR Government have been very kind towards us in not keeping us waiting eagerly at the door steps for the arrival of the postman with our tappals on Sundays! Because, this facility so far as I knew, has not been extended in any other country to its people.

It was in 1950 that Mr. R. A. Kidwai, the then Communications Minister in the Union Parliament made the announcement that all post offices in India would be closed on Sundays, which item of news was received by all the public with considerable surprise. And five years have now passed without postal facility on Sundays. Although some of the post offices in important cities and towns are kept open with a skeleton staff for delivery and clearance of mails, for which an extra stamp of two annas and anna one respectively is to be affixed, the places where this facility exists are few when compared to the total number of other places where it does not exist.

In Madras City, for example, though there is Express delivery on Sundays, the other convenience, the posting of any urgent letter is denied for quite a number of people, leaving apart those near the G.P.O. and Mount Road and near places where the mobile post office functions.

The Special Feature of SWATANTRA for March 12, 1955 will be the Malayalam Literary Miscellany which will be issued subsequently as an off-print at two annas a copy.

An essential convenience which every member of this vast Republic has been enjoying since the inception of the postal system, is thus denied. This is an infringement on his primary right to have information without let or hindrance, time being the essence of the matter. Obviously, this decision was taken at that time by the Government from the point of view of economy. If only they realise (i) how important the time factor is in many cases and how much can be accomplished by the timely receipt of information and how much is lost for want of it; and (ii) what the magnitude of such inconvenience and loss is likely to be when the vast multitude of the Republic's citizens, and the volume of its trade and industry are taken into account; and weigh the inconvenience and loss against a small extra compense incurred and the strength of the public opinion against the introduction of this measure, there is every reason to believe that they will take into consideration the present situation which is quite different from that which obtained five years ago and revert to the old system of deliveries on Sundays also.

If it is the intention of the Government to give a day's rest to the postal

staff, they can do so by giving it in turns. Railwaymen of all categories are given rest for a day in a week, and the trains do not stop on Sundays!

The Ministry of Railways appointed a three-man commission to tour foreign countries and study the conditions obtaining there with regard to the amenities provided to railway passengers. The commission, on their return after visiting countries like Russia reported to the Government about their study. The first phase in implementing the report was to provide sleeping accommodation to the railway passengers and removal of the distinction in exit gates between upper and lower class passengers. This very same suggestion of providing sleeping accommodation was put forth by me through the correspondence column of a leading newspaper some years back and was also supported by several others. Unfortunately I was neither a Minister nor a V.I.P. and my suggestion was not implemented. Likewise, if the Ministry of Communications find it not practicable to open the post offices on Sundays, they may as well appoint a committee, or a selected person may be sent to foreign countries.

Aynavaram

N. V. R. SWAMY



Dr. A. Lakshmipathi, whose seventy-fifth birthday falls this week

# SWATANTRA

On Sale Every Saturday

Vol. X. March 12, 1955. No. 6

## CONTENTS

|                                                                 | PAGE  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| EDITORIAL                                                       | 3     |
| SOTTO VOCE <i>Vighneswara</i>                                   | 5     |
| SIDELIGHTS <i>Saka</i>                                          | 7     |
| FOREIGN AFFAIRS: STALEMATE IN THE EAST <i>Santha Rungachary</i> | 11    |
| THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA <i>Khasa Subba Rau</i>           | 15    |
| SWATANTRA MALAYALAM LITERARY MISCELLANY                         | 17-50 |
| FILMS <i>V. P. Sathe</i>                                        | 51    |

### ON THE COVER:

A Sanatorium for textile workers in the Soviet Union

All communications should be addressed to the Editor, SWATANTRA, 2 Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras 4. Manuscripts for publication should be typewritten on one side of the paper only and must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. The editor cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

Subscription rates (including postage); for one year; Inland Rs. 20; Foreign, £1-16sh., or \$8; Half-year: Inland, Rs. 10; Foreign, 18sh., or \$4.

Advertisement rates can be obtained on application to the Manager.

Cut along this line

### SUBSCRIPTION FORM

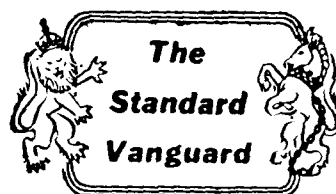
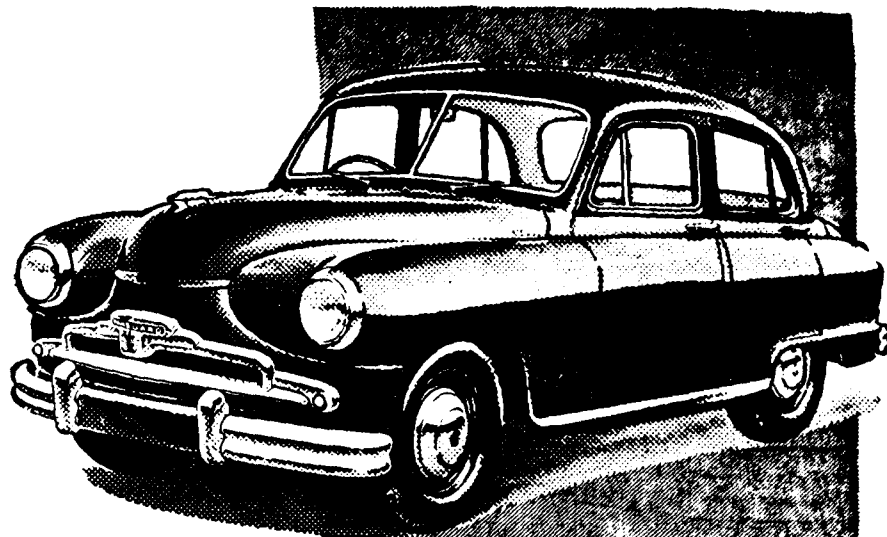
Make certain that you get your copy of SWATANTRA regularly by completing this form and posting it to the address boxed to the right

To:  
The Manager,  
SWATANTRA,  
2, Brodies Road,  
MYLAPORE : MADRAS 4.

I enclose remittance of Rs. 20; £1-16sh; \$8 for one year's subscription (or) Rs. 10; 18sh; \$4 for a half-year, including postage.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....



**Elegant**  
**Efficient**  
**Economical**

- Smooth running
- Swift Acceleration
- Seats Six  
in Comfort
- Economical  
in Maintenance
- Capacious  
Luggage boot

#### DEALERS IN SOUTH INDIA

THE UNION CO. (MOTORS) LTD.,  
Madras, Bangalore & Ootacamund.

M/s. ASSOCIATED AUTOMOBILES  
LTD., Coimbatore & Ernakulam—for  
Coimbatore District and Cochin area in  
T.C. State.

M/s. G. N. CHAKRAPANI CHETTY &  
SONS LTD., Madurai & Tirunelveli—for  
Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Tirunel-  
veli Districts.

M/s. KASI & SETHU, Tanjore &  
Kumbakonam—for Tanjore & South  
Arcot Districts.

M/s. STANES MOTORS (SOUTH INDIA)  
LTD., Trivandrum, Quilon and Kottaya  
—for T.C. State (excluding Cochin area)  
Malabar and South Kanara Districts.

M/s. SRI PATTABHIRAM COMMER-  
CIAL SYNDICATE, Kakinada—for  
Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Ea-  
Godavari Districts.

M/s. SRI PRAKASH AUTOMOBILE  
Vijayawada—for Guntur, Krishna and  
West Godavari Districts.

# SWATANTRA

Vol. X. MARCH 12 SATURDAY 1955 No. 6

## THE CENTRAL BUDGET

IT is as a foretaste of what is to be expected in the coming years that Mr. Deshmukh's fifth Budget assumes exceptional importance. The fifth year of the first Five Year Plan finds the States well behind schedule in raising the resources which the Planning Commission expected them to raise. They had also been lagging behind in expenditure as scheduled under the Plan in the first three years of the Plan; furious efforts are to be made in the current and the coming year to make up for lost time. Uniformly the States have come out with heavy deficit budgets (except Bombay) the excuse for which is the scale of development expenditure programmes for 1955-56. States in Northern India have generally preferred to wait on the bounty of the Centre and have sought to make no provision through new taxes for closing the gap. The southern States, in keeping with their more orthodox and conservative traditions, have been exploring such additional levies as are still open to them. But even they cannot find all the money to cover their deficits from taxes and are looking to such expedients as drawing on cash balances, loans and Central assistance for meeting the bulk of the deficit. In this context, the overall deficit of the Union Government is perhaps of much greater importance than the revenue deficit alone, which itself is expected to amount to Rs. 30 crores next year.

Aggregate fresh taxation to the tune of Rs. 26 crores in one year is

2

not by any test a trifling burden. Mr. Deshmukh has doubtless armed himself with the authority of the Taxation Enquiry Commission in determining the pattern of new taxation, but the country is yet to digest the implications of the analysis and the proposals made by the Matthai Commission. There is still too little data about the incidence of taxation on different sections of the community, but the general impression is inescapable that in the past the middle class—including in that term the salaried classes and families with incomes of Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 15,000 a year—has had to pay more than its fair share of taxes directly and indirectly. It was the class which largely bore the brunt of protection to infant Indian industries. It bore the burden cheerfully in the hope that when the foreign industries were replaced by indigenous industries, there would be more employment within the country and ultimately Indian-produced goods would be cheaper than imported goods. And just at the moment when that long-deferred hope seems to approach fulfilment, the Taxation Enquiry Commission has come forward with its proposals for a wide range of excise duties on new industries which have established themselves in recent years. Last year Mr. Deshmukh introduced excise duties on a variety of consumer products like soap, matches, vegetable oil products, and footwear. This year he has extended the list by the inclusion of several other products like sewing machines, electric fans, paper,

and woollen fabrics. The excise duties amount to ten per cent *ad valorem*, but we may be certain that to the ultimate consumer the prices of these goods will rise by more than ten per cent. The middle class consumer, who is the principal buyer of these manufactured goods, will wonder when, if ever, he will get the relief to which he has looked forward for years. As though the excise duties were not enough, Mr. Deshmukh has also chosen to increase the direct taxes on income slabs between Rs. 7,500 and Rs. 15,000 and to bring down the exemption limit for super-tax from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 20,000. The increased burden on the middle incomes will make a sizable hole in the purse, which will not be compensated by the new differentiation sought to be made between bachelors and married persons in regard to the exemption limit in the first slab. A penalty of Rs. 25 on single blessedness is no great infliction and a relief of Rs. 25 will not make the married man's troubles any the more bearable. Mr. Deshmukh has claimed that this is only the beginning of a more rational tax structure in which provision will be made for children's allowances, etc., as in the West. What is more important, it is the total burden of taxation, both direct and indirect, Central, State and local taxation, that matters. And if all the taxing authorities lay their hands on people with middle incomes as the class that can be most easily taxed, the results may be disastrous. If the unspoken implication of the "Socialist pattern of society" envisaged by the Congress is the elimination of the middle class, it would be well if that is realised early enough by the victims.

### Rush Into Congress

THE Forward Bloc has joined the Congress, and after the Forward Bloc, the K. L. P. Professor Ranga has announced the *unconditional* return of his party to the ruling

organisation. These conversions to the Congress, taking place in a flood, leave a bad taste. They resemble the enthusiasm of poor relations for a rich potential benefactor in anticipation of favours. The voluntary liquidation of the small parties is having the deplorable effect of accentuating further the already frightening polarisation between the Congress and the Communist party. That means that the Communists can be kept out of power only by means of the perpetuation of Congress rule, introducing just that feature of Communist government,—permanent, unalterable irrevocable one-party rule—which is urged by Congress propagandists as its most undesirable and undemocratic feature. It is a very odd factor in the present situation that only a Communist victory at the polls can save the Congress from falling hopelessly into this undemocratic, totalitarian rut. In Andhra only the Socialists have held out of the crazy fortune-hunting stampede of the satellites towards the Congress. A shining example of straight, undeviating devotion to significant political principles in lofty disdain of the prevailing opportunism has been given, when so many veterans failed, by the young Raja of Vizianagaram. In the new Andhra Assembly he towers over all as the outstanding exemplar of personal honesty and political integrity. Though the elections have, for the time being, averted Communist rule, it does not appear as if the Congress leaders in Andhra have learnt the art of useful combination in the public interest. In Bombay, Tamil Nadu and similar other States, the formation of the Ministry after an election is done quietly by mutual consultations among the prominent political leaders. Only in the case of Andhra, there is a regular invasion of Vijayawada by stalwarts from everywhere else. The tide of new entrants does not look like bringing corresponding strength to the Congress.

# Sotto Voce

★

## THE VISWAMITRA GESTURE



IN one of those sudden transitions from bland geniality to explosive wrath with which Mr. Nehru has made the Indian public so familiar, he told the Film Seminar that his Government would come down with a heavy hand on producers "who made films showing warfare, which was bound to encourage war mentality." And he added decisively, "I do not want any war propaganda in India." Now, a film showing warfare need not necessarily encourage war mentality. "War and Peace" on the screen might be a powerful plea for pacifism. There have actually been produced many first class war films of that sort.

As for war propaganda, it is a creature of policy. Of course Mr. Nehru doesn't want war, nor do any of us. But if tomorrow for any good and sufficient reason we should go to war, or we should have a war thrust upon us, we should require all the propaganda we can get. And we should vote the war film makers public benefactors, as in Britain they voted Beaverbrook at the beginning of the first world war and Winston Churchill at the beginning of the second. So long as no nation is prepared to renounce war as an instrument of policy, it is mere sentimental evasion to gird at war propaganda.

But war propaganda is not on the tapis just now. Mr. Nehru's reference to it was presumably intended to illustrate the vast and pervasive influence of the film and the untold mischief it might do if allowed to rampage at will like a *mast* elephant. It is the more surprising that the

Prime Minister should have been content to sing small when it came to dealing with the possible effect of films on morals. He was acutely aware, he said, of the danger of Government taking upon themselves the "role of judging people's morals." He would draw the line at that.

I fully share Mr. Nehru's suspicion of the bureaucrat as censor. And it is indeed reassuring to be told that our Government is averse to too much regulation and regimentation, "more especially in matters which obviously are things of the spirit like music, dance, literature, and the like." But, I must say that the Government showed no sign of this spirit of abnegation when they amended the Constitution in order to reduce the "fundamental right" of freedom of speech and expression to a solemn farce. Promptly on the heels of the amendment followed a Press Act based on C. R.'s discovery that the rotary press was a mad elephant. Only he, the wise mahout, knew where to strike to bring the beast to reason.

However, abstention of Governments from the task of controlling public morals is clearly not the end of the matter. Unbridled license or lasciviousness will destroy a community, if immunity is conferred on these ugly eruptions in the sacred name of art. The fact that the rulers are personally inspired by a noble austerity or adopt a god-like detachment towards the failings of lesser mortals will not save society from being corroded by the moral canker, as the Rome of Marcus Aure-

lius testifies. And if the Governments' policies have themselves tended to weaken the moral fibre of the people their sins of omission will weigh as heavily in the scales as their sins of commission.

The fashionable modern view is that a man's morals are his private concern. As there are no moral absolutes everyone is at liberty to live as he please provided he does not come in the way of somebody else enjoying a like liberty. This attitude derives from the equally influential view that religion is something primitive of which civilised Governments take notice only to snub it when it comes in the way of those Governments' plans. These plans may aim at making men in the mass 'moral'. Prohibition and the Hindu Code are classic examples. But the 'morals' which Governments are anxious to bolster up are not based on the sanction of religion or the private conscience. They are just rules of social utility like the Rule of the Road. And they can be

changed at will by those who lay them down.

It is this 'scientific humanism' with its empirical, not to say cynical attitude towards religion and morals, that has landed European civilisation in a mess. Seventy-five years after the famous Forster Act conferring the boon of universal literacy was introduced Britain discovered that a godless education was making its children anti-social morons. We need not wait, though our obsequious educationists dare not suggest it, for another century before following Britain and introducing compulsory religious education in our schools. When the degeneration of private morals leads inevitably to public chaos, our rulers may as strenuously seek to repudiate the unwanted child as Viswamitra does in Ravi Varma's famous picture. But the world will not acquit them of the paternity of the evil changeling.

VIGNESWARA

## WHY NOT SEE INDIA DURING THE NEXT HOLIDAYS?

YOU CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF  
CONCESSIONAL  
STANDARD TOUR TICKETS

FIVE SPECIFIED ITINERARIES COVERING PLACES OF  
RELIGIOUS, HISTORICAL &  
SIGHT-SEEING INTEREST

ALSO  
TOURS OF YOUR OWN CHOICE  
APPROVED BY THE RAILWAY

For further particulars apply to:

CHIEF COMMERCIAL SUPERINTENDENT,  
SOUTHERN RAILWAY,  
PARK TOWN, MADRAS.

OR  
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER,  
18-A, Mount Road, MADRAS.

# SIDELIGHTS ::

THERE are occasions in the life of a journalist when a conflict arises between his own safety and the demands of the public interest. To be guided by safety when confronted by such a conflict would mean neglect of the higher purpose of journalism, which is undoubtedly the promotion of the public interest. One such occasion was the Quetta earthquake disaster twenty years ago when I was leader-writer of the *Free Press Journal* in Bombay, edited by the late Sri Sadanand. Immediately after the disaster, the military authorities virtually sealed up the earthquake area with a stringent military cordon and shut out from access to it even veteran leaders in charge of the national relief operations like our present President, Sri Rajendra Prasad. The Government of India were very touchy about any comment in the Press on their way of dealing with the earthquake crisis, and most newspapers, sensitive to the heavy repression-laden atmosphere of the time, maintained a discreet silence. I drafted an article in the way I thought it should be done unmindful of the risk involved, and carried it to Sri Sadanand. I warned him that its publication might land the paper in trouble but that he should not shrink from it if he cared for his editor's duty of being a custodian of the nation's good. He said, "Don't you think this is the task of the Congress organisation?" I replied, "Yes, but as the Congress has done nothing, we should step into the breach." He thought for a moment, then said "If you feel like that, go ahead". I give below the relevant extract from the Quetta article:

"Quetta was a military station with a mixed population of Europeans and Indians. The Government have not, by their past, succeeded in creating the impression that they can be trusted to give equality of treatment, in adversity or prosperity, to Indians and Europeans alike. Already, there is visible a striking disparity in the

## TRUTH AND ACCURACY

To test an article only by the accuracy of the facts it contains is to show an abysmal ignorance of the art of journalism. Any practised journalist can write a column which contains no single mis-statement of fact and which is yet a damned lie from the first word to the last. Similarly, incidental inaccuracies in fact or expression may occur in an article by an honest reporter or editorial writer who, with the sweat of his brow, attempts to reach the truth by a careful balancing of the facts and vigorous expression of his convictions.

—KINGSLEY MARTIN in *The Press The Public Wants*

official arrangements made for the transport of European refugees and the publication of information about European dead, as compared with the manner in which the Indian victims of the disaster have been, and are being handled. The hand of God in the earthquake has not apparently cut across the bedrock of racialism on which British rule rests, and helped it to transfer its moorings to fresh values based on broad humanitarian considerations. . . . Humanity is evidently being sacrificed to misdirected frontier policy."

It sounds very tame stuff, now, after the lapse of twenty years, but when the article was written, in the prevalent panicky setting of conspiratorial Press subservience to official cerebations and ukases it was considered very daring, and it provoked the Government to forfeit a security of Rs. 20,000 that had already been deposited by the *Free Press Journal* and to demand a fresh security of an equal amount. Sri Sadanand rushed into my room with the forfeiture order, shook me by the hand and said he was proud of the *Free Press Journal* that day because it had justified itself as a fearless ser-

vant of the public interest. He was not content with this. He wrote to me:

"I can pay no better tribute to you than what I have paid you publicly, namely, that at a time when I found it difficult to adjust myself to the course of political events, you enabled me to free myself from all work connected with the editorial columns and at the same time day in and day out kept the flag of the *Journal* flying high.

"The forfeiture of security over Quetta will remain in my mind as the happiest incident, because in spite of all our desire to avoid a clash, truth came out of us. In my opinion, no greater tribute can be paid to a journalist than that he is a truly fearless and independent journalist. That you are and by reason of that virtue you are to my mind one of the brightest ornaments to Indian journalism. A few more honest and independent journalists, I am certain, the face of India can be changed."

The people of Bombay rallied handsomely round the valiant F.P.J. and within a day of receipt of the Government's forfeiture order, they subscribed nearly double the amount of the security forfeited.

Another case of conflict with the authorities occurred when I was editor of the *Free Press*, Madras, then owned by Sri S. V. Swamy, which ceased publication some years after I left it. Gandhiji had published in *Harijan* a report from the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee about a death that occurred in a village, Feni, as the result of some soldiers stationed there kicking, with their boots on, some of the villagers. I reproduced the *Harijan* report in the *Free Press*. Madras was then under Advisers' regime and the August revolution (1942) was in full swing. The regime took strong exception to the publication of the *Harijan* extract in the *Free Press* without corroborative testimony from further direct investigation. I replied:

"News about the conduct of troops is of vital interest to the public. It cannot be denied that there have been several instances in which the conduct of soldiers has not been all that could be desired. In the *Harijan* article objected to, the Secretary of the Bengal Congress Provincial Com-

mittee gave a matter-of-fact, strictly objective narration of certain occurrences in Bengal in which several Indian soldiers were alleged to have played a deplorable part. Gandhiji's scrupulous care for truth is well known. Are Government justified in presuming, as they seem to have done, that he had published the news without proper scrutiny? Newspaper editors cannot be everywhere; direct personal investigation by them of all news published is out of the question; they have to depend on information received and judge its reliability from the worth of the sources from which it is received. Are we to suppress reports, even when bearing the authoritative authentication of so great an exemplar of high journalistic standards as Gandhiji, because they deal with the wrong-doing of persons who happen to wear a soldier's uniform?"

There was no answer to my letter from the Government and the matter was dropped.

There was once again an illustration of the traditional conflict of the journalist's calling between safety and duty when I was in the *Indian Express*. There was then a High Court Bench that frequently reversed the acquittals of the lower courts in murder cases and condemned the accused to hanging. Pothan Joseph asked me to write an editorial note on the subject. When it was shown to Sri Ramnath Goenka, he, with that intuitive comprehension of the minds of judges which his experience of courts gave him, smelled trouble, and declared that publication of the article would surely land the paper in contempt proceedings. I said I had merely carried out the instructions of my senior. Joseph felt that if contempt proceedings came, they were not to be dreaded as they would give the paper both national renown and a martyr status. Joseph won the day and Goenka proved to be a true prophet. The High Court hauled the three of us for contempt.

Sir Lionel Leach, the then Chief Justice, was reputed to hold stern views on judges' duty in contempt cases, and the late Sri S. Srinivasa Aiyangar advised us to tender an unqualified apology. When I demurred, he reprimanded me roundly.

He said loyalty to an institution demanded complete abandonment of the pose of personal self-righteousness, and it was petty on the part of an employee to strike an attitude of his own in a crisis, in disregard of the consequences of such an attitude on the public position of other important office-holders in the same organisation. He said, "Do not argue. Do as I bid you. I have the right to command."

This right of his to command went back to a decade in the history of our relations and it arose out of one of my most singular experiences as a writer. The date of it was subsequent to the Lahore Congress which passed a resolution advocating complete independence for the country. I was then on Sri Prakasam's paper *Swarajya*. The peace of post-Lahore Congress politics in Madras was broken by a terrific controversy between the two giants, Prakasam and Srinivasa Aiyangar, on Independence versus Dominion Status. It so happened that in a series of articles, what I thought and wrote in the office corresponded exactly with what Sri Srinivasa Aiyangar thought and wrote at Amzad Bagh at about the same time, and occasionally, the very words were almost the same. But for the accident of prior publication, he should have suspected and convicted me of blatant plagiarism. The phenomenon was so odd and unusual that he could not fail to be impressed by it, and invited me to his house, initiating a close and cordial relationship which lasted till his death, of benevolence from his side and eager admiration from mine.

Sri Prakasam in those days used to sojourn for two or three days in the city, spending the remainder of the month in long tours in interior villages. Spirited apostle of Dominion Status that he then was, he cut short his tour when he read my rhapsodies on complete independence in the paper, and rushed to the office boiling with rage. I was summarily called to the presence; beside himself with anger, he pitched into me without mercy. "You have cut my throat behind my back" he stormed.

Sri Prakasam is one of the most formidable persons I have ever come across, and when roused to fury, he makes everybody quail, but I mustered courage feebly to quote from the very first issue of *Swarajya* a pledge of his that the policy of the Congress would for ever remain the policy of the paper. I remonstrated, as articulately as I could, that he had resiled from his pledge; and before doing what he did, he should have given a chance to the staff telling them of the change of policy and giving them the choice to leave if they felt uninspired by the dull insipid goal of Dominion Status. He became speechless with amazement at my temerity and I thought my day of parting had come and retired to my seat to start packing. By the evening however his anger cooled, as it always did when given time, and calling me to his side and patting me, he said, with extreme gentleness, "All right, all right, have it your own way." He refrained from glorifying Dominion Status afterwards.

In the *Indian Express* contempt case our apology was read in court and published in the paper. We were fined Rs. 250 and at that price and expense the majesty of the judiciary in the land was vindicated. But the offending article served its purpose, nevertheless. Condemnation to death of persons acquitted of murder by lower courts became rare in the Madras High Court thereafter.

In the third year after starting SWATANTRA I received three threats of legal action. The first was from the Pipe Dealers' Association demanding disclosure of the identity of a correspondent "Kay" who had urged that the activities of the Association deserved to be scrutinized by the anti-corruption department. If disclosure was not made in three days, the Association threatened to "take proceedings, civil and criminal, in the matter." I refused to make any disclosure. The second threat was from the proprietors of the Marina Canteen. The Canteen, handed over by the Government to the Corporation, was by the Corpora-

tion leased for a song to the brother-in-law of the then Finance Minister. It was a condition of the lease that the Canteen should not be viewed as a profit-yielding commercial venture but should be run as a model institution. Commenting on the transaction I wrote in SWATANTRA that the idea of running the Canteen as a model institution did not seem to have found favour with the Corporation's lessee and he simply specialised in high charges and insanitary conditions. I was informed that my remarks lowered the reputation of the Canteen and I was asked to tender an unconditional apology and publish the same in SWATANTRA within seven days. Otherwise, I was told, legal proceedings for damages and for defamation would be instituted against me. The third threat was the most interesting of all. It came from the president of a house-building co-operative society. This society commenced its housing operations by dispossessing, to start with, those who were already owners of houses in the area it had taken under its care. It then proceeded to make profit on the property it had thus acquired. I cavilled at this sort of co-operative housing enterprise, and characterised it as an "abomination." Prompt came a threat from the president demanding an unconditional apology in the next issue of the journal, failing which, I was warned, a suit for damages would be filed against me for Rs. 5,100. To all the 1949 threats I replied in one sentence: "The threatened action is awaited." But it never came.

\* \* \*

Accusatory declarations, always risky, may sometimes be commendably conceived and reflect a measure of public spirit, as in the instances cited above; but malice, in whatever context discovered, is a vile offence; it has no place in the journalism SWATANTRA aspires to. When malice is absent, amends for an error committed need not always imply an exhibition in public of a humiliation endured to escape a difficulty. It might well be a dignified act of reparation indicating inevi-

table human fallibility and no more. But to attain this dignity, the amends should not be influenced by dread of consequences and should be limited just to what one would be impelled to say and do in the undeceivable cloister of one's own conscience, where there is no question of courts or convictions, or any other form of external pressure. I endeavoured to act thus in the most recent of my involvements.

This was in connection with a paragraph, written and published under *Sidelights* in SWATANTRA in the Avadi Congress week, accusing the Dalmias of exporting cement to foreign markets, denying supply to their Indian customers in a particular South Indian district. I attached significance to the information that had come to me under the belief that export permits were not given to Indian producers of cement as a rule, and the general cement position in South India was one of inadequate supply. Later, as late as last week, I learned that there was no official interdict on cement exports and throughout 1954 production of cement in South India exceeded regional requirements and it was Government's deliberate policy to encourage the movement of cement into foreign markets. This major premise of which I had been ignorant knocked the bottom out of the syllogism I had made out against the Dalmias. What I had thought to be a struggle in the public interest lost that character. The passage about the Dalmias was to this effect:

"Not long ago, the Dalmias created by manipulation an artificial impression of 'no demand' for cement in a South Indian district (while in reality there was the direst scarcity of that commodity) and managed to get a permit for export of cement to Ceylon and Pakistan. An honest officer of the Madras Government discovered the fraud and took steps to stop the export."

As this passage was based on assumptions which I have since discovered to be incorrect, I regret its publication and the hurt from it to all adversely mentioned therein.

SAKA

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—By SANTHA RUNGACHARY

## STALEMATE IN THE EAST

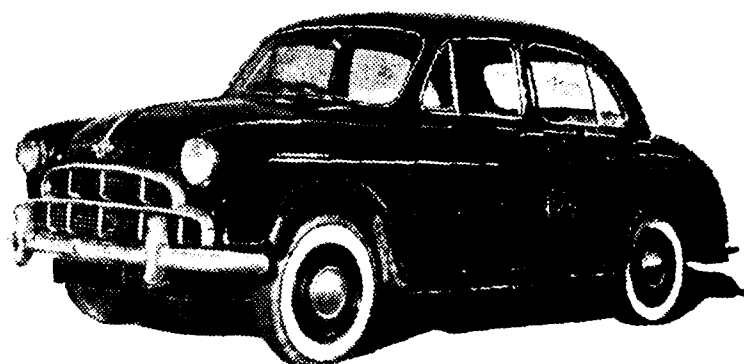
WHAT had been an imminent explosion in the Far East four weeks ago has since settled down into a steady, protracted rumble. The Security Council met at the end of January and voted 9 to 1 with Soviet Russia opposed and Nationalist China abstaining, to consider the tension in the China coastal islands as a "situation threatening international peace and security." It also voted 9 to 1 with Nationalist China opposing and Soviet Russia abstaining to invite the Peoples' Republic of China to take part in a debate on a resolution sponsored by New Zealand. Mr. Chou-En-Lai sent back an uncompromising reply. The Government of the Peoples' Republic of China, he said, holds that only for the purpose of discussing the resolution of the Soviet Union and only when the representative of the Chiang Kai-shek clique has been driven out from the Security Council and the representative of the Peoples' Republic of China is to attend in the name of China can . . . (we) agree to send a representative to take part in the discussions of the Security Council.

The military aspect of the Formosa question is being kept under commendable restraint though, indeed, the situation has lost none of its urgency. It has been known for a certainty ever since the Tachens was evacuated that in a matter of days the communists would have their first shots at the Nationalist-held Quemoy and Matsu group of islands. And the American Congress and top Administration leaders have been asking ever since then what exactly the United States proposed to do in such an eventuality. President Eisenhower has spoken of *closely related localities* which have to be considered in the defence of Formosa and the Pescadores. Would the United States defend Quemoy and Matsu has been the 64 dollar question in America for the last three weeks? *Confusion*, said one Congressman,

had replaced *determination*. With the China Party in the Congress grimly set against *appeasement* President Eisenhower bided for days without making any comment on the plea that it would only *muddy the waters*. But it was evident the initiative was being left to the communists. Ironically enough the man who really muddied the waters was Chiang Kai-shek himself who declared that the United States was committed to the defence of Quemoy and Matsu. That put Washington in a spot. An attitude of silent dignity on the subject could no longer be maintained. But nobody has as yet given a categorically direct confirmation or repudiation of that statement. Early in February, when a Labour member in the House of Commons justified Peking's claim to Formosa, Sir Winston Churchill replied shortly that the Cairo Declaration had been *outdated* by subsequent events. So much for the immutability of man-made treaties. Sir Anthony Eden on another occasion said that though Quemoy and Matsu undoubtedly belonged to the Peking Government any attempt by the Communist government to *assert its authority over these islands by force* would . . . *give rise to a situation endangering peace and security*. Mr. Dulles, having had to mention the subject in a broadcast got himself out of a fix by declaring that the U. S. government was not committed to defending the coastal islands *as such*. *Careful and diplomatic ambiguity*, said the *Baltimore Sun*. The most that one could gather was that if the hand of the U. S. government was forced, she would aim at a *limited war* and adopt a *doctrine of hot pursuit* but not *massive retaliation*. They would, it is believed, make quite a few concessions for establishing a cease-fire.

But it has been fairly obvious that American championship of the offshore islands is clearly questionable. And it is equally obvious that Wash-

## HINDUSTHAN LANDMASTER



★ BIGGER, BETTER AND MORE  
LUXURIOUS THE HINDUSTHAN  
LANDMASTER IS NEW THROUGH  
AND THROUGH



Now on Display at

### RANE (Madras) LTD.

No. 5, Patullos Road, Madras-2

Phone: 85742, 86848

Grams: 'AUTOWORKS'

ington is not unaware of the untenability of its stand in the matter. What the U. S. government is trying to salvage out of the Formosan crisis, so far as one can see, is 'face'. Washington has also been practising one or two delaying and diversionary tactics to give herself time to steel herself to lose 'face' without losing prestige. She offered, for instance, to return 6 fishermen from Hainan Island who had been rescued by the U. S. Air Force last May when their fishing junk was stranded on a reef in the Paracel Islands.

It appears that what Washington is as much apprehensive about as about communist aggressiveness in the Straits of Formosa is the probable loss of Nationalist morale, the loyalty and efficiency of one of the largest allied armies we support, once America takes a stand other than all-out support for Mr. Chiang. Nationalist morale, according to reports, hangs on a shoe-string. Mr. Chiang Kai-shek has been feeding half a million men on hopes for six years upon an overcrowded island. To that number have now been added the refugees from the Tachens. If the United States Government barter the Quemoy and Matsu islands in return for a cease-fire, it is as good as putting *finis* to the Nationalist cause, which is a dying cause, anyway. No imagination, however fantastic, can foresee the Nationalists occupying the mainland again. If in pride or desperation, Mr. Chiang Kai-shek attempts anything on that scale, it would be plainly suicidal.

It is also clear that the Peking government, however substantial its case, is not rushing things, though it is keeping its teeth bared. It is aware that to precipitate a major crisis in the Far East and sting the U. S. to the quick would be as foolish as running the risk of bringing the roof down on one's head to repair a leak in the roof. Moreover, it is unnecessary. It would stand to gain by waiting. It would only be a matter of time until most of its demands are conceded.

A stalemate, then, is what suits all parties best at the present juncture. A breather, so to speak. A stale-

mate, defined President Eisenhower at a recent press conference, is a situation in which *neither side is getting what it desires in this whole world struggle but in which they at least have enough sense to agree that they must not pursue it deliberately and through force of arms.* Militarily, the situation still remains explosive. The finger is on the trigger, but no one is shooting seriously yet. The only hope lies in a compromise by diplomacy, to move, as *The Economist* delicately put it, in stages from a very dangerous position of explosive deadlock to one in which two utterly incompatible points of view can at least be discussed out of the shadow of the guns.

It is unlikely, as at present, that the Formosan crisis will precipitate a major war, though it might well become, if it dragged on long enough, an election issue during the next American Presidential elections. But what is not unlikely is an accidental war, that is, a local fight which would spread and would not be controlled except with outside interference. *The New York Times* quotes Jap Press comment which expresses the prevalent opinion best. *It is a fact, says the Jiji Shimpō, that there is hardly any person who anticipates that this local armed clash will develop into grave consequences. It is also a fact, it adds, that there are few people who believe that there is absolutely no danger.*

#### NEW BOOKS

Decline of Wisdom by Gabriel Marcel Rs. 3-12 as  
New World of The Mind  
by J. B. Rhine Rs. 13- 8 as  
Photo-Technique by H. J. Walls  
—With Illustrations Rs. 18-12 as  
Nanga Parbhat by Karl  
Herrligkoffer with Illustrations.  
The Great Mountain-climbing  
book of 1954 Rs. 15-12 as  
Men Who Ruled India  
by Philip Woodruff 2 vols.  
Rs. 41- 4 as

K. MAHADEVAN  
82-A Royapettah High Road,  
MYLAPORE, MADRAS 4.

# Prosper with the **NATION**

INVEST YOUR SAVINGS IN

GOVERNMENT  
OF INDIA'S

*Small Savings Scheme*

*and  
help  
India's*

- ★ COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
- ★ GREAT RIVER VALLEY PROJECTS
- ★ SOCIAL WELFARE SCHEMES
- ★ RAIL AND ROAD DEVELOPMENT

PUT YOUR MONEY IN

ANY OF THESE ATTRACTIVE GUARANTEED SECURITIES

|                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>12-YEAR<br/>NATIONAL<br/>SAVINGS CERTIFICATES</b>                                                                             | Interest at 4.16 per cent per annum at maturity. Available in denominations of Rs. 5/- to Rs. 5,000/-. Individual holding upto Rs. 25,000/-.              |
| <b>10-YEAR<br/>TREASURY SAVINGS<br/>DEPOSIT CERTIFICATES</b>                                                                     | 3½ per cent interest paid annually. Available in multiples of Rs. 100/- upto Rs. 25,000/-. Individual holding upto Rs. 25,000/-.                          |
| <b>10-YEAR<br/>NATIONAL<br/>PLAN CERTIFICATES</b>                                                                                | Interest at 4½ per cent per annum at maturity. Issued in denominations of Rs. 25/-, Rs. 50/-, Rs. 100/- & Rs. 500/-. Individual holding upto Rs. 1,000/-. |
| <b>POST OFFICE SAVINGS<br/>BANK ACCOUNTS</b>                                                                                     | 2% interest added on deposits upto Rs. 10,000/- and 1½% on balance upto Rs. 15,000/-.                                                                     |
| <b>15-YEAR ANNUITY CERTIFICATES</b>                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                           |
| Issue Prices: Rs. 3,500/-, Rs. 7,000/-, Rs. 14,000/- & Rs. 28,000/-. Individual holding upto Rs. 28,000/-.                       |                                                                                                                                                           |
| Refunded together with compound interest at 3½% per annum in the form of monthly payments spread over a period of fifteen years. |                                                                                                                                                           |

*you are assured of a*

**HANDSOME RETURN FREE OF INCOME TAX**

For further particulars and/or rules governing these investments please write to the National Savings Commissioner Simla, or to the Regional National Savings Officer of your State.

**INVEST IN INDIA'S FUTURE**

March 12 1955

SWATANTRA

15

## THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

By KHASA SUBBA RAU

A month or so after the transfer of power I had occasion to discuss the future of English in India with Sir Archibald Nye, then Governor of Madras. He was of the opinion that if English was not compulsorily banned within a year or two by the new National Government of India, it would manage to survive for ever. His argument ran thuswise: It is in the first flush of freedom that sentimental objection to the use of a foreign language is at its intensest. That is just the time when thought of consequences is least oppressive. Drastic changes are therefore made then more easily than later. If in the first excitement of freedom, English is not straightway abolished as one of the emblematic needs of the new era, later on the intensity of the feeling against it will diminish, and a process of adjustment will take place, affording the English language sufficient security against legal banishment.

As I made no record of Sir Archibald's argument at the time, I have put it in my own words without, I hope, impairing the sense of it materially. One factor, which perhaps he failed to take into due account, has taken the course of events in a direction different from his prediction. With the advent of freedom there has been a resurgence of the demand for linguistic division of the country, and this demand has broken up the cosmopolitan outlook that provided the congenial atmosphere for the spread of English in the days of British rule, even more than State patronage. It is a remarkable fact that it was under foreign government that the unity of India was achieved as a psychological reality, more than in any of the periods when native rulers held the country. Multilinguality became the basis of national integration as British power spread from province to province. There was unrestricted

migration of people from one part of the country to another, and one natural consequence of it was the multiplication of multilingual centres where people speaking different languages drawn from all parts of the country established their homes, feeling quite at home in their new surroundings. This multilinguality was by no means confined to the towns and cities. It became an all-pervasive process and it extended to the rural areas as well as to the urban, though in a lesser degree.

Multilinguality had two effects. It bred a spirit of tolerance for other languages besides one's own, and provincial Governments in India did not limit their concern to any one language deemed *regional*; they took a lively interest in all the languages spoken within their jurisdiction, without conceding priority or importance in accordance with numerical strength. Without any oppressive feeling of majority or minority, people speaking different languages in the composite provincial administrations of the British pattern, felt themselves cherished under a common umbrella of protection and hospitality. For the purpose of inter-communication between different linguistic groups, English fulfilled a role that could be supplied by no other language and it flourished under the double impetus of State support and practical necessity.

With the rise of the spirit of linguism every State is now tending to regard itself as the special patron of a regional language, and languages other than the regional are being driven into forlorn condition in a large part of the country. The passion of linguism is not likely to diminish with the efflux of time, as the excitement of attaining independence might. The real threat to the position of English comes, therefore, not from the momentum of political forces traceable to the attainment of



Prepared from deodorised Neem oil by a special process. Its emollient and antiseptic rich lather removes germs and dirt, goes deep into the pores and cleanses the skin thoroughly. It thus tones up and revitalises the skin. It is delightfully perfumed and is harmless to the tenderest skin.

**A CALCHEMICO PRODUCT**

Madras Office:  
5/149, Broadway,  
MADRAS-1.

freedom but to the reactions of bigotry arising from the insurgence of linguism. We have evidence of this in Bombay where an attempt is being made to ban the use of English in University teaching.

FOR the next ten years, as a result of State action in response to unimaginative popular clamour or engineered fanatic pressures, a progressive decline in the position of English, in educational institutions as well as in public life, may be expected. But this decline seems to be likely to have only a temporary duration. As the first generation of educated youth under the new system of exclusive vernacular teaching are thrown out into life, they are bound to feel at every stage the pinch of inadequate equipment and insufficient knowledge. With appetites roused for knowledge and information, but with facilities for their satisfaction denied, they are sure to turn to some foreign language to supplement the deficiencies of their tuition, and in the rush of this inevitable quest of the future which may begin about ten or fifteen years hence, English will have a far greater appeal and wider spread in India than it ever had, for it will come out of intellectually stimulated mass hunger and not superimposed administrative action. Language is the expression in concrete form of the experience of the race, and it is because of the phenomenal superiority of the English speaking race in economic, scientific and historical achievement, that their language is an incomparable treasure-house of knowledge and culture, such as none of our languages is able to provide even in remote approximation. Only when our experience as a nation outdistances that of which the English language is the compendium, can we dispense with recourse to English with any degree of hope for the sustenance of our present status in the competitive setting of the world's comity of nations. This attractive destiny is certainly unattainable in ten or twenty years. If at all it comes, it will take a couple of centuries at the least.—*Triveni Silver Jubilee Number.*

## SWATANTRA

Malayalam Literary Miscellany

### CONTENTS

Saturday, March 12, 1955

|                                       |    |                                 |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|
| MODERN TRENDS IN MALAYALAM LITERATURE |    | VALMEEKI (Poem)                 |    |
| P. Chandukutty Nair                   | 19 | Vagbhatan                       | 37 |
| FALLEN FLOWER (Poem)                  |    | CHANGAMPUZHA                    |    |
| Kumaran Asan                          | 23 | S. Guptan Nair                  | 38 |
| VALLATHOL'S MAGDALANA MARIAM          |    | THE WORLD-FAMOUS NOSE           |    |
| Adhunika                              | 25 | (Short Story)                   |    |
| A. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI                 |    | Vaikom Muhammad                 |    |
| C. J. Thomas                          | 27 | Basheer                         | 40 |
| BUT . . . (Poem)                      |    | LOOK NOT SO DEEP . . . ! (Poem) |    |
| Vyloppilli Sreedhara                  |    | Changampuzha                    | 43 |
| Menon                                 | 29 | HE MADE US LAUGH                |    |
| "TODAY ME, TOMORROW YOU" (Poem)       |    | T. V. Kunhi Krishnan            | 44 |
| G. Sankara Kurup                      | 31 | TWENTIETH CENTURY MALAYALAM     |    |
| THE SERPENT (Short Story)             |    | POETRY                          |    |
| Karur Nilakanta Pillai                | 32 | K. Ayyappa Panicker             | 47 |

### ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

P. Chandukutty Nair is lecturer in Malayalam at the Government Arts College, Madras . . . Kumaran Asan (1871-1925) along with two other poets of Kerala has the distinction of bringing the Romantic School in Malayalam poetry to a high level of excellence . . . Adhunika, a nom de plume, conceals the name of a critic of note . . . C. J. Thomas is a well known dramatist and critic . . . Vyloppilli Sreedhara Menon is one of the leading poets in Malayalam writing today . . . Mahakavi G. Sankara Kurup is Professor of Malayalam, Maharajah's College, Ernakulam . . . Karur Neelakanta Pillai is a distinguished short story writer and Founder-Secretary of the Writers' Co-operative Society, Kottayam . . . M. P. Paul who has rendered Pillai's Malayalam story for this Literary Miscellany is a stalwart in Malayalam literature: he was the President of the Progressive Writers' Association of Kerala for over a decade . . . Vagbhatan is the pseudonym of a reputed creative writer and critic in Malayalam . . . S. Guptan Nair, lecturer in English at the University College, Trivandrum, is known for his impartial and polite criticism . . . Vaikom Muhammad Basheer is a top-ranking short story writer and novelist in Malayalam . . . Changampuzha Krishna Pillai who died in his thirty-seventh year is a major voice in modern Malayalam poetry, his own being celebrated for its highly musical quality . . . T. V. Kunhi Krishnan, an alert culture contact man is at present engaged in getting some of the English classics translated into the different South Indian languages; he is a keen student of both English and Malayalam literature . . . K. Ayyappa Paniker, lecturer in English at the University College, Trivandrum, is a rising young Malayalam poet.

### In Kerala Now

Like other literatures in the several Indian sister languages, Malayalam began in the devotional way, and the first work we have to reckon with is supposed to be "Ramacharitam."

After a period of Sanskrit influence, Malayalam came into its own with Thunjath Ezhuthachan's classical epics, Adhyatmaramayanam and Mahabharatam, and Kunchan Nambiar's "Ottam Thullals."

The modern renaissance in Malayalam begins with Asan, Ulloor, and Vallathol on the side of poetry and O. Chandu Menon in the field of prose fiction with his novel, "Indulekha."

What we have offered here does in the least claim to be a representative anthology; it just brings within a short compass a significant cross-section in the creative and the critical in modern Malayalam writing.

## "NICCO CABLES"

*Manufactured by*

**The National Insulated Cable Co. of India Ltd., Calcutta.**

Are the cables of your choice for they give you more satisfaction.

For your requirement of V.I.R., C.T.S. Lead Covered Weather proof cables and flexibles, SCC and DCC Enamelled Copper and Motor ignition, Wires

PLEASE CONTACT

**P. NATESAN & CO. LTD.,**  
10, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS-2.

*The Agents of:*

**The National Insulated Cable Co. of India Ltd., Calcutta.**  
For Madras State.

## HAVE YOU READ THESE?

|                                                                                     | Rs. | As. | Ps. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| History and Legend in Hyderabad                                                     | 1-  | 0-  | 0-  |
| New Hyderabad Series in Telugu, Marathi, Urdu and Kannada, Each copy                | 0-  | 2-  | 0-  |
| 1. Planning                                                                         |     |     |     |
| 2. Land Reforms                                                                     |     |     |     |
| 3. Labour                                                                           |     |     |     |
| 4. Tribal Welfare                                                                   |     |     |     |
| 5. Cooperation                                                                      |     |     |     |
| 6. Education                                                                        |     |     |     |
| 7. Cottage Industries                                                               |     |     |     |
| Jhankar (Urdu)                                                                      | 0-  | 4-  | 0-  |
| Our Legislators (M.L.As., M.Cs. and M.Ps.) in Marathi Kannada and Telugu, Each copy | 0-  | 4-  | 0-  |
| Kathanika Guchcham (Telugu Short Stories)                                           | 0-  | 12- | 0-  |
| Oregallu (Kannada Short Stories)                                                    | 1-  | 0-  | 0-  |
| Some aspects of Hyderabad                                                           | 1-  | 0-  | 0-  |
| Bhoodan or Land Through Love                                                        | 1-  | 0-  | 0-  |

(Postage extra)

### HYDERABAD TODAY

Published in five languages English, Telugu, Urdu, Marathi and Kannada

Annual Subscription Rs. 2 only

Obtainable from:

**DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

HYDERABAD-DECCAN.

## MODERN TRENDS IN MALAYALAM LITERATURE

By P. CHANDUKUTTY NAIR—

THOUGH Kerala lies insignificantly in a corner of the peninsula and its language is spoken but by a comparatively small section among India's millions, the literature of Kerala has nothing to fear from a comparison with the other literatures of the sub-continent. We have had in the past writers as original and gifted as any in sister languages, nor is recent Malayalam writing devoid of powerful and gifted artists in almost every literary genre, in the novel or the short story, in poetry or dramatic writing. The purpose of this essay is just to notice the more important of the new trends in the modern literature of Kerala.

It cannot be gainsaid that the overall effect of the British occupation of our country has been discouraging, if not detrimental, to Indian patterns of culture. But, strangely enough, the acquaintance with Western and particularly English literature beginning in the closing decades of the last century, has been definitely and extensively beneficial to literature in Kerala. Even Kunchan Nambiar, who was the first to attempt the linking of poetry with contemporary life, did not depart from the classical tradition which concerned itself exclusively with the vast store of puranic themes. And nobody bothered to take Kunchan Nambiar's hint, and poetry continued to flow smoothly and insipidly along the old channels for another two hundred years after his death. It was the growing familiarity with English which finally set the language free from classical bonds. Prof. Raja Raja Varma heralded the birth of romanticism through his pseudo-critical writings, and the first star soon rose in the new sky: V. C. Balakrishna Panikkar. Romanticism

naturally brought about comprehensive changes in the writers' choice of subjects and their treatment of them. Literature began to concern itself with live themes of social significance and what was even more important, it began to admit personal experience cast in lyrical moulds. By this time, the idea of freedom had taken firm root in the country, and in the heart-searching endeavours of our people to fashion themselves into instruments to wrest independence, the national consciousness began to function more acutely and vigorously, making the environment for the new literature more dynamic than it would have been otherwise. The Congress movement made the people increasingly aware of themselves not merely in the political context, but also in the social. The Romantic Movement reached its greatest heights of glory in the three poets whose names are household words in Kerala: Kumaran Asan, Ulloor, and Vallathol. It is almost entirely due to this great trinity that the Romantic Period has come to be universally recognized as the Golden Age of Malayalam Literature. And if we look round at those writing poetry today, we will find that the more significant of them are very much the offspring of the Romantic Movement.

It is but natural that changes in the social climate should raise echoes or cause corresponding changes in literature. In the decade or the decade and a half before the second world war, the entire country was, economically and culturally, in a wretched plight. Every problem began acutely calling for solution. The restlessness, dissatisfaction, and misery engendered by chronic unemployment and poverty began to get mirrored in poetry. It is in the work

of Edapalli and Changampuzha that this spirit of universal defeatism first finds its strongest expression. These two, especially the latter poet, Changampuzha, were amazingly popular, more popular than any other in Malayalam, except, perhaps, Vallathol himself. The reasons for such enviable mass-appeal are not far to seek. Their poems were about themes and problems and emotions which were uppermost in men's minds. They spoke in a language which almost anybody could understand. Their verses were wrought in enchanting rhythms traditionally familiar, and with words specifically melodious. Their poems could be sung. Since they wrote from the heart of experiences which they shared with their unhappy fellow-creatures, there was an unmistakable ring of sincerity in their outpourings.

It is with such faithful portraiture of the inward and outward life of the common people that the defeatist mentality of realism superseded in poetry the bright faith and aspirations of romanticism. Though sporadic exercises in realism had been attempted even before, it came to stay as a literary force only from the 'thirties onwards. Realism also effected desirable changes in the external forms of poetry. Poets began mostly to write in old verse-forms that had been forgotten but were eminently musical, and Sanskrit metres were almost totally banished. For these progressive changes, Kerala remains indebted to Changampuzha and Edapalli, both of whom were tragically cut off before their youthful promise could flower in full.

At about the same time, mysticism began to make itself felt, as a result of the wide popularity enjoyed by Rabindranath Tagore in the country and also the discovery of Persian mystic poetry by writers. G. Sankara Kurup is the most convincing of those who have attempted the mystic vein. Mysticism is, in its positive aspect, the introspective pursuit of the most difficult secrets of the soul, but is it not also, artistically, consequent to the desire to stand apart from the diurnal wretchedness

of existence on this heavy planet? But the new plant did not flourish, perhaps because of the insufficiency of personal experience or because of the feebleness of imitators.

The Second World War saw the beginning of a rather violent trend in the approach to literature. The global nature of the conflict brought about remarkable changes in the social and economic spheres. As the war gathered momentum, inflation and near-famine conditions harassed the populace beyond endurance, and imparted new vigour to the struggle for national emancipation. Radical economic doctrines began to find favour with the masses. The world began to shrink under increasing control of distances, and its countries to impinge in complex ways on the popular consciousness. Great interest in scientific thought and in the new sciences of the mind went hand in hand with a desire to seek edification in the great literatures of the world. All this helped to considerably widen mental horizons, and effect particular changes in the mind and art of the creative writer. In the new environment, these deviations created what is known as progressive literature.

CHANGES were first noticed in the subject-matter of poetry. The lover breathing like a furnace and the yearning of the individual soul for the universal Atman were all banished and poets concentrated on the under-dog in society for most of their inspiration. They were rebellious about the predicament of the exploited masses and passionate about moulding society nearer to their heart's desire. The changes within were matched by changes in the language and form of poetry. Poetry was deliberately so written that it might be within the mental grasp of the humblest citizen.

A little later, it came to be felt that it was not sufficient just to depict and analyse the fraud and cruelty intrinsic to capitalistic society. A progressive poet ought to indicate the course men should take to deracinate the evils which pervade society, and, at the same time, sketch in enchant-

ing outline the paradise on earth awaiting a society marching on in equality and proletarian brotherhood. It is thus that the realism of the 'thirties, which we noticed earlier, unrolled into the darker colours of progressive realism and socialist realism.

These developments concentrated the attention of the poet on his subject-matter and the practice of the art itself deteriorated. The goddess of poetry was thrown down from her pedestal, and, instead, the vulgar deity with a million mouths, Society, set up on it. The writing of poetry became an exercise in propaganda, and but another weapon to destroy existing society. Therefore it is not astonishing to find critics lamenting the degradation of Poesy in recent years. Nevertheless, outstanding moderns like G. Sankara Kurup, V. Sridhara Menon and others have written and are still writing genuine poetry. At the present day, it is heartening to find a different approach to their art in the younger poets. They obviously have rediscovered that social reform is an incidental function of poetry, and that poetry cannot be manufactured to outside orders but must quicken into life from within to have more than a transient value or existence.

MODERN developments in literary forms like the novel, the drama, and the short story more or less follow the modifications in poetry. The first novels written in Malayalam were those by O. Chandu Menon and C. V. Raman Pillai. Their novels are to be noticed not just because they are the first specimens of the form in the language, but also because they happen to be items in its treasurehouse. Unfortunately, novels written after them have seldom merited much attention. Scores of novels were produced, but being merely translations of foreign novels or their weak imitations, they have, very properly, vanished into limbo. It is a sad fact that textbook committees, now and then prescribing such novels as text-books, vainly attempt to bring the dead back to life. Apart from its own weak-

ness, the novel lost ground with the growing achievement, in another form—the short story.

With the publication of C. V. Raman Pillai's historical *Marthandavarma*, romantic novels began to be attempted in Malayalam. A few of them are creditable, and one such is K. M. Panikkar's *Kerala Singam*. The deservedly famous and lovely *Indulekha* of Chandu Menon is the forerunner of the realistic novel. But it took a long time before the new species established itself.

It was when writers who had achieved success with the short story set themselves to novel-writing, that better days dawned for the novel. The new novelists did not confine themselves to noting down the life and loves of a few socially superior persons, and went out into the wide world to portray life lived at less fortunate but not less interesting or significant levels. Their novels began to show the influence of the theories of Freud and his followers, and new advances in socio-economic thought. The best products of this recent phase are Thakazhi's *Rantitangazhi*, Kesava Dev's *Odayilninnu*, Basheer's *Balyakalasakhi* and *Entuppapakkorantarnu*, and Pottakkatt's *Vishakanyaka*. It can confidently be asserted that any language can be proud of such achievements as are seen in these novels. If the present-day novel continues to make headway, we can be fairly certain that within not too long a period of time, Malayalam will acquire a considerable body of superior fiction.

In the literary activities of modern Kerala, the greatest achievement has been in the field of the short story. In both numbers and quality, the Malayalam short story can match, if not surpass, its prototype in any other Indian language. Familiarity with the work of Maupassant and Tchekhov paved the way for advancement in technique, and imparted such creative power to the short story as it had not had before. The enormous increase in journals and periodicals made the short story extensively popular and contributed greatly to its progress. The language bene-

fitted from such spread of the short story. Since it was meant for the widest possible reception, its language and style became lucid, simple and unsophisticated. Modern psychology began to assert itself even more in the short story than in the novel. The new factor did not function all to the good. That was because very many of the stories fashioned in accordance with psychological theories happened to lack literary beauty. An unhealthy, even morbid, concentration on vulgar and perverted manifestations of the venereal desire treated without restraint, hardly ever served the alleged purpose of the writer so bent. The exposure of filth without aesthetic control will not cleanse but soil people's minds. Notwithstanding, the short story made great progress till very recently. The foremost among its modern exponents is Thakazhi. Realism invaded the short story mainly through his work. Other successful practitioners are Basheer, Pottakkatt, Kesava Dev, and P. C. Kuttikrishnan. These, and nearly a dozen more who could be mentioned, are as outstanding as any other group of short story writers in India today. Short stories continue to be manufactured at a great rate in Kerala, today, yet we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that, with the writers of the short story turning their energies to the novel and other literary forms, there is, at the present time, a noticeable decline in standards.

The drama tells a slightly different story. It was at first the result of imitation and translation from Sanskrit originals. A few operas were composed, based on Tamil originals. This tradition was first modified by farces written by C. V. Raman Pillai and E. V. Krishna Pillai, who imitated English farce-makers. In their innovations and those of their followers, the aim was only to amuse the audience. Later, social and historical plays of more serious nature were produced, but they will stand the test of time, happily, we think, brightly. This is due to the

repercussions on the dramatic art of Kerala by the revolution wrought on the European continent by Ibsen and Shaw. Dramas began to show signs of being aware of the life around it, and the standard, if not mechanical, reactions of classic characters to give place to impressive conflicts in the lives of real men and women. New techniques facilitated the treatment of what was now becoming one of the main preoccupations in the dramatist's mind—the concern with social problems and themes. But this welcome realistic trend was later driven into an exaggeration of itself, and dramatic writing became realistic in such fixed moulds that a drama could not be written which did not abound in lament, hysteria, madness and suicide and suchlike blood and thunder. The function of a progressive dramatist is not merely to excite pity in the audience by portraying the bottommost layers of society. They must expose the sources of social injustices and evil, and thus help in social improvement. This is what has been attempted by Ibsen and Shaw. Therefore, though there is no shortage of plays turned out today, we are still waiting for a writer whose work will add to the heritage of our literature.

THIS necessarily brief look at the modern literature of Kerala shows, how, after the great tidal wave of Romanticism, there has not been an uninterrupted ebbing away of literary vigour. Realism itself, before it reached the stagnation of its later 'progressive' stages, was a striking-out on new paths. In the last two or three decades, there has been all-round experiment and bold innovation and effort and achievement. But it is distressing to find no writer of adequate promise in very recent years. We are reminded of Joad's remarks on 'our age' in England, castigating it as uncreative, without art and without beauty, and its writers so totally lacking in genius. Let us hope that this unfertility will prove to be merely temporary.

### FALLEN FLOWER By KUMARAN ASAN

AH, lovely bloom, once thou didst shine  
High like a Queen!  
How sad thou liest now in dust,  
Shorn of thy sheen!  
Inconstant is Fortune on earth,  
Impermanent is Loveliness.

Dearly the creeper gave thee birth  
And tended thee,  
Within its leafy bosom soft,  
So lovingly,  
And stirred by the gentle gale the leaves  
Lisp'd low and long thy lullaby.

Bathing in the milky moonlight  
Full heartily,  
And sporting in the morning sun,  
Serene, carefree,  
Daily thy childhood thou didst spend  
Amid the blithesome buds and bright.

Thou learntst the songs of birds of morn  
With deep delight,  
Thou learntst Life's secret upon earth  
During the night,  
Lifting thy eager little head  
Toward the twinkling crowd of stars.

And growing thus thy features showed  
Charms exquisite;  
Thy countenance did slowly change,  
Thy cheeks were lit,  
O Flower, with a new-born light,  
A new-born smile through them did flit.

Lovesome loveliness, purity,  
Meekness and sheen,—  
Such fleckless attributes of youth,  
To things terrene,  
Do they compare? 'twas a sight to see  
Thy glorious state of golden prime.

Alas, alas, my darling bloom,  
Upon thee Death,  
He placed his pitiless hands and froze  
Thy perfumed breath;  
Doth a hunter in the woodland reck  
A vulture or a dove he kills?

The lustre of thy lovely limbs  
Grew faint and fled,  
And o'er thy shining visage sweet  
A pallor spread;  
Life's oil dried, fast wither'd thou,  
Life's flame flicker'd in thee and died.

Blown by the morning breeze adown  
The spiry stem,  
O Flower, thou fell; couldst thou be  
A bright star-gem?  
Or a Being come upon earth,  
Content with drinking bliss divine?

Thy soul that boundless greatness holds  
Though it lay low,  
Upon the dust like to a pearl  
Void of its glow,  
Thy beauty's glorious glorie  
Undimm'd did seem to shine away.

And soon small spiders wove thy white  
Soft silken shroud,  
And Dawn with tender hands did deck  
(In death yet proud)—  
Thee with a chaplet gaily strung  
With dewdrops like to peerless pearls.

And grief-struck at thy fall the stars  
In dewy tears rain,  
Whilst from the densely-leaved trees  
Sparrows in pain,  
Do drop on earth and clust'ring thee,  
They chirp a shrill continual wail.

Behold! What dread disaster dire  
Has come apace;  
And dolour that would melt a stone  
Bedims day's face;  
The sun slides down the mountain slope,  
Pale, sorrowing; the wind sighs deep.

O, why wert thou so rich-bestowed  
With virtues great?  
O, why shouldst thou be smitten thus  
By baleful Fate?  
Who could fathom the mystery  
Of creation? The good die soon.

Like as a star that slowly sets  
In the western sea,  
And rises o'er the eastern mount  
In white jubilee,  
O Flower, thou mayst on Meru great  
Bloom on the Kalpak branch again!

The words upanishadic wise  
To us give peace;  
Only to people ignorant,  
Self-torture is  
Solace in sooth. Keep faith in such;  
The rest as God ordains will be.

O eyelids, fold on humid eyes!  
For soon this bloom  
Will shrivel, rot, and turn to dust;  
This is the doom  
For all; and what can tears avail?  
Alas, our life is but a dream!

(Rendered from the original MALAYALAM by Manjeri S. Isvaran)  
By courtesy of TRIVENI where it first appeared: Vol. V. No. 1. July-August 1932

## VALLATHOL'S

## MAGDALANA MARIAM

By ADHUNIKA

VALLATHOL'S poetic sensibility finds openings not only in strange and out-of-the-way subjects for his art—so different from that of the classical poets—but in his unique handling of metre. It is he who rescued Malayalam poetry from the crushing weight of Sanskritic metres with their rigid rules, and in restoring it to its original garb improved that garb: the Dravidian metre.

His *Magdalana Mariam* is typical for its out-of-the-wayness as well as for its verse pattern. The theme is from the Bible. The only material Vallathol has had for this poem is a meagre Malayalam rendering of the bare outlines of the story of Mary Magdalen as narrated in the Gospel. Yet this little work is permeated with the spirit of the age and the country where the scene is laid. The poet has only his imagination to draw upon. And to speak of the metrical composition of the poem: there is an eternal caesura after the sixth syllable in every line; each couplet—a hexametre line followed by a pentametre line—is a distinct unit, both metrically and in meaning. Vallathol gets over this monotony by shifting the caesura into different positions; his lines run on one into the next; and he groups them into stanzas of varying size, thus adding colour and variety to the metre.

Apart from its intrinsic pulchritude *Magdalana Mariam*, has a special value in unfolding the range of Vallathol's poetic vision. He has handled a theme so alien to him in culture and ethos with a freedom reined in by an admirable restraint. An error, rather a misconception, has to be removed at the outset for a clear understanding of the theme.

Mary, known as Mary Magdalene, is first mentioned in Luke 7, 2. Jesus Christ cured her of an inveterate disease and exorcized seven devils out of her. "She proved her gratitude to Jesus by the most devoted adherence to him. She served him with her property, attended him on his journeys

and wept at his crucifixion. She was the last to leave his grave and the first to visit it on the morning of the resurrection and to behold her risen Lord." (*Encyclopaedia Americana*).

Mary Magdalene is confused with the unnamed fallen woman, who in Simon's house anointed Christ's feet, and appears in Western Hagiology as a harlot restored to purity and elevated to sainthood by repentance and faith. It is of this fallen woman that the Malayalam poem treats. (Luke 7, 37-50):

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now, when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touched him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

In the construction of nation's **MIGHTY PROJECTS**

**DURGA  
BRAND**



**PORTLAND CEMENT**  
*is playing its VITAL PART*

Manufactured by

**THE ANDHRA CEMENT CO. LTD.**

REGISTERED OFFICE:  
POST BOX NO 1896  
337, THAMBU CHETTY ST.  
G.T. MADRAS-1  
TELE (Phone: 3502  
Grams: ANDHRACEM

FACTORY OFFICE:  
POST BOX NO 301  
BUCKINGHAMPET POST  
VIJAYAWADA-2  
TELE (Phone: 557 (R.B.U.)  
Grams: CEMENTS

*Extensively used in*  
**TUNGABHADRA AND MACHKUND PROJECTS**

*Available with our Stockists throughout*  
**ANDHRA STATE & MADRAS CITY**

Managing Agent

**THE ANDHRA ENGINEERING CO., LTD.**  
RAJAHMUNDRY

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they sat at meat with him and began to say within themselves, who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

There is, however, one discrepancy in the poem where Vallathol makes Mary to anoint Christ's head (Section V, Line 63) whereas in the Gospel it is his feet that Mary anoints. The effect of this departure is apparent in the succeeding stanzas; it quite fits in with what is in the *Song of Solomon* where Christ is represented as the lover and the faithful votary as the loved one.

It is true there is an element of classicism in Vallathol's poetry. He is full of the conventional ideas and imageries of the classical poets. But he presents them in a new setting with the impress of his own individuality. He is an adept at scenic presentation. Half a dozen words and there is a full picture. The subdued moonlight and the stars gazing down: the quiet street of an oriental town—we see the whole vivid atmosphere in the first few lines in the second section of the poem:

Ye stars that shine in heavens high  
Why look'st thou down so steadfastly?  
Has anyone from midst your throng  
Fallen on the earth below?

Ay, 'tis a starlike shape that beams  
Upon the street this house doth stand!  
Or better, 'tis a sister sheen  
Unto this jasmine white moonlight.

Or, his economy in communicating Mary's consciousness of her sin, through commonplace externals that assume harrowing significance, in the fourth section:

When in the gleaming cage of gold  
The emerald plumed parrot lisp'd:  
"Look, lady dear, look, lady dear,  
Here are a hundred golden pounds,"—  
It beat upon her ears the heat  
Of Satan's foul and hideous yell.

When from the flower garden nigh  
(Where humming bees did fly about),  
Honey-besprinkl'd gales blew in  
And swelled the silken screens that  
hung

O'er diamonded casements wide—  
To her their bellying folds did seem  
To murmur thus: "Beware! Beware!"

And if to fan her body soft  
With beauteous golden-handled fans,  
Or if to smooth her lotus feet  
Her servants came and stood around,  
She whistled as if she were hemmed  
By flaming white Wills-o'-the-wisps.

Malayalam with its long syllables, slow movement, flexibility and vocalic finals can produce at once a sonorous and soporific sweet effect. *Magdalana Mariam* achieves this almost without a flaw. It ends on a note of serene, spiritual exaltation: "This *Chatak* bird (Mary) will never know drouth."

Reading the poem one is strongly reminded of James Elory Flecker's *Mary Magdalen*; no comparison between the two poems is intended; the curious may be interested to note how two poets of different race, religion, and tongue have handled the same theme, each in his own way and tellingly. Here is Flecker:

O eyes that strip the souls of men!  
There came to me the Magdalen.  
Her blue robe with a cord was bound,  
Her hair with knotted ivy crowned.  
"Arise," she said, "God calls for thee,  
Turned to new paths thy feet must be.  
Leave the fever and the feast.  
Leave the friend thou lovest best:  
For thou must walk in barefoot ways.  
On hills where God is near to praise."  
Then answered I: "Sweet Magdalen,  
God's servant, once beloved of men,  
Why didst thou change old ways for  
new,

Thy trailing red for corded blue,  
The rose for ivy on thy brow  
That splendour for this barren vow?"  
Gentle of speech she answered me:—  
"Sir, I was sick with revelry:  
True, I have scarred the night with sin,  
A pale and tawdry heroine;  
Yet once I heard a voice that said,  
'Who lives in sin is like one dead,  
But follow: thy dark eyes shall see  
The towns of immortality.'"

"O Mary, not for this, "I cried,  
"Didst thou renounce thy scented pride  
Not for the roll of endless years  
Or fields of joy undewed by tears  
Didst thou desert the courts of men,  
Tell me the truth, grave Magdalen!"  
She trembled, and her eyes grew dim—  
"For love of Him, for love of Him."

(Continued on page 37)

## A. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: A TRADITIONALIST WITH A TORCH

By C. J. THOMAS

YOU alight from the Cochin Express. A bus is ready at the stand just in front of the railway station to take you to Parur, a small town in North Travancore. There lives Mr. A. Balakrishna Pillai. Who is he? An advocate? A physician? In Parur none, except a few, knows him; and that makes your mission difficult. Evidently you are unfamiliar with the topography of that small town. You have come all the way from—only to have a *darshan* of Mr. Pillai and to get some advice from him. You may be a novelist, poet or one interested in literature. How to get at him? Which way to go? At last your searching eyes find someone who can, you think, be of help to you. Will you kindly guide me to—what is he? A scholar, critic, famous writer—sorry, I don't know. Are you sure that he lives in Parur? You were! But now you try to reassure yourself. If so, better go to Pappukutty Vakil. Perhaps he can help you.

From various places stretching from Kasargod to Cape Comarin writers, young and old, well-known and promising coming to meet Mr. Pillai had to encounter the same situation. Strange, but it is true. This man is famous all over Kerala. He lives somewhere in Parur. Yet the local people are not aware of this fact. No, it is not their fault. Nor is it Mr. Pillai's. Then—?

### II

MODERN Malayalam literature is quite a new thing not more than thirty years old. Its basic nature is humanism arising out of the contacts with various cultures. Its chief preceptor is the West. The three channels which carried Western culture to the land of the coconuts were British Rule, Christian religion, and A. Balakrishna Pillai. Of these the first was merely atmosphere-making except where "Lessons in English

History" made young brains dream of Indian Magna Cartas and Indian Boadiceas. The first instalment of Christianity came direct and as such could not import anything from the West. (In fact at this period it was that Christianity got baptised into indigenous conditions). But the second instalment of Christianity via Lisbon and London inaugurated a period of conflict and construction. Bengal and Kerala got the doubtful benefit of the Bible. In both these states every aspect of culture has been coloured by it. It was on this historical background that Mr. Pillai, a conscious evangelist of western learning as he is, began to work. He is neither a Christian nor a blind admirer of the West. Deep down in his soul he is absolutely Indian. But he is aware of what had happened to the much-vaunted Indian *Samskara*. It had, like every other culture in its decline, forgotten its real greatness and become the tissue paper in which it was packed. Mr. Balakrishna Pillai delved into the caverns of the Great Indian Heritage. His torch shed light on many an important value, but he took a malicious pleasure, so to say, in holding the torch to the moth-eaten palm leaves which harboured various types of vermin that did not know the value and historical importance of those leaves except, perhaps as food. The torch he used was made in the West, i.e., Rationalism.

Those who assiduously research on this man will find that he is a cause with a remote effect. He has been teacher, journalist, lawyer, politician, critic, historian, archaeologist and what not? During his active career he was an academy (with its original spelling and function!). Throughout his life he has broadcast ideas many of them strange. What ogish crop these dragon's teeth produced, no one can say for certain; because at this period lesser luminaries also were shedding their small modicum

of light. But we can be sure of one thing: Mr. Balakrishna Pillai had a lion's share in introducing the best trends and tendencies of Western Letters into Malayalam. He was not just a translator or a commentator. He had his own ideas of men and matters. Every inch a revolutionary, he had to encounter many difficulties in disseminating those among the people, ideas especially among the superstition-ridden section. The very word revolutionary, unless precisely explained, is rather misleading in these days of shibboleth-mongering. Mr. Pillai is a revolutionary in the real sense of the word. His watchword is change; every step of his aims at progress. He believes and propagates that the pre-requisite of a genuine revolution in our country is what he calls a far-reaching and radical psychic change—a revolution in the mode of thinking and behaviour. He conceives the human mind as an augean stable reeking with the deposited dung-heap and dirt of ages. Once in a speech replying to the felicitations of friends on his Shastyabdpoothy he claimed that he was only drilling holes in a rocky hill, the hill of popular superstition and prejudice. Once the dynamite of ideas are filled in those holes and exploded along with the smoke, sparks and splinters, the deep-rooted layers of irrationalism would get cracked. To do it one needs to be patient. If you simply throw an acid bulb on the rock the bulb will burst asunder without any consequence. And to do such things he maintains is childish; those who indulge in such cheap antics are either clowns or cowards wearing the mask of revolution. No wonder, the Communists during their Zhdanov-cum-Ranadive-inspired reckless adventurism found in Mr. Balakrishna Pillai their formidable opponent. As usual they showered on him their Soviet-imported epithets—formalist, decadent etc. But the old man accepted this malicious campaign with a philosopher's typical dispassion. Perhaps he might have enjoyed the pranks amusedly. Thanks to the Co-existence principle, now they refer to him 'as a good old fel-

low' who has done some very wonderful things in the realm of literature. At best he is a critical realist to them, waiting to be dethroned by a full-fledged socialist-realist who is undergoing a rehearsal in the cloak room of Clio.

### III

ACCORDING to Mr. Pillai prejudice born of man's slavery to his emotions causes much havoc in the world. A world in which reason rules will be kinder and more tolerant. This is his Utopia. This Universal Catharsis he calls a Psychic Revolution. That is the thing and that alone can deliver the goods. All other revolutions only shift man's burdens from one shoulder to another. Man is free only when he becomes free from his own evil. Does this Gentile's gospel sound pretty close to the core of Indian thought? If that is the case, there is the difference too. He is not a fanatic. He is not just out to save anybody! His favourite story is that of Prometheus. He believes that cots are made for men though some people through some strange dialectics have come to the conclusion that men are to be made to suit the cots.

All his life he has been a research student, Pre-history being his option. He claims to have rediscovered *Kalpa kala ganitha*. This is a system of chronology by which pre-historic dates can be asserted. What are these dates? He would answer: the birth of Vishnu, the death of Siva (who by the way is an Arab), the birth of Adam and so on and so forth. These things look queer. No historian has so far confirmed all his conclusions. And by and large, he says that his system is only pseudo-scientific. In such a situation it is safe for us neither to challenge nor to accept his arguments. But it can't be denied that he has thrown a flood of light on many a problem in history. Chinese professors have thanked him for helping them to fix certain dates in Chinese pre-history. His view that the submerged Dwaraka-Atlantis is in the Persian Gulf, his story of the migration of the Dravidians to South-

India via Lybia from Egypt and Sumer and his statement that Arabia is the original home of human culture deserve respectful attention of historians and scholars. It may be difficult for us to swallow the suggestion that all the Hindu pantheons were real men who lived, once upon a time, in Arabia. But if ever it be proved that his Kalpa chronology is correct it will knock the bottom of all the world's caste, colour, or race prejudices. At present Mr. Balakrishna Pillai is working on a book (in English) in which he wants to sum up all his inferences in this field. What the layman today can understand is only that for him history is a series of time cycles of varying length, with great events recurring themselves on a different plane. It is difficult to oppose his theories while it is practically impossible to agree with him! Where you agree with his arguments he will force you to disagree with his conclusion. In case you find yourself agreeing with his inferences it may turn out to be for the wrong reasons. His brain knows no order, no dimensions. It is chaos shot through

with flashes of lightning intensity—the resultant pattern being intelligible to nobody. He talks of the marriage of Osiris as if it took place in the calendar year. His notions of good and bad, truth and falsehood and such multilevel concepts he has, and the incongruity of his theories make him appear crazy—a Van Gogh in thought. He is an iconoclast, but one who does not build others on the empty pedestal. He values tradition—as every one who believes in evolution has to—but not all things old. His touchstone for everything, whether it be science, philosophy or art, is Man. The path he points out to humanity is the nobler man until you watch the superman alias God on earth. His views have earned for him all kinds of enemies. But for some people he is the superman of the times, standing like a champion of man, with his head in the clouds, bathed in the glory of being an Enemy of the People. The rare occasions when people write of him he is named Socrates, but in the *avantgarde* circles he is just the beard—not blue, but pure white!

### BUT . . .

By VYLOPPILLI SREEDHARA MENON

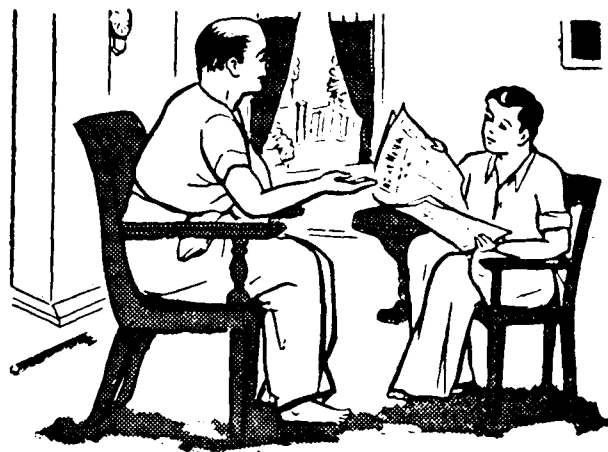
ON a hill I stood and beheld everything,  
The first throb, the blooming of flower and man,  
I heard philosophies various, heard too  
Christ's bewailing, and the genuine bliss  
Of Art on the Cross.

Heaven and hell I witnessed and the secret caverns  
Of the human heart that supplied the clay to mould them.

I stood, I grew: whither my steps  
The sky watched, blue with fearful curiosity;  
Spinning carefree pastoral melodies  
A damsel along the valley came;  
My heart echoed her tunes, my pole-white wings  
Nestled in her embrace.

My son, ten or twenty years hence,  
Might stand on the same hill, but . . .

(Rendered from the original MALAYALAM by C. P. Gopinath)



Son: "Dad what is **INDIAN MUTUAL**?"

Father: "Son, you mean **INDIAN MUTUAL LIFE ASSN.**.....  
Yes, it is an Indian and a Mutual Insurance Institution."

Son: "What is it, Dad, and is it good?"

Father: "Yes, my son, it is Insurance on Ideal Lines,  
**SERVICE** to the public being its only objective."

Son: "Then it must be **GOOD** and **BIG**."

Father: "Yes, son, it is really **GOOD** and **PAYING**. The **WISE**  
always insure with it as its rates are low and bonus  
is high. Started by Policy-holders themselves without  
Capital, it has now over Rupees One Crore and Seventeen  
lakhs. It is a co-operative effort by the insuring public  
themselves."

Son: "Dad, very good. Where is this Assn.?"

Father: "Though started in Madras, it has offices all over India."

*For all your Insurance PROBLEMS, please contact:*

**Indian Mutual Life Assn. Ltd.,**

10, Mount Road, Madras-2.

Branches & Agents all over India.

**"TODAY ME, TOMORROW YOU"**

BY G. SANKARA KURUP

**"T**ODAY me, tomorrow you,"  
These words still echo in me.

While the shadow of the roadside tree  
Quickly grew into a grim big ghost;  
While dry leaves fell down  
Trembling in mortal fear and fainted;  
While the dying wind  
Breathed heavily in spasms;  
While North, South, East and West  
Stood around in silent reverence  
To place the corpse of Day  
In the coffin of the sky,  
Covered with silk, bedecked with stars,  
Ready to bear it;  
While Eve, kissing her father's coffin,  
Shivered and swooned—  
I stood alone on that road  
While, like life,  
Showed neither beginning nor end.

Birds sang not, nor did leaves ruffle.  
The very earth looked numb.  
From the church, close by,  
The bell struck a mournful note.

The white clouds, descending,  
Seemed like winged angels  
Coming down to kiss the Cross—  
The Cross that though dumb,  
Sings aloud  
The praise of the Great Sacrifice  
Of two thousand years ago.

May you, Holy Cross,  
That redeem the world from sin,  
Showing the right path to heaven,  
Be glorified for ever and ever!

Then, a poor rustic's coffin passed me by.  
No drum broke the stillness of the procession  
But the thud of a faithful woman's heart.  
No flower fell on it  
But the tears of an innocent child,  
Stricken with grief.

A line that glittered on the coffin  
Struck my eyes:  
"Today me, tomorrow you."

It sent a shudder through me.  
In the twinkling of the stars  
That shudder is seen even now.

(Rendered from the original MALAYALAM by V. V. Menon.)

## Short Story

## THE SERPENT

By KARUR NILAKANTA PILLAI

THE family lived on the verge of starvation in a thatched hovel in an unfrequented lane of the town. The mother made pancakes of rice or tapioca, and the two youngest children went about to sell them. Uthuppan, the head of the family, lay coughing and spluttering in his bed. The eldest daughter did what little cooking there was to do.

Mariamamma was not yet forty, but she looked fifty. The hollows under her dark, arched eyebrows bore traces of better days. The lips, though paling, were full, and the lines on her face did not wholly conceal its former comeliness. When she laughed (which was seldom nowadays), a row of white, even teeth was displayed. She had been a beauty in her time. But want had withered her, and starvation had aged her before her time. She did not mind the loss of beauty; after all, the man to whom it belonged was being crushed in the grip of disease. Her eyes were often wet with tears; their lids were swollen; there was a smouldering fire in her heart—for Sosamma was eighteen; Sosamma, who, as the neighbours said, looked exactly like her mother at her age. A girl in her childhood is the light of the home. But a girl in her youth is fire—it would burn the hearts of parents to cinders.

Sosamma grew up unblighted even by poverty. The miracle of youth was renewed in her. The mother's anxiety grew in proportion to the contours of the maiden. How to get Sosamma married? The anxious mother could not yet see the light. Sosamma's youth looked out through her torn jacket; it seemed to warn her mother: 'Don't forget me!' Her beauty was stifled beneath the soiled jacket; the stifling was occasionally eased by sighs. Sometimes the girl's laughter rang out in the hut, and the mother shuddered. To get her

daughter married—that is the limit of a mother's ambition. But Mariamma could not see her way to its fulfilment. The dowry, the Church's share of it, the feasting, the jacket and cloth for the bride, the gift of clothes to the bridegroom—all these meant money, and more money; but she had little of it, and there was no one to help her. If only her husband got better!

An old woman lived all by herself next door. She had always some secret or other to confide to the neighbouring gossips. Of late she had begun to interest herself in Mariamma's affairs and talk to her. Uthuppan's illness and Mariamma's cares were the chief topics of discussion.

They were talking earnestly one day in the yard in front of the old woman's hut. On her face were plainly written the pity and pride of one who was directing a drowning person to a point of safety. But Mariamma looked like one who had caught a glimpse of the empire of Satan, black with a blackness that could be felt, and clamorous with the roar of wild beasts.

"Wasted days, I call it." The old woman was serious.

"Auntie Naiti, I'm afraid." Mariamma turned to go.

"Look here! You're old enough to know better. Afraid? Afraid of what? Oh, you mean that! That's nothing. I know the remedy for it." The old woman added confidently: "Well, if you don't want it, there's an end of the matter. Ah! Wait. Have some betel."

SHE produced her bag of betel-leaves and continued. "I'll tell you what. Don't you starve those little ones, I tell you. God'll call you to account for it. Don't say then that I didn't warn you."

"Is't only the starving that will have to be accounted for?" She heard her daughter calling her and went away.

"What a pig-head!" the old woman murmured.

That night Mariamma cried out something in her sleep. The words were indistinct, as if issuing from a strangled throat, and so no one understood. She said that she had had a bad dream.

When Sosamma went to church next morning, the old woman accompanied her. Returning from church, the old woman talked earnestly to her. The monologue was carried on mostly under the breath; but now and again the words rose above a whisper. Her pock-marked face expressed a succession of feelings: pity, scorn, surprise, and amorous desire. Sosamma was confused and hung her head most of the time. She looked about her to see if anyone was listening. Her pretty face was discoloured by shame, confusion, fear and loathing. Now and then she made feeble protests: "Oh! What's granny talking about?"—"Aren't you ashamed, granny?"—"I won't go to church with granny any more"—and the like.

WHEN she found herself at last under her own roof, she felt relieved. The musty air of the hovel was more refreshing to her than the free air outside.

"Finished cooking your supper?" the old woman asked Mariamma another day. Though there had been several days before when the hearth had been cold, she had never shown the concern she showed now.

"No supper today, my dear auntie Naiti. We'd three annas in the house, and that had to be paid for medicine for the children's father." Mariamma was at the point of indifference between grief over her starving children and joy at having bought medicine for her husband.

"You're a hard woman, Mariamma. Really! You'll kill those pretty birds," said the old woman with more than maternal tenderness. "I'll lend you two or three annas if you like.

But you must return it on Saturday, mind. Here!"

"Many thanks, auntie. I'll repay it on Saturday somehow or other." Not that she saw her way to repaying it. But for her husband and children, she would not have run into debt.

That night hunger was kept out. But Mariamma did not sleep. At dead of night she lit the tiny oil-lamp. In its faint light the anxious mother looked intently at the sleeping form of Sosamma. Her eyes became misty. The light went out as if on its own account. "My God—!"

She repaid the loan punctually on Saturday. The old woman did not ask her how she would manage to feed her children on that day. Nor did Mariamma utter any complaints.

A FEW days later the old woman said: "Now, listen. I'll tell you something for your own good. But you won't like it; not you! You're too proud."

Mariamma started when she thought of the words which would follow. But she forced a smile and said: "Why do you say that?"

The old woman was encouraged, and, lowering her voice, said: "I tell you, this won't do. If you want to save your husband, you are not going the right way about it. Native medicines are no use, take my word for it. Do as I tell you. It'll cost only three or four rupees. He'll leave his bed and go back to work. You'd better send for that omeopathecary." The old woman sat up with the air of one that had rendered a great service to Mariamma.

"My dear auntie, you can talk glibly of three or four rupees. But I don't know where to look for three or four annas."

"If you get three or four rupees somehow, he'll be able to go back to work. Just think, and then he will get at least ten annas a day. That'll be the end of all your worries."

"Somehow!" Mariamma thought, and added aloud, "My dear auntie, what did you say? Somehow?"

"Yes, you fool. Money's everything these days. Or hug your pride and damn yourself. What do I care?"

Mariamamma's eyes became dim.

The old woman lowered her voice still further and continued: "You have a peach of a girl, and you keep her like this! Who do you think will come to marry her? If her father was well, would she have remained thus? She may not curse you; but her soul will. Then what'll become of you? Think of that!"

Mariamamma said tearfully: "Auntie—she—she's—. People say her father will never recover."

The old woman was scornful. "Who said that? I'll tell you of a hundred cases of recovery from illness a hundred times worse than this. Ah! I see! So that's your idea, eh? You've given him up? Are you a woman?"

Mariamamma turned pale. She appeared to examine her conscience for a while. The result was not unsatisfactory, and expressed itself on her face. She said: "You know very well, auntie Naiti, that I've been doing all I can. God must see to the rest."

The old woman was sarcastic. "There you are! God shows you a way; but you shut your eyes to it. What then?"

Mariamamma opened her eyes wide; she was all ears. "What way?"

"First get rid of your pride."

Mariamamma's attention flagged; her look became uncertain.

THE old woman went on in an energetic whisper: "Just look about you, I tell you. Don't you know that the women in the neighbouring houses have money of their own. How did they get it, I ask you." She fixed her glittering eyes upon Mariamma's face; her voice sank lower. "Now, listen to me. God has given you a jewel of a girl. You've only to show it off a bit, and things will begin to look up. I wish I'd been in your place. I sh'd have built a house all of gold before now."

Mariamamma wanted to cry out.

The hag continued: "Perhaps you're thinking that I'm seeking to gain something out of this. Why is this old woman so keen on this?—is

that what you're thinking? What do I need, my girl, a lonely old woman like me? A little gruel every day—thank God, I've enough for that. Even if I hadn't, how could you help?" She paused for a reply; but there was no reply, not even a glance, from Mariamma. She went on: "Just think of it! Is there a girl of your daughter's age remaining unmarried in the house nearabout? What does she lack? Money. You want money for everything. In two years the other girl will have to be married; and in another two years, the third. And you haven't got a quarter-anna in the house. Do you know of any way of getting the money you'll need? Do you, now? Tell me. Why are you silent? Well, perhaps it's best. What could you say, after all?"

"What could I say?" Mariamma echoed, lifelessly. The old woman brought out her betel-bag. They chewed in silence.

THE remonstrance was resumed: "Well, let me ask you just one question. How long do you think you can keep her like a caged bird? Remember: you can carry the areca-nut in your lap, but not the palm-tree it shoots up into. And if the worst happens, it's no use regretting, then. I never thought you were such a fool, my girl." She saw that she had touched a chord in Mariamma's heart. The latter said nothing; nor indeed was she expected to say anything. The old woman went on, with a note of triumph in her voice: "I'll do it for you. You just keep out of it. You needn't know anything."

Mariamamma's tears flowed unchecked.

"Yes," said the old woman, "others have had children, too. Others have known, too, what it is to suffer. To starve is suffering. To see one's husband bedridden is suffering. To see a grown-up daughter unmarried is suffering. But crying is no use, anyway."

"Sosamma! Where's your mother?" The voice was her husband's. Mariamma hastily dried her tears and ran to her house.

"What's all this whispering about, mother?" Sosamma asked her a few days later. "You seem to have a lot to talk to granny about."

"I went to get a little tobacco for my toothache, and then we fell to talking about father's illness."

"What was it? Anything special?" Sosamma was inquisitive.

"Auntie Naiti was saying that the homeopath should be sent for. She has promised to get the money."

"Then send for him, mother. My God! If only father were well again! Mother, send for him at once." The fit of coughing from inside the hut put an end to the talk.

Sosamma also had a talk with the old woman about her father's illness. "I've only one wish," she said, "to see father on his feet again."

"Oh, that's easy. Send for a doctor."

When Sosamma was going to the nearby stream to bathe next day, the old woman said: "I'm coming too, child. Come here. See! Pour this oil on your hair. It's good."

THE scented soap given by the old woman brought wreaths of smiles to her face. The brook flowed on, murmuring at the kind of things the harridan was telling the young girl, and pausing now and again to look back.

That night the old woman said to Mariamma: "My dear Mariamma, I feel out of sorts. Oh dear! Don't know what it is—headache, or cramp, or something. I'm ill."

"I'm so sorry, auntie. You shouldn't sleep alone to-night. I'll come to keep you company."

"O, no," said the old woman, "that won't do. With your husband so bad, and all that—no. I can't take you away from him."

Mariamamma did not reply.

"You needn't go, mother," said Sosamma, "I'll go and sleep with granny."

Mariamamma said nothing.

"All right, child," said the old woman, "come to granny. Who knows perhaps but I may have to

send for someone at night or get some water or something."

Mariamamma did not demur.

None could see the mother's face. As she had stepped into the lane, nobody could hear the beating of her heart. "My God! May nobody else be afflicted like me!" She breathed a silent prayer and re-entered the hut. Sosamma was there, with her strong, lissom body, her clear face, and the childlike heart that was reflected in it. Her mother had a mind to stop her. "Sosamma!"

"What, mother!"

The children—hunger—the dark morrow—Mariamma thought she shouldn't stop her. "Did you hear what granny said?"

"Shall I go and sleep there, mother?" There was no eagerness in her question.

Mariamamma stood awhile looking at the bedridden figure. When she took the lamp the light went out. "Hm."

Sosamma took it for consent. She thought it meant: Yes, go and sleep there. "Don't," said Mariamma. But her tightened lips did not allow the sound to escape.

Sosamma got a good mat to lie on, a pillow, and a clean sheet to wrap herself with. The poor girl must have felt very grateful to granny and thought it not a bad idea to sleep there every night.

THE old woman had many stories to tell—romantic stories of girls like Sosamma and realistic stories from her own past. The girl forgot even to 'hm' to assure the story-teller of her attention. She must have felt her body tingling and her heart beating high.

Piercing the darkness, the mud walls, the ears of the listener, and her dreams of bliss, her father's incessant coughing went to her heart.

"Tell me, granny, will father get better?" she asked in a low voice.

"It's nothing if you've money. Worse diseases have been cured."

Sosamma knew nothing about money.

The old woman said: "You can't, of course, get money for nothing. Will you do as I tell you? All your troubles will be over."

"What's it? Tell me."

The old woman's triumphant leer and the grimaces of her wrinkled face were lost in the darkness. She began to expatiate on the ways of getting rich, of obtaining the means to set the girl's father on his feet again. Sosamma too said something—not much, however. They talked in whispers. It was doubtful whether either of them heard the whole of what the other said.

Sosamma's intermittent flow of words ceased altogether.

At that very moment her mother was weeping silently in the dark.

The old woman had something more to say. She went out for a while, and returned, saying, "Oh! How dark it is!"

After a long silence, the hag's forced cough was heard as a pointer in the darkness.

"Sosamma, are you asleep?" Evidently, no reply was expected.

There was a sound of whispering. A lighted match revealed the interior of the hut. There was a man inside, lying still and wrapped up.

The flicker of another match some time later showed the form of a pretty girl heaving with smothered sobs, her face swollen with the tears that made a runnel down her cheeks.

The light went out.

Uthuppan's cough hacked like a saw at the stillness of the night and the aching heart of the girl.

NEXT morning the doctor—one of the best—came to examine Uthuppan.

[Translated from the Original MALAYALAM by M. P. Paul]

## SAHITYA PRAVARTHAKA C. S. LTD.

... It is a long story to tell, but  
in short ...

It is where Malayalam Writers unite in  
co-operation and publish their works ...  
and sell them through their own book stall,  
the biggest in Kerala:

## THE NATIONAL BOOK STALL

Post Box: 40.  
KOTTAYAM.

Grams: "BOOKS"  
Phones: 272; 282; 292.

### VALMEEKI

BY VAGBHATAN

FRIENDS, let me introduce Sri Valmeeki, the conscientious poet.  
Disgraceful is his determined fall from Akadami's Paradise.

The Grey Genius who wrote the heroic epic of Sri Ram  
Failed to compose poems on compost pit and cattle farm.  
Scribbling in sixteen minutes three odoriferous odes  
To Mrs Sesbania, Mr Sulphate, and Prof Phosphate,  
An unconfirmed Under Secretary to Fertiliser Section  
Scored an easy victory over a veteran's age-old wisdom!  
Shall we, in sympathy, invite him  
To a sumptuous dinner?  
Why not?

By the by, we obey  
Provision Seventyseven,  
Section Thirtynine of  
Prohibition Act;

A post-Freedom fact  
To be observed with tact.

(A professional poet may prefer a few drops of hot drink;  
Omar Khayyam himself pickled his life in precious wine).

On penultimate Saturday  
We prepare special crane soup;  
It tastes pretty fine

With chappathi. A saint will devour it!

OH, HUNTER, HEARTLESS WRETCH, YOU DID KILL A  
PASSIONATE BIRD,  
YOUR ACCURSED EXISTENCE, THEREFORE, BE EXTINCT  
FOREVER!

He is speaking esperanto, I wonder  
With pure Sanskrit accent.

No, recites his poem  
Of curse and compassion.

Says the legend:

When Sage Valmeeki beheld the passionate one of a crane couple  
Crash down by a hunter's arrow and heard the widow's bewailing,  
His pious heart melted and spontaneous came the poem—  
The most Original Seed from which sprouted the Virgin Muse.

Is it so? Never have I heard of it;

Nor, I think, Moulana Azad!

The great poet who brought epic glory to our country

Is fast becoming a pest to the specialists spraying

Insecticides in season and out of season to preserve

Their perverse civilization from premature collapse.

But, alas! a genuine artist

Survives chauvinist cultures

Of party bureaucrats

And the resultant boomerang!

Sir, I beg to differ: this old fellow failed in Akadami test,  
An Under Secretary to Government won the contest!

(Rendered from the original MALAYALAM by the author)

## CHANGAMPUZHA :

## A SWEET VOICE OF KERALA

By S. GUPTAN NAIR

THE poetry of Changampuzha Krishna Pillai is a true index to his tumultuous personality. And strange as it may seem, this poet who spread such gloom in the evening of his life made his *debut* by spreading no less gloom. His first anthology—*Bashpanjali* (Garland of Tears)—was a gospel of gloom. That work startled the public of Kerala nearly two decades ago as the bold attempt of a strange genius who was in the depths of adversity. He wept profusely, he was almost feminine, but the ring of sincerity in the announcement on the cover page of the work was a pitiable cry. He complained that his failure in life was because he alone had fidelity in a world of hypocrites. There he was outspoken, but outspoken to the point of foolishness. But he never flung it as a challenge on the face of the public, as he had not then turned a rebel. The public, with its proverbial shallow memory, failed to give succour to the poet even when it enjoyed his exquisite lyrics. The lovers on their part learned those charming lines by heart, and perhaps made proper use of them when they taunted their sweethearts. He was himself a lover, too sensitive and, one may say, sensuous. I remember in one of his earlier letter-papers he inscribed the famous lines of Shelley: "Love's very pain is sweet . . ."

That period of adolescence, however, soon passed and people no longer saw him with his Shelleyan curls. He was growing into manhood. The external changes were almost symbolic of the change in his inner personality. He realised the futility of mourning and took a firm resolve to fight. Then occurred an event of far-reaching significance. His bosom friend, another precocious poet who had been hailed as one of the twin 'Edappalli poets' (both came from the

same village) took his own life at the young age of twenty-seven. His grievances were almost similar but more accentuated. This incident upset the poet. It was Kerala's loss in general, but to Changampuzha it was a personal calamity. Luckily he soon recovered from the shock and collected his thoughts in tranquillity to write one of the greatest elegies in Malayalam: *Ramanan*. That was even a greater event than the death of the poet itself. He gave the elegy a new form, it was in the shape of a pastoral drama. *Ramanan* and *Madanan* are two shepherds who were "virtually two bodies in one soul." *Ramanan* was meek and handsome. And his rustic songs, which he rendered with profound charm as he led the flock to the pastures green, attracted the attention of a wealthy maiden—*Chandrika*. She fell for *Ramanan* but the aristocratic arrogance of her father would not allow such a friendship to grow. He gave his daughter in marriage to an equally arrogant and affluent youth. The rest of the story has little novelty; it culminates in the suicide of *Ramanan*. Quite a hackneyed theme, of course. But the poem, since it symbolised the life of one of their beloved poets, and since it came from another of their equally beloved poets, went straight to the hearts of the people. Lines passed from lip to lip, and the work almost became a testament of romantic love. There is hardly any youth in Kerala who has not got a couplet from *Ramanan* at his tongue's tip.

IT was from the sale proceeds of *Ramanan* that Changampuzha pursued his studies and steadily worked his way to the B.A. (Hons.) Degree. While at college, he published two of his mature collections, *Sankalpa Kanti* (Beauties of Imagination) and *Raktapushpangal* (Crimson Flowers).

In these he shows a better grasp of the sorry scheme of things mundane, a greater balance, and a loftier imagination. Some of these odes possess an irresistible charm: the one on Kalidasa is a fine instance.

These two collections announced that Changampuzha was no longer a submissive fatalist but an aggressive thinker, with a zest for revolution. He became aggressive with a vengeance, and dealt steamhammer blows on the existing social institutions. One thought, sometimes, that he was doing it with a callousness bordering on insanity. It is evident that some of his revolutionary poems lack the level-headedness of an intellectual. Often he declared that he had no morals to preach. He flung anarchist ideals with a take-it-if-you-want attitude.

His sympathies were definitely with the downtrodden. His *Vazhakkula*, which became popular in an instant due to its anti-capitalistic ring, showed that he could sternly raise his fist against the exploiters.

But with all his progressive vehemence, his steps were shaky when it came to a question of personal sorrows. He could never conquer passion. Passion always conquered him, nay overwhelmed him. The two works next in importance to the above, *Onappookkal* (Onam Flowers) \* and *Spandikkunna Asthimadam* (Throbbing Sepulchre), are full of gloom and despair. Though he was married and comfortably settled in life, love came to him from another direction and tore his heart to pieces. He was too weak to resist passion. Critics, as usual, found fault with his unnerving pessimism and rebuked him. With a scornful smile on his face, he looked at them and asked them in a defiant tone: "Should I laugh an empty laugh to please your blinking selves when I have got a thousand things to weep over? Should I laugh because laughing is the sign of health? Oh, my dear fellows, if I

cry, it is because I have got to do it. You please don't worry about me and my tears."

Critics gave him up as incorrigible, muttering 'hopeless,' and Changampuzha continued in the same strain. Latterly, however, he was tossed between the call of pure poetry and didacticism. But, till the end, the lightning spirit never waned, and it found joy in the limitless regions of unadulterated fancy. The last poem which he wrote was a vision of pure poetry dancing to the tune of his heart.

We adore Changampuzha, the poet. He was a rare phenomenon. But let us also learn a lesson from Changampuzha, the man. His was a tempestuous life. Extremely sensitive to environment, a sense of frustration always tormented him. And success, when it came, drove him mad. Pure peace in this life was not to be his.

NEVERTHELESS, he was a miracle in the realm of Malayalam literature. He came and vanished with the speed and brilliance of a meteor. Endowed with a diction that was the dream of our mighty minstrels, this poet, when he opened his lips, sent a thrill through the hearts of Kerala's thousands. When others strained to produce a single note of merit he sang a hundred tunes with angelic ease and splendour. No other real poet has reached the commoner with such speed and ability. It was because he was direct and simple. Though he read and digested much, he never had the mere intellectual's bent. His was the magic wand that set stones to music. He wept through art, and made weeping a fine art.

(By courtesy of the author and TRIVENI where it first appeared).

(Continued from page 26)

In the course of his poem, in certain contexts, Vallathol compares Christ with Krishna. One is inclined to think that the orthodox Christian's reaction to this comparison may not be happy, but then poetry that is universal knows no barriers, religious and otherwise.

\* Onam: a national festival of Malabar commemorating the glorious reign of Maha Bali.

## Short Story

## THE WORLD-FAMOUS NOSE

By VAIKOM MUHAMMAD BASHEER

AMAZING is the news.

That nose has become a topic of heated discussion among the intelligentsia. Why? The real story of the nose is faithfully chronicled here. It all began when he was twenty-four. Till then nobody knew him. Is there any special significance attached to the twenty-fourth year of a mortal? Perhaps. When you turn the pages of the world's history you will find that certain peculiar events have taken place in the lives of great men at the age of twenty-four. Of course, it need not be pointed out to the students of history.

The hero of our history was a cook, an illiterate chap, none too intelligent. The kitchen was his world. He cared for no events outside that world. Why should he? Eat enough, have a nice pinch of snuff inhaled, sleep, then get up: this was his daily routine. He did not know the months or their names. On the due date his mother came to receive his salary. If he needed snuff the old woman would get it for him. He lived quite comfortably. Then came the twenty-fourth birthday along with the miracle. Nothing spectacular occurred. His nose had lengthened a little, beyond his mouth, just to the chin.

Longer grow the nose day by day. Within a month it had grown to his navel. It caused no inconvenience. Inhale and exhale he could. He could take the usual pinch of snuff, he distinguished smell as well: no trouble worth mention.

But the poor cook was dismissed from service because of that lengthy nose. What was the trouble?

"The dismissed ought to be reinstated."

No organisation came forward with this demand. All the political parties ignored this blatant injustice.

"Why was he dismissed?"

Not even the so-called humanists bothered to enquire.

Poor cook! None need tell him why he lost his job. Oh, the amount of nuisance and trouble that his nose occasioned to the employer! Photographers frequented the house. Press reporters intruded *ad nauseam*. Valuable articles were stolen from the house.

While he lay starving in his dilapidated hut, the dismissed cook was convinced of the fact that both himself and his nose were already famous by now. From far-off places people came to have *darshan* of his nose. They would stand astounded, gazing at the freakish growth. Nobody, ah, nobody did ask him: "Have you had your food? You are tired, why?" Not a nickel in the house, not even a copper for a pinch of snuff. Was he a curious creature in a zoo? He called his mother to his side and whispered: "Drive these wretches away and close the door." Somehow his old mother succeeded in sending the visitors out. She closed the doors. Bang!

THAT day onwards fortune smiled at them. Some people bribed his mother to facilitate a nice look at his nose. A few righteous persons cried hoarse against the bribery. Government, however, took no action. Infuriated at this indifference of the powers-that-be to curb corruption, many people joined the revolutionary parties with the avowed aim of overthrowing the Government. Yet the income from the nose increased every day. Suffice it to say, the illiterate cook amassed a wealth worth lakhs in a brief span of six years.

Altogether he acted three times in the films. What a mammoth crowd his technicolor film entitled *The Human Submarine* attracted! Epic poems were written by six

poets eulogizing his nose. Nine writers wrote and published his biography earning fame and money for themselves. The big bungalow that was his residence, besides, became a guest house. Anytime, anyone could have his *khana* there; and of course, a pinch of snuff on top of the meal.

By this time he had had two girl secretaries—both glamorous and well-educated. They were in deep love with Sri Nose. Both of them adored Sri Nose. When two beautiful belles are simultaneously in love with one man, it ought to be troublesome, not to the lovers but to the one loved. In the life of Sri Nose also the inevitable happened. Above all, just as the pretty girls were, the entire people were in love with Sri Nose. The nose touching the navel—was it not a symbol of greatness? Being great Sri Nose had to comment on all important world-events. Readily the newspapers 'boxed' his views in bold types.

*An aircraft with a record-breaking speed of ten thousand miles an hour has been produced about which Sri Nose observed: "..."*

*"Dr. Buntrose Furasiburose revives the dead to life. Regarding this miraculous feat of modern science, Sri Nose said: "..."*

PEOPLE heard that certain persons climbed on the highest peak of the world. They asked: "What did Sri Nose say about it?" Suppose Sri Nose said nothing, bah, then the insignificance of that incident was assured! Sri Nose lavishly poured his comments on a variety of subjects,—on painting, wrist-watch business, mesmerism, soul, publishing house, the existence after death, novel-writing, journalism, hunting. Why, everything under the sun called for his appraisal!

It was at this juncture that big conspiracies brewed up to capture Sri Nose. Capturing is not a novel method. A major part of world history is the history of conquest. What is this capture and how is it done? Well, you plant coconut seedlings in a piece of virgin land. You water them, put enough manure in

the pits and raise a fence around. Years of expectation lapse, and the trees bear fruits. Ripe cocoanuts, bunches after bunches, swing on the tree. Looking at this spectacular prosperity, some people may think of annexing the coconut grove for themselves.

The first attempt to capture Sri Nose was made by the Government. It was a bluff, a tricky feat. The Government, in addition to the imposing title of Nasikapramukh, presented a medal to Sri Nose. The President himself pinned the diamond-studded gold medal on his breast. Instead of the hand, the President shook the tip of Sri Nose's nose. Newsreels depicting the scenes were shown in all the cinema theatres of the country.

THE political parties also entered the field—aftermath of the Presidential gesture. Comrade Nose must give the lead to the people's struggle, they said. Comrade? Whose comrade? My Lord, poor Sri Nose! Comrade Nose should join the party! Which party? Parties there are many. How can one Nose join all the parties at the same time?

Sri Nose told them: "Why should I join the party? I won't."

One of his secretaries said to him one day: "Comrade Nose, if you love me, do join the party."

Sri Nose kept silent.

"Should I join any party?" He asked the other Secretary. Knowing well what transpired between Sri Nose and her rival, she said: "Oh, why should you?"

Already a party had thrown out the slogans: 'Our party is the party of Sri Nose. Party of Sri Nose is the people's party.'

When the news reached the rival party, it got wild. Quite natural. It was a treacherous strategic march-over. The members of the party caught hold of one of the secretaries of Sri Nose and got a statement from her denouncing her boss. "Sri Nose betrayed the people. All the while he was betraying the people. He made me a partner in this meanest crime. I confess the truth to the people."

The Nose of Sri Nose is a simple, rubber nose."

Hm, all the newspapers of the world flashed the statement: THE NOSE OF SRI NOSE—A RUBBER NOSE!

Astounded were the people when they heard the glaring treachery. Agitated too. Telegrams, phone calls, letters, began to flow into the Presidential residence. His lot became miserable indeed!

"Down with Sri Nose, the arch-betrayer of the people. The party of rubber Nose, Down, Down! Inquilab Zindabad! The anti-Nose party tried their best to rehabilitate itself politically by parading the streets and exposing the Great Hoax of the Age.

THE party that 'owned' Sri Nose did not keep quiet. They tried their utmost to counteract the villifying campaign. What was the *magnum opus* of the Anti-Nose Party? The statement from his secretary. Well, then pro-Nose party also should get a statement from the other secretary. And the other secretary at their request issued a counter-statement which read:

"My dear countrymen, citizens of the world, what she said was utter falsehood. The reason for her provocation and vituperation was that Com: Nose did not love her; he loved me immensely. Hence her spiteful retaliation. She also tried to exploit the fame and riches of our own Com: Nose. You know one of her brothers belongs to the other party, the party of the rogues. I am the everfaithful secretary of Com: Nose. His nose is not of rubber, I know it well. It is as real as my heart. Long live the people's progressive party that has rallied round Com: Nose at this critical juncture! Long live Com: Nose! Com: Nose's party is the genuine people's progressive party! Inquilab Zindabad."

The people were terribly confounded. What would they do? In whom could they invest their confidence? The situation deteriorated further. The rival party of Sri Nose's 'own' party in its frantic effort to save face abused the Government. "A stupid Government it is that gives

the title Nasikapramukh to the betrayer Nose. It presented him with a diamond-studded gold medal, too. The President is also a partner in this conspiracy. Willingly he has allied himself with the anti-people's block. The President must resign. The entire cabinet should resign. The rubber Nose must be liquidated."

Awfully perturbed at this popular agitation the President acted promptly. One fine morning, an array of armymen and tanks raided Sri Nose's house and he was taken away under arrest. For a few days there was no news of Sri Nose. The people had forgotten him completely. And then came the Atom and Hydrogen—a proclamation from the President:—

"Sri Nose will face a public trial on the 9th of March. He will be examined by a Council of expert doctors representing forty-eight nations of the world. Moreover the accredited correspondents of the world-Press will be present on the occasion to give a verbatim report of the proceedings to the people. Besides, the newsreels of the trial will be made available for worldwide distribution. The people should keep peace and tranquillity."

AFTER all, people are people. They were not so quiet and calm. They stormed the Capital, broke into hotels, smashed vehicles, set fire to the police stations and destroyed the Government buildings. Here and there communal riots broke out. Many became martyrs.

March 9th. 11 p.m. An ocean of humanity surged forward in front of the presidential residence. "Please be quiet. The examination is on," the loud-speakers announced.

In the august presence of the President and ministers the doctors examined Sri Nose. A doctor closed the nostrils of Sri Nose. Sri Nose opened his mouth. Another doctor pricked the tip of the nose with a pin, and lo! there sprang a drop of red blood.

"Eureka! It is real. No rubber Nose!" Unanimous was the verdict of the medical authorities.

The girl secretary who had stood

through thick and thin with Sri Nose loyally during the crisis kissed the blood-stained tip of the nose. The crowd shouted in unison:

"Com: Nose Zindabad! Nasikapramukh Zindabad! Long live people's progressive party of Com: Nose!"

As soon as the popular ballyhoo subsided the President played another trick in response to the overwhelming enthusiasm of the masses. He nominated Sri Nose, on the spot, to the Parliament as a member.

After this grand function the episode ended as far as the people and the Government were concerned. It was again raked up when some parties formed a United Front of Anti-Nosists and demanded:

"Down with this huge betrayal. The cabinet must resign."

No wonder that the intellectuals are in confusion. They don't know which side they should choose. Poor intellectuals!

(Translated from the Original MALAYALAM by M. Govindan)

### LOOK NOT SO DEEP . . . !

BY CHANGAMPUZHA

LOOK not so deep into it, dear!  
The well has its own abysses,  
And each abyss its own charms,  
And each charm its own poison,  
That the more thou approachest  
The more thou art tortured!

Reflected shine the far-off hillocks  
Robed in green, at the depths of its bottom;  
Scarce couldst thou suspect of its  
Death-hiding caverns.  
Silently numerous they are  
With their wide open jaws  
Breathing out venom;  
Turn away thy head, dear  
From this all-conquering magic  
And rest thy gaze upon  
The never-changing mountains!

Hard they seem, but hardly threatening,  
Misty they appear yet never misleading,  
Where every fatigue could have  
Dream-scented repose,  
And every thirst ever-quenching nectar.

That enchanted fountain where death abides thy host,  
That uncharming mountain where life welcomes thee most,  
One or the other: I falter as thou art, my dear,  
Ah, Life, Life, I adore you forever!

(Translated from the original MALAYALAM by the author)

## HE MADE US LAUGH SANJAYAN: POET, CRITIC, AND HUMORIST

By T. V. KUNHI KRISHNAN

IT was a moment of high expectation for the students of the Junior Intermediate class of the Malabar Christian College: a new lecturer in English was to arrive. Our young and handsome German principal, Dr. Lorch, brought in M. Ramunni Nair, introduced him to the class and withdrew. Here in flesh and blood before us was "Sanjayan", the greatest Malayalam critic and humorist of his age! We were curious and excited.

His severe countenance, sharp eyes and a defiant lock of hair falling over his forehead, were in sharp contrast to the picture we had formed of him from his writings. But his words were full of charm and cheer. He was already the hero of many millions of Malayalam readers and we were individually proud to own him as a hero in a personal sense.

I remember with particular delight his Shakespeare classes where he taught us *A Midsummer Nights Dream* and *The Tempest*. While explaining Shakespeare he used to quote parallels from Kalidasa and other Sanskrit poets. One day when our Sanskrit lecturer suddenly took ill, Sanjayan volunteered to take the Sanskrit class, and I was told that he did even better than the learned Sanskrit pundit. He was a scholar in French and German also.

While his knowledge of English, Sanskrit and other literatures was truly profound, it was his contribution to Malayalam which won him fame. His literary career, confined to a short period of about a decade, had the brilliance and brevity of a comet. Born in 1903, he started his active literary life at the age of 29. He died in 1943, leaving behind a gap in Malayalam literature that has not yet been filled.

Sanjayan made us all laugh and we loved him for all the light and laughter he gave us. But his own life was one of darkness and grief

and he laughed that he might not cry. He took his M.A. degree and started life as a clerk in the Malabar Collectorate, Kozhikode, but later resigned the job and entered a sanatorium for treatment of tuberculosis. In the fight against the disease he lost one lung. And in his struggle with life he lost many dear things. His wife died young, leaving behind an only child—a crippled son. In a letter written to a friend at that time, Sanjayan said: "Babu has become motherless; I am still alive."—Babu died later. A brother to whom he was deeply attached also died soon after.

Sanjayan did not allow these dark clouds to cast their shadow over his heart: they only hovered high over his head. In all his writings it was difficult to see any shred of defeatism, for he had developed a high degree of detachment. His optimism was unbounded. In one of his poems he said:

In the shoreless sea of tears black  
I am launching a tiny boat of laughter,  
Without caring what they say I will  
go on

On and on as long as my Lord is at  
the helm.

(Translated from Malayalam)

AFTER many misadventures, he studied law for a while. But he soon discovered that his mission in life was to write. He made his entrance into the literary arena through articles he regularly contributed to the Malayalam weekly, *Kerala Patrika*. After a few years he started his own weekly, *Sanjayan* and he assumed the pen name of Parappurath Sanjayan. This journal was suppressed by the British Government in India. He started another weekly, *Viswaroopam*, which also had to fold because of restrictions placed on it by the authorities. It was while editing *Viswaroopam* that he worked as lecturer in English.

Sanjayan's greatest weakness was laziness, and I remember very well how the publisher of the journal used to wait impatiently outside our English classroom, while Sanjayan scribbled out articles at top speed.

In 1942 an article he wrote about the malpractices of a district educational officer brought him trouble. The Government forced the management of the College to send him away and that was the end of his teaching career. It may be mentioned here that *Mathrubhumi*, the largest circulated Malayalam daily was banned by the government as a sequel to the publication of an article by Sanjayan. The power of his pen needs no more proof.

Sanjayan was a born poet and critic. He wrote poetry with ease and confidence and was a master of verse. William Blake and AE were two of his favourite poets. He employed poetry with devastating force. He was a dramatist also, and his translation of "Othello" is the solitary Shakespeare translation in Malayalam.

More than a poet he was a critic. His sharp eyes never missed any of the imperfections, inconsistencies and absurdities around him. He was one of the best literary critics of his time, and he was never tired of ridiculing "progressive" writers who, overcome with defeatism, pre-

ached pessimism and suicide. Addressing the defeatist writers, he said once:

O, brother, if only you will laugh!  
You who want to push down  
Literature into dirt and mire  
You who see the supreme remedy  
For all infirmities in mutual hatred  
You who try to light the fire of  
revolution  
With the blast of bitterness  
O, brothers, if only you will laugh!

(Translated from Malayalam)

IN literature he wanted the re-establishment of optimism in place of the pessimism which then prevailed in Malayalam. This led him to campaign against mysticism as it developed in Malayalam poetry. He had high regard for Tagore's and Aurobindo's mysticism and in fact he relied very much on Tagore's "Essay on Mysticism" to criticise the undesirable aspects of mysticism in Malayalam. Some of his best articles and poems are on mysticism.

It seems to me that Sanjayan as a literary critic had certain limitations. He loved Sanskrit a little more than was pardonable and he had an unaccountable and perceptible dislike of new experiments with poetic forms in Malayalam. His concern for the future and knowledge of the past made him a little impatient with the present.

PATRUDU'S

"BALASANJEEVINI" R  
E  
G  
D.

Best Remedy for Infantile LIVER & SPLEEN Disorders

For free advice consult:

DR. PILLA PAPIAH PATRUDU & BROS.,

19, South Mada St., Mylapore, MADRAS-4. Phone: 85254.

Branch:

7, Sarangapani Koll East St., KUMBAKONAM.

(Enclose 2 Annas Stamps for Free Advice)

It is as a humorist that Sanjayan now lives in the hearts of Malayalees, not as a poet or critic. His humour not only made us laugh but also learn. The bulk of his writings relates to non-literary themes and all of them had a social purpose. He strove to instill social and political consciousness and expose impostors and tyrants. He stirred everyone to action—to a greater appreciation of duties and responsibilities. A firm believer in democracy, he hated and ridiculed all forms of totalitarianism.

In his articles on local themes he always sought to achieve some immediate good. His "Lament of the Kozhikode Municipality" ridiculed the unpopular Justice party then in power in Madras. In "An Open Letter to Rajaji" he criticised the Congress attitude toward harijans. And in his poem "Through Communism," he made fun of communists whom

he described as those "who glorified the stomach and raised it to the position of the head." He spared no political party; he belonged to none.

His articles and poems which have now been collected and published in 8 volumes, are all too long to allow reproduction here. Moreover it will be futile to attempt to translate his humour into English. Here are a few sample snippets:

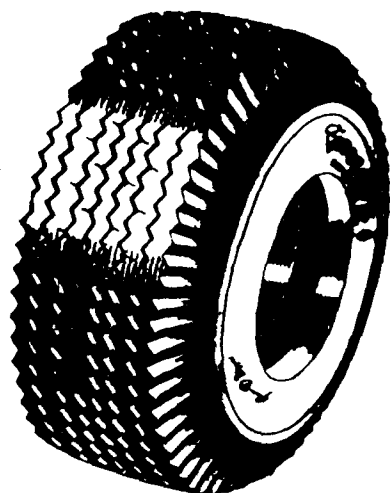
Sir K. V. Reddi, our Chief Minister, has declared that his ancestors were great warriors. We now know one of the reasons why our country was enslaved by foreigners.

Someone has remarked that some of our poets do not look like poets. But what is more regrettable to us is that even after we read their poetry, some of them do not look like poets.

The three great influences on Sanjayan's life were Gandhiji, his mother and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Gandhiji was his political and spiritual guru. Though ill health prevented him from taking active part in politics, he did his bit by driving people to action. Sanjayan lost his father, a Sanskrit scholar, at the age of eight and he had ever since lived under the care of his mother. The *Gita* was his constant companion to which he was introduced in the tuberculosis sanatorium. Whether he wrote on politics or economics, mosquitos or municipal gutters, bus conductors or college professors, on Hitler or Amery (Secretary of State for India), he could always quote the *Gita* with consummate skill.

SANJAYAN as a humorist did not take pleasure in tearing things to pieces. Instead, he was interested in piecing things together, in constructing. He wrote with the lash of a Jonathan Swift, but he was not a Swift in his malice. And he is loved and revered by millions of people for all the laughter and wisdom he gave them.

## Firestone



**BEST TODAY—  
STILL BETTER TOMORROW**

## TWENTIETH CENTURY MALAYALAM POETRY

By K. AYYAPPA PANIKER

TWO things are most clearly noticeable in contemporary Malayalam poetry: the fairly large variety of forms and themes and the individuality of approach of the major writers. The first decade of the present century marks the transition from an age of decadent pseudo-classicism to an age that though it learned largely from the past broke new grounds and extended the domain of poetry. After the exquisite refinements and formal excellences of the nineteenth century poets, there was indeed a return to life—to nature, society and the individual, and a revitalization of the sources of poetic inspiration. From a silver age of translations, adaptations and imitations poetry emerges into a creative age breathing a freshness and fragrance akin to the life of the people. The new poets, no wonder, learned more from Cherrusseri, Ezhuttachan, and Kanchan Nambiar, of a more distant past, than from the nineteenth century poets like Kerala Varma and Venmoni Namboothiri. This revival was both in spirit (deep moral concern, interest in simple human relationships, glorification of India's past and social awareness), and in externals (the preference for Dravida metres, less Sanskritised diction, less conventional imagery and popular folk-art forms).

The present age may for convenience be divided into two periods: one from 1900 to 1930, and the other from 1930 to the current year. The former is marked by the achievements of the celebrated trinity: Asan, Ulloor, and Vallathol. By 1930 the most characteristic works of this school (who were themselves to a limited extent forgers of new links with the tradition of the neo-classical court poets of the nineteenth century) had all been published. Asan was drowned in 1925. The other two also did their best work before 1930. They were not able

to bring into their poetry any new element after that date and writing poetry thereafter has been with them a habit and not original creation. V. C. Balakrishna Paniker, an early contemporary of these poets, is an inheritor of unfulfilled renown. His *Viswarupam*, a very promising volume came out in 1912 but he did not live long enough to fulfil the promises. Death laid his icy hands on him a little too early.

N. Kumaran Asan (1871-1925) is the most introspective of the three. His first significant work *Veena Poovu* (Fallen Flower) came out in 1909. The fifteen years that followed this were a period of sustained inspiration. In *Veena Poovu* and in *Kuyil* (Koel) he makes use of allegorical symbolism. His *Nalini* and *Leela* are short narratives while in *Buddha Charitam* (Life of the Buddha) he attempts at the epic narrative. *Chinthavishayaya Seetha* (The Pensive Seetha) belongs to the monologue type. *Prarodanam* (Lament) is an elegy. His last works *Duravastha* (Miserable Plight), *Chandalabhikshuki* and *Karuna* (Compassion) are narratives with an added dramatic interest. These last have considerably enhanced his popularity and his importance. As the disciple of the great Yogi and social reformer Sree Narayana, Asan has obviously been interested at once in the social and political affairs and in the metaphysical and moral problems. His message to the world is universal love and devout living. The main themes in his poems are love and death, the transience of beauty and joy, the immortality of the soul and the evil of social inequality.

Ulloor Parameswara Iyer (1877-1949) is a scholar-poet. In his busy life as a responsible Civil Servant in the Travancore State he found time to apply himself earnestly and stea-

dily to the self-appointed task of writing poetry. He has set his hands on a wide variety of themes. His poetry is not completely free from the pseudo-classical elements of the previous age. *Umakeralam*, a Mahakavyam (elaborate narrative studded with dragging descriptions in the epic fashion) based on the ancient history of Travancore came out in 1912 and is claimed to be his *magnum opus*. But the best qualities of his poetry are also seen in shorter works such as *Nercha* (Offering), *Tharaharam* (Garland of Stars), *Karnabhushanam* (Ear-rings of Karna), *Pingala*, *Chitrsala* (Portrait Gallery) and *Manimarjusha*. The glory that was India is a recurrent theme in his poetry. The strong didactic element in his work does not disguise his sincerity nor blind us to his limitations as a poet.

Vallathol Narayana Menon (born in 1878) has however been the most fortunate of the three. Like Ulloor he too began by imitating the classical masters and translating Sanskrit classics. But just before the outbreak of the first world war he discovered his own line and began writing numerous short narratives like *Ganapathi* and *Bandhanasthanaya Aniruddhan* (Aniruddha Imprisoned) and short lyrics such as are collected together in the several volumes under the title *Sahityamanjari*. These last are the treasure-house of his best lyrical pieces. His *Badhiravilapam* (Lament of a Deaf Man) is a reflective lyric of autobiographical interest. In the years after the war of 1914-18 Indian nationalism found in Vallathol its most vigorous spokesman in the Malayalam language. This immensely increased his popularity. He set the fashion of singing with fullthroated ease of the glories of ancient India and of the ideals of the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Quite a large number of his shorter pieces deal with episodes taken from Hindu Puranas. He has also sung of the beauties of nature, of beauty as it appeals to the senses. But unlike those of Asan, his poems do not reveal to us an inner world of spiritual pre-occupation. He has his eyes set on

the superficies and any deeper observation he makes, one may be sure, is purely incidental. His Mahakavyam entitled *Chitravogam* is no more than an academic exercise. *Magdalana Mariam* (Mary Magdalene), a narrative which combines lyrical and dramatic interest and poems on Gandhiji and allied subjects (such as 'My Master,' 'Salute to the Mother') are the most popular of his works.

Vallathol's nationalism, sensuous appreciation of beauty, and interest in simple human relationships have gained him countless followers. Kuttippurathu Kesavan Nair, Nalappatt Narayana Menon, Vennikulam Gopala Kurup, G. Sankara Kurup and Nalappatt Balamani Amma and a host of minor poets in whom only the fact-recording historian is interested belong to this group. Some of these have in later years made considerable advance along original and independent lines. Nalappatt Narayana Menon (who died only last year) is nearer to Asan than to Vallathol in spirit. He seems to be obsessed with the metaphysical problems that life poses. His poems are the deep echo of his moral concern for the human condition. He has written only a handful of poems but they have secured for him a unique place in recent Malayalam poetry. His *Kannuneerthulli* (Tears) is among the best elegies in the language and *Chakravalam* (Horizon) is a record of his philosophical reflections.

TWO poets who belong to this period but not to any particular group are Sardar K. M. Panicker and Bhodheswaran who also have earnestly tried to enrich Malayalam poetry.

The three main spokesmen of the next generation are Edappally Raghavan Pillai, Changampuzha Krishna Pillai, and G. Sankara Kurup. With their works Malayalam poetry takes a long stride forward imbibing the influences of the major literatures of the world. From Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley to Leopardi, Baudelaire and Pushkin, from Omar-Khayyam and Hafiz to Heine, Mayakovsky and Tagore, from simple

romanticism to futurism and surrealism—the influences were readily absorbed and made one with native talents.

Edappally Raghavan Pillai (1910-1936) is in many ways a unique phenomenon in Kerala literature. During his short unhappy life he wrote about eighty short pieces in all. In 1936 at the age of 25-26 he committed suicide and thus cut the branch that, one is tempted to hope, would have grown full straight. Both his poetry and his life (and death too) were a challenge to the older generation that had little sympathy for him. His enemies who are now in their fifties still derive a malicious pleasure from calumniating him! He belongs to that select group of extremely sensitive and serious-minded bards who are not more than a handful in any literature. He is the matchless master of the lyric in Malayalam. The main elements of his poetry are a deep concern with ultimate values, sincerity and intensity of emotion, striking and apt imagery, and chiselled perfection of diction and style. A collected edition of his works has been published by Changampuzha Krishna Pillai.

Changampuzha (1911-1948) has been hailed as the people's poet though there was no political party to boost him up. He was a voracious reader and a prolific writer. Thousands upon thousands of copies of his works have been sold. Over fifty volumes have been published between the publication of his first book *Bashpanjali* in 1934 and his death in 1948. One gets the impression that he has often been a careless writer though his innate poetical gifts were of the highest order. He is perhaps best in selections. His most important works are *Ramanan*, *Spandikunna Asthimadam* (The Throbbing Sepulchre), *Onappookkal* (Flowers of Onam), *Rakthapushpangal* (Scarlet Blossoms) and *Swararagasudha* (Nectar of Melody). Among his translations mention may be made of *Deva Geeta* from Jayadeva's *Geeta Govindam*. He has also adapted Tagore's *Victory* in an elaborate and embroidered narrative with the title

*Yavanika* (Curtain). His poems are often pure lyrical effusions. Their passionateness and musical quality are unsurpassed. All the varied strands in his personality are colourfully reflected in his works. From abject pessimism to violent fury, from selfpity and sentimentalism to philosophic sobriety—his poetry holds a mirror up to his life and personality.

SRI G. Sankara Kurup (born 1902) had his period of apprenticeship in the 'twenties under the influence of classical writers and of Asan, Ulloor, and Vallathol. Before 1930 he published the four volumes of *Sahityakouthukam* but it was only after that date that Kurup began to follow his own *metier*. A strain of Tagorean mysticism finds halting expression through pseudo-classical conceits for a time. A wave of Asian nationalism and internationalism occasionally lifts his poetry to sublime heights. Among the living he alone has the



Sri S. R. Venkataraman of the Servants of India Society. A prominent social worker. Now standing for election for the Senate of the Madras University.

trumpet tongue. His *Suryakanthi* (Sunflower) *Navathithi* (New Guest), *Chenkathirukal* (Scarlet Rays) *Pooja Pushpam* (Flower Offering) *Nimishiam* (Moment) and *Mutthukal* (Pearls) contain a few brilliant gems amidst many less inspired pieces. His latest collections include two types of poems. One is purely personal ramification of an experience of love in early life. The other is on socio-political themes in which we hear the voice of resurgent Asia and of independent India. His poems at all times have been deeply tinged by a moral concern and didactic humanism.

Along with these three may be discussed the major feminine note—that of Sreemathi Nalappatt Balamani Amma. Her first volume, a very slender one called *Kooppukai* (Hands Joined in Salutation) was published in 1930. Her diction is derived from Vallathol but she is definitely more introspective, and except in a few nationalistic poems has found a path of her own. Her imagery is mainly classical and conventional with an occasional streak of symbolism. Her main themes are God, Nature, and Home. The traditional Indian concept of motherhood finds its best poetic exposition in her poems on husband and wife, and on Mother and Child. *Amma* (Mother) *Kutumbini* (Family Woman) and *Stri Hridayam* (Woman's Heart) deserve special mention.

Vennikulam Gopala Kurup with his modest ambitions and gifts seems to specialise in reproducing little vignettes from life. He too is, like Vallathol, a devoted worshipper at the altar of beauty with a sheer delight in the simple virtues of humanity. His poems have an emotional and musical quality of their own. Poets of a lesser vitality are to be found in this generation also. K. K. Raja, P. Kunjiraman Nair, N. Gopala Pillai, Pala Narayanan Nair and Srimathi Kuthattukulam Mary John—all have a few fine poems to their credit.

Towards the end of the 'thirties there appeared a new face, that of Ippillil Sreedhara Menon who

made his reputation only in the forties along with P. Bhaskaran. The latter of late seems to have forsaken the muse and taken up more lucrative concerns (in return for which, one fears, the muse has deserted him too). The former is at times capable of high excellences though any moment he may descend to cheap pedestrian stuff. He has secured an abiding place in the hearts of his readers with his *Kannikoythu* (A First Harvest) and *Sreerekha*. Bhaskaran's poetry evidently belongs to the Changampuzha tradition. The sentimentalism of a romantic love-theme and a keen awareness of the social and political conditions are the twin notes of his instrument. *Satraithile Oru Rathri* (A Night at An Inn), *Mulkireetam* (The Crown of Thorns) and *Orkuka Vallappozhum* (Remember Sometime) are his best known collections.

IN the field at present are actively engaged a host among whom may be mentioned N. V. Krishna Warriar, Edasseri Govindan Nair, Olappamanna, Akkittam, O. N. V. Kurup, Vayalar Rama Varma, and G. Kumara Pillai. N. V. Krishna Warriar has attempted through partially successful experiments to direct modern poetry into channels different from those of the Changampuzha tradition. He holds that lyric is not the only type of good poetry. The narrative, the dramatic, and the satiric should also be tried. The cloying romantic diction of the Changampuzha school is also outmoded. But the influence of Changampuzha is still potent. Even the self-styled progressive camp has not attempted anything which Changampuzha and in his wake P. Bhaskaran have overlooked. In the younger generation there are many whose earnestness and diligence outrun their real gifts. It is indeed gratifying to note that many of them are slowly learning that great poetry should have a rich human element and that election verses are no better than cheap journalism. The duty of the poet is a sacred one and the real poet cannot afford to ignore any phase of life.

## FILMS

By V. P. SATHE

WHAT will be the outcome of the Seminar? Apart from providing an opportunity to the stars and other film celebrities to meet the Prime Minister, the President and other big political leaders, would the Seminar serve any useful purpose? These are the questions being discussed in film circles today.

It is agreed that Pandit Nehru's speech was very enlightening and inspiring. His advice for minimum censorship, his plea against sermonizing and his admission that melodrama was necessary to attract people, reveal that Pandit Nehru has the correct grasp of the problems confronting the creators of films. It is hoped that both the film creators and the Government authorities would follow the principles laid down by the Prime Minister.

Unfortunately, however, but for Shri Vasan's paper in which he attacked the Government for censorship and taxation, the other papers have not been given any publicity in the Press. Had these papers and the discussion that ensued been given proper publicity, it would have been realized that the film people are not as self-complaisant and unaware of their own shortcomings as some people seem to think. For, in these papers, producers like Shantaram and writers like Abbas have tried to analyse the fundamental functions of films and how far the Indian producers have been successful in carrying them out.

It would be certainly wrong to attribute the bad quality of our films to either censorship or taxation; it must be attributed to lack of the artistic integrity, or say lack of the artistic calibre of Chaplin, De Sica or Disney. It has to be attributed also to the present economic structure of

the industry. Unless film financing and the distribution of returns at the box office are perfectly rationalized, if not controlled, the film creator cannot get out of the rut and make really good pictures.

For that, the Seminar is of course no panacea; hence perhaps the film people have an attitude of cynical frustration about the Seminar and its proceedings.

### Picture of the week

Good intentions and sincerity do not necessarily make a good picture; this is all that one could say after seeing Amar Mullick's film biography of Swami Vivekanand. As in the case of Atre's *Mahatma Phule* the picture suffers much because of the poor technical values; and in addition, poor diction ruins the impact of a picture in which dialogue is given undue importance.

Moreover, though the personality of Vivekanand was so dynamic and his life so thrilling and dramatic, the film fails to impart either that dynamism or the dramatic thrill. It is just a series of disjointed events from his life presented in a rather episodic fashion with no proper dramatic build-up or unity. As a result, the picture appears to be more like a documentary than a human drama.

The very first meeting between Naren and Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, his guru, who changed his entire outlook of life, fails to be thrilling; and so does the scene of the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Perhaps these situations were better in the original Bengalee version; but in their transcription to Hindi they have lost their sting altogether.

Lacking in dramatic build-up and strength *Swami Vivekanand* is none the less a very sincere effort to recount the tale of one of the greatest servants of modern India. Ajit Prakash bears a close resemblance to the hero; but his Hindi diction lacks the force and vigour so necessary for his role. Manoranjan Bhattacharya as Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa does not impress much.

March 12 1955

Bharati Devi tries valiantly to look an English woman; but it is difficult for her to identify herself with the role of Margaret Noble who became a staunch disciple of Swamiji and was later known as Sister Nivedita. And yet her performance is both sincere and convincing within the limitations. The other foreign characters are even less convincingly portrayed.

The music by R. C. Borai is soft and scintillating; all the bhajans are well sung though they will not perhaps appeal to the jazz-crazy picture-goers. The direction by Amar Mullick is just straightforward; he does not seem to be using film-craft to achieve any dramatic effect, or thanks to poor technique, he seems to have constrained himself with the method of straightforward narrative.

One must say, however, that in these days of escapist entertainment, this picture is a laudable effort worth appreciating. And at least as a documentary, the picture would help to give the young generation some idea of the great man whose story it depicts.

Indeed, apart from their commercial value, pictures like *Mahatma Phule*, *Vidyasagar* and *Vivekanand* should be shown to students so that they may have some idea of the work these pioneers have done. At the same time it is necessary that such biographies should be produced on an elaborate scale, with Government aid, if required, so that we too can have film-biographies of the stature of *Emile Zola* and *Pasteur*.

#### Personality of the week

On 13th March 1954 Pandit Mukhram Sharma would be receiving his first award as a story-writer. He is being given the Filmfare award; and he is also a contender for the award to be given by the Writers' Association.

And it has taken about a decade and a half for Panditji to get this recognition from the film industry. It is perhaps not known that he joined the films in 1941-42 and he was a 'discovery' of Prabhat. But in Prabhat instead of writing any original story he was content with writing dialogue and songs. His first assignment was *Ten O'Clock*; his second

assignment was *Ramshastri*. With Raja Nane and Datta Dharmadhikari, he left Prabhat and wrote some scripts including *Taramati* for the Raja Nane unit.

Surprisingly enough, his first important original story was produced in Marathi and that too by Datta Dharmadhikari. The title of the picture was inspired by a famous couplet from a poem by Mithili Sharan Gupta; and it was after the Marathi picture proved a hit that he wrote an 'original' story for a Hindi film, *Aulad*. Meanwhile the story he wrote for Datta has also been transcribed into the Hindi *Aurat Ye Hi Teri Kahani*; and he has himself repeated the success of *Aulad* with *Adhikar*.

So after about thirteen or fourteen years of hack writing, Pandit Mukhram Sharma's talent as a creative writer has been recognised. And he is perhaps the most sought-after original writer in Bombay today. Already he has written *Tongawali* for Kuldip; he is writing a story for Ratnadip Pictures and a story for Bimal Roy.

On the one hand, producers complain that there is dearth of original stories; on the other hand, producers do not give opportunities to writers like Mukhram Sharma to write stories and they utilize their services for hack dialogue writing. But now at least Mukhram Sharma has come out of the rut, though others like him may be still plodding in it. In future, at least, one can look forward to refreshing stories from Mukhram Sharma, whose stories have won praise from critics as well as picture-goers.

#### News of the week

Director J. K. Nanda has performed the muhurat of Kardar's new picture *Aurat Ka Pyar* written by D. N. Madhok and starring Nimmi and Suresh on Friday 4th March. O. P. Nayyar is giving the music.

Nargis is ultimately playing the mother's role in *Mother India*, with Dilip playing the husband. Mehboob is leaving this week for three months' outdoors in Gujrat. He is making the film in Gevacolor.

# SWATANTRA

On Sale Every Saturday

Vol. X. March 19, 1955. No. 7

## CONTENTS

|                                 |                            |    |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----|
| EDITORIAL                       |                            | 3  |
| SOTTO VOCE                      | Vighneswara                | 4  |
| SIDELIGHTS                      | Saka                       | 6  |
| THE "DESHMUKH COCKTAIL"         | H. R. Vedanta Iengar       | 9  |
| THE WONDER OF HELEN KELLER      | Santha Rungachary          | 13 |
| PEACEFUL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY: |                            |    |
| A SYMPOSIUM                     | V. V. Srinivasan           | 16 |
| NEHRU ON THE PROBLEMS OF ASIA   | P. G. Krishnayya's Service | 17 |
| OLD 'TRIVENI' DAYS              | M. Chalapathi Rau          | 23 |
| THE TOILETTE                    | Manjeri S. Isvaran         | 28 |
| GENTLE PRETENDER                | M. C. S.                   | 32 |
| NEW BOOKS                       |                            | 33 |
| ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL           | P. K. Sivaprakasam         | 37 |
| RHINO AND FRIENDS               |                            | 39 |
| LESSONS OF THE ANDHRA ELECTIONS | V. Raghavaiah              | 40 |
| MACHINE-MADE WEATHER FORECASTS  |                            | 42 |
| ANDHRA ELECTION RESULTS X-RAYED | P. N. Sampath              | 43 |
| CORRESPONDENCE                  |                            | 48 |

#### ON THE COVER:

Miss Helen Keller and her Companion Miss Polly Thompson  
with Sri Sri Prakasa

All communications should be addressed to the Editor, SWATANTRA, 2 Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras 4. Manuscripts for publication should be typewritten on one side of the paper only and must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. The editor cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

Subscription rates (including postage); for one year; Inland Rs. 20; Foreign, £1-16sh., or \$8; Half-year: Inland, Rs. 10; Foreign, 18sh., or \$4.

Advertisement rates can be obtained on application to the Manager.

Cut along this line

#### SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Make certain that you get your copy of SWATANTRA regularly by completing this form and posting it to the address boxed to the right

To:  
The Manager,  
SWATANTRA,  
2, Brodies Road,  
MYLAPORE : MADRAS 4.

I enclose remittance of Rs. 20; £1-16sh; \$8 for one year's subscription (or) Rs. 10; 18sh; \$4 for a half-year, including postage.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

*For All Aches and Pains*

**AMRUTANJAN**

**IS THE PAIN BALM**



**AT YOUR SERVICE  
SINCE-1893**

**AMRUTANJAN LIMITED**

**MADRAS**

**BOMBAY**

**CALCUTTA**

# SWATANTRA

Vol. X. MARCH 19 SATURDAY 1955 No. 7

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS

**I**N a speech last Sunday scintillating with wit and wisdom, Sri C. Rajagopalachari pleaded for a ban on all nuclear weapons of destruction. He addressed his appeal particularly to America. Explaining why he did not ask the USSR to throw away the nuclear weapons and urged only the USA to do so, he said it would be impossible to expect a weaker party to take a courageous step like the one he had suggested. And he quoted Gandhiji as having said that one must be strong to effectively show non-violence. "Non-violence," Rajaji repeated, "could be effectively practised only by the strong. If a man strikes you, turn to him your other cheek, was the advice given not to the weak but to the strong." Rajaji is undoubtedly the ablest exponent of the Gandhian way of life, but in this matter of assessing strength and weakness for qualifying one to meet aggression non-violently he seems to have gone quite wide of the mark. Mahatma Gandhi was by no means a physically strong man, but that did not prevent him from turning the other cheek. The Gandhian evaluation of strength was not that of physical attributes but of qualities of the mind and will—the spirit. The whole historical significance of Gandhi's work in the world lies in the victorious fulfilment of the struggle for the liberation of India which he led, enabling an unarmed people utterly insignificant militarily to stand up to the armed might of the greatest empire and overcome it with other than physical means. America's title to be considered superior on the

ground of more powerful military equipment for the purpose of setting an example in disarmament and the practice of non-violence is not in harmony with the spirit and substance of Gandhiji's teaching and it is somewhat surprising that Rajaji should have overlooked this.

After having called upon the USA to forswear nuclear weapons, Rajaji argues that if he had addressed his appeal to the USSR and the USSR had responded, then "all the shouting politicians of America would say that they (the USSR) had given up because they knew their weak position and knew their effort was futile." This is blowing hot and cold in the same breath mixing high expectation with low suspicion in a strangely inconsistent manner. If the USA could not even be trusted to appreciate the course of action urged by C. R. if another power pursues it, how can it be called upon to set the example in the matter, itself?

In his analytical exposition of the reasons that led the great powers to go on with the production of nuclear weapons, Rajaji was on quite unassailable ground. "It was easy," he said, "to make mistakes when subjected to passion. Of all passions, the most misleading was fear. Fear would mislead the wisest and the most courageous and the most upright of men." Yet the sort of fear responsible for the vogue of nuclear weapons is quite different from the personal fear of individuals when confronted with dangerous situations. To be wholly free from fear is to discard completely every instrument of

March 19 1955

coercion as a means to safety and protection, and there are quite a few not incapable of this. But the guardianship of others such as administrators are concerned with poses quite different problems, and in their case the highest courage is not inconsistent with the most sensitive apprehension bordering on parental anxiety for the well-being of a helpless child. For all their courage and faith in non-violence, neither Gandhi nor Rajaji could bring themselves to dispense altogether with the police and the military when their conscience was not exercised on merely individual matters and had to be applied to their duties as statesmen and political leaders.

The Americans are no more violent than we are. Neither are the Russians. Both sides are confronted with the dilemma that military measures which seem to them entirely defensive are interpreted by the other side as preparations for offensive war. And yet, even such a pacifist as Bertrand Russell holds that no sane member of the Western world can be made to think that it would

be wise to discontinue such preparations on their side. As he visualises it, "the problem is to find some way by which, in spite of our armaments, we can persuade the Communist world that we do not intend to inaugurate a war." Steps in this direction could, in his opinion, be most advantageously taken by the neutral nations, particularly India.

Within ten years after their discovery, nuclear weapons have developed into a threat to millions of lives and the whole material civilization of the modern world and even the future of the human race. Sri Rajagopalachari's suggestion for unilateral banning of nuclear weapons reflects the concern of the enlightened individualist with detachment at the menacing drift of things, but just because of the misleading influence of the fear complex he referred to, which is quite real though worthy of extirpation, it must remain for the time being an ineffective theoretical wish. Bertrand Russell's suggestion seems more practical. It is embodied in the following extracts

(Continued on page 7)

## Sotto Voce

★

### ALL MAGIC IS BLACK MAGIC



**M**ADRAS, where nothing much ever happens, has, with a great air of consequence, been debating nuclear energy, possibly on the assumption that the onlooker sees most of the game. India has neither the knowledge nor the means to manufacture H. bombs or even to make atomic reactors for peaceful uses. So she may flatter herself that she can take a less biased view of

the pros and cons. But, if we can do nothing else, let us at least try to take the argument a stage farther than the protagonists are usually content to do.

If we can persuade Russia and America, Britain and any other power that can make the bomb, to desist and declare a total ban on its manufacture and use none will be happier than myself. For there

March 19 1955

SWATANTRA

5

would then be some hope that man had begun to recognise the hand of Providence. If he recoils from the edge of the abyss, he might be saved from his own *hubris*. But, frankly, I do not believe that that kind of miracle will happen. All war is a gamble in margins. And, however tremendous the odds against survival, an atomic war is still a war, and the Sakunis of every nation will have the last word.

Mankind having sold itself to science as Faust sold himself to the Devil, it was inevitable that Dr. Oppenheimer's moral and humanitarian scruples should be overborne and the H. bomb make its appearance on this distracted planet in due course. Oppenheimer realised with a shock, like one who had stepped on a snake unawares, that the Hydrogen bomb might be the end of things. Being a simple and decent man, the atom bomb which he had made and exploded was lying heavy on his conscience. Was it not sacrilege to arm oneself with the thunders of the Lord, which his reading of the Viswaroopa Adhyaya of the Gita had brought so vividly to his mind as he saw that first fatal fireball go up in Santa Fe?

But the politicians were as merciless on his humanity as the bearded wolfish kings who decreed the doom of Jephtha's daughter. And the scientist, after those first furtive doubts, succumbed to his *milieu*. He was at once too humble and too unsteady on his moral pins. In his anxiety to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's he failed to render unto God the things that were God's. The failure, I must insist, was not the failure of just one man: there are few better men living to-day than Robert Oppenheimer. It was the disastrous failure of the humanist faith.

Science, we are told, is neither good nor bad in itself. In wise hands its infinite potentialities can be made to yield an Earthly Paradise. If in the wrong hands it can bring about cosmic destruction, the remedy is not to call a halt to the march of science

but to appeal to men's reason and self-interest. We must make them see that the engines of destruction which science can devise may attain the terrible perfection of a Frankenstein monster. Having foolishly released the genie from the bottle, we should now try to coax it back to captivity and put the stopper firmly on it.

But those who plead thus for putting the H. bomb out of commission do not go to the root of the matter. Science is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating avenues open to the questing spirit of man. But all the protests of the eminent from Einstein downward to the contrary notwithstanding, science since the days of Paracelsus and Friar Bacon has not been pursued for its own sake. From alchemy to transmutation of metals, from gun powder to the Hydrogen bomb, it is the prospect of power, naked power, over his fellows, his environment, his destiny, that his *ahankara*, his uncontrolled ego, has dangled before greedy man. And science, that Wishing Tree, has created the Mohini of technology to lure him to his doom. The H-bomb has assuredly not exhausted her magic.

An age-long tradition in India barred the communication of vital knowledge to the *non-adhikarin*. If the same herb could be used for turning baser metal into gold and for curing leprosy, who that remembers Hiroshima will blame our ancients for deciding that it would be better far to take the chance of losing the cure for leprosy than to let the magic herb fall into the hands of morons with the Midas itch? We can—theoretically speaking—pursue pure science as much as we please, and yet give an indefinite holiday to the technicians. But even our crusaders against the bomb dare not suggest that. It would be treason against that golden calf the moderns worship—the standard of living that must go on growing like Jack's beanstalk. But in sober truth we cannot have both *aasthikya* and *aabhichara*.

VICHNESWARA

# SIDELIGHTS ::

**S**RI PRAKASAM is an uncertain force in Andhra politics. When the Andhra State was formed he was elevated to a unique position the like of which is not to be found anywhere else in the democratic world. He was not the leader of any party in the legislature. Party leadership, the recognised title to the Chief Ministership, belonged to Sri Sanjiva Reddi. Sri Prakasam as the first Chief Minister of the new Andhra State was set on a pedestal higher than that of the administrative head of any other Indian State, and in singling him out for this distinction Pandit Nehru paid a graceful tribute to his giant stature as a general of the freedom movement before the British withdrawal. Sri Prakasam had thus the opportunity given to him of incribing his name in letters of gold on the history of the Andhra State in the same way in which it was inscribed earlier on the history of the country's freedom struggle. But he missed the opportunity. He took a fatal step that no man of decent regard for the integrity of the government would have taken, and from that time onward it was as if a blight was cast on the State he governed. It could not digest his Ministry and threw it out.

For much less, others in the past, like Gopala Reddi, Kala Venkata Rao and Chandramowli, were rejected by the electors when they got the chance, and were sent into the wilderness. They took their penance sportingly and with a becoming respect for the electorate's will. Quite unlike Sri Tenneti Viswanatham now who, after his defeat at the polls, has been going about like a victorious warrior, staking his claims, if report be true, for a seat in the Ministry. I am sure the provision in the Constitution which permits an outsider to be appointed as a Minister for six months before getting elected to the legislature was not planned as a device to enable a

defeated candidate to flout the verdict of the polls, and Pandit Nehru is too good a democrat to tolerate such a constitutional atrocity. A decent interval must pass compelling defeated legislators to taste defeat as defeat and draw from it its significant political and moral lessons, before they can have another try at popular suffrage to win back their lost positions. Otherwise the very guardians of our Constitution would be reduced miserably to the level of being its licensed violators. Tear up the Constitution and destroy the whole purposeless paraphernalia of the electoral system rather than take with it this sort of violent liberty.

The uncertainties that attend on the election fortunes of ordinary candidates do not touch Sri Prakasam. Not in Andhra at any rate, unless it be in the environs of Vizianagaram where the P. S. P. leader Sri P. V. G. Raju is reputed to be practically undefeatable. For a tithe of Sri Prakasam's sins as Chief Minister, anyone else would have been thrown, not only out of the Ministry, but also out of public life, without any hope of return, for at least ten years to come. But Sri Prakasam has worked his way into the affections of the Andhras as a figure of pathos arousing in them a strange blend of admiration and compassion, and however blameworthy his follies, they provoke not resentment or censure, but further indulgence and a still more indefatigable pity. He knows this and flourishes on a systematic exploitation of it, in that artless way of his which excels all art in its dramatic effects. "He is 87. He has not long to live. Let us not cross the old man in his last days"—so runs the popular attitude to him, and there are signs that it will be used to the full now in a sentimental campaign for his reinstatement as Chief Minister of Andhra a second time.

The limits to which, inside the legislature or out, sentiment can drive the Andhras, in defiance of commonsense, are quite unpredictable. I am not therefore wholly confident that the susceptible and excitable members of the United Congress Front, will turn out to be so cold-blooded in their judgment as to realise that the leader whom they elect to rule the State as Chief Minister should at least have all his faculties at work, free from the decay and dilapidation that the senility of age brings. But if they do, there will be no further impediment, according to all accounts, to the election of Sri Gopala Reddi as Chief Minister.

When Henry V succeeded his father as King, Falstaff his boon-companion shouted to one of his cronies, "Choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine." To another he promised, "I will double-charge thee with dignities." But the King to whom he rushed, disowned him. "I know thee not, old man," he said.

"... I banish thee ..."

As I have done the rest of my misleaders,

Not to come near our person by ten mile."

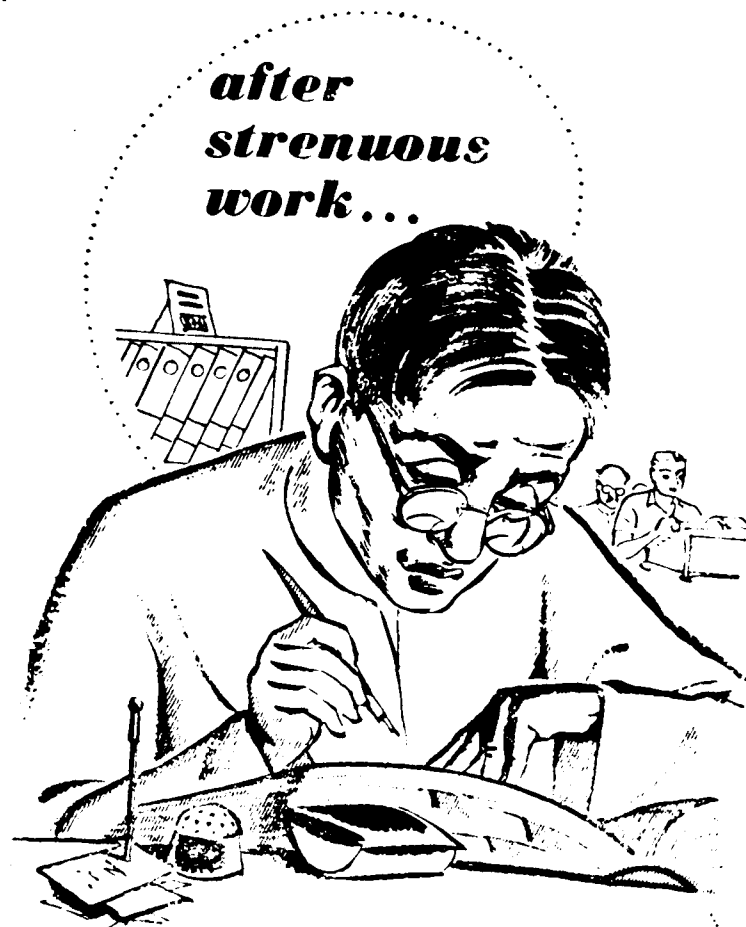
Round every heir to high destiny, gormandisers gather, avid for office and dignities. There is no path of justice for one who fails to get clear of them. Duty and safety dictate their banishment. To yield to their importunities is to destroy both good government and the public weal. If the lessons of the bitter experience enshrined in the past are not lost on him, Sri Gopala Reddi will make no worse Chief Minister than any other aspiring for the honour; but if they do not have that effect, he will have a short inglorious run before lapsing into obscurity. He has the advantage of colleagues, each as gifted in his particular way, as any State Minister in the country. Sri Kala Venkata Rao is undoubtedly one of the ablest politicians in South India today. Sri Sanjiva Reddi has geniality and charm, and when not oppressed by too heavy responsibility, a worthy ambition for fair dealing. Sri Chandramowli has a felicitous,

rustic, peasant attitude, quite captivating in the midst of the urban sophistications that fill the lives of so many of our leaders today. These more than average ex-Ministers came to grief on past occasions through the influence on them of Falstaffian hangers-on that corrupted their conscience and made them playthings in petty regional quarrels. A Minister exists for the whole State and not any part of it exclusively. If this truth is properly grasped there will be assurance of competent and stable government in Andhra. In the selection of other Ministers it is to be hoped that fantastic conceptions that have nothing to do with efficient administration, will not be allowed to hold sway. Even Rajaji could not long survive the appointment of a Jyoti. He provided for the benefit of all Chief Ministers the warning, from which particularly Sri Gopala Reddi can derive great benefit, that a woman merely because she is a woman has no better right to be a Minister than abler and more experienced male competitors with better records. SAKA

(Continued from page 4)

from a statement of his made last year:

The governments which Russia regards as hostile cannot expect to be listened to sympathetically in the Kremlin. Only those governments which are genuinely neutral can hope to make any impression upon Communist governments by moves intended to diminish the tension. A third World War, if it occurs, while it will probably completely ruin all the belligerents, will certainly do very grave injury to the neutrals also. They have, therefore, a legitimate interest in trying to prevent such a calamity. . . . Neutral nations have in this respect an advantage, and can approach both sides simultaneously with complete impartiality. . . . I do not think that the prohibition of atomic and thermonuclear weapons would be very useful. Whatever agreements might be reached, and whatever thoroughness in inspection might be established, the prohibited weapons could always again be manufactured after the outbreak of war, and no doubt would be. It is the prevention of war, not of this or that weapon, that must be sought.



after  
strenuous  
work...

no other drink  
refreshes you  
so much, yet costs  
so little as

**TEA**

our national drink



## THE "DESHMUKH COCKTAIL"

By H. R. VEDANTA IENGAR

A FIFTY per cent increase in excise duty on sugar, a hundred per cent increase in excise duty on coarse and medium cloth per linear yard accompanied by a reduction in the export duty on cloth to 6½ per cent, the introduction of the principle of family allowances in embryo through differential income tax rates on married and unmarried persons, heavier income tax burdens on middle and upper middle income groups, a ten per cent *ad valorem* excise duty on a new range of articles of indigenous manufacture, measures to make less expensive cigarettes cheaper and luxury cigarettes dearer, concessions to cottage match units and tax relief incentive calculated to give a fillip to industrial development—these are some of the main ingredients of the Deshmukh cocktail for the coming year.

The budget for 1955-56 is not remarkable in the sense that it does not mark any striking departure from the general pattern of the 1954-55 budget, though, fortified by the recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission, the Finance Minister has enlarged the scope of excise duties and taken measures to enhance, readjust or rationalise as the case may be, income and certain other taxes. The 1955-56 budget differs from the 1954-55 budget in the scale of revenue expenditure on nation-building and development services, being a little over Rs. 29 crores higher, and also in the scale of capital expenditure which is Rs. 44 crores higher. The Finance Minister characterized his last year's budget as a 'reflationary' budget. The budget for 1955-56 may be said to represent a continuance of the reflationary phase. With falling agricultural prices calling for official intervention to bolster them up by means of Government buy-ups, with the general wholesale price index down by 44 points since April 1954, with industrial production extremely buoyant on the whole, with a lower cost of liv-

ing index and with the employment situation continuing to be a source of anxiety, the country is far from any threat of inflation notwithstanding deficit budgeting to the extent of Rs. 560 crores in the aggregate during the current and coming years.

### Revival of Confidence

A matter of profound and far reaching significance in Mr. Deshmukh's budgets for the past 5 years is that deficit budgeting has come to stay, even as State planning has come to stay. Indeed, it may be said that the former is the consequence of the latter. The fact that a number of State Governments and the Central Government have budgeted for deficits with equanimity without making frantic efforts at indiscriminate economies in expenditure and without launching on heroic taxing, the fact that people do not feel outraged and scandalized and throw up their hands in horror over continued budget deficits, shows that Mr. Deshmukh has by his budgetary policy of courage tempered with care and watchfulness, of "calculated risks combined with caution," wrought a real revolution in public policy and in people's thinking and attitude to the budget. The country may now be said to have outlived the "sound finance" timidity of the 19th century financial canons which regarded a balanced budget as an end in itself. The realization is now fairly widespread that the paramount consideration is not the balancing of the budget of Government but the balancing of the economy of the nation as a whole through development of resources, that the role of Government is not to balance its budget and then sit back but to take positive steps to promote investment and production. The only bad thing about deficit budgets, says an economist, is our habit of worrying about them; and, by and large, the Indian people are nowadays less disposed to worry about the budget deficits of

March 19 1955

their Governments than some years ago. Nothing could be a more eloquent demonstration of this fact than—as the Finance Minister reported—“the distinct signs of a revival of investor confidence” after the initial period of distrust, scare, suspicion and hesitancy, the encouraging reaction of the capital market, the “heartening” response to Government and private borrowing in 1954 and the increasing tempo of industrial progress evidenced by as many as 110 new industrial undertakings being licensed to be established and 226 old industrial undertakings seeking permission to go ahead with expansion plans during the year.

Incidentally, attention may be drawn in this connection to the practice now adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Great Britain of publishing statistics on national income and its components, investment, savings, consumption and money incomes, as an annex to his budget, thereby revolutionizing Treasury practice, in order to show how the Government's budget is related to the national economy as a whole. The American practice of presenting the “nation's budget” (as distinguished from the Government's budget) giving figures of receipts, expenditure, savings or absorption of funds for each of the economic groups—consumers, business, and Government—is useful in quantitative analysis of economic prospects and forms a factual basis for evolving a rational fiscal policy. Something on these lines could be advantageously attempted in connection with the presentation of the Indian budget to Parliament so that the country may judge Government's budgetary proposals against the background of the balance sheet of the national economy as a whole, though Mr. Deshmukh has promised to issue a “plan-frame” in the near future on the basis of the new statistical information that is now available.

In a country like Russia which is the pioneer in State planning and which set the “fashion” in drawing up 5-year plans as long ago as 1928, the National Economic Plan totally

and exclusively dominates the nation's economic activity with the result that the budget of the Government is merely the financial expression of the plan. It would obviously be going too far to say the same thing of the Indian budget not only because Indian planning is by no means so comprehensive, total or detailed as Russian planning but also because Indian planning depends on quantitative as well as qualitative controls and the Indian economy is a composite of the public and private sectors with the latter occupying, for the present at any rate, the dominant position in the national economy. Nevertheless, to the extent that the Indian budget is not affected by major happenings abroad, to the extent that it is not the old gamble in the rains, it will increasingly determine and be determined by the needs of the 5-year plans and the progress in implementing them. “From now on”—Mr. Deshmukh rightly claimed—“unless a very marked deterioration takes place in the international situation or a natural calamity like the failure or maldistribution of the monsoons occurs in a big way, the determining factor in the economic situation, we may hope, will be the rate of planned economic development.”

#### Taxing Education

Of all Mr. Deshmukh's tax proposals for 55-56 the most vulnerable to criticism are those which fall heavily on the middle income groups with the tall poppies not coming in for comparable attention at his hands. The differential rates of income tax on married and unmarried persons is a welcome innovation not only because it can be justified on the principle of comparative ability to bear tax burdens but also because it has the ring of a distant echo of the social security schemes in Welfare States where children's allowances are an integral part of such schemes. While it is inevitable that the scone of excise duties should go on widening and revenue from this source should progressively supplement and supplant the dwindling or vanishing revenues from import duties as indi-

March 19 1955

genous industries grow up to, manhood, a ten per cent *ad valorem* excise duty on Indian made paper seems like a tax on learning or education. With only 6 crores out of India's 36 crores or 16.6 per cent of the population literate (according to the 1951 census) it would be expedient to leave at least printing and writing paper outside the mischief of this levy. The exemption of newsprint from the new excise duty is an illusory concession since little or no newsprint is yet being made in India.

Another levy which will especially affect the middle classes is the proposal relating to the excise duty on cloth which results in increasing the duty on coarse and medium cloth by as much as a hundred per cent, while fine and superfine cloth are in effect treated with more consideration. This enhanced duty accompanied by a simultaneous decrease in export duty to 6½ per cent seems invidious and has the appearance of favouring the foreign buyer at the expense of the home consumer. Though, as Mr. Deshmukh said, the real object of reducing the export duty is to strengthen the competitive position of the Indian textile industry in export markets and increase the earnings of foreign exchange which will be needed in increasing quantities for the import of industrial equipment in the coming years, and on the other hand the proposals relating to the excise duty on cloth are motivated by purely revenue considerations, Lancashire textile interests who have been lately very loud in their complaints against the large scale exports of Indian textiles to U. K. might plausibly argue that the Indian budget proposals simultaneously enhancing the price to the Indian consumer and reducing the price to the foreign buyer amount to what is technically called “dumping.”

#### Nationalisation of Insurance

The raising of the limit up to which rebate for income tax purposes would be allowed for payment of life insurance premia (this concession will cost the exchequer Rs. 25 lakhs) seems to be intended to give a stimulus to savings through life insurance so as

to enable life insurance companies, which are important institutional investors of funds in Government loans, to participate in a larger measure in the borrowing programmes of Government. Insurance companies are the middle men for the savings of a large sector of the community and measures to give a fillip to life insurance business are certainly worthwhile. Indeed, it is time that Government went further and took up for serious consideration the question of early nationalisation of insurance in the country. The Finance Minister stated sometime back that the question was being studied. The importance of nationalising insurance is brought home by a study of the ways and means position of Government, as disclosed by the Finance Minister. As against the total needs of Government to the tune of Rs. 947 crores in the coming year to meet the revenue deficit, to finance capital outlays and meet the loan requirements of State Governments and to repay maturing debts, Government hope to raise a loan of Rs. 125 crores in the market, mobilize 52 crores from the small savings scheme, realize 86 crores from miscellaneous transactions and receive foreign aid to the extent of Rs. 74 crores, leaving an overall deficit of Rs. 340 crores, to be met by issue of Treasury Bills. The quantum of foreign aid is not susceptible of being increased, being contingent on the ability and willingness of foreign Governments to extend such aid. The only way to keep the overall deficit from assuming a gargantuan size is to increase our internal borrowings from the market and intensify the savings drive. It is in this context that nationalisation of insurance becomes important as well as urgent. Here again, Mysore showed the way many years ago. Though insurance is by no means a Government monopoly in the State, the functioning of a Government Insurance Department has enabled Government to undertake many development projects in the past. “Mobilization of small savings, necessary at all times to the country's economy”—said the Finance Minister—“has now assumed added

March 19 1955.

importance for the fulfilment of the development plans which will need increasingly larger resources." Making the insurance business a Government monopoly is an effective way of meeting this problem of resources for our plans. The implementation of the second 5-year plan would be facilitated and the size of overall budget deficits prevented from snowballing into undesirable proportions if nationalisation of insurance synchronizes with the inauguration of the second plan.

#### Living Dangerously

The Taxation Enquiry Commission have emphasized the need for enlarging the role of taxation and borrowing as opposed to deficit financing to implement the development programme of the public sector. This view is entitled to great respect but there is a fairly widespread feeling that the scope for further taxation and the possibility of sizable increases in public borrowing in present circumstances are extremely limited and in view of the fact that the "multiplier effect" of past investments during the 5-year plan period takes time to work out and result in the creation of new incomes on a substantial scale from which taxes and savings could flow and in view of the accelerated rate at which the country expects development plans to be put through, deficit financing on an appreciable scale seems unavoidable for some time to come. It would be relevant in this connection to recall the view which Keynes enunciated at the beginning of World War II that "taxation and borrowing could not be adequate so long as the national income remained at low levels." Keynes said that the first job was therefore to raise the level of incomes from which taxes and loans could then be extracted. He argued that, in the circumstances, war financing should first come via monetary expansion and that once the national income had risen to an adequate level taxes and borrowing could then come into their own. War financing in the U. S. A. was, it is stated, "a gigantic laboratory demonstration" of the

Keynesian view. Economic development in India must be treated on the same basis as a war emergency since the country has no patience with a glacial pace of development. What is true of financing a gigantic war may be said to be true, by and large, of financing gigantic development plans at an accelerated speed in a country whose national income is extremely low, though unbridled monetary expansion and deficit financing can turn out to be Frankenstein's monsters if inexpertly handled. While Mr. Deshmukh is, quite rightly, opposed to the replacement of prudent finance by the printing press, he has not hesitated to resort to deficit financing "as an instrument for securing the maximum development without injury to the stability of the economy." The Finance Minister observed that finance "can, if one likes, be created up to a point and within limits laid down by the need for combining stability with quick but orderly progress." In reporting a "substantial increase in money supply," during the current year, namely, an increase of Rs. 71 crores in note circulation and of 55 crores in demand liabilities of scheduled banks, Mr. Deshmukh must have had no doubt that the requirements of both stability and quick and orderly progress have been adequately met.

Keynes advised President Roosevelt to "live dangerously" if he wanted to pull his country out of the greatest depression the world had ever experienced. The Finance Minister of an underdeveloped country cannot but "live dangerously" if he should succeed in the attempt to pull his country speedily out of chronic and secular stagnation. Negative, "safety first" finance is ill-suited to a nation which is in a hurry to forge ahead. And having regard to the various economic indicators like production, prices, employment and foreign exchange reflecting contemporary and likely future conditions, Mr. Deshmukh can justifiably feel confident that the policy of "living dangerously" is far from likely to lead to disaster.

March 19 1955

SWATANTRA

13

## THE WONDER OF HELEN KELLER

By SANTHA RUNGACHARY

ONE evening last week we waited in a sunny room in Raj Bhavan for Helen Keller. Through the door we could see the lawn, bright-green and velvet-smooth in the sun. We had just passed, on our way to the room, dense shrubs of bougainvillea bright with blossom. The breeze coming from over the water was cool on our cheek. It set the chandelier tinkling.

Helen Keller came into the room hand in hand with her companion, Miss Polly Thompson. My first thought was: she can't hear the chandelier. There was a moment of silence as she took her seat and turned her face, smiling, towards us. My next thought was: she *does* hear the chandelier.

I don't know why I corrected myself. Because, obviously, she *couldn't* hear the chandelier. She couldn't see the sun shining on the green grass or perceive the riot of colour in the garden. She couldn't hear us as we moved our chairs closer to her, so close indeed that if we had put our hands out we could have touched her grey flowered dress. She couldn't see our small, answering smiles.

And yet one felt she heard them all, saw them all.

On our way to the press conference a friend had said: What is she going to say to us? We knew about her, of course. Poor Helen Keller, we thought, who had been blind and deaf for 75 years, what could she say to us? What could *we* say but express our sympathy and admiration? What could we do but feel deeply and poignantly her immeasurable lack?

It took us exactly 30 seconds after she entered the room to realise that Helen Keller no more needed our sympathy than the sea needs salt.

Having by a superhuman effort of will risen above herself, she has

become a symbol, a victory, an attitude of mind. She has become a phenomenon, but she has become that without ceasing to be a person. In fact, it is her personality which is the most astonishing thing about Helen Keller. Here is no calm, serene soul, subdued and composed, perhaps resigned, reaching out through an interpreter into this strange other world in which live the people who speak with their voices and see the world with their own eyes. Her mind is full of laughter, it is a gay mind as sturdy, active, wholesome and vital as her body. She is like a child, ageless. Time has drawn fine lines round her shapely mouth and on her forehead but age has not withered her soul nor staled her insatiable love of life. Helen Keller does not, like a recluse in retreat, live deep down inside of herself. She lives just behind her blue eyes, immediately at the back of that child-like face.

SHE smiles easily. She laughs easily. After having travelled all over five continents and done most of the things other people dream about, after having met the men and women who have made the world what it is today, learnt four languages and written half a dozen books, she still reaches out like a child to the thoughts and communications of even commonplace people. And at 75 she sits on the edge of her chair and waves her hands with an impatient gesture if a full minute passes by without her being told what is happening. She must be a fascinating but exhausting companion. Her hand goes out eagerly to Polly Thompson's mouth and throat and the head shakes vigorously as the fingers catch the modulations and vibrations of the other's utterance. She slaps her knee vigorously in delight as comprehension flows into her through her finger.

March 19 1955

She can speak—slowly, in a high-pitched voice, with an effort. But to her, speech is a movement of throat and tongue and a holding of breath. It took her 25 years of constant practice, practice, practice to learn to speak. The very fact of speech is still a delight to Helen Keller. But now it is not merely a mechanical process she has mastered with painful concentration. For the words she uses and the thoughts she expresses are the words and thoughts of a fine and sensitive mind. To have affiliated organical manœuvres like the movement of lip and tooth and tongue with a feeling inside her, therein lies the greatness of Helen Keller. She is full of things to say. She is irrepressible. *You are talking too fast, Helen*, said Miss Thompson more than once to her delighted, excited chatter, at the press conference.

AS you listen to her and see her impatient, unselfconscious movements, you feel her eyes and her ears are a secondary feature. Helen Keller wants you to notice her not as the character who has triumphed over her disabilities but as Helen Keller, person. Period. She wants no handicap given to her in personal evaluation. She has always wanted to be like other people. To be unique was not worth ambition. She has been famous from the time she was 12 but it was not because she was trying to do something exceptional but because she was trying to be like everybody else. Never to be apart, never to be special, never to be alone. *After all she said to Madame Maeterlinck once, what does it matter what we are? The important thing is what we are able to do.* But it is a fact that we are what we are by what we have been able to do. The complexion and accent of life changes with every new achievement, indeed with every new experience.

And Helen Keller has had immeasurably more than her share of experience. She herself attributes the beginning and unfolding of her individuality to her first teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, about

whom she has just finished a book. *All the best of me*, she says in one of her earliest volumes, *belongs to her*. Anne Sullivan taught her to read, write, converse. She acquainted Helen with the moods of nature. She gave blessed release to the pent-up energy inside of the rebellious, passionate child. She made self-expression possible. She taught her language letter by letter, syllable by syllable, word by word. But she did something far more wise and significant. She brought Helen Keller out of the world of the blind and deaf and mute and made her a citizen of the world of the seeing. Her academic scholarship, vast and varied as it is, is not Helen Keller's special achievement. Thousands of blind people learn to read and write and work and support themselves by the labours of their hands. Her unique distinction is the quality of mind she has developed. Her mind is robust, indefatigable, pertinacious. It has no doubt been touched by grief, despair and disappointment but it has absorbed the tears and reconditioned itself. In the transmutation of a mind to such purpose lies Ann Sullivan's genius. It would have been so easy and safe to turn the little, handicapped girl's thoughts inward, to let herself build her own world inside of herself, to make abstractions her reality. Ann Sullivan did not make any such effort to protect Helen from life. She pushed her right into it, to learn to make herself happy and useful. That is why Helen Keller today is startlingly extrovert. An exuberance of spirit overflows her every gesture. Time even as an abstraction has no place in her life. She exists, as it were, apart from time. For the mind of man develops not in terms of hours and minutes but in terms of ideas and experiences. And Helen Keller has grown from one discovery of the spirit to another, from one intimation of mortality to another, from one mental response to another.

Ann Sullivan taught Helen to learn through her hands. And Helen Keller touched everything—flowers, animals, trees, grass, water, faces. She came to know the wind by its

March 19 1955

vibrations and the coolness of it against her cheek, snow by the hard, crusty feel of it under her heels and the cold. She played with tadpoles in the water. She shook hands with a bear, stroked a lion, was held up to feel the neck and ears of a giraffe. She once allowed a snake to coil itself and an elephant to wind its trunk around her. She learnt to love art through passing her hands down the lines of pieces of sculpture. She learnt geography on the banks of the Tennessee from a map outlined on the ground with clay. She saw the World's Fair in Chicago literally with her hands while Dr. Alexander Graham Bell spelt out its wonders into her hand. Helen Keller learnt to see with her fingers and listen with her feet and diagnose with her nose. She was once asked how she differentiated between day and night. *Oh*, she said, *in the day the air is lighter, odors are lighter and there is more motion and more vibration in the atmosphere. At night there is less vibration; the air is dense and one feels less motion in things.* Because two of her senses are dead, the others are overdeveloped. Her whole body is keyed up to a height of perception and impression which those who see and hear never reach because there are a hundred other things to distract them. Her imagination is prodigious and flexible as it well has to be since it has to be exercised on every little thing which she is trying to understand. She learnt to swim, ride, bicycle, row and toboggan. She learnt geometry, algebra, physics, botany, zoology, and philosophy. She is now one of the two deaf and dumb people in the whole world who are known to have received 'higher education'. She can speak French, write German and read Latin. *I dislike people*, she wrote once, *who try to talk down to my understanding.* From the first printed word on cardboard to Shakespeare is a long way, but Helen Keller has traversed it. Early in life Helen Keller realised that her way to light through the dark silence which enveloped her very soul like a shroud lay through knowledge. Knowledge was not only

happiness, it would help her to acquire her moral standards, to know true things from false and lofty things from low.

When she was ten Helen Keller said to her teacher: *I want to speak with my mouth.* That was sixty-five years ago. She has since spoken before the Massachusetts Legislature and lectured at universities from Cairo to Jerusalem as well as in Europe. *It is an unspeakable boon to me*, she wrote when she was 22, *to be able to speak in winged words that need no interpretation.* That was the summit of her achievement, this vocal release to her mind.

One cannot help wondering if the quality or texture of her thought is the same as that of people whose mental make-up is shaped by a whole visible world. *More than everything*, she said at the press conference, *I wish for peace.* What does peace mean to her? Or government? Or even a tree, an ash-tray, a dog? They must mean something far more ideal and untouched by human disposition than they do to us. It is in this one sense that Helen Keller lives among us and yet apart from us. In one sense she must live alone as our sages lived once upon a time in their trances, as Buddha lived in the forest and Jesus lived among the heathens.

IN her twenties, she wrote in her autobiography: *Sometimes a sense of isolation enfolds me like a cold mist as I sit alone and wait at life's shut gate.* Much knowledge has flowed into Helen Keller's mind since that confession. She has broken that silence and a sense of dedication has dispersed that mist of despair. Today she is living testimony to the endlessness of man's possibilities and to the invincibility of the human spirit. She is, as William James said of her simply, a blessing.

★

In Springfield, Ohio, a truck driver charged with drunken driving and knocking down a pedestrian was fined \$150 and sentenced to "spend as much time in jail as the victim spends in the hospital"

## Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy:

### A Symposium

THE United States Information Services organised a symposium last week at the Gokhale Hall on "The Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy." On the first day the audience was introduced to the subject through lectures on the "Personalities of the atomic age," "The Story of the atom" and the Nuclear Reactor. Dr. A. Narasinga Rao, the eminent mathematician, spoke on the personalities of the atomic age. He spoke at length on Einstein who more than anyone else has revolutionised our concept of the physical world. Einstein's famous equation  $E=MC^2$  is perhaps the most portentous equation of the twentieth century. It was this identification of mass and energy and the suggestion of the possibility of the conversion of mass into energy and vice versa which has given the world the atom and hydrogen bombs. But without the labours of other great experimental physicists like Rutherford, Cockcroft and Walton, Joliot and Irene Curie the atomic age would never have been ushered in. Time was a grave limiting factor and Dr. Narasinga Rao evidently could not elucidate the work of more scientists than he talked about. He spoke on Enrico Fermi who constructed the first reactor and thus made the bomb a practical project. As Dr. Rao so well expressed it, nothing helped the Allied powers more than the expulsion by Hitler and Mussolini of some of their most brilliant men of science like Fermi. A brief reference was made to Dr. Oppenheimer. But it is indeed regrettable that Dr. Rao should have seen fit to pass over Chadwick the discoverer of the neutron. This omission becomes more painful when one realizes that the time spent on speaking about Dr. Bhatnagar and Dr. Bhabha could have been utilised to expound the work of Rutherford, Chadwick, Niels Bohr, Lise Meitner and others. For, neither cosmic rays—on which Bhabha is an expert—nor Dr. Bhat-

nagar have much to do with the atomic bomb.

The film 'A for Atom' is one of the best films on a scientific subject we have seen. It should have helped the audience more than any lecture could ever have done, to understand the principles involved in the manufacture of the atom bomb, the making of radio-active isotopes which are of such immense value in medicine and biology, and other uses of the atom. The commentary on the film was a masterpiece of lucidity and informativeness.

Dr. I. Ramakrishna Rao traced the story of the atom aided with the epidiascope.

Dr. Clarence Kent, an engineer by profession spoke at length on the problems raised in the construction of an atomic reactor, and the methods adopted to meet them.

On the second day the symposium was continued with the main emphasis on the practical and constructive uses of the atom. Dr. K. M. Rai spoke on "The Atom in Medicine." With his wide experience as a radiologist he had not much difficulty in conveying to the audience a clear idea of the uses of radioactive isotopes, deep x-ray therapy and tracers in the diagnosis and treatment of tumors and other afflictions. The theoretical aspects and the advance on the pure research side were considered by Mr. S. Raghavachari and the important uses of the atom in agriculture were touched upon by Mr. Venkatasubramanian. Prof. J. P. Manikkam, a physicist with a gift for popular exposition dwelt on the manifold uses of the atom in industry. He spoke of the possibility of changing the human complexion when everyone will be fair from end to end of the earth and matrimony will cease to be a serious problem!

The film "Atom in Agriculture" was an eye-opener.

Mr. Paul C. Sherbert, concluding the two days' proceedings said India with her immense potential of men and material could easily have the lead in the development of atomic energy.—V. V. SAINIVASAN

## NEHRU ON THE PROBLEMS OF ASIA

### TEXT OF TELEVISION INTERVIEW

NEW YORK: In the middle of February Ed Murrow interviewed India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on CBS-TV's "See It Now" programme. Mr. Murrow has a respect for the news that sets him apart from most of his colleagues. And, he does not believe that any radio or TV commentator should editorialize by injecting his own opinion into the news—at least consciously.

The interview was filmed in London the day after Malenkov resigned. Following is the transcript:

MURROW: Mr. Prime Minister, may I ask you a personal question?

NEHRU: Yes.

M: Why do you go about both here and in India, with such small bodyguard?

N: I have no bodyguard here—my own, I mean.

M: Yes.

N: The British government supplies me with a person who is supposed to look after me, but otherwise I don't bring a body guard. It is a great nuisance even in India, for me to carry about somebody with me. You see, Mr. Murrow, my life has been spent in crowds. I feel isolated if bodyguards come in the way between me and the people.

M: Mr. Prime Minister, are you hopeful—well, that's not exactly the right word because I know you are always hopeful. But do you have hopes of an eventual peaceful settlement on Formosa or around Formosa?

N: I have certainly that hope. Indeed, Mr. Murrow, if a person didn't have hope he would be unable to function properly. That is, one would become functionless. I certainly think it can be hammered out. I think it should be realised that the situation is a difficult one, but I

would say it is not so difficult after all as the Indochina situation was when the Geneva Conference met, and yet, through patience, through understanding, they arrived at a settlement, and therefore, there's no reason why we shouldn't exercise that patience and understanding in order to get over this hurdle also. Because, after all, one has to understand that some kind of co-existence in the modern world is the only way to live on. The alternative is co-destruction. Also, if I might add, I am sure that all the parties do not want war, that is the most hopeful thing.

M: You spoke of Indochina where India certainly contributed to the solution—similarly in a war in Korea. Do you regard at least part of India's function in this area to be a meeting ground where some of these tensions can be resolved, or at least where conversations may be held? It's sometimes referred to as a third force. I don't mean it in that kind.

N: I know. I know. We don't function as a force because we are not a force. But India is, fortunately, so situated there that it can speak with some understanding and in a friendly way to the various countries involved. It is because of that that it can help in the present context, too. We may have conferences and the like to deal with it, but these informal approaches help in—in creating that understanding and removing misconceptions more than formal conferences.

M: You believe in secret diplomacy and restraint. Is that it, sir?

N: Well, secret diplomacy has a bad flavour, but I must say the open diplomacy of the present day has been something worse than all secret diplomacies. What I mean is that private exchanges, private talks, do create better atmosphere for public meetings afterwards.

March 19 1955

M: In my country, your policy is occasionally referred to as being neutralist. How would you describe it, sir?

N: Well, I don't like the word "neutralist" and I do not think it applies to our policy. First of all, the word "neutral" is normally used in times of war—belligerents and neutrals—not in times of peace. Our policy is neither neutral in that sense nor passive. It is an active, positive policy, well, in favour of peace. Holding on to certain objectives and ideals and trying in a friendly way and in a small way to influence events. We don't imagine that we can make a terrible lot of difference but sometimes when things are in the balance, even a little tells.

M: Mr. Prime Minister, you spoke a moment ago about using war-like words. Is it possible that we are all being brutalized as a result of these exchanges of epithets and sloganistic terms?

N: I agree with you, Mr. Murrow. There is far too much shouting at each other, and generally speaking, I am not referring to individuals. The wars, and what has happened subsequently, has rather suppressed the finer instincts of men and made them somewhat brutal, which is unfortunate, because, after all, we are supposed to develop in the course of thousands of years of civilization and culture the finer instincts and not merely what might be called the military instincts.

There is far too much strong language even by big statesmen not to mention the press, of course, which does not help. Now, any person, any country can put forward its own position as firmly as possible without necessarily running down the other party which doesn't add—doesn't help at all. In this atomic age one has to balance that atomic and nuclear age with patience, understanding, charity and compassion.

M: Prime Minister, you were recently in China?

N: Yes.

M: Do you regard Communist China as a threat to India?

N: No. Not at all. Quite practically, looking at the picture, I do not regard any country as a threat to India. But insofar as China is concerned, we have had not only long talks there but we have come to certain agreements about common problems; and we have clearly stated there in those agreements the basis of our relationship. Non-aggression. And what is important, non-interference in each other's affairs—internal or other. That I think is the basis that might well apply to every country.

Of course, it might be said that, oh, it's all very well but are you sure this will be acted upon. Well, that kind of thing can always be said but the mere fact of coming to these agreements creates an atmosphere of goodwill, better relations, and an obstruction to somebody trying to break them. So, it's a great gain.

M: What would you say or would you care to say anything about the relations between Moscow and Peiping, Mr. Prime Minister?

N: Well, obviously, the relationship between those two countries is a friendly relationship—friendly in many ways. And Moscow has helped Peiping in regard to technical personnel and other matters. But if your question means any kind of subservience of Peiping to Moscow, I think that is not so at all. One must remember the whole background of China where the mere size is very big—past traditions, past history, and they are proud people, and in their revolution they succeeded very largely because of their own efforts—not of external help, even Soviet help, and all this has given them a kind of self-reliance.

Their policy—internal policy may be partly guided, no doubt it is, by Communist ideology, but you'll find that it is all translated in terms of Chinese life, not of any other country, and because they are great realists, the Chinese, and their approach is pragmatic in regard to land, in regard to industry, and everything, and so while no doubt they will continue as friends to the Soviets, they lead their—their independent life as a nation.

March 19 1955

M: But this relationship again, to use the current shorthand of the day, is not that of a satellite in any sense?

N: Well, that is completely correct. You can't have a country like China a satellite to any country. If there was any conflict in China between Chinese nationalism and some external influence, I have no doubt that the nationalism would be the stronger force.

M: Yes. It would not be fair to refer to this as Titoism but it would be in the same line?

N: Yes—it is not—no. You can't compare the two.

M: Well, yesterday as you know, Malenkov resigned. I was wondering if you would make any comment on the political changes in Moscow?

N: I'm afraid I am not in a position really to comment and I don't know much about them except what has appeared in the press, and therefore, I don't know what exactly they signify. But I am more interested, of course, in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union rather than its internal policy, and I would imagine that these changes are more concerned with internal policy than with foreign policy, and that the foreign policy would continue more or less as it has in the recent past.

M: Well, sir, is that the reason you've declined aid—military aid from the United States and the Soviet Union?

N: First of all, the Soviet Union has never offered us military aid.

M: Yes, but . . .

N: But there is no question of military aid from the Soviet Union.

M: You have stated that, yes.

N: I know and even the United States have hinted at it, that if we so wished they would prepare to consider it—there has never been any question of the United States offering us military aid. Well, the real reason is that we really do not think, we try not to think in military terms. I want my country to be strong and the strength of my country is going to be, apart from economic health

and progress, the unity of my country and self-reliance in my country.

Now, I do not want anything to be done which reduces the feeling of self-reliance. And that, of course, is the big lesson that Mr. Gandhi taught us, and although Mr. Gandhi died several years ago, his influence in our thinking continues very much.

M: Well, Mr. Prime Minister, having read some of your writings, do you ever regret that the burdens of state prevent you from writing these days?

N: Well, perhaps yes—sometimes. Well of course, you must realize, Mr. Murrow, that I'm not what might be called a writer by profession.

M: Yes.

N: Whatever I have written has been, well, an expression of myself under certain circumstances. Not written, let us say, for, or even with a very keen eye to, publication. In the back of my mind I might have had that thought and all my major works have been written in prison.

M: Well then, as I understand it, you wouldn't recommend prison for aspiring writers?

N: Well, since you have asked me that question, I would recommend prison not only to aspiring writers but to aspiring politicians too—in the sense not that prison is too good a thing—in the sense that it helps one to live quietly and—and think. And in the modern world I think one of the very unfortunate results of, well if you like, industrial civilization is that it gives little time to think. We live from act to act and we rush from place to place.

I think, so far as I am concerned, the years I have spent in prison have been the most formative and important in my life because of various things. Well, the discipline, the sensations, but chiefly the opportunity to think clearly, to try to understand things—and I took to writing—more to clarify my own ideas than to address somebody else.

M: Several years ago, Mr. Prime Minister, I had the opportunity to help bring Indian students to the States to study. Was that develop-

March 19 1955.

ment successful or in the vernacular "did it pay off"?

N: Now, obviously, we require highly trained technicians in various subjects and we welcome their going to America or coming to England for this kind of training. That is, our whole outlook is changing from the literary type of study which was encouraged in the past to technical and scientific and the like, so in that sense they are good. But there is one—sometimes I have noticed one drawback, if I may say so, that a person who goes to America becomes a good technician, gets used to all kinds of mechanical ways of working. When he goes back to the Indian village he feels frustrated. He says, "I haven't got those tools," you see.

M: Yes.

N: He has to adapt himself to other conditions and he tends to hanker after special equipment which he may not have.

M: Well, you spoke of the need for self-sufficiency—that is, to rely upon yourself, but what sort of technical aid do you require from the West? Is it agriculture, hydro-electrics, mining? What is it?

N: Really—we really need it in ever so many departments. Of course, we need it so much that the only way to get it really is to train people in India. We may send a hundred, we may send five hundred, we send a thousand people abroad but we want to train a hundred thousand. We can't send a hundred thousand people abroad, so that what we need really is—we are putting up institutes of training not only for high class technicians but middle grade ones. Take the community schemes.

Now we start at the lowest level—the village worker. We select him from the village—a bright young man or woman. At present we give him nine months' training, send him back to the village—and above him a big group of ten villages. We have got a small group—a medical man, an educationalist, an engineer, an agricultural man, a veterinary man—five or six like this looking after that group of ten villages. Then the bigger group of a hundred villages has now a higher standard of people.

Now, if you think in terms of five-hundred thousand villages in India, imagine how many people require the village worker type. You require them by the hundred thousand. We have to train them ourselves but some types of superior training we can't give at present, and therefore, we have to send them—we like to send them and we do send them abroad. What we require in India is equipment for our institutes, you see.

M: Then you want to home-grow your own experts?

N: That's right. That's what I mean.

M: Yes.

N: Of course, some people go abroad to be trained but they have really to develop the habit of working in the environment they have got to work in the future. If they get accustomed to another environment they don't easily fit in for a long time.

M: This, of course, is a development that presumably would combat domestic Communism in India. Wouldn't it?

N: Well, naturally, the more we lift standards of living, the more we make people realize that they are marching towards better objectives, the less they are discontented and frustrated.

M: Well, Mr. Prime Minister, I know there isn't any such thing as one Asia, but what about the relationship between Asia and the United States?

N: Well, Mr. Murrow, you just said quite rightly that Asia is not an entity except in a geographical sense. You may divide up Asia into various large areas. The Far East, Southeast Asia. South India, of course, is part of Southeast Asia and at the same time is a big enough entity in itself. Big enough not only in size but in historical tradition and all that.

Then, Western Asia, the Arab world and all that, they have different backgrounds and yet historically they have been connected in various ways. Also, the last 200 years or so, they have had the common experience of some form of colonial or semi-colonial domination. Now, this common

March 19 1955

experience is a big link between them because they have reacted in a common way, principally a nationalist reaction. Also a reaction in search of social progress, social justice in varying degrees. And you will find in Asia, therefore, some common understanding of each other on that basis. I don't wish to put it too high because—because of the differences.

Your question was about the United States and Asia. Well, the first thing to realize, and I say so with all respect—I have a feeling that what is not adequately realized in the United States or elsewhere in the world, is that something very big has happened and is happening in Asia. In a sense you might say Asia became stagnant and static—not changing—unprogressive several hundred years ago—not now. That made it weak and the Europeans came. They were dynamic, they were making progress industrially and in many other ways. That set—that set in motion certain forces in Asia slowly—nationalist forces.

Well, they have come to fruition now and so some kind of revolutionary tumult has existed in Asia for some time past in the minds of men. It has taken different shapes, different forms, dependent on circumstances. In China it has taken a big shape—of the Chinese revolution going in the Communist direction.

In India we were guided largely by Gandhi. A very unique personality, and he turned us in another direction. But more and more the other countries, Indonesia, Burma, all the Western Asian countries that have been in this turmoil trying to break through that crust which made it difficult for them to get out of it—social crust, economic crust, social habits.

But the first thing that came in the way was political freedom—political lack of freedom. Now to realize this and to realize that Asian problems have not only to be understood in their new revolutionary context but can only be solved in full co-operation with the Asians, is important.

What I mean is this. In the past it became the habit for great Euro-

pean powers at first—America came into the picture later—to deal with Asia and the Asian countries as a kind of outer fringe of Europe and to be decided by the big people in Europe. Now, that kind of thing is not only very irritating to the Asian countries but—but it just fails to solve the problem today in the context of things today.

And mere military power is not enough when you are dealing with vast masses of human beings. Military power is, of course, important, but one has really to win the minds of those people and win them also not merely by, well, not certainly by threats and not merely by, well, doing good works even, if I may say so. Good works are good, but it's a psychological problem—the problem of friendly understanding and not merely showing that if they don't behave they will not get some benefit or they might be injured. This kind of thing produces the opposite reaction.

Thank you very much indeed, Prime Minister Nehru. Thank you, sir.

N: Well, I'm very glad.

M: Thank you very much.

## ★ INDIA AND THE PHILIPPINES:

### Common Links

#### *An Interview With Ambassador Serrano*

UNITED NATIONS, New York: India and the Philippines have something in common among the Asiatic countries. These two countries more than any other lands in the Orient have been influenced by Western culture. In the case of India, it was the British influence and in the case of Philippines it was the influence of U. S. A. As such the Indians and Philippines understand the West better than other Asiatics.

When H.E. Felixberto M. Serrano, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to the United Nations came to New York to take his present post, the local papers made a big story

about his family. No wonder, because the Ambassador is blessed with a family of 12 children which is indeed a record for any diplomat that has ever come to the United Nations. Mr. Serrano held a press conference at the United Nations Headquarters and the newspapermen from all over the world who interviewed him thought that he was one of the most pleasant and able men they had ever encountered. They were also of the opinion that men of his calibre are needed at the world body. He came here after a rich and varied career as a teacher, lawyer, guerilla leader, military adviser and legislator.

Dr. P. G. Krishnayya, Indian editor and publisher, met him a few times and was so impressed with the Ambassador's knowledge and understanding of the problems the world is facing that he got this personal interview from him.

The following are the Ambassador's own words:

India and the Philippines have many things in common. Once in the dim past the Philippines was a part of a vast empire which included India. The cultural stream which began in those days did not cease flowing for centuries, and to this day there are considerable traces of Indian influence in the art and life of the Filipinos. Even more binding

perhaps is the instinct of nationalism, for all its difference in form and development in the two countries, India and the Philippines share with an equal passion. It is a movement which produced leaders of the type of Gandhi and Rizal, two of the most devoted and selfless patriots who ever worked for the cause of national emancipation.

It would not seem necessary today to labour these points except for the seeming fact that India and the Philippines held opposite views on a number of international issues. There has been one outstanding issue on which India and the Philippines have consistently differed, and that is, on the Communist issue. But here again the case has been overstated. India and the Philippines, it must be emphasised, regard Communism as a peril in common. Both countries have a domestic Communist problem and both have been successful, in the main, in the attempt to confine it and keep it within manageable limits. Where Communism of the homegrown variety is concerned, India and the Philippines are uncompromising.

It is on the issue of external Communism that these two countries have not always seen eye to eye. While both are agreed that Communism should be prevented from further aggression, neither has agreed with the other's view of the danger which Communism poses at present, or on the manner of combating it. It is a question of procedure, but important as it is, it need not obscure the larger area of agreement. Prime Minister Nehru has himself indicated that should India be convinced of the immediacy and imminence of the Communist threat, his country would stand without hesitation on the side of the democracies.

Upon these considerations must lie more of the eventual reconciliation of the views of India and the Philippines. In the meantime, the two countries continue to be friends on the basis of common traditions, and partners, along with the rest of the free world, in the unceasing effort to build a world free from strife and injustice.—P. G. Krishnayya's Service.

#### SOME TRAVEL BOOKS

Traveller's Prelude by Freya Stark, With Illustrations

Rs. 13- 8 as

Beyond Euphrates by Freya Stark

Rs. 18-12 as

Apes and Ivory: Travels in South Africa by Jay Packer

Rs. 18-12 as

Aegean Greece: Travels in Greece by Robert Liddell

Rs. 18-12 as

Four Guineas: A Journey through West Africa by Elspeth Huxley

Rs. 15-12 as

Seven Years in Tibet by Heinrich Harrer

Rs. 12- 0 as

K. MAHADEVAN

82-A Royapettah High Road,  
MYLAPORE, MADRAS 4.

## OLD 'TRIVENI' DAYS

By M. CHALAPATHI RAU

Editor, *National Herald*, Lucknow

THOSE days seem distant, but they were days of hope and vaulting conceit and they remain in the timelessness of the mind. The Salt Satyagraha had passed into history. To me, who was thinking only of an inner disturbance, the Armenian Street was the street of adventure, giving to that part of Madras City the look of a cathedral town. The cathedrals passed by, and then the merchant houses. The taxidermist's shop sprang to life on this day with dead animals glaring limply. I went up the steps of the Young Men's Indian Association, stood outside a room, and scrawled my name on a scrap of paper. I went in, with trepidation but with an air of assurance, and on light feet.

I had seen Ramakoti somewhere in Mount Road, with some detachment. A friend pointed him out to me as the Editor of *Triveni*. So unlike John Morley or W. E. Henley, I thought, and so unobtrusive. I had seen *Triveni* but today I was meeting its Editor, and it seemed a moment on which somebody's destiny depended. He would be kind, but would he have the pleasure of discovering me, I who was so well-known to myself?

He was considerate. Inside me the small ego was struggling, like that of Frank Harris hawking his early stuff in Fleet Street; outwardly I was shy and wide-eyed. He said kind things, something about the raciness of the writing. But first I had to get the article typed out. I ran to the nearest typist, passing the taxidermist's animals, dictated the article word by word, and delivered it on tiptoe next day. It was only when the article was published that I realised that the writing had been too racy, a tumble of similes and metaphors, racing beyond the point of no return. In writing about Masfield, I had been affected by his 'Reynard the Fox'. With twenty-

five neatly printed reprints, in red cover, I felt I was a writer. First article, first impression, twenty-five copies.

I did not know how to reappear before Ramakoti now. He might ask me to write on another poet—not Drinkwater! I wanted to be the Macaulay of his 'Edinburgh Review', writing long, spacious articles, with Macaulay's swaggering sententiousness, with history as the background. One day, I met Ramakoti in a tram. He called me to his bench. He spoke like a friend and said what has remained memorable to me and what I tell young men, with variations. "It is good to write with imagination, even excessive imagination, when one is young," he observed. "That means there is something there. If there is no ferment at this age, nothing will emerge later." Casually, he asked me if I had read *Yenki Patalu*\*. I had; it had been exciting; but I remembered none of the songs. Could I translate them? I could, I said; only, I wanted the book. He sent me the book next day.

I READ the songs, hummed them to myself, and felt they could not be translated. But I had said I would translate them, and I must. That night, the humming went into my head. One song was translated, then another, they tumbled into rhyme and shape, the rhythm corresponding nearly to the original rhythm. Exhaustion overtook me. I left the manuscript next day at *Triveni* office, not daring to know the Editor's opinion of a night's exhilaration. I forgot the article and was spending delightful days, chasing dreams in Cubbon Park, in Bangalore. A letter came from Ramakoti saying that the article was "exceedingly well-written" and that he was happy and proud he had discovered

\*Songs in Telugu by Nanduri Subba Rao.

me. Restrained commendation, but as good as a Nobel Prize for me then. The letter was affectionate and consoling. "Life is greater than service," it said, referring to my rejection by the Medical Board for a highly important competitive examination. That saying has been a prize; life is above all service, even the highest.

One marginal comment on the manuscript, I have not forgotten—"Too much antithesis." There could have been no viler antithesis. The exuberance remained, in spite of the editing. Today the commentary part is not acceptable to me. I could improve the translation, but I would not be able to do it, given another chance.

It was something to a student of law, which was an ass and not yet the engaging perplexity it was later to become. I lived in the Y.M.I.A. I was a *Triveni* young man and in 1931-32 it seemed eternity lay before me. There was no urge to write, except for poetry which was reserved for English publishers. Reading and study were exciting. Ramakoti encouraged me to be an Edward Fitzgerald. I translated several Telugu poems but would not produce them.

There was early in 1932 a literary controversy, typical of Madras intellectualism of those days, which had a start from me. Two well known professors of English opposed in the Academic Council Satyamurthi's proposal for the selection of Venkataramani's *Murugan* as a text-book for the B.A. classes. There was derision for Indian writing in English. What had it produced except rhetoric-mongering? I wrote a long letter in irritation on 'Indo-Anglians and Rhetoric-Mongering', which was published in *The Hindu*. I made it rhetorical and derided the pedantic negativism of professors, and what had they been teaching? Sparks flew for some weeks. The controversy was interesting for me, for nobody questioned the standard of my rhetoric, and Saranathan, one of the two professors, praised it. On my way back from Bangalore, Ramakoti gave me Venkataramani's

new novel *Kandan* for review, making it plain that he had declined to give the book to others and the honour of reviewing it belonged to me. I had read Venkataramani's *Paper Boats* and liked it. But a novel? Throughout the night, I had not a wink of sleep in the railway compartment. I was too eager to read the book I was to review. When I returned after the summer vacation, I was greeted enthusiastically for the review, which had yet to be published. It was dazing, when Venkataramani, meeting me for the first time, recalled Coleridge and praised the review also. He must have been a conceited young man in his time, I thought. The review was more a review of the English novel as it was at the time, and *Kandan* to me was a medium of what seemed the strange, simile-studded English of Venkataramani.

THIS was a year of friendships and discoveries, and for me the golden age of *Triveni* I was now informal and confiding with Ramakoti. He had been vague, with his gestures of joy and despair; he emerged like a Botticelli portrait. Behind his softness, the dissolution of individuality, I saw the strength of steel, the core that would not dissolve. He had unchangeable ideas about the get-up of *Triveni*, the paper on which it was to be printed and the advertisements which must be accepted or rejected. Proof-reading was a refined passion, like an engraver's art, the test of perfection. This could be appreciated by me only slowly by the elaboration of experience. At that time I was incapable of such analysis, incapable of understanding the nature and extent of the sacrifice. I only felt the impact of sunniness, and the sunniness of one who knew good writing and to whom editing was an art. His excisions were delicate surgery. He was a pruner, a gardener with other men's words, thinking more of the garden than his own chrysanthemums.

The Y.M.I.A. throbbed with life, and the reading-room characters were a study in South Indian sculpture, young men and old men, some Hogarthian. Mrs. Besant's statue,

the St. Paul's-like dome, the gallery of portraits of greatness, the bookshop where theosophy and palmistry jostled with Georgian poetry, the marathon *kalakshepams* on Sundays, and the genial secretary, who seemed to be unaware of what was going on round him! The restaurant, dingy and noisy, broke up into literary round-tables with an occasional Johnsonian rumble. The coffee was famous for its freshness and kick, and sweets were served stingily like manna. Between *Triveni* office and the restaurant, one might meet varying incarnations of *belles-lettres*, among lawyers with punctured gowns.

I COULD recognise Isvaran before we were introduced to each other, on Ramakoti's return from his hometown. He thumped frequently the wooden verandah-passage before my room, with a far-away look, an assistant editor of *Triveni* with an outstanding story to his credit, which I had read. He seemed to stare, with time enough. When he spoke of his forthcoming collection of poems, I pitied the situation. By then, poetry meant melancholy to me: happiness lay with prose. But he looked dedicated, doomed, and was later to make me think of our generation as the doomed generation. His mind was fascinating like a fairy castle which had to be scaled. I reviewed his book. For me reviewing was a sybilline task, in which the reviewer had to weigh the chances of perfection and immortality. Isvaran's friendship was useful for prosaic work too, when I was entangled in a private war of words on behalf of Madras reviewers against Masulipatam bards. It was my effort to drop gentleness and, assume a Byronic ferocity befitting an 'atheist, socialist and vegetarian', as I described my convictions of the time. Isvaran was less contemporaneous, living within himself, in the drudgery of an inner devotion, and his daemon, as I called it in commemoration of Goethe and Faust, had to be roused. He too was to be a perfectionist in editing and later to edit the *Short Story*, a model of that art.

Venkataramani dropped in occasionally, gnome-like, kindly-looking, wise with humour, his eyes glittering with fun, his solemnly delivered similes contrasting with his effortless quips. I was not sure, that a person with such orthodox looks should write good English prose. Writing to me was either good prose or good poetry—and prose was intolerable for whole seasons—and if any Indian attempted it, he must look like a Tagore or at least like the Chettur Brothers. Venkataramani broke down my resistance. He talked as he wrote, in cascades of similes. From him I learnt that creativeness is sympathy. He was the antithesis of his environment but the environment was essential for his integrity. I called him, in days when I did not comprehend the importance of environment, "a lily in the mud of Mylapore." His heart, even when it bled, was lily-white.

IT took me time to know and understand Chandrasekharan. He chattered endlessly, pontifically, but with humility. His book, *Persons and Personalities*, was a surprise to me: his gaiety contrasted with the purposefulness of his writing and even the punctuation seemed to be affected by high seriousness. Except for classics, I assumed the authority of Coleridge towards books, though I cared as little for Coleridge as for Kubla Khan. It was some years later that Chandrasekharan was convinced that I liked his book, that in spite of my love of resonance, I demanded meaning.

I had expected A. D. Mani to be a frosty, old professor from the way he had reviewed Isvaran's first book, on Venkataramani, and patronisingly asked people to watch 'the coming man.' From the moment I saw him in the reading-room, elusively swimming in and out of sight, smiling to himself, I knew it must be Mani. His slippery walk and furtive, searching looks frightened me but there was no avoiding him. He was chummy from the first meeting. From then I have been 'Philip' to him and he 'Jimmy' to me, after two writers of the day. His world was the world of Wodehouse and Edgar Wallace. Through-

March 19 1955.

out the years we have remained warm-hearted friends in the profession, except for a brief period on the Press Commission. We go about as old *Triveni* boys, even claim that we started journalism from the gutters of the Armenian Street. We discussed, and mostly dismissed, the journalists of the day, competing vigorously in our conceit. It never occurred to us that we would after some years be presidents of the two all-India organisations of the profession.

K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar must have been a French academician and an authority on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Europe, from the hefty manner in which he had written about Joan of Arc. His humility and his young looks, when I was introduced to him by Isvaran, over the noise of a *kalakshepam* in the auditorium, were a surprise. He seemed too eclectic in his tastes, tolerant in his criticism. He was generous and reviewed my *Triveni* article on 'Modernists, Imagists and Futurists', recalling the unusualness of expression, in one of the many weeklies for which he wrote. I find that, after an enormous output, he is among the Mandarins.

THERE were several others who dropped in occasionally, bringing rumours of other literary worlds. From his tours, Ramakoti returned and talked of Phadke, Gokak, and Masti, Madame Sophia Wadia, and literary circles and reputations in Bombay which were dim to us. Now and then, we had Marco Polos like Nilkan Perumal, art-critics like G. Venkatachalam, whose suave personality I had to engage one day single-handed and with nervous enthusiasm, in the absence of Ramakoti. There were *kalakshepams*, Chidambara Bhagavathar completing the Ramayana twice, talks on culture, debates, oratory and nonsense, and all the while Isvaran, whom Venkataramani would rag for slavery to the printer's devil, and Ramakoti, on the prowl for talent. I am not sure of the sequence, nor am I sure that it was all as solemn as it seems now. The days were hilarious, cold or sunny, troubled, crowded, but not

dull. We were an elite, not a clique. It was a club without rules. One day Khasa dropped in, from a hospital, recovering from near-to-deathness after a lathi-charge, a martyr and a figure of interest.

Life seemed larger than any service and Ramakoti was the centre of the universe. I was in a world of books, and journalism was far below literature. The newspapers were within my daily study, feasts of jargon and lawless syntax. I wrote little, content to dream of writing classics. One day Ramakoti wrote in exhausted despair an article, 'Bring Me Thy Failure'. I called it a lyric in prose, though he would not concede it. It was the consummation of his *sadhana*, and it conveyed to me the essence of the *Gita*, though I have cared little for that classic of ambiguity, sought unsuccessfully to be annotated into faith. The article was a revelation to me of the essence of a good editor's sacrifice, how a writer has to be ruthlessly subjected and reduced to ashes, so that an editor might rise from them. I have seen editors selfishly project themselves and make their journals advertisements of their self-esteem. I do not know if even Massingham of the *Nation* cared to set himself aside so gallantly as Ramakoti did to make his journal express in its personality, which was his personality, the many-sided singleness that can come only from the significance of many writers. It was not safe for my conceit to live so close to a person of Ramakoti's severities. I could see how decisive were his decisions, how imperious he could be in his tastes. He saved me from early cynicism and from much else. But I was afraid of taking advantage of his kindness, while loyalty, I thought, demanded that I should write for no other editor. It explains the meagreness of my published contributions in my most productive phase. The reading-room was my world; there I could laze for hours, making a discovery of Lucretius or carrying out, under Edith Sitwell's influence, experiments with verse texture to see its influence on rhythm. On some nights, Ramakoti

March 19 1955

SWATANTRA

27

would call me to his room and ask me to talk. I had nothing to aid me but a gawk's humour to decorate the trivial tales I could tell.

These are memories, without an effort at memorising. The years which followed had gaps. But I was again near *Triveni* whenever possible, still writing as infrequently. The writing included two political articles which swung me into journalism. The bitterness of conviction was far away and dilettantism was an escape from life. After a long measure of the dissipation of daily journalism, the old contempt for it has returned. I might, it seems, be able to indulge in the ancient dream of writing the whole of *Triveni*, the notes, the stories, the poems, the translations, the book reviews. But Ramakoti is too good an editor to encourage such a parade of perversion. And, besides, in those days the whole of eternity lay before me and

there was the security of an unknown future. Now, it seems time is shrinking, with life's daily battle for integrity.—*Triveni Silver Jubilee Number*.

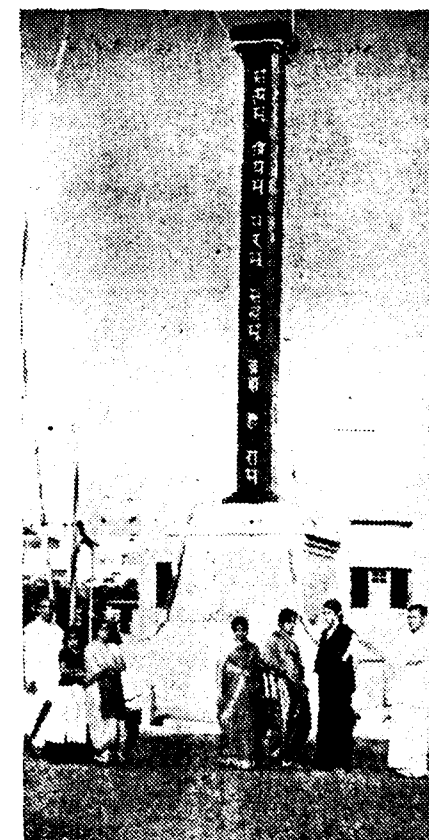
★

I think it an abuse to use the novel as a pulpit or a platform, and I believe readers are misguided when they suppose they can thus easily acquire knowledge. It is a great nuisance that knowledge can only be acquired by hard work. It would be fine if we could swallow the powder of profitable information made palatable by the jam of fiction. But the truth is that, so made palatable, we can't be sure that the powder will be profitable, for the knowledge the novelist imparts is biased and thus unreliable; and it is better not to know anything at all than to know it in a distorted fashion.—*The Art of Fiction*. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

#### Natesa Iyer Reading Room, Madurai

THE city of Madurai is fortunate in possessing a truly cultural organization in the Natesa Iyer Reading Room, Tallakulam post. In addition to making available over thousand Sanskrit, Tamil and English books to the public of Madurai, the Reading Room sponsors regularly lectures, musical recitals, religious discourses, and bhajans.

One of the most attractive buildings of its type, the Natesa Iyer Reading Room was opened by the Vice-President of India on January 14, 1953, and it can justifiably be proud of its two-year record of service. The latest of many acts of public service rendered by the Reading Room is the consecration of a Gandhi Stupa, a black granite structure of simple and austere beauty on which are immortalized in letters of gold some of the most memorable utterances and favourite sayings of the Mahatma. The city owes the Reading Room and the Stupa to the sense of civic pride, public spirit and philanthropy of Sri S. N. K. Sundaram, Managing Director, Pandyan Bank, Madurai, who is seen in the picture standing at the foot of the Stupa with the members of his family.



March 19 1955.

out the years we have remained warm-hearted friends in the profession, except for a brief period on the Press Commission. We go about as old *Triveni* boys, even claim that we started journalism from the gutters of the Armenian Street. We discussed, and mostly dismissed, the journalists of the day, competing vigorously in our conceit. It never occurred to us that we would after some years be presidents of the two all-India organisations of the profession.

K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar must have been a French academician and an authority on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Europe, from the hefty manner in which he had written about Joan of Arc. His humility and his young looks, when I was introduced to him by Isvaran, over the noise of a *kalakshepam* in the auditorium, were a surprise. He seemed too eclectic in his tastes, tolerant in his criticism. He was generous and reviewed my *Triveni* article on 'Modernists, Imagists and Futurists', recalling the unusualness of expression, in one of the many weeklies for which he wrote. I find that, after an enormous output, he is among the Mandarins.

THERE were several others who dropped in occasionally, bringing rumours of other literary worlds. From his tours, Ramakoti returned and talked of Phadke, Gokak, and Masti, Madame Sophia Wadia, and literary circles and reputations in Bombay which were dim to us. Now and then, we had Marco Polos like Nilkan Perumal, art-critics like G. Venkatachalam, whose suave personality I had to engage one day single-handed and with nervous enthusiasm, in the absence of Ramakoti. There were *kalakshepams*, Chidambara Bhagavathar completing the Ramayana twice, talks on culture, debates, oratory and nonsense, and all the while Isvaran, whom Venkataramani would rag for slavery to the printer's devil, and Ramakoti, on the prowl for talent. I am not sure of the sequence, nor am I sure that it was all as solemn as it seems now. The days were hilarious, cold or sunny, troubled, crowded, but not

dull. We were an elite, not a clique. It was a club without rules. One day Khasa dropped in, from a hospital, recovering from near-to-deathness after a lathi-charge, a martyr and a figure of interest.

Life seemed larger than any service and Ramakoti was the centre of the universe. I was in a world of books, and journalism was far below literature. The newspapers were within my daily study, feasts of jargon and lawless syntax. I wrote little, content to dream of writing classics. One day Ramakoti wrote in exhausted despair an article, 'Bring Me Thy Failure'. I called it a lyric in prose, though he would not concede it. It was the consummation of his *sadhana*, and it conveyed to me the essence of the *Gita*, though I have cared little for that classic of ambiguity, sought unsuccessfully to be annotated into faith. The article was a revelation to me of the essence of a good editor's sacrifice, how a writer has to be ruthlessly subjected and reduced to ashes, so that an editor might rise from them. I have seen editors selfishly project themselves and make their journals advertisements of their self-esteem. I do not know if even Massingham of the *Nation* cared to set himself aside so gallantly as Ramakoti did to make his journal express in its personality, which was his personality, the many-sided singleness that can come only from the significance of many writers. It was not safe for my conceit to live so close to a person of Ramakoti's severities. I could see how decisive were his decisions, how imperious he could be in his tastes. He saved me from early cynicism and from much else. But I was afraid of taking advantage of his kindness, while loyalty, I thought, demanded that I should write for no other editor. It explains the meagreness of my published contributions in my most productive phase. The reading-room was my world; there I could laze for hours, making a discovery of Lucretius or carrying out, under Edith Sitwell's influence, experiments with verse texture to see its influence on rhythm. On some nights, Ramakoti

March 19 1955

SWATANTRA

29

Many comparisons suggested themselves to my mind, all chromatic and tropical; but the uppermost was: the den of the forty thieves in the famous Arabian Night's story. The Morgiana touch too was there; it was no fancy; a few yards away in a corner seat was a dark young girl; with a little preparation—transferring into shimmering veil and taffeta trousers and tight-fitting bodice shot with lace and sequins, with bells on her toes and a tabor in her hands, a dagger concealed in her bosom, she would easily have been the dancing slavegirl of the household of Ali Baba.

**ARABIAN NIGHTS** . . . Forty Thieves . . . Morgiana . . . Ali Baba . . . *Open Sesame!* The tide of my reflections was rising high when a voice suddenly cut short:

"Please be seated, Sir."

It was one of those men who had loudly disapproved of my last minute entrance into the compartment.

"Please sit down," he repeated affably, pointing to a little vacant patch near him.

I sat down.

"How far?" he asked.

"To Calcutta," I answered, in a tone to indicate that I had no desire to continue the conversation.

"To Calcutta! You can't travel all that way standing."

Whether he meant it in a spirit of commiseration or sympathy, I accepted it in silence, but smiling neutrally. Nevertheless it was certainly some relief to me, and I took advantage of it by refreshing myself from my food basket and thermos flask. The hot coffee put me in a warmer mood for reflections.

"If you want to stretch yourself I've an idea," said my fellow passenger: "till Bezwada there'll be no lessening of the rush."

He was trying to be really helpful.

"I shall adjust my things," he said, looking up the shelf that ran through the middle of the compartment; and forthwith he began moving, adjusting, putting a small suitcase on a trunk, bringing down a tiffinset and shoving it beneath the bench, and

generally making a compact arrangement of his belongings. I too shoved my steel trunk beneath the bench, and unstrapping my hold-all and taking out of it a pillow and a quilt made a sort of bed for myself in the space so generously cleared for me on the 'upper berth.' Then thanking my travelling companion for his kindness I hopped up. I sat awhile taking an aerial view of the compartment and its contents—human and otherwise—enveloped in a haze of tobacco smoke, of cigar and cigarette and cheroot making the air stale; then laid myself to sleep with a last glimpse of the dark girl in that far corner below, my Morgiana. But the last glimpse was not to be Morgiana, for just before I closed my eyes a plaque in the wainscoting that divided the carriage caught my attention, on it were embossed the letters: TO SEAT 20 BRITISH TROOPS AND 60 INDIAN TROOPS. Now I could understand this forced congestion; even granting that every ordinary man is a potential trooper, it was straining the Indian anatomy much too much for the sake of the British. Maybe, I thought, the third-class compartment of a railway train was a perpetual vengeance for the Black Hole Tragedy. That was a proven myth now. But the inspiration stood!

**BLACK HOLE TRAGEDY!** Myth! I don't know how long I had slept and when I opened my eyes, I sensed a sort of spaciousness about me. I sat up wide awake; and the first thing I saw was that the crowd in the compartment had considerably diminished, that the atmosphere of stale tobacco had cleared before a cool wind that flew in through the open windows of the carriage. The compartment was plunged in sleep, although a few snorers disturbed the silence; bumble-bees flew out in deep variations through nose and mouth and kept on exploiting the possibilities of a most natural orchestra. I looked down to take a closer scrutiny of the world below, and I looked on a little drama, the homeliest I had ever seen, yet instinct with a strange romantic glamour which compelled

me to follow, and following perhaps share an adventure.

The Morgiana of my early wakeful hours was no longer there; in the place she had sat was a young woman. She must have got in from one of the intermediate stops. Twenty if not a day, she was still in her first bloom; her bold eyes and broad cheekbones and resolute symmetry proclaimed her race: she was an Andhra. Her complexion was the lighter shade of dark, but the aura of youth rendered her fair. She looked like an Ajanta carving come to life; the hard medium of the lapidary had changed into plastic human flesh, warm blood burnishing the skin, in itself an enchanting ransom for beauty.

**S**HE looked so homely. Sooramma, I christened her. No, not Kokilavani or Lalitakumari, one of your potboiled film affairs who call themselves stars with not even a hundredth of Sooramma's grace and loveliness.

She was in the midst of her toilette. The whole paraphernalia was scattered on the lid of a box in front of her. When first my glance fell on her, she had finished plaiting her hair—a glistening black snake—and was coiling it up into a knot, pushing and drawing and patting it through strands pulled from behind her sleeky-combed head. The sleeves of her bodice which were puffed like little balloons and which exaggerated the width of her shoulders, puffed more balloonishly when she progressed with the knot; presently she finished it and turning to someone near by asked:

"What's the time now?"

Her voice was clear as a bell.

I was so absorbed in what she was doing that I would have told her the time—for instinctively I glanced at my wrist—but the good genius of propriety held me luckily by the borderline and my eyes sought the person she had addressed.

He was a man in his early forties, stoutly built, tall to correspond to his stoutness. His head was closely cropped, so closely that the skull

twinkled like incipient baldness. He was dressed, *katcham* style, in tough brown khaddar for which the Andhras are famous, and a flowing *jibba* of the same material, which in the North goes by the name of *panjabi*. He seemed to have been dozing, and when the young woman addressed him he opened his eyes, but didn't care to answer her. He yawned as if bored, and I saw a small gap in the middle of his upper row of teeth.

Sooramma patted his cheek playfully. "Didn't you hear me?" she cooed.

"Yes, yes," he mumbled. His tone betrayed annoyance at her girlish prank.

But that pat settled all my doubts. For I had been furiously guessing at their relationship; father and daughter, no; brother and sister, certainly not; uncle and niece, it can never be; that playful familiar pat and intimate warm voice established the tie: he was the indulgent elderly husband and she the second young wife, smart, charmingly froward.

**P**AUSING in her toilette, she held up an orange, produced as if by a sleight-of-hand and started peeling it. She next pulled out a fig and brought it tantalisingly close to the mouth of the man.

"Tcha! Tcha!" he mumbled again, ill-humouredly, "what are you doing? Somebody may be looking."

"What if? Come, open your mouth."

"No," he said, pursing up his lips, "funny to eat oranges in the early morning. What a girl!"

"If you can eat betel you can eat oranges too," she said pertly.

"That reminds me—" the man said, smiling, and took out his *pan*-box.

Sooramma chuckled the orange through the window, echoing "Funny to eat oranges in the early morning!" and turned aside to continue her toilette.

The man laughed faintly, smearing *chunam* on the betel, as if accustomed to such displays of perkiness on the part of his wife. He

tried to be gay for the sake of his young Tilottama, but there was something forlorn about him, some sense of guilt that overshadowed desire.

I fell in love with Sooramma for her sauciness. Her whimsies were those of a child. Sitting in my aerial perch I was immersed in thoughts and dreams of her. I thought of the children that would spring from the loins of this vigorous woman, children who would grow into lusty youths, wear the coarse brown khaddar, and carry on the freedom fight of our country. But will the man by her side rise equal to the occasion? My love and admiration for her was tinged with a sudden pity.

**M**EANWHILE her husband sat dumb, chewing betel, all unconscious of the fact of how lucky he was to possess a pretty young woman for wife; perhaps he saw no difference between Sooramma and a well-masticated chew of betel and nuts.

And I thought again: It is quite common to see a gem of many carats exhibited in a jeweller's window, only a connoisseur will be interested in it; but to unexpectedly come across a diamond in the dunghill of a third-class compartment in a train, is most astonishing, is most ecstatic.

A faint smell of talcum powder floated with a whiff of wind. I saw Sooramma putting aside the powder-puff.

A cough. Then a loud yawn. More coughs and yawns. One by one the passengers in the compartment were rising from their sleep. Shutters were raised against a whitening sky.

Soon I was aware that not one pair of eyes, mine alone, but many pairs were watching the girl at her toilette. My gaze became all-embracing.

The dawn was lovely, but lovelier was Sooramma inside the carriage, smartening herself up, so softly, so subtly spellbinding those around her, and she herself appearing so distant, the evocation of some beautiful dream, for all her sauciness and child-like whimsicalities. It is wonderful how a woman can achieve such detachment, can turn a crowded

third-class carriage into a boudoir of her own. Only utter simplicity or ignorance can accomplish this miracle.

The husband fidgeted. He did not like the spectacle of his wife being thus ogled. His eyes censured what his tongue was powerless to protest. And for all his bulk and stature he look so shrunk, so pathetic in his powerlessness.

Sooramma glowed. She put the *kumkum* on her brow and regarded herself critically in the hand-mirror. She smiled with satisfaction. Then she put away the toilette-set and opened her box. Out came a paper packet. She untied it and brought out a darkgreen blouse and a blue spangled sari. The passengers held their breath in excitement. The husband was on the verge of a collapse.

Then as everyone looked on, hushed with agitation, swift as a streak of lightning she vanished into the commonest and the most private place in the carriage. The door shut tight on hungry looks. A few minutes later she emerged, arrayed in green and blue, a delightful combination of bird and flower, perfectly adorable. She then took a wreath of flowers which she had carefully wrapped up in a wet towel, and wound it about the knot of her hair. Her toilette was complete.

**S**HE beamed like an angel upon her husband. But he sat dull and listless, digesting his resentment. The old ore was afraid of the transmuting young flame.

He rose heavily and carrying one after another their belongings arranged them neatly near the carriage door. Obviously the next stop must be their destination.

The train slowed and pulled up. It was a bustling cheerful station: Tadepalligudam.

Sooramma got down hurriedly on the platform. I saw her looking ahead eagerly, and jumping onto the bench beneath from my eminence, I put out my head through the window. I couldn't see her face for she had moved a few yards away; but I saw her holding out her arms, and a young man hastening towards her.

He was scarcely a man, he was just an overgrown lad with down on his cheeks which gave a sort of dewy brightness to his face. Then I heard her cry with joy a name—it certainly must be that of the youth who had come to meet them at the station—but it escaped my ears. The two walked back to the carriage door, almost hand in hand; only a dread decorum, I felt, prevented them from kissing each other.

Other passengers were also getting out, but I didn't take my gaze off Sooramma. A new light of peace and happiness had come dancing like a benediction into her eyes; and her face seemed to have gone all open like a flower to meet that of the youth who stood beside her.

The husband was carrying the luggage out.

"Annayya, how was the journey?" asked the youth, hastily seizing a box out of his hands and putting it by.

The man lifted his head and smiled feebly. Almost instantaneously his face blanched as if all the blood was driven to an arid spot inside.

"You both go in advance and see to the jutka," he said, without looking at them.

They moved on. They moved, the lad moved with her in his hands, a flower closed suddenly into a fruit, full of sweetness and darkness. he moved, and she was fulfilled.

THE husband waited near the luggage. A coolie approached him. He helped the things to his head. I scanned his face. He had grown ten years older. His jowls had fallen. There were crow's feet about his eyes. He stood there even after the coolie had departed, empty, disinherited, an alien from another world, alone with his destiny, and as though imploring it to be more merciful to him during his transitory stay in this starcrossed planet.

#### GENTLE PRETENDER

AUTUMN comes with sudden braggart shout  
Across the hill, stamping his hobnailed boots.  
His mighty shoulders push against the trees  
And snap their branches. As the wild leaves fall,  
His laughter rolls among the thin gray clouds  
Where birds escape in circling, southbound droves.  
Great, bullying Autumn strides along the road  
And flings his boreal chanties to the sky.

But late at night, when trees at last are silent,  
When frost lies bitter on the rigid ground,  
He kneels with soft regret, and in the shadows,  
Gathers the leaves in clumsy hands to press  
Along the tender roots of frightened flowers,  
And tucks the sleepy chipmunk in his bed.

M. C. S.

## New Books

### A VISION OF BEASTS AND GODS

By George Barker

Faber and Faber Ltd., 24, Russell Square, London

9s 6d net



"THERE is a perfectly serious prospect of a decline in the experimental writing of young poets for the simple reason that they can no longer write as they wish to write and eat at the same time . . . The poet needs three things in order to go on being a poet: Milton described these as simplicity, sensuousness and passion. I put it as a dictionary, alcohol and love. It is still possible to buy a tolerable dictionary for a few shillings; and once you have bought it, you are hardly tempted to pawn it. But the price of alcohol and love, in a world full of Americans and hate, has risen in precise proportion with the cost of living . . . I have heard that some poets now get jobs, on the British Council, the British Broadcasting Corporation, and the British Railways . . . Being a poet is about as full time a job as being a Virgin with a Lamp. The poet will no more be forgiven if he is found, when the angel calls, collating material for the British Council, instead of cultivating his hysteria and his garden, than any other purveyor of an empty lamp . . ."

This quotation is taken from George Barker's essay, 'Poet as Pariah' published in *The New Statesman and Nation* for July 8, 1950 in which he speaks with great vehemence of the poet in relation to society ("The enmity between the poet and society," he says, "will never subside, in spite of some poets being conciliated or converted by gifts such

as titles, appointments, rich wives, popularity, or medals from the King.")—and this essay read along with 'Letter to a Deaf Poet' (appearing in *Botteghe Oscure, Quaderno XIII*, 1954, the international review of contemporary literature issuing from Rome), also a vehement proclulsion on poetry, containing statements such as "a poem affirms spiritually what it cannot possibly declare intellectually," and "every poem is a making known of ourselves to the Unknown God, and a dedication of its altar to him," will give one a correct knowledge of the stand taken by George Barker, as a poet. He is farouche; he doesn't want to hide the fact; he is dedicated; he doesn't want to put down his crown of thorns. Ronald Bottrall, one of the modern poets and a contemporary of William Empson expressed his indignation at what he termed as Barker's "cant" about the poet's being a full-time job, that in order to write, he should live at the expense of someone else; he cited the instances of Chaucer, Spenser, and Matthew Arnold who were civil servants and who found time to write excellent poetry; of Milton who "willingly gave twenty years of his life and his sight to the service of his Government;" of Donne who was the Dean of St. Paul's; of Herbert and Herrick who were country parsons; of Blake who was a hard-working engraver; and in our own time, of T. S. Eliot, who, during his most fecund poetic life, was a bank-

March 19 1955.

clerk, and is now the director of a publishing house. To the list of these may be added the names of Humbert Wolfe, a civil servant, and Edwin Muir who has held important official positions without detriment to his integrity as a poet. "Like the rest of us, employed or unemployed," Bottrall wound up, "he (Barker) is more likely to be forgotten than remembered in a hundred years' time." This is not only ungenerous but beside the point, the decision of immortality does not at any rate rest with a contemporary; it is left to posterity.

George Barker, born 1913, and educated at Marlborough Road L. C. C. School, belongs to the number—in the words of Kathleen Raine—"who have preferred to suffer the full impact of poverty and anxiety that falls on poets who do not come to terms with the world on the world's terms."

I, born in Essex thirty-four  
Essentially sexual years ago,  
Stepped down, looked around, and saw  
I had been cast a little low  
In the social register  
For the friends whom I now know.  
Is a constable a mister?  
Bob's your uncle, even so.  
Better men than I have wondered  
Why one's father could not see  
That at one's birth he had blundered.  
His ill-chosen paternity  
Embarrasses the fraternity  
Of one's friends who, living  
Huysmans,  
Understandably have wondered  
At fatherhood permitted policemen.

Happy those early days when I  
Attended an elementary school  
Where seven hundred infant lives  
Flittered like gadflies on the stool—  
(We discovered that contraceptives  
Blown up like balloons, could fly.)  
We memorised the Golden Rule:  
Lie, lie, lie lie.

Thus Barker in his *True Confession*, a long autobiographical poem, conceived in the line of poems like Villon's *Testaments*: outspokenly sexual, its lyricism alternating between rapture and revulsion (issued by the Fore Publications Limited, London, 1950, in the Key Poet series), that could "become literature—as all sexual poems do—only after the poet

is long dead." He was Professor of Literature in Tokyo, in 1939—recorded in his *True Confession*:

I sat one morning on the can  
That served us for a lavatory  
Composing some laudatory  
Verses on the state of man:  
My wife called from the kitchen dresser:  
"There's someone here from Japan  
He wants you out there. As Professor  
Oh, yes. The war just began."

He was resident in America until 1943, and has travelled widely. His first book of poems *Alanna Autumnal* appeared in 1933, to be followed by *Poems*, in 1935; *Calamiterror*, in 1937; *Lament and Triumph*, in 1940; *Eros in Dogma*, in 1944, *News of the World*, in 1950. *Janus* published in 1935 and *The Dead Seagull* in 1950 are prose works, the latter is a highly ornate piece of fiction.

*A Vision of Beasts and Gods*, his recent volume of poems, comes as the second choice of the Poetry Book Society, the first being Vernon Watkins's *The Death Bell*. "At his worst," says the Faber blurb to the book, "Mr. Barker might be imitated, at his best, he is both inimitable and wholly different from any poet of our time of equal rank." This new volume contains some of Barker's very best; the cultivation of hysteria (of which he spoke) which meant word-intoxication and obscurity of style is also a little in evidence here; confusion and incoherence in idea spring as weedy undergrowth here and there in the garden he has made—he is alone and unafraid—but the sparkling leaves and flowers make one forget the undergrowth—the irritation is momentary. And in his best Barker has worked out his thoughts and symbols with a lucidity and beauty beyond compare. The volume begins with a major piece, "Goodman Jacksin and the Angel" in which idiom and imagery combine to achieve a nuptial harmony; abstract things are concretised in the way of common realistic occurrences and the morality in the colloquy is brought out, with a controlled brevity and simplicity, thus:

March 19 1955

SWATANTRA

35

JACKSIN

There is no mystery in this  
A man and woman do not know:  
The law of dialectics is  
How Love evolves. There are no  
Two ones of any kind but must  
Bring forth a firstborn third to prove  
That the arithmetic of love  
Transcends the lonely dust.

ANGEL

Thus Love and Death together got  
Under a dark constellation,  
And in their fever they forgot  
That even Love and Death are not  
Exempt from generation.  
Then from their open-eyed embrace  
Rose the first god that ever was  
With doom in his face.

But for all its intrinsic loveliness and its several levels of profundity, one feels that Barker's notion of and attitude to sin are rather vague and the redemption he suggests is too idealistic and arbitrary. Other fine things in the volume are 'Letter to a Young Poet,' 'On a Friend's Escape from Drowning off the North Coast,' 'Bleeding a Stone is Walking by the Sea,' 'To a Child,' 'Epitaph for Many Young Men,' 'Consolatory Verses for the Middle Years,' 'At the Wake of Dylan Thomas,' and 'Channel Crossing,' that superb visionary statement of an inspired moment about the post-war world, arising from the Britain of those horrible years—a Britain from whom the impulse to song is as perennial as from a vernal wood, whatever the climate, peaceful or inclement. (This poem inscribed to John Lehmann, it must be remembered, first appeared in the last issue of *Penguin New Writing*, No. 40, 1950 and when it was reproduced in *New Poems* (1953): *A P.E.N. Anthology* there was a lot of pother about it from critics for the omission of a line which later the editors of the anthology ascribed to the poet himself). Here are a couple of stanzas from the poem:

But when I turned and looked into  
The silent chambers of the sea  
I saw the displaced fishes flee  
From nowhere into nowhere through  
Their continent of liberty.  
O skipping porpoise of the tide  
No longer shall the sailors ride  
You cheering out to sea.  
I thought of Britain in its cloud

Chained to the economic rocks  
Dying behind me. I saw the flocks  
Of great and grieving omens crowd  
About the lion on the stone.  
And I heard Milton's eagle mewing  
Her desolation in the ruin  
Of a great nation, alone.

In the second stanza one sees the difference from the version as it first appeared; "Dying behind me; saw the flocks" becomes "Dying behind me. I saw the flocks"—the punctuation is altered and the intrusive, individualistic 'I' is pressed into the imaginative revelation; and "Her dereliction in the ruin" is changed into "Her desolation in the ruin."

George Barker and the late Dylan Thomas were the two protagonists of the school of neo-Romanticism which was a divergence from and a reaction to the intellectualism of the Auden—Day Lewis—MacNeice—Spender group of poets which came into prominence during the thirties. They were less contemporaneous in the sense that their responses were overwhelmingly emotional and what they wanted to say was so remote from workaday experience, so trance-like as a seer's or a mystic's. On the political side their movement was towards "anarchism and pacifism." Cecil Day Lewis, in his *Revolution in Writing*, observes thus: "In the near future I think it likely that literature will divide into two main streams. On the one hand, morality writing—conveyed through fairy tales, allegory, satire, and perhaps a new kind of semi-religious drama based on the revelations of recent psychologists. (The myth follows naturally here). On the other hand, a form of writing somewhat akin to music, depending on highly elaborated sounds, intense verbal subtlety and complex patterns of association."

In the poetry of George Baker one finds quite a fine commingling of these two streams. *A Vision of Beasts and Gods* is in many ways a landmark in Barker's poetic development. Here is no cloying sweetness and self-intoxication with words, that marked much of his earlier

verse; the unevenness has disappeared and an admirable harmony between slang and serious, between reality and unreality, between *compos* and corybantic is accomplished to a near perfection. When Barker lives in heaven, the gods and angels are his personal friends; when he lives in hell he doesn't have to be lesser than Satan—it was said of Dante that he only visited hell but Baudelaire came from there—the intensity of his life in both the spheres is the same. One needn't have to bother about what Ronald Bottrill said about Barker being forgotten in a hundred years' time; his magnificent eloquence which releases vision is enough for us who are his contemporaries, for as he says, "we praise before we theologise just as we believe before (but not necessarily until) we know," and he reminds us "that the oldest of all poems, the great Rig-veda signifies by its title Poem of Praise."

**The General's Wench**  
By Rosamond Marshall  
A Signet Book  
The New American Library.  
New York, N. Y. 22  
35 cents

ROSAMOND MARSHALL is a novelist whose books have sold in millions. She does this, if *The General's Wench* is any guide, by handing out buckets of highly-spiced romance to her readers. True love, as flaming and passionate as men and women of drab lives want it, runs its very unsmooth course through the novel. Also here are two ancient enemies to love—the lechery of old age and the malignancy of the ill-favoured villain whose interest is, for the duration of the story, concentrated on the heroine. Add to this the doubtful delights of reading how a beautiful woman is whipped, or how unfaithful wives are disposed of in quicklime, or how quickly a tart like Molly Quin can take a diamond ring from a rich General before she leads the way to her bedroom. The General himself cuts a dashing figure, young, handsome and rich, with time on his hands and most of the women

in England at his feet. He can be suspicious and sardonic when his old friend Ollie Oliphant meets him on his return to England with two million pounds in gold and jewels, but when the plot requires that Oliphant should be successful in duping him, he can be as helpless and as credulous as any eight-year-old. For a good half of the novel, General Templar blubbers so ineffectually that we are tempted to ask why he has strayed from his nursery into the Rosamond Marshall world of violence and treachery and a price for every man and woman. It gets so dreary by the middle of the book, but let not that remark be understood to mean that we do not know why such books sell so fast. Whatever the reason, it is certainly not due to the authenticity of the historical background. We have come across few historical novels in which there is so little concern with history.

**The Life of Abraham Lincoln**  
By Stefan Lorant  
A Signet Key Book  
New American Library  
New York, N. Y. 22  
50 cents

TO the biographer as to the historian prolificacy of material is as much an obstacle as paucity of facts. This is more so to one who sets out to write the life of a historical figure as Mr. Stefan Lorant does in the case of Abraham Lincoln. The outstanding event of Lincoln's presidential career was the conduct of the great Civil war. The successful conclusion of that war and the emancipation of slaves have made Lincoln immortal. Mr. Lorant's sense of history enables him to place Lincoln in his proper perspective and bring out his role as hero. But he does not let his enthusiasm outrun his sense of proportion. Though this book is the labour of love, that love is leavened by a critical appraisal of men and events. The author has painstakingly collected many pictures of Lincoln, his family, intimates and colleagues, which render the book more interesting.

## Alexander Graham Bell

By P. K. SIVAPRAKASAM

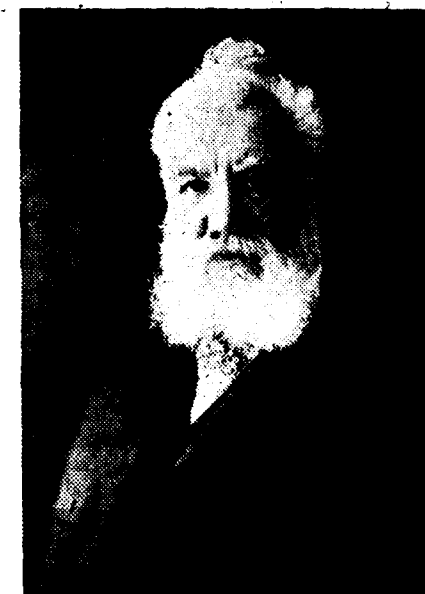
ONE day in the early 1870's a young man wrote a letter to the girl he loved. In describing his father's home in Canada, he particularly referred to a grassy depression at the edge of a nearby cliff which was so like a couch that the family called it the "sofa seat."

"This is my dreaming place!" the young man wrote. "When I lived here I used to take a rug, a pillow and an interesting book, and dream away the afternoon in luxurious idleness."

The dreamer was a man of action who had a searching mind and a vigorous imagination. In Boston he not only worked all day, but also worked far into the night experimenting with the electrical transmission of sound. "You can't make an owl sleep at night," he wrote in another letter.

From the dreams and the hard work of this young man, the telephone was born. The dreamer, Alexander Graham Bell, was only 27 when he worked out the principle of transmitting speech electrically, and 29 when the basic telephone patent was granted in 1876.

Bell was born on March 3, 1847 in Edinburgh, Scotland. His family background and early education had a profound influence on his career. His father, Alexander Melville Bell, enjoyed a world-wide reputation as a teacher and author of textbooks on correct speech and as the inventor of "visible speech," a code of symbols which indicated the position and action of the throat, tongue and lip in uttering various sounds. His grandfather also was a specialist in the art of good speech. The inventive ability of the boy appeared while he was very young. One day at the age of 15, he visited a flour mill near Edinburgh. The owner asked if he could suggest a way to remove the husks from wheat before grinding. Bell found that the husks could be removed with a stiff brush, so he suggested installing a rotary brushing wheel. The mill



owner found this process so economical and effective that he used it for many years.

Later Bell and his brothers made a model skull and fitted it with a reproduction of human vocal apparatus that was worked with bellows. They were able to make this model wail "ma-ma" in such life-like imitation of the baby that the neighbours turned out to search for the baby in distress.

From the early age of 15, he assisted his father in public demonstration of Visible Speech. He enrolled as a student-teacher at Weston House a boys school near Edinburgh where he taught music and elocution in exchange for instructions in other subjects. At the same time he carried out a series of experiments to determine how different vowel sounds are produced. His father showed his son's report on these experiments to a renowned scientist in London who introduced to the young man a book called *Sensations of Tone*. By reading this German book, Bell got the wrong impression that the author Helmholtz had managed to "telegraph" the vowel sound or send them from one point to another over a wire. Though he soon learned that Helmholtz had

March 19 1955

merely made the tuning forks vibrate by electrical means, he could not dismiss the possibility of "telegraphing" speech. He had performed no electrical experiments up to that time and it was not until 1867 while teaching at Somersetshire College, that he became interested in electricity and installed a telegraph wire from his room to that of a friend.

By then he was 21 and assumed full charge of his father's professional affairs while the latter was touring America. Disaster uprooted the Bell family. His two brothers died of tuberculosis and doctors warned that Bell too was threatened with the same disease. Soon his father moved the family to Brantford, Ontario, where young Bell fast recovered from his illness.

A school for the deaf in Boston (presently known as Horace Mann School) requested Melville Bell to show the teachers how to use visible speech in teaching the deaf to speak. As he could not go, he recommended his son who left for Boston in April 1871. By this new method Alexander G. Bell brought about a revolution in America with the relatively new idea that deaf children could be taught to speak.

In 1873 Alexander Graham Bell became the Professor of Vocal Physiology at Boston University.

At this stage, Bell was making no attempt to transmit speech. He was merely trying to send several telegraph messages over a single wire at the same time. By using several forks he could send more than one tone over the same wire simultaneously and then separate them at the receiving end. He devised the "harmonic telegraph."

But he soon found that he lacked the time and the skill to make the necessary parts himself, so he went for help to the electrical shop of Charles Williams. The man who assisted him was Thomas A. Watson. They became so friendly that eventually Watson received a share in Bell's telephone patents as part pay for his work.

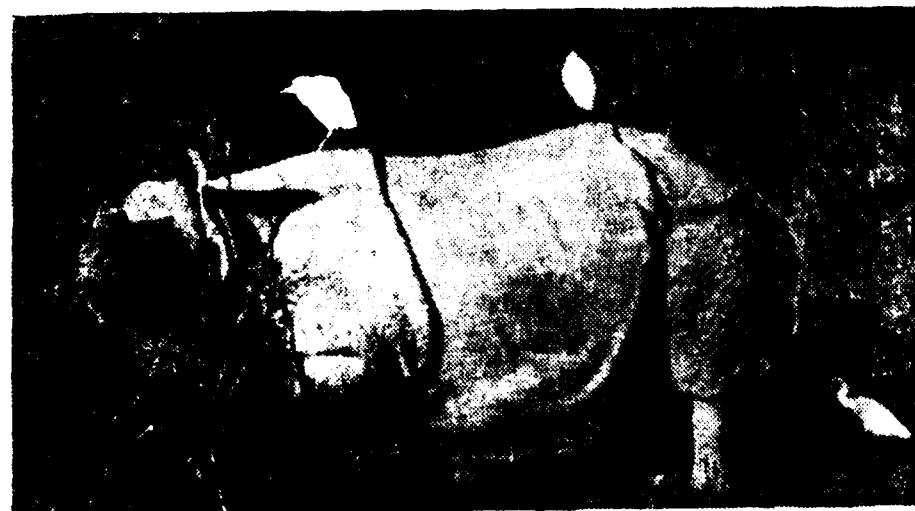
Together they did several experiments and on June 2, 1875 came the "break" in telephone history. Bell at

one end of the line, and Watson at the other, in a different room, were tuning the reeds of the harmonic telegraph. One of Watson's reeds was screwed down so tightly that it "froze" to the pole of its electromagnet. Watson plucked it to free it. Twang-g! Bell at the other end of the line heard in his receiver a sound quite different from the usual whine sent out by the vibrating transmitter. He heard distinctly a sound with tones and overtones. He rushed to the other end of the line and soon found out that the reed, too tight to send an intermittent current, had acted as a diaphragm and sent undulating current over the line. The receiving reed, pressed against the ear also acted as a diaphragm. Thus the first telephone was born—not words but just recognizable voice sounds were transmitted. Bell improved upon it and in June 1876, he was able to exhibit both magnetic and variable resistance telephones at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. He also obtained the original patent in that year.

Inventive genius that he was, Bell also devised electrical apparatus to locate bullets or other metals in the body. Also in the field of medicine, he published *A Proposed Method of Producing Artificial Respiration By Means of A Vacuum Jacket* in which he described a device having the same purpose as today's "iron lung."

He was proud to become a U. S. citizen in 1882. He described the U. S. Government and Constitution as one of the remarkable inventions in the history of man. He died in August 1922. The epitaph on his grave reads: "BORN IN EDINBURGH . . . DIED A CITIZEN OF U. S. A."

He was really something more than that—a citizen of the world who left a legacy for all mankind. Enthusiastic and tireless he accomplished what he wanted. By his invention of the telephone he has made the world smaller. With him began the unceasing scientific progress which has not only overcome the barriers of distance, but also helped to serve as mankind's chief physical aid in achieving better understanding among the peoples of the world.



## RHINO AND FRIENDS

THIS is a Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros, from a recent photograph taken in the Kaziranga Sanctuary in Assam. Never known outside South-east Asia, it was on the verge of total eclipse at the beginning of the century, but the protection afforded to it has revived it in the Kaziranga Sanctuary. It is also found in certain parts of the Nepal territory, but nowhere else today.

This is perhaps the largest rhino in the world. Full-grown, it stands 6 feet at the shoulders and weighs almost 3 tons. Only the elephant, among land animals, is bigger. However its horns (slimmer and longer in the cow than in the bull) are less imposing than those of African rhinoceroses. Incidentally, this horn is made up of agglutinated hair and is regrown if broken. It is belief in the medicinal and sanctifying powers of the flesh and blood of the Great Indian Rhinoceros, and in the anti-poison and aphrodisiac potency of its horn, that led to its extermination. This beast is almost worth its weight in silver, alive or dead. Commenting on its value in spot cash, Dr. Verrier Elwin points out the aptness of the English slang term for money, "rhino."

The birds in the picture are cattle egrets, the same birds that perch on grazing cattle or walk in their wake, for the insects disturbed by the heavy hooves. In Africa the red-billed ox-pecker (the "tick-bird") attaches itself to rhinoceroses, and relieves the great beast of ticks which find areas in the hide thin enough for blood-sucking. Further, hippos in Africa are usually attended by egrets, which are said to pick ticks off them. No doubt the cattle egrets in this picture attached themselves to the rhino for the sake of the insects flushed from the grass in its ponderous passage, but they, too, pick ticks off cattle at times and it could be they relieve their massive companion of these parasites.

Incidentally, none of these birds is called "rhinoceros bird"—that name is applied to certain hornbills in Africa, from the similarity of the casques on their bills to the horn of a rhinoceros. Another African bird habitually associated with a large "host," the "crocodile bird" (which is a kind of plover) invariably gives the alarm to the saurians at the approach of man. It is not known if cattle egrets help our rhinoceros in this manner.

(Photograph by courtesy of the Ruler of Sandur)

## LESSONS OF THE ANDHRA ELECTIONS

By V. RAGHAVIAH

IT is not without considerable astonishment that the first batch of election results were received everywhere in Andhra. The Andhra Congress party which did not even aspire for a working majority was suddenly stupefied at the windfall which swept it off its feet. It was a breath-taking success for the Congress, a dismal failure for the Communists, and a great lesson for the intelligentsia and the middle classes but for whose unexpected pull the Congress might not have secured these successes. It is high time the Communists reread their old books and realise that sabre-rattling does not always pay good dividends and that too much talk of violence would scare and even antagonise peace-loving peoples like the Indians, more so the Andhras. The election speeches of the top-ranking Communist leaders, with a few exceptions like those of Messrs. Dange and Ajoy Kumar Ghosh, were so full of frightening references to their shape of things to come, that the average villager not to speak of the educated townsman, was worried at the prospect of the Communist success. The importation of a new and hitherto unheard of element into the propaganda slogans of the C. P. namely, the cry for the capture of power, completed the picture and well nigh scared the rural folk out of their wits. Though the Communist leaders from outside Andhra who toured the Telugu districts appear to have realised this and even warned their fire-eating comrades here, the local heads paid no heed to their advice and intensified their campaign of venom and hatred as the polling dates approached. When I mentioned this to one of their up-country leaders, a fortnight before the polling commenced, as a factor likely to have disastrous consequences, he did not attempt to disagree. The explanations the Andhra Communists are now at great pains to

offer that they were misguided by the exuberance of petty peasants and landless labourers at election meetings, is a puerile excuse to conceal their tragic blunder in rehearsing their Telangana experiences as to the wisdom of which there has been not a little divergence in the Communist party.

The President of the Andhra P. C. C. Sri B. Gopala Reddi can reasonably lay claim for a decent share of the election triumphs on account of the United Front for forging which he appears to be largely if not mainly responsible. If the Praja Socialists had lined up with the rest without sticking to too much logic, they would have, perhaps, like the Krishikar Lok, secured many more seats by mutual adjustment than by ploughing a lonely furrow.

If the elections surprised the opponents of the Congress United Front to a great extent, they surprised no less some of the candidates adopted by the Congress, who under normal conditions could not have dreamt of winning at the polls. The failure of a few candidates like Sri Viswanadham leaves many regrets behind in the same way as the success of a few others does. It has got to be admitted by the United Front selectors that they have made many blunders in the selection of candidates which would have wrecked the reputation of the Congress seriously and impaired its moral strength materially, if only fair winds had not been blowing. It is common knowledge that some deserving life-long servants in the cause of the Congress and country have been ignored for no justifiable reasons, whereas ex-Justicite and erstwhile enemies of Congress had been eagerly coquetted with and preferred.

This leads us on to a more important issue, namely, what repercussions these elections would have on

the future of the two main contending parties in this State as well as elsewhere. To take the Communist Party first, the slogan for the capture of power accompanied by numerous street calls and shouts bordering on vulgarity against the person and administration of Pandit Nehru and his team of able and sincere administrators, was inopportune in view of the many friendly contacts being so strenuously made by the two major Soviet countries with India in international politics. Even if the Andhra Communists had succeeded in establishing Red Raj in the eleven districts, one swallow could not have made a summer. All the doves that had been flown from Red China and all the millions of signatures so laboriously obtained elsewhere and in our country would have gone in vain if India's suspicions had been roused to a realisation that all the 'Pancha Silas' are only a cloak for a relentless policy of Communist sabotage on Indian soil. With a peace loving and rising power like India set against them, the Soviet bloc of countries would not find it easy to convince the world that they have no ambitions for aggrandisement. This major folly of the Andhra Communists would have enabled American diplomacy to score a first class victory, and India would have been thrown into American arms at least in self-defence.

**E**VEN tactically the Communist approach was anything but correct. If only they had approached the electorate as they did on previous occasions with less fuss and more skill they would have secured more seats. In riding roughshod over the sentiments, tastes, prejudices and feelings of the intelligentsia and the middle class who by the way had contributed to the bulk of the Congress victory, they miscalculated the potentiality of this dominant force and forgot that it was the same element that had pushed them into limelight in the last elections. After the notorious debacle of the 'People's War' policy of 1941 the Indian wing of the Politbureau had not been guilty of any other catastrophic blunder like this. Repudiation of the

Congress Government's well merited achievements, constant running down of everything that the Congress stands for, naive attacks and ridicule poured incessantly on Gandhiji and his cherished principles, unceasing depreciation of the eight year rule of the Congress gradually alienated the thinking section in this country and embittered them further when the lower rank and file of the Communist party units indulged in scandalous and ungraceful personal attacks.

If the aristocratic and feudal forces in Andhra from whose ranks many of the candidates in the present elections had been selected, are under any impression that it is their wealth that pulled the Congress chariot to its destination, there cannot be a greater delusion. The Congress committees in the hapless Andhra State have got to be revitalised. They badly need to be thoroughly overhauled. This could be done by constant supervision on the part of the All India organisation coupled with greater day to day contact between the parent body and its provincial branches. As all bickerings and personal rivalries arise on account of the race to capture power, the Congress High Command may be well advised, if all other efforts fail, to relieve the Congress bodies, not only in Andhra but all over the country, of the onerous, irksome and unpleasant function of selecting candidates at least until sounder conventions and better discipline come to prevail in the party units. This will not only leave the Congress to discharge its more legitimate duties of undertaking constructive and nation-building programmes but also reduce the scope of internecine warfare.

The propaganda machinery of the Andhra Congress should be geared up on entirely new and more intelligent lines. Greater effort must be made on the part of the Congress and its Governments to win the sympathies of the intelligentsia and the middle classes as well as the effortless loyalty of the services. The Congress committees, instead of posing themselves as the champions of every act of every Government servant and

March 19 1955

spokesman, may do well to zealously function as the watch-dogs of people's rights and liberties; and thereby earn the confidence of the masses, who unfortunately are more prone to bracket them along with the Governments and their sometimes erratic servants. The Congress should not be called upon to take up the unenviable task of bolstering up governmental policies and actions in formulating which they had not the least responsibility and which are pronouncedly antagonistic to the cherished principles of the Congress like, for instance, the non-enforcement of Prohibition.

If several Congressmen here and elsewhere do not touch labour even with a bargepole, it is no credit to the great institution to which they claim to belong. Gandhiji did not organise the struggle for Swaraj to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. If his Daridranarayan who towed the ship of Swaraj so successfully and faithfully during his life-

### Machine-made Weather Forecasts

A NEW technique of weather forecasting is being tried out at Manchester University in the North of England. The experiments are mostly made at night because they involve the use of the University's giant electronic computer which in the daytime is in almost continuous use. Similar research is going on in the United States and in Sweden, and Ivor Jones, the BBC's Air Correspondent, went to Manchester to find out what was happening there. He said in a BBC programme that four in five of the Meteorological Office's forecasts are right despite the general public's complaints about their lack of accuracy. By handing the job over to a computer the machine draws for the forecaster an outline of how things will look twenty-four hours hence and gives a series of figures showing where the pressure lines are to be drawn on the map. Jones saw the machine at work in a very big,

time did not feel the urge to continue his support after Mahatma passed away, the blame cannot be laid altogether at his door. In no event can the Congress afford to transfer their anti-Communist charge towards the labouring classes who had fallen easy victims to the rosy hopes held out by those who had neither the means nor the intention of fulfilling them.

THE Andhra elections are a proof of the soundness of the long rope policy pursued by Pandit Nehru against the Communists, who with all the facilities and freedom they could ever hope to get anywhere in the world, failed to make the slightest impression on the ruling party of this country.

The elections in Andhra were, on the whole, held impartially, effectively and peacefully. They amply bear the imprint of a Governor who is universally recognised to be a strong and at the same time an able man.

bare room lined with cabinets that resemble refrigerators, with a further double bank of such cabinets going down the centre of the room. These contain some six thousand valves and a mass of other electronic equipment which has to be controlled from a central point and the controls are mounted on a console which bristles with switches and has six radar screens to show what the machine is doing. The computer is fed with information from meteorological stations and weather ships and these facts are passed into it in the form of holes punched in a paper tape: rules for calculating the way in which the weather situation will change are also on tape. The computer took four hours to make a forecast which a man would take four years to do, for it involved some four million additions, multiplications and subtractions. The result appeared punched on yet another tape and this in turn was fed into a teleprinter which translated the results into groups of figures that could be plotted on a map.

## ANDHRA ELECTION RESULTS X-RAYED

By P. N. SAMPATH

EVER since the last General elections when the Communists in Andhra swept the Congress off its feet and secured as many as 40 seats, the Andhra region has been recognised at home and abroad as the nerve-centre and citadel of Indian Communism. As such, it is no wonder that the eyes and ears of the world were focussed on the battle of the ballot-box in Andhra State. India is looked upon as the last bastion of democracy in the East, and even so, many in America, England and elsewhere were having their ears glued to their radio sets to hear of the progress of the elections and the results.

For the Communists, it was a case of gigantic endeavour followed by dwarfish performance. They have suffered a stunning defeat. Under the benumbing effect of their electoral reverses, the Communists are attributing their failure to a multitude of causes in accents of disillusionment. Their present situation answers the meaningful description of a politician as the chap who tells you today what is going to happen tomorrow and explains the next day why it did not.

The Andhra Communist Legislature Party had grossly miscalculated when they decided to make common cause with Sri Latchanna in bringing about the fall of the Prakasam Ministry. Even though the Ministry was tottering with internal squabbles and schism and inadequacies and scandals in the sphere of administration, no purpose could be served in pulling it down unless the opposition parties were sure of their solidarity and of their chances of replacing the fallen Ministry. With the next country-wide General elections in the offing, and with no prospect of a worthwhile majority, it was folly on the part of the Communists to have precipitated the fall of the Prakasam Ministry.

Had they allowed it to continue for the remaining term of two years, the opposition would have been more advantageously placed vis-a-vis the electorate, considering the dead set the Ministry was making to forfeit the people's confidence. Too frequent elections disturb public equanimity. Fed up with the seesaw rivalries between parties not having sufficient strength to stand by themselves, the Andhra public decided to vote overwhelmingly one way and put a stop to all possibility of elections until the next term which is five years hence.

The time lag of a few months between the resignation of the Prakasam Cabinet and the holding of the elections was a blessing in disguise to the Congress Party inasmuch as the worst effects of the Ministry's record in office were somewhat mitigated by the beneficial administration of Governor Trivedi. In fact, what Sri Trivedi has accomplished in this short span is greater than what the first Andhra Ministry had done in its time. This cushioning period was a key factor in rallying public confidence in the Government. Also, nearly 86 lakhs of people could freely exercise their franchise only because Sri Trivedi was in charge of law and order during the elections. Had the Congress been in control in the guise of a Caretaker Government, this tranquillity and peace would not have prevailed. We cannot suggest the appointment of an U. N. Commission every time we go to the polls to supervise and ensure impartiality, and even if such a Commission is to be called in, the parties to the election may not agree on the choice of its personnel. We can therefore console ourselves that supervision by the head of the State is the best available arrangement under the circumstances. Even though harassment and intimidation of voters have been reported against the minions of the

law, the elections were on the whole fair.

The electoral alliance between the Congress, the K. L. P. and the Praja Party constituted an impregnable tower of strength. It completely isolated the Communists and they had to go it alone. While the Congress party is overpeopled with Reddis, the K. L. P. may be renamed as the Kamma Legislature Party in view of its predominantly Kamma following and membership. The Kammas would not have left the Congress had they been given their due share of the fishes and loaves of office in the Congress organisation and in the Government. The union of the Congress and the K. L. P. gave the United Congress Party a maximum of the Reddi and Kamma votes. This strength in unity contrasts with the debility suffered by the two parties during the last General elections when they contested separately.

The fortuitous circumstances which facilitated the Communist success at the polls in 1952, such as the existence of controls, the Visalandhra issue, the apathy and anger of the Andhra people on grounds of neglect by the rulers of the composite Madras State, the demand for a separate State and the popular belief that the Andhra Ministers in the Madras Cabinet were deliberately delaying the formation of the Andhra State, nature's calamities like floods and drought, etc., did not exist this time. With the formation of the States Reorganisation Commission, the linguistic urge among the Andhras was softened and the Visalandhra issue ceased to be a draw at the hustings. Further, during the last elections, many of the Communist candidates were either underground or had just emerged from it and as such, they were looked upon with sympathy as martyrs in the public cause. This decided psychological advantage was not available when they went to the polls a second time.

No one man was ever a problem to opposing parties in an election as our Pandit Nehru is. He is at the heyday of his fame. The quality of his foreign policy has earned world wide

recognition and even the Communist Party has acclaimed his policy of Co-existence. Second to none in international prestige, Nehru is the focal point of attention. Foreign diplomats and statesmen of every country in the world come on pilgrimage to New Delhi to worship at his shrine. Attlee, Chou En-lai, Marshal Tito, Strassen are the prominent visitors to this country in recent times. Nehru is hailed as the architect of Asian solidarity. People could note a profound change in him ever since his return from China, and his Panch Seela and the ideal of the Socialist pattern of society have great propaganda value even though the goal may be far off. Tito is a Communist dictator but that did not prevent him from paying eloquent tribute to Nehru's internal and international policies. Even so, what are these when compared to the unreserved praise heaped on Nehru's achievements in India and abroad by the Soviet papers, the *Pravda* and *Izvestia*? The timing of the last named publication proved disastrous to Communist propaganda. It took the wind out of their sails. It is inexplicable why the Soviet papers had supplied the unkindest cut. If it means anything it is that Moscow wants the Indian Communists to go slow in view of the international situation. At least in this instance the much-vaunted charge of the abject dependence of the Indian Communists on Moscow has proved to be false.

Much of the effectiveness of propaganda rests on its susceptibility to varying interpretations, so as to make a simultaneous appeal to heterogeneous dispositions. S. K. Patil, who is a master in this art played his role with telling skill. The mighty Congress propaganda machine concentrated in one State was something which the Communists could not effectively withstand. The Congress took the Andhra issue as a challenge and a summons to action. The Communists had neither the resources nor sufficient electioneering experience to make any headway. The Congress is one of the most wealthy

parties in the world and now has many rajas and zamindars in its fold. It is also served by tried leaders who are adepts at election tactics. At any rate, the irrefutable facts are that the Communists had taken to the parliamentary path only quite recently and that they are backward in electioneering technique, though they are able rallying agents of discontented elements at other times. Another fact is that the Congress was ably served by a good number of first class dailies and weekly journals which published powerful reasons why people should not vote Communist. Compared to this, the Communist press was insignificant.

Even in Andhra the Communist Party had not established itself in many districts. In the last elections they won most of their seats from Krishna and Godavari districts. Such being their position, the Party overestimated its chances by setting up as many as 159 candidates spread over the State. Twelve of the candidates lost their deposits. In their bid to secure an all-out victory, the Communists were unable to concentrate their energies and resources in areas where they have some pull.

Ideals without the means of realising them lead to futility. For example, the Communist programme of placing an immediate ceiling on land holdings at 20 acres per head, was looked upon by the people as impossible of realisation by peaceful means. Expropriation in such a drastic way without compensation could not be peacefully accomplished either, at any rate as long as the present Constitution exists. This caused apprehension in middle class minds especially. They concluded that to back the Communists now was to invite violent class struggle in the near future. Respect for property is the bedrock of the social order. Congress propaganda warned the people that the Communists have no respect for property rights. Also, from what people saw in Madras and Travancore-Cochin, they formed the impression that however much the Communists might cry hoarse and even succeed at the polls, they would

not be allowed to function in the Government. Union Ministers have spoken in that strain and T. T. K. is one among them.

While the agricultural workers, Harijans, and the lower middle class had voted for the Communists, the vested interests voted ungrudgingly on the side of the U.C.P. The middle class votes also went overwhelmingly to the U.C.P. and the U.C.P. owe their success to these votes. This class had been the pillar of the Congress in the pre-independence era and it has not forsaken its loyalty even now. This class is traditionally pro-Government and pro-order. Despite their suffering from heavy imposts of indirect taxes under Congress rule, despite the continued neglect of the interests of this loyal class by the Congress Governments, the loyalty of the middle class has not wavered. There are on the other hand instances of Government interferences against the best interests of this class, such as the modification of the Bank Award. As this class is highly literate, the Congress papers appealed to the patriotic instincts of this class by playing up the international popularity of Nehru.

#### Repercussions on the Communists

Anyone who imagines that the Communists have been swept out of existence through this defeat is only in a fool's paradise. The Communist Party has the property of growing by what other things die of. The humiliation of defeat will only brace it to new life. The Congress President is very much alive to this as he has warned the Congress against any mistaken complacency. As far as the Communists are concerned, they see in the election results a triumph of the bourgeoisie and a failure only for the masses. Even in defeat the Communists have secured 30% of the votes polled which is more than half of the total votes polled by the Congress, K. L. P. and the Praja Party. The votes polled also forms 25% of the electorate. The votes polled by them in the last elections being 18%, it is a misnomer to call their present failure as a rout. It is significant that the best of Con-

March 19 1955

gress overtures and propaganda could not prevent these 26 lakhs of voters from voting Communist. It is also significant that of the three seceders from the Communist Party, two had lost their deposits and the third, his seat.

The Indian Communists are experimenting in parliamentary democracy. While the initial laboratory work proved successful, the second experiment has been pretty disappointing. No quick results can be got in parliamentary democracy. Here the road is longer but surer. It is true that the party has secured only 15 seats and that, not having the prescribed minimum strength of 25, it will not be recognised as a party in the Assembly. The impatient among the members of the party may want to abandon the experiment. But, generally, the miscarriage of his experiment no more converts the political speculator than the explosion of a retort undecives an alchemist. The parliamentary way has not been tried out in full. It is reported that the Communists are thinking of resigning their seats and giving the final go-by to the parliamentary method. Any reversal of the party's policy at this juncture will be fatal to its future prospects. Dhebar has paid the Communists the tribute that they will not take their drubbing lying down.

#### Future of the Congress

A parliamentary democracy based on a representative system cannot work without agreement among like-minded people to pursue common ends by common means. Compromise is the strategy of democracy. But today compromise in public life is degenerating into ignoble makeshift. The U. C. P. was a polyglot association of diverse interests and even after the merger of the component units in the Congress, the sectional interests will be eternally at war with the public interest. The Andhra Congress Party is a conglomeration of ex-zamindars, landed proprietors and communal and sub-communal rag-tag and bobtail. These constitute the Trojan horse that will one day capture the Congress fortress exclusively.

The zamindars are on the path of subtle revenge and already hold their conquerors captive. The K. L. P. has shown no adherence to principles. It sometimes sided with one party and sometimes aided the other. It is such opportunism that pays. It may be seen in the overnight elevation of Mr. Ranga to the candidature for the Provincial Congress Presidency. Imagine the feelings of loyal Congressmen.

It is a fond hope that the different units in the Congress Party will act if not in unison, at any rate, in harmony. Like the armour of Don Quixote, this unity may be blown away by even a mild storm of sectional assault. Nevertheless, the merger is welcome in the sense that a multiplication of parties usually leads to confusion in the public mind. It also conduces to better appreciation of political who is what. The Independents have not generally found favour with the electorate as is evident from the fact that out of 162 candidates who contested as Independents, as many as 102 have forfeited their deposits. Almost all the 22 candidates elected were discontented Congressmen who left the Congress for standing against the official Congress candidates. Political tight-rope walkers and cat-on-the-wall tacticians should take a lesson from the fate of the Independents.

#### The Congress leaders

Sri Prakasam has turned up like the proverbial bad penny even though his colleagues had hoped that he would go under. But he is perhaps the only leader towering over the others in sheer sacrifice for the national movement. The tragedy of politics is that a man in power rarely knows when to take his bow and leave. So Prakasam stays on. In his senility, his usefulness at the helm of affairs is ruled out, but there is the danger of his being used to bad purpose by scheming lieutenants. Sri Sanjiva Reddi, while in power, attributed the fall of the Prakasam Ministry to his own alleged refusal to reinstate a venal police official in the face of the importu-

titles of a powerful group within his party. Sri Gopala Reddi while in office at Madras indulged in plentiful peccadilloes. But he atoned for it by losing his seat in the last elections. His hibernation has had a chastening effect on him and people forgave him. He will make a good leader of the new team in the Assembly. Sri Kala Venkata Rao is the Andhra Chanakya and anybody who falls foul of him will rue the day. So many of the ex-Ministers have been returned that the question of picking and choosing among them will constitute a problem. It is a strange quirk of fate that Sri Viswanatham, the architect of the United Congress Party was defeated in his home constituency. He is however talking as though he has been returned unopposed. As there is no Upper House in Andhra, he will have to come to the Assembly via a bye-election. Sri Sanjiva Reddi has congratulated himself on his own magnanimity in having stood out of the leadership contest. But the cleavage between him and Gopala Reddi seems to preclude any possibility of lasting rapprochement. The invulnerable position secured by the Congress in the legislature may drive Congressmen and the prodigals who find it advantageous to return to its fold to give a free rein to internal warfare and the spoils system. It may lead them to make promises with impudence and break them with impunity, and to be more sensitive to pressure from lobbies than to the

voice of the people. Greater damage is caused to Congress principles by its ostensible adherents who violate them in practice than by those who are totally opposed to it. The High Command which showed so much concern for the success of the Congress in the elections should continue to keep a strict vigilance over the activities of the Congressmen and scotch all attempts at indiscipline and questionable practices.

The ideal of Socialism extended the idea of equality from the political into the economic field. In a democratic set-up there is no easy road to salvation, no gate around the corner that we may simply unlatch and walk into a garden of peace and prosperity. The leaders should strive and the people should serve in proportion to their relative capacities, to achieve this goal.

The fact that the Andhra area has been a predominantly zamindari tract until recently and that the indigent among the peasantry and the agricultural workers are the most discontented should be prominently borne in mind if the Congress intends to do well in social legislation. The absorption of quite a few zamindars into the Congress Party may however dampen the hopes of the people, unless positive relief is immediately forthcoming. Largescale unemployment has driven many young men into the Communist fold. The Congress should do something about this also if they really mean to serve this time.

PATRUDU'S

"BALASANJEEVINI" R  
E  
G  
D.

Best Remedy for Infantile LIVER &amp; SPLEEN Disorders

For free advice consult:

DR. PILLA PAPIAH PATRUDU &amp; BROS.,

19, South Mada St., Mylapore, MADRAS-4. Phone: 85254.

Branch:

7, Sarangapani Koil East St., KUMBAKONAM.

(Enclose 2 Annas Stamps for Free Advice)

March 19 1936.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor welcomes letters on subjects of general interest or topics arising out of articles printed in SWATANTRA but reserves the right to abridge them.

## Commonsense View On Prohibition

Sir.—C. T. Srinivasan has forestalled me in congratulating Major Raja Rao on his very sober and well reasoned-out article. His reference to the constitution and the misinterpretation of the same by the misguided Congressmen should be taken note of by the lawyers, who alone can put up a fight against the inroads on one's individual liberty. I am very glad that he brought out in his article the energy-giving and fatigue-lessening properties of alcohol. It should be apparent to every unprejudiced reader how improvement in motivation, capacity for work and productive capacity of people in general can be brought about by moderate consumption of wines. Ordinarily the evil effects brought about by over-indulgence are so luridly painted that the beneficial effects accruing from judicious use are altogether overlooked.

Sri C. T. Srinivasan has referred to the threat offered to the efficiency and honesty of the police force by entrusting them with Prohibition. This threat is a real one, and will become a major problem very soon.

No honest man can say that alcohol is absolutely necessary for any particular individual; but the circumstances are such that unless the civil surgeon says so, the applicant for a liquor permit does not stand the ghost of a chance of getting it. The doctors have to perjure quite against their will.

A very respectable mirasdar of Tanjore told me recently that illicit distillation is rampant round about Kumbakonam. A general indiscipline and disrespect for law has come in the wake of Prohibition.

That the old excise revenue was tainted money is a pretentious moral pose and a sophism used to delude the mob. For the matter of that, most money is tainted as it is made in most instances by exploitation of men adversely placed.

Dear Editor,—I wish you get up reprints of Raja Rao's and Srinivasan's articles and broadcast them to the intelligent and thinking public who might have failed to read your valuable journal.

An impartial and unprejudiced observer cannot but come to the irresistible

conclusion that Prohibition and other laws interfering with another man's life have tended to bring about a general lowering of morale in a great majority of instances.

"Safety first and salvation next." What a nice motto for a State to have before it! We never had people murdered in railway trains, nor a bus load of passengers held up and rifled. If this is the state of affairs when the police had to be only concerned with safety, what is to happen when they are to be trusted with salvation also?

KRISHNASWAMI

## Mother Tongue Medium For Degree Courses

Sir,—The Syndicate of the Madras University has decided to inform the managements and principals of colleges in the State that they might impart instruction in the mother tongue of the students as far as humanities are concerned, upto the degree course. If the experiment of imparting instruction to students in the mother tongue is to be a success, it is imperative that lecturers and professors knowing the mother tongue of the students should be appointed.

The second problem relates to students in a college speaking different languages such as Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. It may at once be pointed out that it may not be possible for any college to make provision for imparting education in the mother tongues of its students. There are two ways by which this difficulty can be got over. One of them is to arrange for inter-collegiate lectures to students of one language group studying in the various colleges, but whose strength in each college does not justify the appointment of full time lecturers and professors. The other alternative is for the college with a majority of students speaking one of the South Indian languages.

The third problem is about text books. One suggestion is that professors and lecturers should be asked to prepare their lectures in their own mother tongue and after a period of three years they must be examined by a committee and the most outstanding among them should be recommended as a suitable text book. The other alternative is for both the university and the Government to set apart say three lakhs of rupees and ask competent scholars to write suitable text books and publish them in a year's time. If this process is continued year after year, within five years' time we will have enough text books to meet the needs of teachers and students alike.

S. R. VENKATARAMAN

