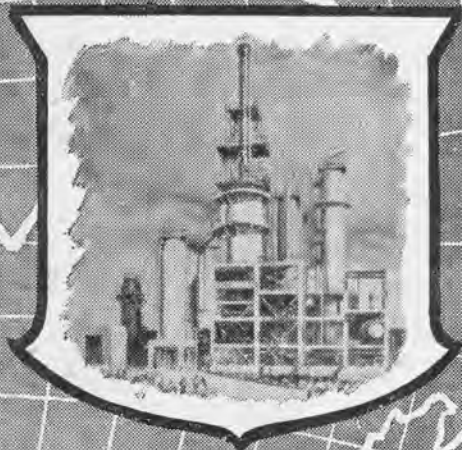
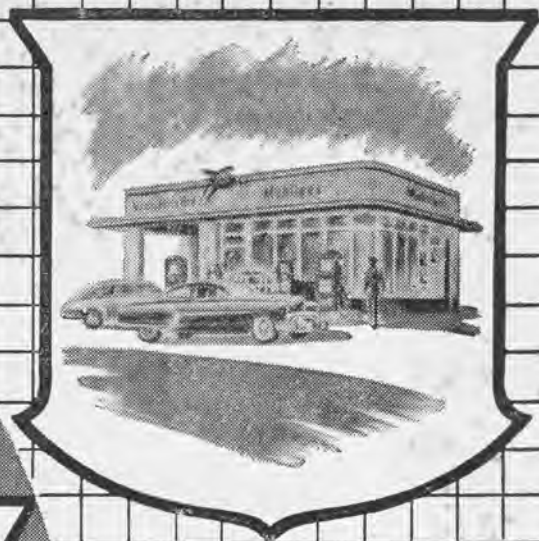


QUEST

a bi-monthly of arts and ideas

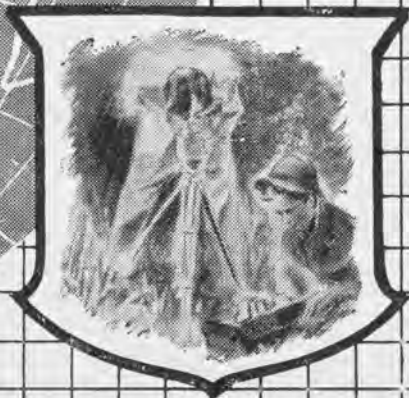
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QUEST

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EDITOR: NISSIM EZEKIEL

June-July '56 Vol. I No. 6

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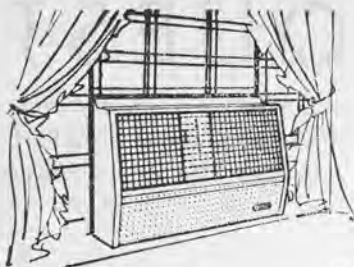
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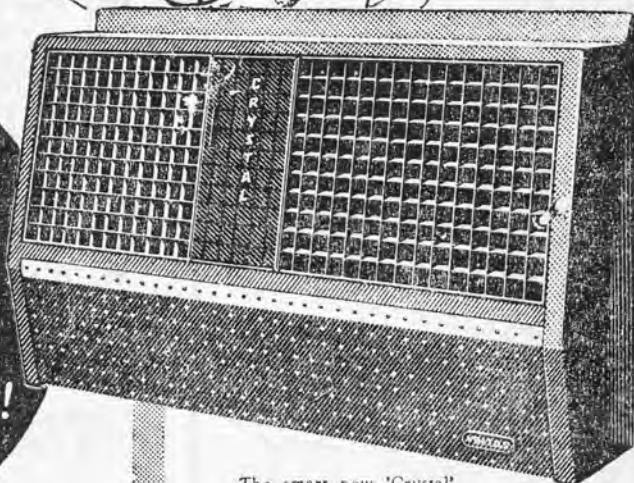
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editorial

THE new Copyright Bill, which is at present in the Committee stage, is a radical revision of the Act now in force. Why revision on a comprehensive scale was considered necessary is not clear and is not explained. Changed conditions, particularly in relation to Indian books marketed abroad, may have called for broadening of authors' rights. If so, it is difficult to understand why on almost all issues that really matter, the Bill treats artists and writers with scant respect. Substantial inroads are made into their rights as recognized by the International Convention to which India is a signatory. Further, the assertion of such privileges as are granted is made difficult, and in some cases, impossible, or so at least it would seem to anyone aware of the conditions in which Indian writers live and work.

In addition to the points discussed in the article which follows, it is necessary to draw attention to several major regressive provisions in the new Bill. The fact must be faced that, if enacted, it would lead to India's voluntary withdrawal or expulsion from the international community of writers which is governed by more liberal principles. India would violate her obligations on no less than three counts: (a) shortening the term of copyright; (b) insisting on registration of works for the exercise of rights relating to them; (c) confiscation at the discretion of the Copyright Registrar, overriding the copyright holder in relation to publication or performance.

In keeping with the general tenor of the Bill are the provisions which apply to works produced in collaboration. It is proposed to calculate the copyright term from the death of the first co-author. This means that a writer may find himself in certain circumstances deprived of his copyright in the course of his lifetime, and make his widow and children completely defenceless. In view of so thoughtless a proposal, it is not surprising to find that the general position of the writer as an employee is severely shaken. The writer in employment is expected to protect his creative work outside his employment by entering into an agreement with his employer for this purpose. The repercussions of this may well be far-reaching.

As a rule, copyright is assigned for specific purposes only. Proviso A to Clause 16 places the heavy burden on the author or musician of limiting the scope of his assignment by 'contracting out'. Proviso B does the same thing in relation to the artist and his employer as mentioned above. Thus, the inherent right of the artist to his own work is denied and its economic fruits are not automatically assured to him as they should be. He is not guarded against individuals or concerns who may have financial or other reasons for wanting to exploit him. Even without this encouragement, exploitation of the artist by governmental and non-governmental institutions is by no means uncommon.

In this connection, it must be frankly stated that perhaps as great a danger as any of copyright infringement in the near future is likely to come from the State. The extensive powers proposed to be given to the Copyright Registrar amount to a serious encroachment on individual freedom. To that extent, the new Bill concerns not only artists and writers but all those who cherish the dignity and self-respect of the individual personality against the endless claims of the State.

An insidious defect which permeates the new Bill is the failure to distinguish

between the primary rights of the artist and the ancillary rights of publishers, manufacturers of mechanical recordings, broadcasters and performing artists. It is desirable to deal with these in separate legislation which should not in any way diminish the rights of the creative artist. The general tendency in the Bill is to undermine the creator's position in favour of the manufacturers of material objects, for example, mechanical recordings in which copyright is made to inhere.

Few authors are socially and financially so placed as to take full advantage of the facilities provided for seeking a remedy against infringement of copyright. It is not fair to impose upon them the onus of proving that the infringer was aware he was violating copyright. Equally unfair is the limiting of the aggrieved party's right to an injunction, should the defendant prove his ignorance of the complainant's rights. As one might expect, in the context of so much discrimination against the author whose rights the Copyright Bill is supposed to protect, no provision has been made for a presumption in favour of the person complaining against infringement of copyright. Thus the author is exposed to all the dangers of litigation in which the dice are loaded against him from the start.

It is strange that in drafting the Bill it was not thought necessary to consult literary associations or personalities. That this should be so in spite of the fact that the Ministry of Education has taken over the responsibility for the new legislation from the Ministry of Law is surprising. It is quite possible that the Government of India are unaware of the full implications of their proposals. It is not too late for an organised nation-wide effort to persuade Government to modify the Bill substantially. In this connection, the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, in association with the P.E.N. All India Centre and the Indian Institute for Educational and Cultural Co-operation, have given the lead. They organised a public meeting in Bombay on April 16, 1956, which adopted a Resolution authorizing the sponsors to present their case to the Joint Select Committee of Parliament. A suitable Memorandum has been drafted for presentation. The matter should be taken up by literary organizations and by authors individually.

Incidentally, the Bill is a reminder that there is no authors' society in this country engaged in protecting and extending the rights of authors. In the absence of such a society and pending formation of one, the existing literary, dramatic and art groups ought to take a special and active interest in the subject. If there are no immediate and persistent efforts on their part, the case of the creative artist is likely to go by default.

the new copyright bill

THE right of an author to control, and profit by, the reproduction, sale or translation of his work is recognized in nearly all parts of the world, though the term of protection varies widely. In the U.S.A. a book is protected in the first instance for a period of 28 years, and the author or his widow can then renew protection for a further period of 28 years. In Mexico the normal period is 30 years. In Guatemala there is perpetual protection for Guatemalan authors, and under the common law of England literary property, like other kinds of property,

was formerly protected in perpetuity. But at present common law rights have in most countries been superseded by special copyright legislation, and in most of the countries of Europe a literary work is now protected for the author's lifetime and fifty years thereafter. In Switzerland the term is 30 years after the author's death, and in Russia it is only 15 years after the author's death; but at the international convention held in Brussels in 1948, Article 7 lays down that the term shall be the life of the author and fifty years after his death, and this is today accepted in most countries.

In the Copyright Bill which is now being considered by a committee of both houses of the Indian legislature it is proposed that the period of protection shall be reduced from 50 to 25 years after the author's death, which is rather curious when the general tendency of the Bill is to extend and safeguard an author's rights. There seems still to be in many people's minds an idea that copyright protection restricts in some way the dissemination of knowledge or of ideas, and is therefore harmful to society. Such a notion is based on a misconception of the nature of copyright, which can never confer a monopoly of knowledge or of an idea, but only protect a particular order of words.

Suppose for example that ten thousand people witness a Test Match and are then asked to write an account of it in twentyfive words. There is not a chance in a million that any two accounts will be identical, with the same twentyfive words in the same order, but even if that millionth chance came off it would not constitute an infringement of copyright, for each writer would have composed his account independently. Infringement would only take place if one man copied his neighbour's account word for word. And so in all departments of life, any man is free to express his thoughts in writing, and the law only prevents other people from copying without the author's permission. A book is only an arrangement of words in a certain order, and it is the arrangement which is authorship.

Another curious provision in the Bill now under consideration is the proposal that, at any time between seven and ten years after publication, an author who has sold his copyright may repurchase it at the same price. This is clearly intended to protect the author who has sold a masterpiece for a song and would no doubt succeed in this eventuality. But masterpieces are exceedingly rare, and the effect of such a provision is likely generally to mean that an author will receive less for his copyright, as the purchaser will be buying rights for a limited period of ten years instead of for the full term of copyright, which will evidently be considerably longer. If a similar provision were to be introduced in the deed of sale of a house, for example, it would undoubtedly depress the price.

A most welcome feature of the Bill is its proposal to extend protection for the full term to translations. At present works first published in India are only protected, in respect of translations into Indian languages, for a period of ten years. If within the first ten years after publication no translation of, say, one of the Hindi novels of Premchand had been published in Bengali, anyone is at present free to make and publish a Bengali translation even though the original Hindi novel will be protected for fifty years after Premchand's death. At a time when the regional languages are developing rapidly, and translation from one regional language into another is being encouraged, this extended protection will be of immense benefit, not only to authors but also to literature. It is too often forgotten

that a publisher will hesitate to incur the expense of making and publishing a translation—and this expense is normally greater than is involved in publishing the original book—unless he can count on copyright protection. Paradoxical as it may seem, copyright protection encourages publication. Only the giants of the past survive in print today, and without the protection of copyright only the giants of the present would be published at all. Even then their words would be so misprinted, garbled and blue-pencilled that few readers would ever so much as see the original authorized work. There can be no doubt that copyright protection is healthy both for society and for authors individually.

Apart from the reduction of the term of protection from 50 to 25 years, the most controversial part of the Bill is the proposal to set up elaborate machinery for the registration of copyright and with power to issue licences to republish or translate books which the author does not wish to have reissued or translated. Under the present Act, and in all countries which adhere to the Berne Copyright Convention, publication by itself establishes copyright in a work, and the author whose name appears on the title-page is assumed to be the owner of copyright until the contrary can be proved. Moreover, under the Press & Registration of Books Act and the Delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Act, ample provision is already made for several copies of all new publications to be supplied to Government officials and libraries, and it is hard to see what useful service a new copyright register could give. In the Notes appended to the Bill, the very lame explanation is offered: 'Such registration will furnish useful information to interested members of the public. In order to encourage voluntary registration of copyright, it has been provided that no proceedings for infringement of copyright shall be entertained unless the copyright is registered.' This is bureaucracy rampant.

The other function of the proposed Copyright Office is equally uncalled-for, but even more objectionable from the point of view of the author. For example, in Clause 31, it is said that any person may apply to the Registrar of Copyrights for a licence to publish a translation of a literary work, provided he has 'proved to the satisfaction of the Registrar of Copyrights that he had requested and been *denied authorization from the owner of the copyright*' to publish such a translation (the italics are ours). Similarly it is proposed to give the Registrar of Copyrights the right to grant licences for the reprinting or broadcasting of copyright material if a complaint is made to him that the owner has refused to allow the republication or broadcasting of the work. Provision is in fact made to set up an office for the expropriation of literary property, though it is only fair to add that compensation is to be paid. The occasions on which such compulsory powers are desirable are so rare that they cannot justify the setting up of the elaborate and expensive machinery asked for in the Bill.

The intentions of those who have drafted the Bill are doubtless of the best: they have sought to ensure that the public cannot be deprived of any literary masterpiece, and that the author will derive some benefit whenever his work is printed or translated. But it provides too many illustrations of the maxim 'Hard cases make bad law'.

R. E. HAWKINS

R. RAMANI

how fast should we run?

the race with Red China

INTerviewing Mr. Nehru for the *Daily Herald* recently, Mr. John Strachey asked what had made the Prime Minister change somewhat suddenly towards a planned process of rapid industrialisation for India: 'Were you influenced by the example of rapid Chinese economic development?'

Mr. Nehru's reply, the Labour M.P. reports, was emphatic: 'No. Indian economic planning, Indian determination to industrialise, goes back to a period long before the Chinese development of the last eight years. As early as 1938, even before independence, the Congress took up the question of planning...and appointed a committee of which I was the chairman. In 1947 came independence. Soon afterwards we launched the first five-year plan, which has now been actually carried out. Our present second five-year plan is much bigger. But it is a logical development from the first.'

It is true that India's desire for planned economic development and industrialisation predates the emergence of Communist China. But has the latter event had no impact on Indian planning, and is the second five-year plan 'a logical development from the first'?

Mr. Nehru has been noticeably anxious to maintain the theory that Red China is irrelevant to his recent emphasis on rapid industrialisation and socialism, perhaps for the reason that to admit competition between the two major Asian experiments in economic development under democratic and totalitarian conditions implies a rivalry with Communist China which might be construed as hostility towards it. This anxiety was amusingly illustrated at a press conference in the Capital last July, when a correspondent suggested that the Prime Minister had started advocating socialism vigorously after his visit to China in October 1954. Mr. Nehru denied the suggestion, and asserted

that Parliament had resolved on a socialistic pattern of society before he left for Peking. Actually, it was on December 21, 1954, several weeks after Mr. Nehru's return, that the Lok Sabha incorporated the socialistic goal in a resolution on economic policy.

It is only necessary to recall some of Mr. Nehru's statements in the winter of 1954 to recognize the theory of Red China's irrelevance as a diplomatic pretence. On the eve of his departure for Peking, the Prime Minister said at the inaugural meeting of the inter-State Board of Irrigation Ministers that India had to speed its economic development 'as if the devil were at our heels'. On his return, he declared himself 'greatly impressed by the vitality of China and by its discipline; and given vitality and discipline such a vast country must develop enormous strength'. A week later he told the National Development Council: 'We have to realize that we are not functioning in a vacuum in the world. All kinds of forces are at play and there is a very great element of urgency, not only because we want to better our country but because other forces are compelling us... We are on trial.' Without naming the 'other' process of change as Communist totalitarianism, Mr. Nehru went on to say that planning should henceforth be oriented to the achievement of rapid industrialisation and socialism through democratic and peaceful means 'even though that change might appear to take a little more time than the other. I do not think it takes more time, if people are capable and keen on doing it. I think that in the long run the democratic and peaceful method is more successful even from the point of view of time, and much more so from the point of view of final results.'

Obviously, then, the visit to Red China made a profound impact on the Prime Minister. Even without his being the chairman of the Planning Commission, this was

bound to influence the framing of the second five-year plan which was then being taken in hand.

A FUTURE increase in the rate of development and a shift in emphasis from agriculture to industry were implicit in the first five-year plan. Framed under conditions of inflation and acute food shortage, the first plan had necessarily to be limited to modest objectives: 'first, to rectify the disequilibrium in the economy caused by the war and Partition, and secondly, to initiate the development of certain basic resources so as to lay the foundation of more rapid economic growth in the future.' With the conquest of inflation and the signs of increasing urban unemployment during the first plan period, the planners were bound to think in terms of a bolder size of investment and greater emphasis on industrial development. The urgent sense of challenge with which the Prime Minister returned from China could have led to the framing of a second five-year plan which could have been a logical though accelerated development from the first—if Mr. Nehru had allowed his own *Planning Commission to draw it up*.

But, paradoxically for one who wished to demonstrate the superiority of democratic over totalitarian methods, he turned for guidance to Prof. Mahalanobis, the Russophile head of the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, and the band of foreign Marxist economists assembled by him.

On November 3, 1954, a day after landing at Calcutta on the way back from China, the Prime Minister inaugurated the 'studies relating to planning for national development' at the Indian Statistical Institute, with a speech in which he reminded the foreign experts that 'in India we are not wedded to any definite creed which we have to follow remorselessly', and that 'we function on the basis of parliamentary

democracy which has great advantages and certain obvious drawbacks'.

Typical of the studies which emerged, and also the most important of them, was Prof. Charles Bettelheim's 'Scheme of a model of reasoning for the elaboration of the second five-year plan of India' (to be found in the first volume of the I.S.I. papers now in private circulation). 'We shall consider,' says the Polish economist in this paper, 'that the objective is to double the national income in 10 years. This is a long-term objective, fixed *a priori* on the basis of the experience of other countries having followed a policy of economic planning. It should be pointed out that the hypothesis of doubling the national income in 10 years by no means appears to be exaggerated, rather it is to the contrary. In the Soviet Union, the national income nearly quadrupled in the course of the first two five-year plans.' Prof. Bettelheim proceeded to outline a Rs. 6,980-crore investment plan which would increase India's national income by 34% in five years, on the assumption of an exceedingly favourable capital-output coefficient of .6 (which, again, was justified by reference to Soviet achievement: 'A coefficient of such magnitude, and one of even higher magnitude, is obtained in countries with planned economy. In the Soviet Union the ratio in the first two plans came up to .68 and .62'.)

Though the Planning Commission was in effect superseded by the I.S.I. at the turn of 1954, there was no Government decision to this effect and the public did not know about it except through stray newspaper reports. Three out of Mr. Nehru's five colleagues in the Commission—the deputy chairman, Mr. V. T. Krishnamachari, the Finance Minister, Mr. C. D. Deshmukh, and the member for industries, Mr. K. C. Neogy—were known to be unhappy both on account of the intrusion on their authority and the dubious political affiliations of the intruders. But all of them

acquiesced, partly out of tolerance for what was hoped would be the temporary rashness of a great and good Prime Minister, but also doubtless because any really firm protest would have been futile and entailed their resignation.

THE Finance Minister, who had told the National Development Council in November 1954 that the Planning Commission regarded Rs. 5,500 crores of outlay (Rs. 3,000 crores of it in the public sector) as the maximum possible under the second five-year plan, was confronted in March 1955 with the Rs. 6,500-crore Plan-frame produced by Prof. Mahalanobis. It must have been particularly difficult for Mr. Deshmukh to accept the proposition that the public sector should be responsible for Rs. 4,300 crores, or full two-thirds of the outlay, in view of the fact that his chief budget officer estimated the resources likely to be available to the Government at no more than Rs. 3,000 crores and he himself believed that they could be stretched, with great effort, only to Rs. 3,500 crores. But the Finance Minister, like other privately sceptical members of the Planning Commission, chose to suspend disbelief and be infected by the Prime Minister's enthusiasm.

Subsequent scrutiny of the Plan-frame (which promised a 25% increase in national income—an impressive target though it fell short of the Polish professor's prescription) revealed that its assumptions were uniformly over-optimistic: implementation of the public sector projects, it was found, would require an outlay much greater than Rs. 4,300 crores, and would not even so yield the promised 11 million jobs. But the popular imagination was so fired by the combined vision of a rapid increase in national income, economic self-reliance through the development of heavy industries, and full employment in village crafts, that there grew a powerful demand—exemplified by

the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee last September—for adherence to the Plan-frame targets at any cost.

By December the Planning Commission, trying as best as it could to invest with some realism the financial estimates and allocations of the Plan-frame, produced a revised version of the public sector plan which bore an increased price tag of Rs. 4,800 crores, left out some industrial projects in order to make a more adequate provision for transport, promised somewhat fewer jobs, but still claimed to be capable of increasing national income by 25%. Resources were nowhere in sight for the enlarged cost of the plan: even after allowing for Rs. 1,200 crores of deficit financing—which was admitted by the Commission to involve ‘considerable risk’—and assuming foreign aid of Rs. 800 crores (for which, it was likewise admitted, there was no warrant), the resources budget showed an uncovered gap of Rs. 400 crores. Nevertheless the National Development Council, encouraged by Mr. Nehru, approved the revised plan last January.

IT was at this meeting of the N.D.C. (though the fact was not officially or otherwise revealed at the time) that Mr. Deshmukh made an attempt, which he was in duty bound to make as Finance Minister, to plead for realism. ‘From a practical point of view,’ he said, ‘I feel that the size of the plan should be Rs. 4,000 crores.’ He suggested that the plan could be split into two parts: one of Rs. 4,000 crores which should be implemented with all the necessary effort, and another of Rs. 800 crores which would be optional and dependent on the availability of resources. But the State Chief Ministers who constitute the Council raised a chorus of protest, some even urging that the plan should be further enlarged. After all, no politician desires less than the best for his State when it is the Centre that

has to find most of the funds for development.

Mr. K. C. Neogy remained silent even longer, and recorded his dissent only this April, when it was altogether too late—with general elections only ten months away—to expect a scaling down of the promises held out before the people. The deputy chairman of the Planning Commission is not known to have openly criticised the size of the plan at any stage. However, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister for Industries and Commerce, unexpectedly did so in the Lok Sabha on April 16. ‘I would not commit this country, if I have any say in it,’ he said, ‘to a type of planning which, while it might seem to meet our immediate aspirations, would in actual fact be impossible of achievement. It does no good to flatter ourselves that we can do something more than what is actually possible.’ But this was obviously a retort to Mr. Deshmukh who had said elsewhere the previous day that ‘it is not failure but a low aim that will be the crime’. Mr. Krishnamachari’s comment was primarily an expression of the strained relations between the two ablest Cabinet colleagues of Mr. Nehru, which is one of the minor tragedies of the country’s affairs today. The Industries Minister, who is not a member of the Planning Commission though he obviously should be in it, has taken no sustained interest in the plan except in so far as it affects his own portfolio.

Thanks, thus, to Mr. Nehru’s overawing political strength, which makes him prone to ignore the advice of his colleagues and discourages them from offering any, and thanks, too, to the absence of a tradition of critical thinking in the ranks of the ruling party, the country stands committed today to a Government outlay of Rs. 4,800 crores, which is not merely excessive in itself in relation to foreseeable resources but is admitted by the Planning Commission to be inadequate for implementing the

development schemes included in the plan. The final version of the plan does not disguise the fact that the iron and steel programme will require Rs. 50 crores more than the provision made for it, and that coal production will similarly require Rs. 20 crores more. On top of all this are the imponderable needs of defence, which might claim the revenue surpluses now intended to be voted to economic development, and the likely requirement of additional expenditure on the Ambar Charkha scheme, oil exploration and atomic energy.

Do the events recapitulated above suggest that the second five-year plan is a 'logical development from the first'?

The only justification that has been offered on behalf of the Planning Commission, and by the Finance Minister personally, for defying the limitation imposed by resources is that some other countries have, or claim to have achieved an annual rate of economic growth much higher than 5%. Last year's 'tentative framework' of the plan quoted breath-taking figures for the Communist countries, ranging from 12% in Czechoslovakia and Hungary to 16% in the Soviet Union and Bulgaria. As recently as on April 15 this year, speaking before the national planning forum, Mr. Deshmukh justified the size of the plan by saying: 'In concrete terms it does not amount to very much, this annual increase in the national income of about 5%. It is very much less than what is claimed to have been achieved in countries which are under an authoritarian regime.'

Clearly, then, Mr. Nehru's image of 'the devil at our heels', of a race with Communist achievement, is crucial to the explanation of the size and targets of the second plan. But if we are engaged in a race, is it not necessary to find out at what speed the adversary is really running (as distinct from the records he may claim to have set up)? In case he is actually running faster, should we not consider whether it

would be wise to run as fast immediately or to run less fast but more steadily and thus win in the long run? In the short run, after all, the competition is unequal and decidedly in favour of Red China. The people of China must keep running the race of forced industrialisation on short rations, breathless and bruised though they may become, because of the whip lashed on their backs by the Communist dictatorship. But our discouragement at the initial disadvantage in the race should surely be tempered by the knowledge that the Chinese economy cannot avoid, even as the Soviet economy has not been able to avoid, a collapse sooner or later in the field of agricultural and other consumer goods production.

THESE questions would appear to be simple and fundamental enough. Yet, to judge from public pronouncements, they have not even occurred to our leaders. When Mr. Colin Clark, who has devoted a lifetime to the study of the rate of economic growth of different countries, visited India last year, he expressed amazement at the Planning Commission's uncritical acceptance of Communist claims. These claims, he said, were demonstrably exaggerated in the case of Russia and the East European countries, and quite unverifiable in the case of China owing to the absence of statistical data. Yet the Finance Minister apparently continues to be dazzled by, and certainly dazzles the country with, the high percentage figures of economic growth claimed by the Communist countries.

Soviet leaders have themselves been loudly proclaiming their failure, 38 years after the establishment of the Communist regime and after five five-year plans, to achieve a balance between the development of heavy industry on the one hand and of agricultural and consumer goods production on the other. Yet Mr. Nehru and his

colleagues appear to regard any diminution of the industrial investment programme announced last year as a betrayal of planning. Actually, the question of over-all size apart, the second plan is fairly well balanced internally as between industry, agriculture and consumer goods. But neither the planners nor the people seem yet to have grasped the fundamental difference between the welfare orientation of economic planning in a peaceful democracy, which sets certain limits to the rate of industrial investment, and the power orientation of totalitarian planning which deliberately sacrifices welfare for the building up of heavy, and in the last analysis, war-making industries.

It is all to the good that the search for resources for the second plan has induced the Government to think of new and progressive taxation measures such as levies on wealth, expenditure and gifts, which will serve also to reduce economic disparities. The stress laid in the second plan on the implementation of land reforms, which have been long talked about, is another feature which every radical democrat will welcome. But if the plan should flounder in inflation, as it threatens to, or, even if inflation is avoided, and the development in different sectors falls seriously short of the targets owing to lack of resources, the consequent popular disillusionment will surely be costly in terms of the people's faith in democratic methods.

The danger of a revulsion in favour of totalitarian methods is the greater because of the wide prevalence in the country of the myth of the Communist paradise in Russia and China, thanks to Mr. Nehru's scrupulous avoidance (imitated by his political followers and a large section of the Press) of any fundamental criticism of conditions of life in those countries. Our people rarely hear of the forced labour in Communist countries, and are taught to discredit the little they might hear—witness

the Government's dissociation from the United Nations inquiry into forced labour in which the Indian delegate, Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar, participated. Our people, by and large, do not know the truth about the really low wages in Russia and China. When Mr. Nehru returned from the Soviet Union last year, there was wide publicity for his many references to a minimum monthly wage of 400 to 500 roubles in Russia. But there is a blanket of secrecy on the report of the official Indian agricultural team which visited Russia and found that though the rouble is valued by the Soviet Government at nineteen annas 'looking at the prices in India and in Russia we do not think we can put the real value of one rouble at anywhere more than four annas'. Mr. Nehru was also quoted at the time as saying that income disparities in Russia were within the range of one to ten. It was left to Mr. Mikoyan himself to tell the Planning Commission (though this, again, received little publicity) that the minimum wage in Russia is being raised only this year to 350 roubles, and that some Soviet citizens earn as much as 25,000 roubles—paying a maximum income tax of 10%!

The best insurance against the political risks of failure of the ambitious second five-year plan is therefore to educate the people in the true implications of the 'race'. In so far as Communist achievement is more striking in the short run, it is due to the greater degree of exploitation of the common man through the diversion of a greater part of national production from consumption to investment. The foundation of democratic Socialism in India will be firmly secured when this simple truth is explained to the people, and they realize that the choice between democracy and communism is not a choice between freedom and bread but between increasing bread with freedom, on the one hand, and less bread with no freedom, on the other.

KOBITA SARKAR

failure of the Indian film

evasion, compromise, unreality

AS an opiate the film seems to function excellently; as a conscience rouser, its highest achievement is a somewhat hesitant exposition of the problem play, which poses an issue (generally from a highly individualistic angle), and then tactfully evades any resolution of it. Occasionally a film tries to present sincerely a state of affairs with wider and more general implications, and to demand, subtly but firmly, a solution. If, by some strange chance both producer and audience manage to accept this, the censor steps in. It is true that the 'code' is flexible, but perhaps that in itself is a handicap, for it is left to the interpretation of a few individuals who are not always alive to the fullest implications of the facts shown. But though the censor is generally the whipping boy of such a situation, the villain of the piece is more justifiably the glib acceptance of the cinema as a mere form of entertainment.

The aftermath of the war brought a change of values, induced, quite possibly, by the sensational success of the Italian Realist film. Factuality as a source of entertainment was discovered, and a new trend—the semi-documentary—which adhered rigidly to actual backgrounds and stories with a plausible basis, cautiously initiated. The interest of these films graduated from individual to collective problems. *Boomerang*, for instance, was quietly effective with its theme of the struggle between small town ethics and the local conscience. But Kazan, to whom probably the cinema owes more than to any other Hollywood director in this respect, had to progress. He went on to *Pinky*, a tepid probing of race relations, with a desultory ending, due as much to his reluctance to force the pace as to censorship against miscegenation.

Perhaps the calculated soft-peddalling of social purpose accounted for the vivid im-

pect of *On the Waterfront*. Allegedly based on fact, it resorted to the method of showing a contemporary evil in terms of such uncompromising honesty that one was compelled to sit up and take notice. Admittedly violence, conflict, and a sub-human hero all claimed their share of attention from the implicit morality. Perhaps Kazan quite justifiably felt that if the fullest implications of his theme were too widely realised, he would meet powerful opposition. In his relatively objective exposition, one faced a small, but not insignificant corner of reality, and this appeal to the human conscience was not entirely wasted. Kazan however retired to other equally powerful, but less controversial themes. Some directors tried hard to touch contemporary dissatisfactions, but only with incidental consideration.

Almost imperceptibly, the major trends of foreign—mainly American—films have seeped, perhaps without design, into our cinema. It would be grossly unfair, as one is apt to do, not to admit that our films have evolved, however laboriously and unsatisfactorily, to a state where they do, at odd and unexpected moments impinge on the reality about us. Since the Indian film maker also faces more or less the same problems of censorship and the more crippling ones of audience reaction, his activities are similarly limited. However, that is hardly sufficient excuse to make their sole ethical appeal to the audience in terms of violent films with a 'B' picture morality.

THERE is an eternal cry from our producers about the dearth of good or original material. The most obvious source of it, the problems facing us, offer a whole relatively unexplored field, for they are virtually untouched beyond a peripheral reference. The face of the country is changing rapidly, and new vital issues are throwing out their challenge to us. Against this dynamic

tapestry, there seems little justification for the cinema to dissipate itself largely in fatuities. What about the dilemmas that inevitably beset a country still in the process of finding itself? And what about prevalent ills which the cinema can help to eradicate by enlisting the social conscience of the audience? The business of informing the public and striving to win its co-operation seems at the moment to be monopolised by the Documentary Films of India. Unfortunately, many of these are so academically conceived and burdened with statistics which fail to register with the audience, that the vital implications are cheerfully ignored by the audience, essentially interested in entertainment. As it is hardly possible to achieve a total change of heart in the audience overnight, it seems logical that the lesson has to be skilfully leavened into the main theme, so that it is not entirely lost in the boredom of the audience. On the other hand, when the feature film is not entirely devoid of casual effort to enlist a wider understanding for the socially and economically handicapped, the long tirades against the prevailing order of things tends to be irksome, and the audience successfully manages to reject the moral. Here, a more objective approach might produce more salutary reactions in the audience.

Of Mehboob's attempts to claim for the cinema considerations more serious than those of suitable hair styles and songs, the one that comes most easily to mind is *Roti*—but it is already more than a decade old. Subsequently there were other films, splashed with vulgarity and lavish displays of gaudy sentiment. His moralising was tiresome, besides the fact that the films had the air of pretentiousness associated with a self-appointed lecturer. It was as if the dialogue and the director were conspiring to belittle the audience—a thing the audience could hardly be expected to accept gracefully. To-day, the Mehboob with a

mission in the cinema is largely a memory. But at the time all his shortcomings of taste and imagination seemed trifling as compared to the vigour and honesty of approach of his earlier films, while the basic thought-provoking element they had, compensated for all the other lapses.

Then there is the case of Raj Kapoor. One had got rather used to accepting him as an actor of undoubted, if limited charm, till *Boot Polish* revealed his swift and unexpectedly incisive talent as a producer. After the purely romantic bias of *Barsaat*, *Awara* cautiously posed the problem of whether dubious family backgrounds produced dubious characters. Somewhere along the line, his interest, and that of the audience, was diverted into less controversial channels, and what looked like a conscience rouser became at best a promise of a director with more serious intentions.

Boot Polish benefitted from his absence as a star, for the fact undoubtedly made it easier for him to concentrate on production. With its inflexions borrowed from the Italian Realist Cinema, and its squalor, which in retrospect appears a bit contrived, it was nevertheless, in a way, among our finest films in the semi-documentary tradition. This film again provided one of the most interesting paradoxes in the long history of backstage compromise between artistic integrity and the box-office. Originally conceived without songs, it was the songs (when introduced later), that accounted for its popularity. The sugar-coating of the pill was a canny compromise, and perhaps the serious intention was more widely and effectively disseminated than might have been possible if the film had a more limited audience. The result was a gain to the national conscience.

Then again, very little serious attempt has been made to deal with vital current issues as the main theme of the feature film. What, for instance, has been done to show the difficulties which burden a mod-

ern Indian faced with the dissolution of the joint family system, due to circumstances beyond his control? Surely this is a feature common enough in our lives to-day? *Biraj Bahu*, with an unusual authenticity of background and sentiment, enlivened the Sarat Chatterjee story. It was homage perhaps to classicism, but it helped not one jot in solving the problem of a society disintegrating with the inevitable march of time. It harked back to the good old days of family solidarity and unselfish devotion to an ideal which history is violently rejecting to-day, and merely created a vast nostalgia.

A RECENT Bengali film *Ardhangini*, in many ways a delightful comedy directed by Bikash Roy, a professional actor, was on similar lines. It told of five brothers and their wives living in the same house in domestic felicity, where burdens were shared with a tolerance and affection which is so lavish that it never was so even in the heyday of the joint family system. The film was remote from reality, imbued with the sentiments of a never-never land of wishful thinking rather than actuality.

What, one wonders again, about one of the greatest mass migrations of history? It will be agreed that it calls for more than a passing reference in local farce or as an offscreen background to a situation. Surely the cinema, as perhaps the greatest exponent of ideas for the common man, can make a dispassionate appeal to its audience so as to facilitate the process of rehabilitation? One Bengali film, *Ora Thakey Odharey* tried to do this humourously and effectively. Two families, one from East Bengal and one from the West, live in adjoining quarters in a building in Calcutta. Though they get on at the best of times, the dissonant factor is their provincial idiosyncracies—such as their fauna-

ticism in matters concerning football and local preferences for different varieties of fish—which assume dramatic proportions and wreck their relationship. Tragedy is narrowly averted however by their basic mutual interest in the human aspects of existence. This film swings with a fair degree of impartiality (and a conspicuous absence of moralising), from one riotous situation to another, and since both parties manage to laugh at themselves, the film discovers the answer which must eventually bridge the gulf. As an experiment in public relations, the film was an excellent achievement.

WHERE an attempt is made to probe beneath the surface, the cinema is inevitably one step behind the evil. It never realises the urgency of what it has to combat, nor the fact that the social sore of yesteryear will raise only a sympathetic sigh today. The burning problems of the day, the explosive situations, are carefully evaded, or accorded at most a hurried superficial glance. Or else, when thought is provoked, wrath is carefully dissipated in the wrong direction, which is a wilful misuse of the provocative functions of the cinema. If collective sympathy is not evoked for immediate problems nor public resentment mobilised against it, the cinema is virtually paralysing one of its greatest assets and shirking one of its prime obligations.

Sindoor, for instance, released in 1947, was a deeply moving film in some respects. Its quiet undertones were more poignant for always being present without being overemphasised. But what is its value in the social documentary of the nineteen forties? The problem of widows remarrying, though still not viewed favourably in some parts of the country, evokes a prejudice that is limited to a vastly reduced segment of society. By and large, despite

individual sentiment, widow remarriage is accepted without undue acrimony. What, therefore, is the use of unnecessarily enlarging on the subject at this stage?

Do Bigha Zamin for all its undeniable excellence, fleetingly picked up a relatively outmoded issue, for the zamindar was ceasing to be a menace in the scheme of things. The purely defeatist attitude of the film in succumbing to circumstance, though not unusual, seemed in this case somewhat anachronistic. For surely a man of the calibre of this particular peasant who was prepared to try his hand at anything to earn an honest penny, and whose determination is repeatedly emphasised could have found some opening in one of the many gigantic schemes the country is engaged in. And to rouse the audience to fury against the zamindar was surely a little like flogging a dead horse and squandering virtuous indignation in the wrong direction, where co-operation could have been sought for more vital issues. Then again, the film failed to achieve an air of universality as did, say, *The Southerner*, which tackled a similar agricultural problem.

Abbas' *Rahi* (based on the Mulk Raj Anand novel), valiantly attempted a decade too late to be of live interest. That these or similar conditions prevailed in the past is perhaps true. But this is a post-war story. The hero is a rather juvenile war veteran, with a penchant for waving a whip. Conditions have changed considerably in tea gardens, and such situations are no longer tenable. Displays of overbearing colonialism could hardly have prevailed at the time when the British were preparing to leave not merely the tea gardens but the country itself; and it is a plantation overseer of unusual temerity indeed who would resort to such a liberal use of the whip, except of course, as an opening gambit to an eventual emotional entanglement. The documentary value of

the tea-making sequences is not denied; its conscription of sentiment for plantation labour (in the face of newspaper reports which prove that labour is more than adequately capable of dealing with the situation) seems a bit misplaced.

Naukri hinted at a common issue, the difficulty of finding employment which pays adequately. But if the solution is facile, and if beautiful women abandon themselves so unrestrainedly to temporarily vagrant heroes, (possibly the rarest phenomena in reality) it seems obvious that the compensations outweigh the difficulties, and potential employers may well be excused for their smugness and ultimate lack of humanity.

Almost nothing, apart again from the inevitable documentaries, has shown the progress made by the big industrial projects of the country. Since these are couched in impersonal terms and monotonously intoned by commentators, their interest remains statistical rather than vital. Why not relate at least one of the many schemes to the individual by using it effectively as a background to the commercial story? Imaginatively conceived, this marriage of documentary with drama, so successfully exploited in some of the semi-documentary films of France, could very easily be a grand alliance of education and entertain-

ment. It will be easier to emphasise the essential purpose and greatness of conception of the project, even though it be via the hero-heroine-villain route. The frequent interruption of the narrative by song and dance might be relatively bearable, justifiable if even a little of the ultimate importance of the project is palatably brought home to the audience. The pitfall, of course, is direct propaganda, to which so many of our films succumb so easily.

The incipient causes of crime, which seems to be the 'social evil' most generally enlarged on in the Indian film, are fairly well-known by now. The Americans have been emphasising the proneness of the socially and morally underprivileged towards crime since the thirties, and the same applies here too, with insignificant variation. It is not thinly veiled lessons in morality we need. It is a working solution to most of the evils (and not merely crime) which prevail *now*, so conceived as to stir the national apathy. Only if the present issues are faced with courage will the solution of the movies be of any value to our present society. Ten years hence, they will be history—and no amount of corrosive invective in 1966 will compensate us for the cinema having failed to appreciate our problems today.

THE GOLDEN CITY

BY PUDUMAIPPITHAN

Translated from the Tamil

BY V. S. MANIAM

YOU may not have heard of the Golden City. Not that other Golden City our bards have sung about; I refer to this slum here, very much on this earth, which goes by that glorified name.

Perhaps only in the philosophy of the Law of Karma, and nowhere else, can you find justification for its squalor. Yet, to those human worker-bees, buzzing ceaselessly in the service of the few lucky ones born to lord it over others, to them it is truly a golden city.

That lane there, running by the side of the railway line towards the toddy shop, is its main 'thoroughfare.' Four men can comfortably walk abreast on this 'road'—so long as there are no carts plying. And like any other road, it has its branches... rather like rabbit burrows.

Perhaps the best time to see this place is when a light drizzle is on. Mark the slush and mud which is the 'road'; on the roadside: the Municipal Ganges—or is it the Jamuna, since it is dark-coloured? Beyond, the barbed wire fencing... a little further off, on the high ground, the rails. On the other side, the rows of bee-hives—yes, for human habitation, in case you can't believe it!

Water-taps? Yes, there is one. Lights? You mean electric lights? No. There are none. A kerosene lamp... won't that be enough for such a place?—And even that is used only on nights of the waning moon...

The children of the Golden City are keenly interested in 'fishing'. But what kind of fish can you find in that municipal sewage water? Sometimes, from somewhere, perhaps from some rich man's dwelling, comes

floating in this sacred river, a stray rotten fruit, or some stale left-overs, or some such thing—but I shouldn't speak of it, these are secrets of the children of the Golden City.

And Heaven knows what pleasure these kids find in playing by the rails. The barbed wire fence is there all right, but they know nothing of the law of trespass, nor of the ever-present danger from passing trains. Not that the parents would mind much if their children leave them—for ever.

The children are not baffled by the barbed wire: they aren't your Glaxo or Mellin's food babies, who might find it difficult to squeeze themselves in through the wire. This done, they stand there in a row and, as the train rushes past, cry in great glee to the flashing symbol of civilization: '*koodmorni*'—their initiation into the mysteries of the English language.

* * *

It is only after five in the evening that the place wakes to life: that's when the women start their domestic chores. They rush out to fetch water. Then, at the only tap that place has, you can witness a battle—a full-fledged battle.

Their hair is not prematurely grey but white with the cotton dust settled on it. Their eyes are tired, weak—and no wonder, for they are glazed to the turning spindle all day long. After all, their eyes are not made of iron—as the spindles are; their bodies are healthy, nonetheless, with a health born of honest toil.

Health? How could there be any health

in this breeding ground of bacteria? True, but you forget their will to live, to survive. Did not our primitive ancestor live in the caves of animals, fighting them, killing them and often being killed? Did he by any chance get extirpated or fail to perpetuate the species? Human life is one long hunt...

The womenfolk of the golden City, they have a black string, what is called the sacred thread, round their necks, symbol of life's yoke, symbol of bondage to man. But they don't bother about it, not much, not these women of the Golden City. This is a different world and it has its own laws.

* * *

Ammalu is one of these mill-workers. Her age? Twenty perhaps, certainly not more than twenty-two. Her husband runs a *jutka* which he owns. Their family comprises five; he, she, his mother, a brother and, of course, the horse. It is from the earnings of husband and wife that the family—the horse included—has to live, and also pay besides the rent of their shack, the *mamul* to the policeman, and for the opium the brother smokes secretly. Of course, there's the drink to pay for too, since all of them drink. How else can they forget hunger, especially in the 'dull' season, when work is scarce, when money does not flow into the family till?

* * *

Her husband was in 'form' that day and his horse, too. Both had drunk 'somewhat', and a race ensued. The *jutka* turned turtle and its axle broke. The horse was badly

injured. On her husband there was not a scratch but there was some internal injury. They brought him home to the shack, unconscious. Lucky that he had taken 'somewhat': else, he might have howled with pain.

Thank heaven, he now lies oblivious of his hurt.

She makes some paste to rub on his body. It is then he stirs.

He asks for some gruel with milk.

There is no money at home. The till is completely empty, and her pay-day is yet a few days off.

* * *

Ammalu proceeds to the water-tap with her earthen pot.

It is dark, almost completely dark. The almanac says the moon should be there this night. But where is the moon? Perhaps behind a cloud? And what can the municipality do if the moon chooses to hide behind a cloud?

The usual row at the tap. She has at last managed to fill her pot. She turns homewards.

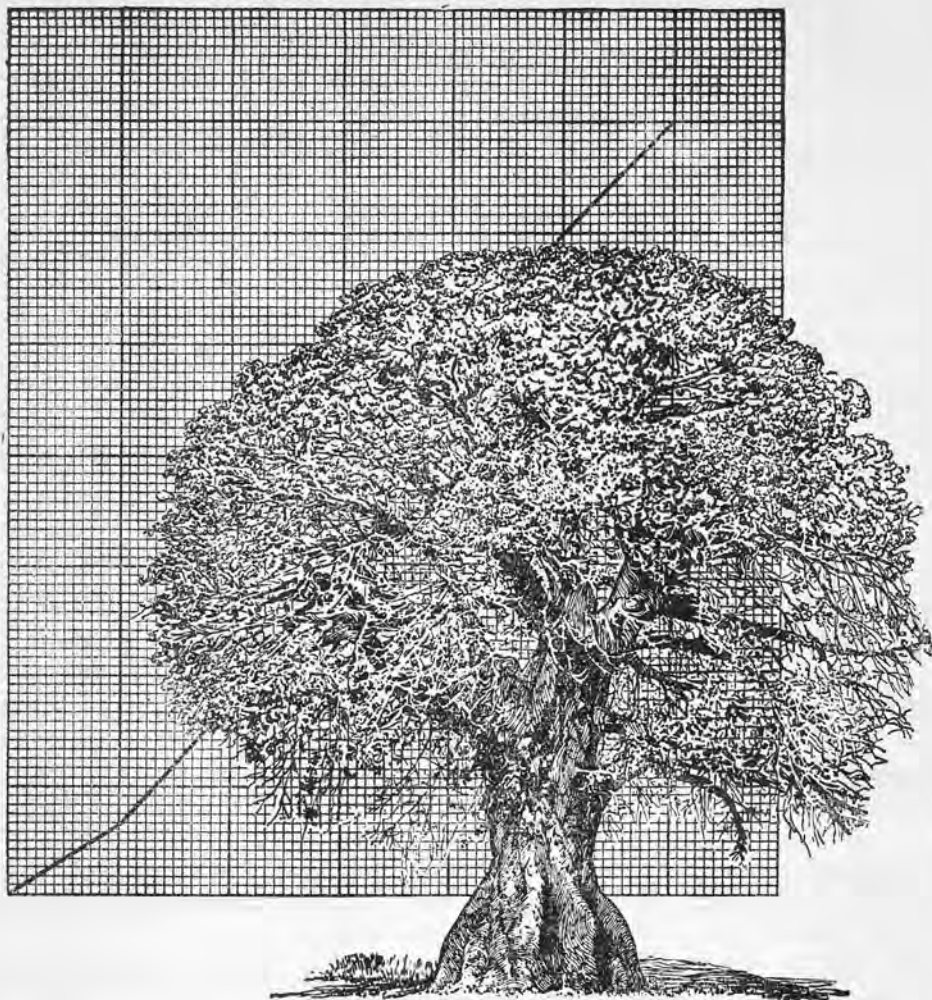
A man emerges from one of the side alleys. For long he has had an eye on her.

They disappear into the shadows....

She has now earned twelve nickels with which to buy gruel, for her husband.

* * *

You who talk of chastity so glibly and tirelessly, here is the Golden City for you.



the sturdy growth of a mighty tree ...

is symbolic of our nation's progress.
Rooted in her native soil, maintained
by the endeavours of her people, India's
chart of industrial and agricultural progress
has soared to encouraging heights within
a short space of time. We take
pride in this progress achieved not by the
talents of a few individuals but by the
concerted efforts of an united people.



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DAYA KRISHNA

an experiment in democracy?

the undebated dogma

LIKE many experiments, this one was the result of an accident. Over a cup of coffee a friend challenged me to write anything against the prevailing views of the Party in power and see if it were published in the responsible press. Too lazy to accept the challenge, I pointed out the defect in the logic of the argument. If a short story of mine were not published, would it imply that there is no cultural freedom in the country?

This happened some time ago. The Amritsar Congress and the statements of the leaders there made me feel that a public discussion of the various aspects of Socialism was imperative, if some of the worst confusions were to be avoided. This could only be done in the pages of some influential daily where the pros and cons could be discussed by thinkers of different persuasions. It is only thus that the people could be brought to an awareness of

the complex issues involved in the goal that the ruling party had put before the country.

Accordingly, I wrote a short article entitled *Socialism...So What?* and sent it, in the first instance, to *The Hindustan Times* with the following letter:

Dear Sir,

I do not know if you would care (or dare?) to publish the accompanying article entitled *Socialism...So What?* I hope you will agree with me that the subject requires a detailed discussion so that an informed opinion may result. I think it is the duty and the privilege of an influential daily such as yours to provide the forum for discussion of that kind. I hope the issue has not been closed. I am, of course, aware that my article is in no sense an exhaustive exposition of the subject. It is merely a challenging opening so that

people may be provoked into discussing socialism.

Yours sincerely, etc.

This is not a verbatim copy of the letter that I sent. Still, it is very close to it in language and almost identical in content.

The Editor thought the article and the letter worth no serious reply. The usual printed 'thanks' and the usual 'regrets' accompanied the article back to me. The same story was repeated with *The Times of India*, *The Statesman* and *The Hindu*.

The Hindustan Times, *The Times of India*, *The Statesman*, *The Hindu*—are not these the most widely circulated, the most influential and the most responsible dailies in India? Yet, they do not seem to be interested in opening their pages to a frank, free and all-round discussion of the most momentous issue facing this country. The reason, perhaps, is too obvious to be missed. When the editors of four leading newspapers reject an article, the objective unanimity of their decision proves the utter worthlessness of the article concerned. Is it, then, merely author's pride that makes me hesitate to accept this obvious verdict? I dare not deny the possible subconscious presence of such a motivation. The decisive reason for my hesitation, however, I find not in the *fact* but in the *manner* of rejection. Whatever the quality of the article submitted, (and the reader can judge it for himself) the letter accompanying it deserved a more serious reply than the usual stereotyped one. It is the *indifference* shown in the manner of rejection, to the seriousness of the issue I sought to raise, that strikes me as the most significant aspect of this affair.

Do I, then, allege that there is little freedom of political discussion in this country? Have I forgotten the defect in the logic of the argument I pointed out to my friend over a cup of coffee? Am I to infer that there is no freedom of discussion just because an article of mine has not been

published by the leading newspaper-editors of this country? The analogy is telling, but there are other important points, I am afraid, which must be noticed. The role of newspapers in providing a forum for discussion of views that may or may not accord with those of the Party in power, is crucial to a democracy. Such a role becomes still more important when, in a country such as ours, the only other medium of mass-communication, i.e. radio, is completely controlled by the Government. It is only through the pages of the daily press that an ordinary citizen can possibly hope to initiate or take part in the debate about the great political and social issues of his times. If such an avenue is closed, for whatever reasons, or if the guardian-angels prove indifferent about such matters, it will take but little time for democracy to stop functioning in that country.

TO read too much into a single incident is the sign of an obsessed mind. But is the incident really so isolated? Only a few weeks ago, an eminent writer of Hindi had read a paper on Dostoevsky during a Death Anniversary meeting and had criticized the Soviet Union on the basis of the great novelist's writings. Later, the editor of some Hindi magazine congratulated him on his paper. The writer turned to him and said, 'Well, dare you publish it in your journal?' There was an embarrassed silence and the other man turned away. A fairly well-known poet of Urdu, who has been an editor of one of the best 'progressive' journals in the language, told me that it was only two or three magazines that would publish anything from a 'non-progressive' writer.

A friend of mine had approached the Rockefeller Foundation for a research-grant to study the recent authoritarian trends in India. They were willing to consider the proposal if some organization was pre-

pared to sponsor it. The gentleman approached an important official of the Indian Council of World Affairs and, according to him, the person was visibly upset at the proposal and almost showed him the door. I can well believe the incident, as in my own presence this gentleman had expressed his considered opinion that we were moving towards a type of fascism in this country. Yet he was not prepared to do anything about it. I may add that I have the highest respect for the person concerned and that, so far as I know, his values are essentially democratic in character. This is perhaps what makes the incident so tragically significant to anyone even slightly interested in Indian democracy.

These are all anecdotes whose veracity can only be more or less private in character. But there are incidents which are more public in the sense that they could be found in a newspaper. Some months ago, the New Delhi Municipal Committee was considering suggestions for altering the names of certain roads and public places in New Delhi. It *unanimously* rejected the two names *Tees January Marg* and *Pandareh August Maidan* as unsuitable for the purpose. At its next fortnightly meeting, however, it received a letter from the Secretary of the Home Ministry saying that the proposed names had the personal approval of the Prime Minister. Thereupon, *equally unanimously*, the Committee came to the conclusion that no better names could possibly have been proposed and accepted them.

The Industries Fair, held recently in Delhi, had a pavilion called *Nav Jivan*. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari stopped before panels indicating what the State should do and what the State should not attempt to do. The Minister showed his intense displeasure and demanded the removal of the offending panels. The next day the panels were removed, showing a gap in the series till the Fair ended. The pavilion was sup-

posed to be the joint effort of enlightened sections of Free Enterprise in India.

THESE incidents aroused no comment, caused no ripple in the Fourth Estate which is supposed to be the watchdog of democracy in every country. Perhaps the incidents were too small to be noticed. But could the same be said of Rajaji's allegation of threats of victimization against the doctors who took part in the B.C.G. controversy, or of Jayaprakash's statement on the Bihar disturbances? And what shall we say of the response of our press to its own Chief's address? Dr. Sachin Sen, the President of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, considered the situation to have reached such a stage that he made it the central theme of his Presidential Address. According to *The Times of India* of January 8, 1956, he said: 'In a liberal democracy, the press must be free from the coercive influence of the ruling party. It must be free to judge the official doctrine of the ruling party. If it cannot, it does not serve. The right to state, argue and defend its case, and to differ from and criticize governmental measures *has to be conceded*' (Italic ours). Is the right to differ and criticize the government not yet conceded? Does the ruling party exercise a coercive influence on the press? Is the press not free to judge the official doctrines of the ruling party? These questions inevitably arise from Dr. Sachin Sen's speech.

The sheer indifference of the social, political and intellectual *elite* of this country to the problem of preserving and enlarging democratic liberties should arouse serious concern among those who still cherish democracy. Some time ago I wrote a short article on *Planning and Democratic Freedom* suggesting that as we are committed to both Planning and Democracy and, as the two are supposed to conflict in some cases, a research organisation may be set

up to investigate the inter-relationship between the two. About two hundred copies of the article were sent to leading persons in politics, education and industry. The only response that I received was from someone in a foreign land who suggested some theoretical and practical difficulties which needed to be overcome before such a project could be undertaken.

Each of these incidents by itself does not mean much. Together, they are an ominous threat on the horizon of Indian democracy. There is a widespread feeling that democratic liberties are somehow assured and that we need not do anything

about them. The complacency is unwarranted and the illusion dangerous, as the above examples indicate. The encroachment on liberties is gradual and minor in the beginning, but if it is not resisted, it becomes impossible to resist later on.

My experiment, then, was not much of an experiment. Too desultory, isolated, inconclusive, the result of an accident—it still shows the need for experiments, better in every way, that may confirm or refute the feeling so widely shared by many in this country. However, in its own little way, my experiment too has proved something.

SOCIALISM SO WHAT?

SOcialism is in the air. Everyone wants it: the Congress, the P.S.P., the Socialist Party, and, of course, the Communists. What is this enchanted word by which everyone swears and to which everyone aspires? Like the Lord, it means everything to everybody. An Aladdin's lamp to every human wish, it fascinates the common man by its promise to fulfil every prayer that may ever move his heart. That there are gins around such lamps, he conveniently forgets, and why should he not when those in whom he has confidence tell him that it is so?

What do the leaders say? The political and the intellectual elite have left no doubt in the matter. 'A progressive increase in the public sector of the economy,' is socialism to these people. It is merely another name for the public ownership of all sectors of the economy concerned with finance, production and distribution. Eminent members of the Panel of Economists have advised such a step in the National Development Council. The Council and the Planning Commission have explicitly accepted this as their aim. Mr. Deshmukh has described the nationalisation of Insurance as a step towards socialism. The nationa-

lisation of road-transport by the State authorities is also a movement in the same direction. In fact, the road to Socialism is marked by the milestones of nationalisation, and each step leads forward to the goal when nothing more will remain to be nationalised. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari has said that by the end of the second five year plan only 40% of production will be in the public sector. There would, then, be only 40% socialism and should not we all be glad if the percentage could somehow be increased still further?

The private sector, of course, is to remain for some time. But that is only an unfortunate necessity, to be got rid of as soon as possible. Even the Soviet Union had to have such a phase and, after all, one cannot jump the transition all at once. But there is little doubt that private enterprise is evil and that public enterprise is good. The evil and the good are inherent in these two types. No further questions are to be asked about efficiency, freedom or public welfare. If thou goest in the right direction, i.e., the direction of nationalisation, all these shall be added unto thee. And if the evidence be otherwise, do not believe your eyes, for how can the pundits

be wrong and, after all, would not everything be all right in the end?

This should be understood by everybody in this country: Socialism does not mean, as the common man fondly believes, a high standard of consumption of the basic goods and services that everybody needs. For, if that were the meaning of socialism, the U.S.A. would be the foremost socialist country of the world. Nor does it mean virtual abolition of unemployment or lessening of inequalities, as many people imagine. China is a socialist country and yet has unemployment. Russia is a socialist country and yet has its paupers and millionaires. Britain has no unemployment and less inequality of incomes than before and is not a socialist country today.

The common man's dream and the politician's idea are, thus, not the same. There is, of course, believed to be a necessary link between the two. At least, the economists and the politicians seem to think so. But have our experts and leaders ever reflected on the fact that after 38 years of Socialism, the average Soviet citizen does not have sufficient bread to eat? This is not American propaganda, but sober fact admitted by the foremost Soviet economist Strumilin himself. After Krushchev had said that it was 'necessary to set ourselves the task of achieving a level of food consumption which would be based on a scientific diet necessary for the harmonious all-round development of a healthy human being', Soviet economists and physiologists started to develop such standards and discover how far the actual consumption fell short of them. The shortage percentage of actual consumption from the standards formulated by Strumilin should be rammed into the heads of every planner and politician in this country. The following figures from *Vestnik Statistiki*, Moscow, 1954, No. 5, p. 22, should be repeated like a *mantram* by every dreamer of a Socialist Utopia

who believes that his problem will be solved in such a society.

Consumer Goods	Percentage-shortage from the Strumilin Standard	
1. Black and white bread	..	35·5
2. Meat and Fish Products	..	59·0
3. Milk and Milk Products	..	80·5
4. Eggs	..	81·0
5. Sugar	..	46·0
6. Woollen clothes	..	87·2
7. Footwear	..	58·0
8. Living space	..	73·0

The amazing deficiency in the consumption of these basic necessities becomes still more amazing if we remember that the standards formulated by Strumilin are nothing exceptional and that, even if they were attained, Russia would not have the highest per capita consumption of these basic consumer-goods in the world. In fact, the standards proposed are equivalent only to average achievements in the West.

But these facts do not matter. If the West enjoys a higher per capita real income, it is not because there is a virtue in its economic system but only because of a series of historical accidents. And if the foremost socialist country of the world does not enjoy these levels of consumer-welfare, it is not because there is something wrong with its economic system but only because of historical accidents. The metaphysical mystique could hardly go further. We are asked to disbelieve what we see and to believe what has not yet happened. When, though, have lovers cared for facts? But they have seldom assumed the guise of experts and sneaked into the highest councils of a nation.

Who is concerned with consumer-welfare these days? Has not the Prime Minister declared in the recent meeting of the National Development Council that it is the basic industries that matter and if we require consumer-goods industries, it is

only that the economy be balanced? Has he not dismissed as 'old-fashioned' the persons who argue that consumer-goods industries should have a relative priority over heavy capital-goods industries? The Prime Minister, unfortunately, is himself 'old-fashioned,' at least by three decades. He has borrowed his ideas from the Soviet Union and the change in perspective could not be better illustrated. The task of an economy is no more the provision of goods and services, but the production of steel and coal and oil and heavy machinery. The Soviet lesson has certainly been learnt well.

SO we want steel; and is it not true that the fastest rate of development in steel production has taken place in a socialist country? From 5 million tons in 1929 to 41 million tons in 1954... is it not an unparalleled achievement in the annals of economic development? What does it matter if the people did not have sufficient food to eat or sufficient woollen clothes to wear? Nations do not count in international affairs by how much their people eat, but by what power they possess. Unfortunately for the socialists, private enterprise has beaten the Soviet Union in the game of steel also. According to *Historical Statistics of the United States 1789-1945* p. 185-6, the U.S. production of steel rose from 5.3 million tons in 1896 to 42.7 million tons in 1916. This eight-fold increase was achieved not only in five years less than by the Soviet achievement, but was accompanied by an increase in per capita real income of the peoples.

But do the facts matter? Is it not self-evident that there is something intrinsically evil about private enterprise and something intrinsically sacred and holy about public enterprise? After all, do not the very words 'private' and 'public' show that the one is individualistic and selfish while the other is altruistic and noble?

When have our policies not been governed by sloganised thinking? That it should permeate the highest councils of a nation however, is tragic enough for anyone who cares to think about it.

It becomes, therefore, the duty of every citizen in this country to ask the Prime Minister and the Congress President as to what they mean by Socialism when they prescribe it as a goal for this country.

1. Does Socialism mean an increasing public sector and a diminishing private sector, till the latter ceases to exist or survives only at the margins?

2. Does Socialism mean that the private sector of the economy is evil, even when it works with efficiency, and that the public sector is good, even when it is otherwise?

3. Does Socialism mean that the defects of private enterprise are intrinsic to it, and that the defects of public enterprise are only accidental?

4. If so, are we in the N.E.P. phase of communist ideology where a temporary lease is to be granted to the private sector, as it cannot immediately be wiped out?

These are straight questions and demand straight answers. The voter has the right to know for what he is expected to vote. The Prime Minister is in the habit of dismissing all such questions as doctrinaire, but does he want to deceive the people and come to power and then do as he likes? If not, an answer is necessary. The very foundations of democracy are at stake and if the men at the helm, in the intoxication of their power, refuse to answer, they would be doing an ill service to democracy by which they so loudly swear. As for the intelligentsia, it is their duty to question the presuppositions of popular and even expert thought and make the people aware of the implications of their leaders' policies. Or, do we have none but fossilised minds who are guided in their thinking only by slogans?

ROBERT FLYNN

a letter from America

politics, literature, theatre

TO be nominated for president by one of the two major political parties in the United States, the candidate has to be picked by his party's presidential convention. Both major political parties meet in a national convention where each state is represented by a group of delegates who, in a series of ballots, select Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, adopt the party platform, and elect the national committee. By and large, the delegations are chosen by the professional politicians of the individual states, and although the choice of candidates depends a good deal upon how popular the delegates think the candidates chosen will be with the electorate, the choice also depends a good deal on astute 'politicking'.

To offset the effect of 'politicking,' the state direct primary was instituted during the early part of this century as a reform of the nominating process. In a state

direct primary, the electorate votes for the candidates they would like to see nominated at a nominating convention. It was thought that allowing the electorate to vote for the candidates they wanted to stand for election would eliminate the political engineering of the convention. It has not eliminated it, mainly because not all states instituted the direct primary, and at the conventions the delegations which were responsible to the result of a direct primary could not control the delegations which were not, and delegations responsible to a primary are released from that responsibility after the first few ballots. In point of fact what the direct primary does is to test a candidate's popularity. His success or failure or even non-entry in the series of primaries can be completely inconsequential. The convention can ultimately ignore the result. But very often it so happens that a candidate is 'forced' to

enter the primaries and if he loses he may be disregarded at the convention. This could very well happen to Adlai Stevenson.

As Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1952, Mr. Stevenson lost the election but, nonetheless, he had polled a very large popular vote and he had established a reputation of being a politician of intellectual fibre and political integrity. In spite of this, there are leaders among his own party who consider that Mr. Stevenson is not aggressive enough to win a national election. Former President Harry S. Truman, for example, still active in Democratic politics, is not an avowed Stevenson supporter. Mr. Truman would prefer a more aggressive type of candidate, pointing out that the Democrats have never won with a candidate who tried to stay in the centre. Thus, although Stevenson could allow himself to be 'drafted' into the candidacy in 1951, he does not enjoy the same amount of pre-convention support that he enjoyed then, which means that he will have to go out and look for it this year and show that he has popular support. Looking for popular support meant putting his political future at stake in the primaries.

Mr. Stevenson entered the Minnesota primary, only to be swamped by Estes Kefauver, United States Senator from Tennessee. Senator Kefauver enjoys even less support among the party leaders than Mr. Stevenson. They say Kefauver works too hard for himself and not hard enough for the party. The Senator's only opportunity to gain prominence, then, is to win as much support as possible in the Presidential primaries; to do this, Senator Kefauver did what is considered normal political behaviour: he met people and shook hands, he accused Stevenson of being controlled by the 'party bosses,' and he made large promises to disgruntled voters. If the candidate is persuasive, this type of behaviour can be very effective.

The prospective candidates will meet again in other primaries. Stevenson knows that if he cannot improve his showing, he will be, in all likelihood, disregarded as a candidate. His answer was to spend more time on practical politics and less time on what he considers to be the important issues. At the present time it appears doubtful that Senator Kefauver would receive the nomination in any case; but if Stevenson can show more popular support, especially after his change of tactics, it appears likely that he will receive a second nomination in spite of the opposition to his moderate viewpoint.

THE Republican Party does not feel this type of tension. President Eisenhower, in spite of his heart attack, has announced that he would like to run again and, as his popularity remains undiminished, this means that his nomination (unless he changes his mind) will be automatic. His party or his associates may be attacked but never the President; he is considered a symbol of the peace and prosperity this country now enjoys. In 1947 he campaigned as a non-politician and was pictured as being above the struggle. Employment is at a record peak and President Eisenhower has been given credit by a number of Americans for what they consider the relaxation in world tension following the Geneva Conference. His running mate, however, is still an open question.

The President has said that he would be happy to run again with Vice-President Nixon but many Republicans would be happy to see Mr. Nixon step aside. He has not been a controversial Vice-President and, should he run, this will surely become part of the campaign, especially considering that should President Eisenhower be incapacitated in office, the Vice-President would take over his duties. (There is no practical possibility of the President-elect and the Vice-President-

elect being of different parties). Consequently, many Republican leaders would like to see a man who would not impair the President's popularity as a runningmate.

It appears likely that the racial segregation issue in the South will be prominent in this year's election. There are good political reasons for both parties to avoid it: the Republicans would like to avoid it because President Eisenhower will try to hold his unusual gains in the South, traditionally Democratic; the Democrats would like to avoid it because some Southern Democrats favouring segregation bolted to the Republicans in 1947 when civil rights became an issue and might bolt to the Republicans again if the liberal wing of the Democrats insist upon a strong stand on civil rights in the party platform. Mr. Stevenson had been looked upon as the moderate who would appeal to both the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic Party. There are still sores among Southern Democrats resulting from the divisions created during the 1951 election campaign, and a less temperate Democratic candidate than Mr. Stevenson might repel the South.

Meanwhile racial integration in public schools in the South continues. On May 17, 1945 the Supreme Court ruled that by the existing segregation in public schools negroes were deprived of the equal protection of the law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The pertinent section of this amendment states:

'No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.'

The Supreme Court decree, which said in part that segregation of children in

public schools 'generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community' and that 'separate education facilities are inherently unequal,' set in motion other rulings relating to the integration of the negro community and the white community in the 16 states (plus the nation's capital) that practised segregation. Previous to this, the Southern states had so-called 'Jim Crow' laws that granted legality to segregation in education and in many fields; for example, separate railroad cars for negroes and whites, separate lavatories for negroes and whites in public places.

THE *New York Times* recently had an eight page supplement on the integration issue. The report points out that in some eight states no integration has taken place; three states have made only a little progress; five states have made substantial progress. Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, which is a separate community outside the federal system, is completely integrated. So far there have not been any great social problems although there have been minor incidents of school boycotts and other forms of opposition. The report also points out that what seems a poor showing will be improved next year when more cities institute their plans to integrate. No one can say how long it will be before integration is completed, but the important thing is that a successful start has been made.

Implicit in the process of integration is a concept that is also the theme of Robert Penn Warren's new novel, *Band of Angels*. This is the concept of freedom. Although Warren does not show the accomplishment that Faulkner, Hemingway, and Steinbeck showed at their best, these last three writers wrote their best work some years ago, while Warren, who is not much younger than the others, (he is 51), developed later and is now doing the finest work in

American fiction. His writing reminds one of Hawthorne; it is faintly allegorical, well-formed, introspective and seriously although broad-mindedly religious. Warren, like Hawthorne, seems to be trying to escape from a touch of Calvinism. But Warren does not equal the mastery of Hawthorne. His novels verge on being abstract dialogues, a sin that Hawthorne never fell into, and even at his best Warren's prose has a slightly wooden quality, while Hawthorne's prose at its best has a highly polished luminous quality.

Band of Angels takes place in the South, a few years before the Civil war when slavery was still permitted. The daughter of a well-to-do planter is sold into slavery when her father dies and his debtor discovers that she is the daughter of her father's negro mistress. The daughter in turn becomes the mistress of the man who buys her, but she is set free during the Civil War. This bare outline of the first part of the plot sounds melodramatic, and, in truth, it is, but there is also a touch of parody in it. There are many popular historical novels dealing with this era which can only be called cheap. The parody evokes the standard feeling that Americans have for this period, the feeling also evoked by the less artistic novels, that the Pre-Civil War South was an aristocratic, cultured, exciting era—but then the parody is undercut by Warren's realism, giving an emphatic clarity to the theme. The theme is the definition of freedom: the servant-master relationship, slavery versus freedom; when is a man truly free—physically, intellectually, morally?

The struggle for freedom is outlined against an effect of light-dark symbolism, representing good and evil (this reminds one of the chiaroscuro effects of Faulkner's novel about miscegenation *Light in August*). Paradoxically, the theme is more complex than the bare statement of good and evil pitted against each other. *It is that each person is responsible for the*

freedom of each other person, but that each person must earn his own freedom; that it has to be a constant struggle in each person's life—each incident has to be considered morally on its own terms, how it will affect the individual, how it will affect other people.

TWO other recent books of importance are the *Memoirs* of Harry S. Truman and a significant contribution to an understanding of the American religious spirit and religious way of life, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, by Will Herberg.

The Truman *Memoirs* are in two volumes. Volume I, *Year of Decision*, covers only his first year in office; Volume II, *Years of Trial and Hope*, covers the next six. Volume I tells how he came to consider Russia an implacable enemy; Volume II tells how he dealt with the problems created by the situation. His decisions included the Marshall Plan, the development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the foiling of the Berlin Blockade, and finally Korea. Mr. Truman had then, and still has, many critics. On the other hand he was able to administer a bi-partisan foreign policy because the American people in general agreed with and supported him. He emerges as a president of decisions, and it is evident that he worked very hard in the preparation of those decisions.

Mr. Herberg's work discusses religion in America, the great 'melting pot' of immigrants. The Anglo-Scotch historian D.W. Brogan has noted that America is essentially a Protestant country and that both the Catholic and Jewish faiths have been influenced by Protestantism to an extent that neither likes to admit. *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* examines what the American religious spirit is. Mr. Herberg concludes that American religion rather than being God-centered is man-centered. This is

created by a certain type of secularism, not secularism as such, but the secularism of a religious people. The author states that it is not man who serves God in this framework but the other way around, God serving man. He also states, however, that in the current religious revival in America there are signs of a more self-conscious, profound type of religion.

Mr. Herberg's searching thoughts are typical of American introspection and self-condemnation. Cinema critics in London (and probably elsewhere) cannot understand how America could produce and send abroad films like *From Here to Eternity* which show American society in a very unfavourable light. The answer is hard to find; it might be because of the Puritan strain in American thought which creates a state of mind demanding, consciously or unconsciously, a severe type of honesty. It might be that the ethnic backgrounds of Americans are so varied that Americans feel no sentimental core of beliefs which must be defended. Or it might be because America is essentially insular. It sweeps across the Continent of North America and dominates its only neighbours, Canada and Mexico. Americans may feel no urge to impress.

FOR a number of years, drama critics have been bemoaning the decline of theatre in New York City. The United States does not have a national theatre, nor, unlike England, does it intend to have one. Although many cities and universities sponsor theatre groups, both amateur and professional, New York is still the centre for this art.

The provincial theatres are usually open only for a relatively short period of time; the university theatres are invariably workshops for their students. There is a 'summer playhouse' season of about four months (June through September) in

which well known actors and actresses play in small theatres scattered in vacation areas. Last year a permanent Shakespeare Memorial Theatre was opened in Stratford, Connecticut, following the example of Stratford-on-Avon and Stratford, Ontario. It is a handsome theatre overlooking the Connecticut River and located 70 miles from New York City and 15 miles from New Haven, the location of Yale University. It opened late last year, producing only *Julius Caesar* and *The Tempest* and was only moderately successful. This year it plans to produce three plays and sponsor a house orchestra. Should this theatre obtain support its annual season could do much to enliven and enrich the dramatic climate of this country—functioning as a national theatre might, an anchor and an outlet for American talent.

But meanwhile New York is still the only area that has what might be termed permanent theatre. All is not lost, however! The downward trend has been abated, at least briefly, by an outstanding season this year. There is still a shortage of theatres in the area of Broadway where the major productions are usually presented, (old theatres are torn down or bought by radio and television stations to be used as studios—meanwhile no new theatres have been built), but a movement known as Off-Broadway is developing and is still gathering momentum. The term Off-Broadway refers to theatres that are located outside the Broadway area. They are less accessible than Broadway theatres, and usually use relatively little known players and directors. It specializes in revivals, and when it does use well-known people, it is usually at a low salary. Between Broadway and Off-Broadway one has had the choice at various times this season of revivals of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Sophocles, Congreve, Strindberg, Noel Coward, Anouilh, Brecht, Shaw, Turgenev,

and Chekov. New plays have included productions from Tennessee Williams and Thornton Wilder. There are other good playwrights also represented on Broadway with new plays this season, but another major problem is that Broadway is becoming more interested in spectacle, to attract the tourist, than in serious drama.

The musical is becoming a major American contribution to world theatre. The West End of London imports the successful American musical, and recently a musical successfully invaded Vienna, stronghold of opera and operetta. An enormously successful musical adaption of Shaw's *Pygmalion* called *My Fair Lady* opened in New York this Spring. There is no denying that it is wonderful entertain-

ment: Rex Harrison as Professor Higgins, a young British actress named Julie Harris as Eliza Doolittle, and Stanley Holloway as Alfred Doolittle sing and dance in this production in which nothing has been spared; the lavish costumes, for example, have been designed by Cecil Beaton. It cost an enormous amount to stage; but then it is booked months in advance. Any new play is a very expensive item in this country; the trend seems to be either to sink or to swim, to invest heavily and seek a large return. The result is that lavish productions like *My Fair Lady* are crowding out the serious drama in what still remains the heart of American drama. It can only be hoped that this trend will decrease in the future.

Elizabeth Arden

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By the Lamplight

BY N. V. HALDANKAR

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ON



FILM



A scene from SATYAJIT ROY's *Pather Panchali* (Ballad of the Pathway) which brings a new note of poetic realism to the Indian cinema. It won the prize for 'the most human document' at the Cannes film festival this year. *Pather Panchali* was reviewed in QUEST Vol. 1, No. 4.
(Photograph by kind courtesy of SATYAJIT ROY)



JAMES T. FARRELL, noted short story writer and novelist, President of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom now in India on a short visit.

JAMES T. FARRELL

FROM the very beginning of his literary career, James T. Farrell has been interested as much in public causes as in creative writing. One of his professors at the University of Chicago recalls that his first acquaintance with the author was through a letter Farrell wrote to the college newspaper. It was a protest against the exclusion of coloured students by the dramatic club from plays with negro characters.

Farrell is still protesting against such practices, against racial and political prejudices, social pressures, the tyranny of the totalitarian state, the frequent betrayals of human rights in democratic societies, encroachments on the freedom of the individual by powerful organized interests. Yet, his activities as a public figure, which have led him to his present position as President of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, did not prevent him from becoming a prolific writer. In his novels and short stories he set himself the task of presenting 'a simple and broad picture of men and things', in the words of Emile Zola whose naturalistic technique he greatly admired.

It is a commonly held opinion, which I share, that Farrell's best work is contained in the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy and three volumes of short stories, *Calico Shoes*, *Guilotine Party* and *Can All This Grandeur Perish*. Subsequent work, though generally

interesting, shows little development of style or range of feeling. Its impact is cumulative reinforcing the impression of Farrell's fidelity to his method and his intimate knowledge of certain aspects of American life. These appear devastating because he treats them in isolation, but there is no distortion of perspectives.

Farrell uses as a rule exceedingly simple situations which he defines sharply without defining deeply. There is no intention to provide depth but the surface analysis is complete. He is often almost unbearably painful in his description of the crudeness and horror of the material observed. He makes no comment, draws out no moral. The denunciation is obvious because the description is clear. The absence of subtlety and richness in his fiction has affected his reputation as a writer, throwing an unfavourable light, in particular, on his style—deliberately flat and pedestrian, enormously simplified, the ordinary unliterary language of bars and beaches, streets and brothels. But it is wrong to blame Farrell for not giving us what he does not pretend to offer, when it is so easy to praise him for what he does. Farrell is the least pretentious of writers.

The *Studs Lonigan* trilogy is in an old and honourable literary tradition. It describes in detail the growth of a boy in the neighbourhood of Chicago. Farrell's sym-

pathetic awareness of adolescent agonies is communicated through a narrative episodic structure with the flavour of a case history, a prolonged journalistic report and a confessional account. There is none of the poetic, literary working over of emotional and intellectual texture which characterises *The Portrait of The Artist As A Young Man*. Joyce was concerned fundamentally with describing the development of a sensibility. Farrell was occupied with the requirements of a social document in the form of fiction. That form held its own even in the most thorough-going sociological passages which give a masterly picture of boys' gang life in the streets of an industrial city.

In *Studs Lonigan* we see the life of the atomised individual on the lower reaches of the social register, deprived of the essential moral moorings of family and traditional institutions. Farrell's literary creed is best exemplified in his attitude to the growth of the young character he created, not depicted in accordance with the author's moral preconceptions but revealed or exposed as driven by necessity, by heredity, environment and upbringing, by the state of the social organism whose influence is ultimately final and overwhelming.

Studs is one of the eternal characters of fiction because he is a universal type shaped by a specific cultural situation. In his squalid career of meaningless, undisciplined experience he symbolises the tragedy of the individual in a modern urban society, a society which is not adjusted to its mechanised setting which has failed to develop a wise way of life. It is shown dissipating itself in work and entertainment both expressed as a fever or madness, the former to propitiate the bitch goddess success, the latter to have 'a good time.'

The titles and contents of some of Farrell's short stories provide a clue to his

ironic intention, which makes his work, as it has been called 'a ferocious indictment of American life.' *Looking 'Em Over* describes the way in which a young man spends his week-end strolling along the beach watching scantily clad females with or without their male companions. His only indulgence, however, is in an orgy of sexual fantasy. *Well, That's That* summarises the attitude of a petrol station attendant who cheats a poverty stricken girl into allowing him to seduce her, then refuses to keep his promise of taking the magazine subscriptions she is selling. *Meet The Girls* is a portrait of female frustration expressed through hard drinking. *The Benefits of American Life* tells of a marathon dancing contest in which the competitors, hoping to win cash prizes and become celebrities, ruin their health. As the dancing goes on for days the boys and girls lose control over their natural functions and drag themselves over the floor with streaks of water flowing down their legs. A typically modern attitude is summed up in *A Hell of a Good Time*. The most ambitious study is *Seventeen* which portrays a girl consumed by curiosity about sex and maddened into premature and reckless experiment by her sophisticated, cynical and knowledgeable friend.

In addition to his fiction, Farrell has published *A Note On Literary Criticism* and *The League of Frightened Philistines*. Both are partly directed against the Marxist and other dogmatic criteria for evaluating literature and art. The former gives an excellent account of Farrell's attitude to his own creative writing. Both are valuable because they show that Farrell is very much at home in the world of contemporary ideas and events.

It is to be hoped that during Farrell's short stay in this country, a number of Indian writers will find an opportunity of meeting him.

N.E.

SOME BUDDHIST IDEAS

THE revival of interest in Buddhism on the occasion of the 2,500th anniversary of its founder's birth, is a truly remarkable phenomenon in the modern world. It cannot but exercise a beneficial influence on the climate of opinion everywhere. In this country there are few followers of the Buddhist faith but many undoubtedly feel some kinship with its spirit. To them the anniversary provides an opportunity to study or renew their acquaintance with the basic Buddhist texts, selections from which are now easily available. Our only object in publishing the short extracts which follow is to urge the necessity of this.

'Dhamma has been taught by me without making a distinction between esoteric and exoteric. For the Tathagatha has not the closed fist of a teacher in respect of mental states.' Thus a statement from the Digha-nikaya. Nevertheless, the difference between the popular conception of Buddhism and the original doctrine together with its various historical modifications and transformations, is very great. Popular feeling merely associates the Buddha with the supreme virtues and concentrates on that part of his preaching which emphasises ethical notions. The precise nature of the enlightenment which the Buddha experienced is not at all clearly grasped by it.

From the non-Buddhist, non-sectarian point of view, this may be quite in order. Our selections too are basically guided by the same feeling. But obviously the Buddhist doctrine is likely to be somewhat reduced in appeal if it is sharply defined and isolated from moral exhortation. It becomes universal by being considered metaphorically and by the human tendency to believe that what one does not like does not exist. For instance, what did the

Buddha mean by saying that he was concerned with 'ill and the stopping of ill?' This is interpreted to imply that the Buddha wished to reduce human suffering by explaining its causes, that he wanted to expose the evil tendencies in Man and show how they could be cured. In fact the Buddha's statement is essentially a metaphysical dogma. What the Buddha wishes to put an end to is the cycle of births and deaths by which the individual is bound. Ill is defined as 'birth again and again'.

In the Samyutta-nikaya it is said: 'The Buddha taught Dhamma, for overpassing birth, for getting rid of all suffering'. And what is suffering? It arises from 'the demands of sense-experience.'

No wonder a recent anthology of Buddhist writings deals first with the Samgha, the Monastic Order or Community. 'Beginning as monks and nuns in a regulated 'homeless life' they are disciplined from without and within by the authoritative rules and sanctions of the Samgha

The spiritual aspirant is led away from 'home into homelessness'. The most poignant passages in Buddhist texts are those in which this demand is resisted. 'Revered sir, when I left my home a Sakyan girl, the fairest in the land, with hair half-combed looked back at me and said: "May you soon be back again, young master". Revered sir, as I am always thinking of that, I have no zest for the Brahma-faring, can't endure it, and, throwing off the training, will return to the low life.'

Not less poignant, perhaps is the equally human desire to turn away from the 'Sakyan girl', from the eternal poetry of her 'hair half-combed' and the 'low life' in search of the unknown or unknowable. That is one vital aspect of the drama of Buddhism.

THE GREAT REFUSAL

'The religious life, Malunkyaputta, does not depend on the dogma that the world is eternal; nor does the religious life, Malunkyaputta, depend on the dogma that the world is not eternal. Whether the dogma obtain, Malunkyaputta, that the world is eternal, or that the world is not eternal, there still remain birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair, for the extinction of which in the present life I am prescribing

'Accordingly, Malunkyaputta, bear always in mind what it is that I have not explained, and what it is that I have explained. And what, Malunkyaputta, have I not explained? I have not explained, Malunkyaputta, that the world is eternal; I have not explained that the world is not eternal; I have not explained that the world is finite; I have not explained that the world is infinite; I have not explained that the soul and the body are identical; I have not explained that the soul is one thing and the body another; I have not explained that the saint does not exist after death; I have not explained that the saint both exists and does not exist after death; I have not explained that the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death. And why, Malunkyaputta, have I not explained this? Because, Malunkyaputta, this profits not, nor has to do with the fundamentals of religion, nor tends to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, the supernatural faculties, supreme wisdom, and Nirvana; therefore have I not explained it?

Questions Not Tending to Edification.

THE BASIC EXHORTATION

'Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Rely on yourselves, and do not rely on external help.

'Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Seek salvation alone in the truth. Look not for assistance to any one besides yourselves.

'And how, Ananda, can a brother be a lamp unto himself, rely on himself only and not on any external help holding fast to the truth as his lamp and seeking salvation in the truth alone, looking not for assistance to any one besides himself?

'Herein, O Ananda, let a brother, as he dwells in the body, so regard the body that he, being strenuous, thoughtful, and mindful, may, whilst in the world, overcome the grief which arises from the sensations.

'And so, also, when he thinks, or reasons, or feels, let him so regard his thought that being strenuous, thoughtful, and mindful he may, whilst in the world, overcome the grief which arises from the craving due to ideas, or to reasoning or to feeling.

'Those who, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp unto themselves, relying upon themselves only and not relying upon any external help, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, and seeking their salvation in the truth alone, shall not look for assistance to any one besides themselves, it is they, Ananda, among my bhikshus, who shall reach the very topmost height! But they must be anxious to learn

Buddha's Farewell Address

The Following Quotations are from the *Dhammapada*.

THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me'—in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.

'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me'—in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.

For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love—this is an eternal law.

The Twin Verses.

THE INTELLECTUAL PROBLEM

As a fletcher makes straight his arrow, a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought, which is difficult to guard, difficult to hold back.

As a fish taken from his watery home and thrown on the dry ground, our thought trembles allover in order to escape the dominion of Mara, the tempter.

It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it lists; a tamed mind brings happiness.

Let the wise man guard his thoughts, for they are difficult to perceive, very subtle, and they rush wherever they list; thoughts well-guarded bring happiness.

Those who bridle their mind, which travels far, moves about alone, is incorporeal, and hides in the chamber of the heart, will be free from the bonds of Mara, the tempter.

Thought

THE WAY OF THE WISE

If a traveller does not meet with one who is his better, or his equal, let him firmly keep to his solitary journey; there is no companionship with a fool.

'These sons belong to me, and this wealth belongs to me'—with such thoughts a fool is tormented. He himself does not belong to himself; how much less sons and wealth?

The fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least so far. But a fool who thinks himself wise, he is called a fool indeed.

If a fool be associated with a wise man even all his life, he will perceive the truth as little as a spoon perceives the taste of soup.

If an intelligent man be associated for one minute only with a wise man; he will soon perceive the truth, as the tongue perceives the taste of soup.

The Fool.

If you see a man who shows you what is to be avoided, who administers reproofs, and is intelligent, follow that wise man as you would one who reveals hidden treasures; it will be better, not worse, for him who follows him.

Let him admonish, let him teach, let him forbid what is improper!—he will be beloved of the good; by the bad he will be hated. Well-makers lead the water wherever they like; fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; wise people fashion themselves.

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people waver not amidst blame and praise.

Wise people, after they have listened to the laws, become serene, like a deep, smooth, and still lake.

The Wise Man.

EVIL

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, 'It will not come nigh unto me.' Even by the falling of water drops a water pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little.

Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, 'It will not come nigh unto me.' Even by the falling of water drops a water pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good; even if he gather little by little.

Evil.

THE SELF

Let each man first direct himself to what is proper, then let him teach others; thus a wise man will not suffer.

If a man makes himself as he teaches others to be, then, being himself well-subdued, he may subdue others; for one's own self is difficult to subdue.

Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well-subdued, a man finds a lord such as few can find.

The evil done by one's self, born of one's self, begotten by one's self, crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks even a precious stone

The foolish man who scorns the instruction of the saintly, of the elect (*ariya*), of the virtuous, and follows a false doctrine—he bears fruit to his own destruction, like the fruits of the *Katthaka* reed. (A reed which dies when it has borne fruit, or is at once cut down for the sake of its fruit.)

By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone; by one's self one is purified. The pure and the impure stand and fall by themselves; no one can purify another.

Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great; let a man after he has discerned his own duty, be faithful to his duty.

The Self.

DETACHMENT

He who gives himself to vanity, and does not give himself to meditation, forgetting the real aim of life and grasping at pleasure, will in time envy him who has exerted himself in meditation.

Let no man ever cling to what is pleasant, or to what is unpleasant. Not to see what is pleasant is pain, and it is pain to see what is unpleasant.

Let, therefore, no man be attached to anything; loss of the beloved is evil. Those who are attached to nothing, and hate nothing, have no fetters.

From pleasure comes grief, from pleasure comes fear; he who is free from pleasure knows neither grief nor fear.

From affection comes grief, from affection comes fear; he who is free from affection knows neither grief nor fear.

From lust comes grief, from lust comes fear; he who is free from lust knows neither grief nor fear.

From desire comes grief, from desire comes fear; he who is free from desire knows neither grief nor fear.

From craving comes grief, from craving comes fear; he who is free from craving knows neither grief nor fear.

He who possesses virtue and intelligence, who is just, speaks the truth, and does his own business, him the world will hold dear.

He in whom a desire for the Ineffable has sprung up, who in his mind is satisfied, and whose thoughts are not bewildered by desires, he is called one who is headed up-stream.

Kinsmen, friends, and lovers, salute a man who has been long away and returns safe from afar.

In like manner, his good works receive him who has done good and has gone from this world to the other—as kinsmen receive a friend on his return.

Pleasure.

IF THE OCCASION ARISES

If the occasion arises, friends are pleasant; enjoyment is pleasant, whatever be the cause; a good deed is pleasant in the hour of death; the giving up of all grief is pleasant.

Pleasant in the world is the state of a mother, pleasant the state of a father, pleasant the state of an ascetic, pleasant the state of a brahmana.

Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age, pleasant is a faith firmly rooted; pleasant is attainment of intelligence, pleasant is avoiding of sins.

The Elephant.

RESTRAINT

Restraint in the eye is good, good is restraint in the ear; in the nose restraint is good, good is restraint in the tongue.

In the body restraint is good, good is restraint in speech; in thought restraint is good, good is restraint in all things. A bhikshu, restrained in all things, is freed from all pain.

He who controls his hand, he who controls his feet, he who controls his speech, he who is well-controlled, he who delights inwardly, who is collected, who is solitary and content, him they call a bhikshu. Thirst.

A SEMINAR IN POONA

THE developments in Maharashtra during the last six months have once again revealed the gulf which separates the intellectual from the man of affairs. The emergence of Tilak, from a background of effete Liberalism, as the undisputed leader of nationalist India confirmed the artificial antithesis between thought and action, so characteristic of the Indian traditions. Tilak at least had a love of scholarship and sometimes yearned for the day when, free from the hurly-burly of politics, he would be able to pursue his studies in Vedic civilization. Gandhiji believed in learning from the book of life, which to him was a life of simple virtue romantically associated with faith in God and the economics of *charkha*. Both Tilak and Gandhi were men of action, who had little patience with fine hair-splitting and the trustful attitude of the Liberals towards the British rulers. Political action on a mass scale demanded that the issues facing the country be simplified to their bare essentials. One result of this over-simplification was to complete the quarantine of the intellectual.

It is no use blaming the politician alone. The intellectual on his part rarely showed any concern with life in the raw. True to the Indian tradition, the modern *Rishi* preferred to confine himself to the safety of his hermitage. Whether he should have shared the passions and joined the movements of his age is a moot point. Julien Benda would say, 'generally, no', and perhaps he would be right. But there was nothing to prevent him from taking note of the forces released by the new-born nationalist sentiment, studying their implications and taking up a definite stand on the intellectual plane even if it meant courting government wrath or public ridicule. His refusal to do so cost the intellectual the confidence of the common man

and brought him in contempt of the politician.

That such an estrangement between the intellectual and the statesman may end in disaster has been amply demonstrated in recent times. The effort of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom to bring together leading intellectuals and thinking politicians of Maharashtra in a Seminar for an uninhibited exchange of thought is, therefore, of pioneering significance. The response it evoked was a testimony to the birth of a new and welcome trend in Maharashtra.

The Seminar, which met on Saturday and Sunday, the 5th and 6th of May, for seven hours on each day was attended by eminent leaders of thought and action in Maharashtra. Professor D. R. Gadgil addressed it on Saturday, pleading for tolerance and modest ambition in our planning for the future. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, perhaps the oldest Liberal in the country, gave on Sunday a ringing exposition of the Liberal outlook on life.

The subjects chosen for the seminar—'The Pattern of Development in the New Maharashtra' and 'The Liberal Heritage in Maharashtra'—were, as Prof. M. P. Mangudkar, the Secretary of the Poona Group of the ICCF, pointed out, of vital importance to the growth of democracy and the burgeoning of a renaissance movement in Maharashtra. The first subject concerned the problems of casteism, of the integration of Vidarbha and Marathawada with Central Maharashtra, and the role of the middle class in solving these problems along democratic lines. The heritage of Maharashtra Liberalism was to be examined with a view to assessing its relevance to the building up of a strong renaissance movement in Maharashtra.

On the first day the seminar discussed 'The Pattern of Development in the New

Maharashtra', with Tarkateertha Laxman Shastri Joshi in the chair. In his paper read at the seminar Prof. D. A. Dabholkar pointed out that the mere transfer of power from the hands of one community to another, unaccompanied by its diffusion among the mass of people, would be a fake solution of the problem of casteism. Dr. N. R. Deshpande said that casteism had assumed a more acute form since Independence, probably because our national movement was essentially negative and lacked a positive, ideological content. Mr. K. N. Phadke, a dissident Marxist (sic) maintained that political and economic equality by itself was not enough to eradicate casteism. He emphasized, and here he was supported by Professor G. B. Sardar, the need of assuaging the 'cultural hunger' of the non-Brahmin majority. Caste, he said, defied orthodox Marxian analysis.

There was practically no discussion on the difficulties and method of integrating the three component regions of the new Maharashtra—a significant reminder of how little we know of our own problems!

The entire discussion on casteism seemed to be characterized by a sense of guilt on the part of the participants. Almost everyone admonished the Brahmins to accept with good grace, and in a spirit of charity and understanding, the inevitable shift in the centre of power in Maharashtra. After some time, of course, everything would be alright; but for some years to come, the culturally advanced community must be prepared to pay the price of its past. One wishes that at least a few of the speakers were able to rise above the distinctions of *Brahmin* and *non-Brahmin*, and proclaim that now, in the second half of the twentieth century, it was no longer necessary or even permissible to visit the 'sins' of the parents on their children up to the seventh generation. Nor did anyone suggest how the pains of this transition could be mitigated by planned social effort.

For 'historical process', when the phrase is used with a teleological or deterministic shade of meaning, is often merely a euphemism for the blind play of popular passions and prejudices. And if history is not at all amenable to intelligent human direction, what purpose would analysis and discussion serve?

On Sunday the discussion was opened, with Professor S. V. Kogekar in the chair, by Professor Mangudkar who gave an exposition of the thoughts of Jyotiba Phule, Lokahitwadi, Agarkar and others. He was followed by Mr. Sudarshan Desai, who defined Liberalism as consisting in 'an unself-consciously tolerant attitude of one individual or group towards another, particularly having different status, opinions or cultural and educational backgrounds.' He did not feel that Liberals in Maharashtra had left any political heritage. Gokhale's heritage, he suggested, was to be found in the work of institutions like the Servants of India Society and the Deccan Education Society. Prof. G. P. Pradhan joined Mr. Desai in condemning Liberalism in Maharashtra as escapism of the respectable minority. Rao-saheb Patwardhan suggested that perhaps the religiously oriented Liberalism of Maharashtrian saints could be put to secular ends. Laxman Shastri Joshi pointed out that Liberal values had yet to take root in our soil, as was evidenced by the extreme intolerance with which dissenters were treated in our society. In a vigorous intervention Mr. M. R. Masani pointed out that it was wrong to think that Liberalism was dead. Its tradition, he said, was living and it was embodied in Europe in such organisations as the Social Democratic Parties and the trade unions.

In his summing up, Prof. Kogekar asserted that Liberalism did have a substantive content. He raised an important question concerning the limitations of Liberalism. Since Liberalism, he said, must rely on rational persuasion alone, how

should a Liberal behave when confronted by an agency which does not believe in liberal values? He himself, he confessed, had no cut and dried answer to this question.

In spite of the Chairman's suggestion at an early stage of the debate, hardly any speaker touched on the future of liberal values. And yet this aspect of the subject was perhaps the most relevant to the contemporary situation. Historically, Liberalism has flourished only in periods characterized by a general acceptance of the prevalent social order. Looked at that way, we in India may reasonably hope for an expanding economy and freedom from internal disturbances. But large-scale planning has introduced a new factor in our political life, which democrats of an earlier age did not have to reckon with. There is a danger that the very pace of economic development may jeopardize

freedom by dragooning the individual to the will of the welfare state. The only safeguard, apart from an increased awareness of democratic values on the part of the common man, would appear to be in the separation of economic and political powers at all levels in the social machinery. This, with decentralization and a greater emphasis on co-operative rather than state-directed effort, would be some guarantee that in the act of earning his bread man will not lose his soul.

The seminar was not intended to find solutions. It was an attempt to get together the leaders of thought and action in Maharashtra into a common discussion. That attempt it must be said succeeded beyond expectation, for which credit must be given to the two energetic and enterprising Secretaries of the Poona Group, Prof. Mangudkar and Mangrulkar.

A. B. SHAH

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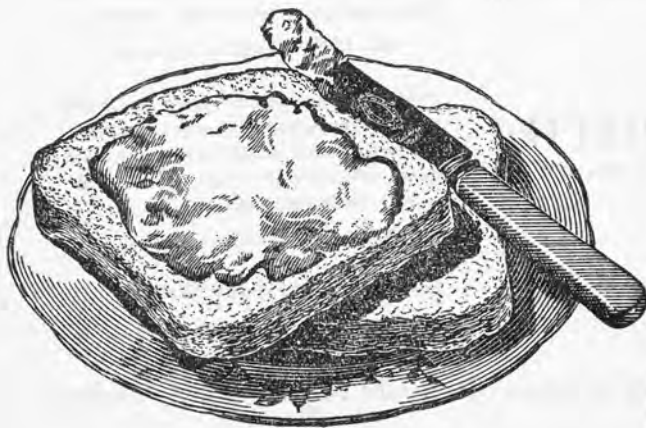
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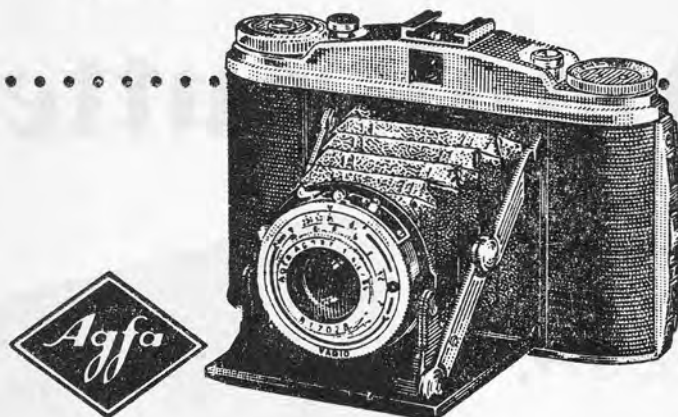
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Sahitya Sangh Festival

THIS year the Mumbai Marathi Sahitya Sangh truly comes of age. Every year it has been organizing a drama festival in its newly acquired, spacious open-air theatre. Money for furthering its activities was the main hurdle, and the efforts of the late Dr. A. N. Bhalerao were all the while directed towards crossing it. Twelve years have passed since the Sangh, under his leadership, staged its first festival. Notable productions undertaken by the Drama Branch of the Sangh include translations from Shakespeare, Maeterlinck, Barrie and Maugham. Among its successes may be counted a breezy rendering of Gogol's *The Government Inspector* done by Prof. P. L. Deshpande with a topical Indian background. Some years ago, the Sangh engaged the services of the British director, Herbert Marshall, to produce a Marathi *Macbeth* on a semi-Shakespearean stage. Its most recent laurels were won on account of two of its finest productions: Khadilkar's *Bhau-bandki* and Chintamani Y. Marathe's musical play *Honaji Bala*. Both these were

impeccable in presentation, especially so in decor and costumes.

The festival that ended in the last week of April presented mixed fare. The Barrie translation—a perfect transformation by Prof. Anant Kanekar—was revived, rather indifferently, after the lapse of some years. Among the musicals, there was Kolhatkar's *Vadhu-Pareeksha*, a revival out of courtesy to the late humorist who was, in a way, Khadilkar's rival. Whereas Khadilkar picked up the undertones of Shakespearean tragedy and chiselled them into the volatile words of his political and mythological plays, Kolhatkar drew inspiration from the great poet's extremely invloved and jerky early comedies. The result, even as presented by such a bright singer-actor as Bhalchandra Pendharkar, was hardly bearable on a hot, breezeless night. *Shaha-Shivaji* by Tipnis, based on the Maratha ruler's early life, was preferable, popularised to some extent as it was by the quality of the singing. Shivaji was one of the singing characters!

Khadilkar's *Draupadi*, produced by Durgabai Khote, was one of the main attractions. The famous film star of Master

Vinayak's comedies, Meenaxi, played the title role. She has improved a great deal both in her singing and her acting, and the role fitted her perfectly. The others, including a veteran like Nana Phatak, in the role of the villain Shakuni, appeared to be more or less amateurish by comparison. The episodes of the gambler and his two wives (typical this of Khadilkar's embarrassing subplots) as well as of Draupadi's *Vastraharan* were well-acted. In the second the lighting was first-rate, though part of the illusion did not quite come off.

Chonkar as Duryodhan sang well and acted with some force. But it is always a funny sight when actors prowl on the stage with weapons that are meant to be carried by warriors with some dignity. The first act was ruined by lapses such as these. At one stage a terribly effeminate-looking Arjuna, who did not have a speaking part, brought down the house as soon he entered the stage with a sheepish smile on his face!

Among the prose plays, a historical produced by a company of Poona intellectuals was a big bore. Another play, *Chchapeel Sansar*, a comedy about a housewife who rules her husband with a blind faith in the printed word, went well with the audience. Anant Vartak and Daji Bhatawadekar respectively as an amateur detective and the docile husband, were at the top of their form. If properly cut, this comedy would have been much more pleasurable. The females in the cast were not quite upto the mark, and the producer, Damu Kenkare, playing a devilish journalist—a stock character in Marathi comedies—failed to reach his usual standard as a comedian.

The play that will really be the talk of the town is *Lokancha Raja*. This is C. Y. Marathe's second play. Marathe has a heaven sent gift for writing dialogue. This play is based on a faded chapter in the history of the Kolhapur state. With an overtly current meaning, the play was just the type of demagogic treatment that the pro-

tagonists of Samyukta Maharashtra could appreciate. All the patriotic references were wildly cheered. While everything hints at this play gaining ground, it must be dispassionately noted that words alone can never make a play. Marathe's plays are usually very badly constructed (he has written only two). He has little sense of a dramatic climax or of a rounded plot. Withal, the settings were poorly conceived by D. G. Godse. The only memorable touch lay in covering the Rajah's furniture with white cloth in a particularly dismal scene. What was laudable here was the presence of the minimum of disparity in the acting levels.

With the income gained from these yearly festivals, the Sangh is going to build a permanent structure on its present site. This will be used as a theatre-cum-centre of Marathi culture. One wishes this plan every success.

K. G. P.

Folk Dances Of India

POPPIES bloom scarlet and lush in tropic fields, but pale to ice-cold fragile blue in Himalayan heights. The sea eddies in, in unending waves, leaving as it ebbs symmetric designs upon the sands; but rushing mountain streams tear rocks to rough jagged crags, that jut out along uneven banks. The pulse, the rhythm, the sap of Earth finds expression in Nature; and primitive man, his expression in the same rhythm, pulse, colour and force as the Earth about him.

Nowhere is this more clearly divined than in the folk-art, and dancing of those few people in tribal areas, or distant mountain villages. The pink and white sharp-featured peasants from Himachal sing in a vague minor key, a somewhat wistful, monotonous chant, with bland remote faces. The big horn echoes through valley and hill. With simple rustic unselfconscious-

ness, men and women grasp each other firmly round the waist (as indeed do all the more primitive groups) in the close need of community warmth, as they move in rhythmic firm steps around the drummers. It matters not whether they sing of a naughty Sadhu, who, found flirting with the village belles, is run out of the village by irate 'jawans', or of the coming of a new era, or in praise of a national leader. The wistful tone, the bland expression, the rhythmic movements remain the same, for these express a deeper need than the transient incident of the moment. They are the embodiment and expression of Nature about them: the remote snowpeaks, the echoing water-fall, and rare, pure, bland air. How marked a contrast is the dark virility of the war-like Barlingas of Hazaribagh, and the quick-tempoed pulsating beat of the dance of the Bison-horned Marias.

But in an expanding universe, our small world shrinks rapidly, and modern civilisation leaves few corners of hill or forest, desert or plateau untouched. 'Primitive art' in its pure form is seldom found. The sophistication of cities seeps into villages, while village folk-dancing is brought to the Metropolis under arc lamps and aided by microphones, mounted upon a huge raised platform with an enormous back-drop of a grey Stupa, (spiritual symbol of our country, and a seeming necessity to the fostering of 'culture', it would appear!) over-shadowing and dwarfing the already microscopic figures upon the stage.

Yet were it not for the courage, enthusiasm and undoubted good efforts of the I.N.T. the citizens of Bombay would be the poorer for the rare experience of seeing some of the many varied and beautiful folk-dances of our country. Few of the troupes were 'authentic folk dancers', and personally one felt that such items as the sophisticated Garba Ras and Sindhi dances by local teams could have been

wisely eliminated. The quality of many others too was uneven as far as 'authenticity' was concerned. The fascinating Tanjore Horse Dancers, who perform on short stilts with elaborate wooden frames about them, though competent dancers, were professionals from an institute, where they had, of course imbibed and adopted such stage and screen tricks, as Hollywood make-up, and the use of a clarinet playing film tunes. It was the tact of the organisers that finally led them to change to South Indian music played on the Nagaswaram! The inclusion of an atrociously self-conscious and precious child prodigy was of course deplored by all. But not all these sophisticated tricks could mar the excellence of their clown, who also gave an exhilarating and life-like Zebra number.

The impatient crowd, who with urban intolerance found the repetitive and rhythmic sameness of such authentic dancers as the Mahasus of Himachal and the excellent Hallis of Udvada (their piper played an extraordinary wood-wind made of palm-leaf and dried pumpkin with remarkable control) difficult to endure, succumbed with enthusiasm to the slick and slightly vulgarised Bhangra of the Pepsu troupe. This Punjabi dance is full of lusty vigour, rough earthy humour, and healthy abandon. The Pepsu folk-dancers however, having performed to large audiences before (the leaders had also been to China with a cultural delegation) definitely played to the gallery. Their performance was as though a satire on themselves; (unconscious here, I am sure!); movement and mime were distorted, humour turned to farce, and to crown it all, the 'Tehmats' they wore, instead of being the traditional bold blue and Indian pink checks were of crepe-de-chine, sequined and embroidered! But the stage sense, showmanship, and awareness of audience-reaction was astute, and won them loud acclaim.

The Lambadis, Gypsy-women from Hyderabad (Deccan) were unspoilt and delightful. They had left their village for the first time, and most of them carried the youngest addition to the family firmly tucked under one arm. Back-stage was very like a crèche, and one must congratulate the workers who calmly undertook baby-sitting as one of their routine green-room chores. The Lambadis wore yellow and red 'ghagras', heavy silver bracelets, bangles and rings, with which they produced the rhythms they danced to, and after a general 'community number' as they formed a semi-circle, in groups of four, three, two, and finally one, the 'star nartaki' broke away to do complicated and intricate steps. This dance had, alas, to be broken up into two items, as it was considered too long for a single performance. In the mutilated form the whole pattern was of course distorted, and personally I was glad to have seen it done as a whole.

Sea-pattern and boat-movement were apparent in the colourful dances done by the Rajkot Sarvodayas. The excellent sense of discipline, exquisite timing, plus the strong sense of theatre and sweet deep voice of their leader, showed the amount of effort, practice and training that had gone into the making of these dances. I thoroughly enjoyed the little 'tumbling-boys' with their small drumkins who came in first. The complicated dandia-ras, although typically 'folk', was done by what was a properly organized and trained troupe.

The lyrical beauty of the Rajasthan 'Ghumar' folk-song is well-known. Its melody lingers, persists and haunts, and the dancers were graceful and pretty. Yet here again the sophistication of cities, market-places, streets and courtyards mingle. The dance is no longer a spontaneous community expression—it is already taking on a professional touch—done by special castes (mirahsis and such like) for an objective audience of spectators who no

longer participate. Street-singers, acrobats and clowns now make their appearance, and in the foot-work one glimpses distorted elementary 'Kathak'.

The Bommalattam of Kumbakonam—a puppet dance, lost much of its charm, being drowned in the vast sea of space. But even this disadvantage could not entirely rob it of its delightfully humorous touches (such as the dancer mopping her brow after a strenuous Tillana) and the mastery of the Master Puppeteer, who not only controlled the movements with head and hands, but also provided the foot-work himself.

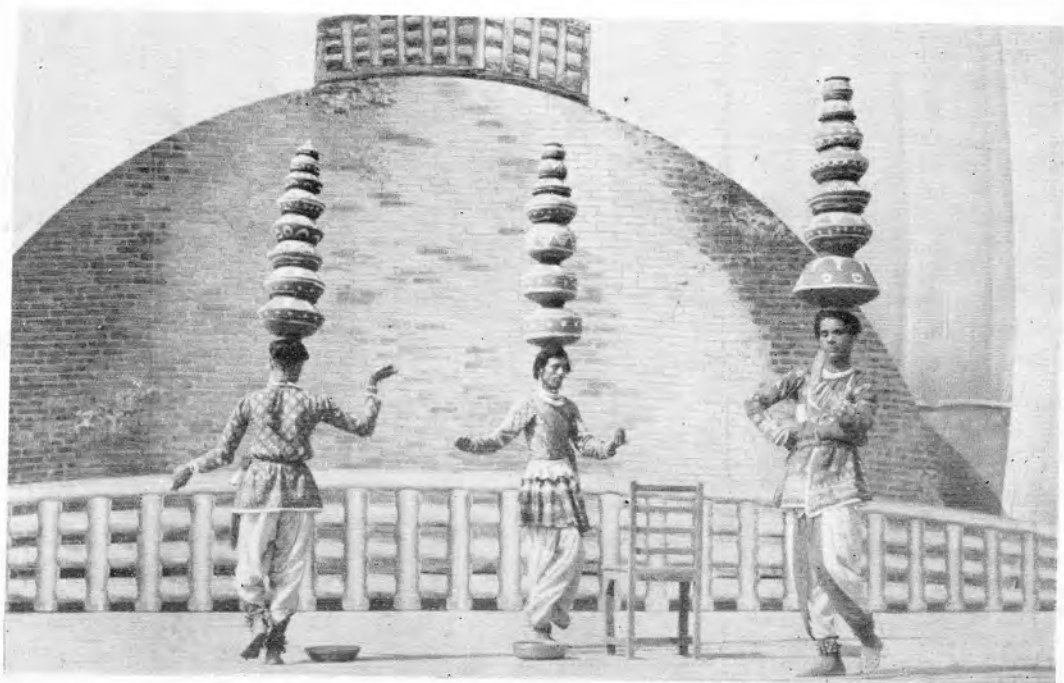
Although one must praise I.N.T. for the herculean effort they made in getting together so many different troupes, and organizing such an undertaking—one cannot help feeling that such an artificial setting robs folk-dancing of its very life and essence. How this can be avoided is a problem. By its very nature folk-dancing can only really be enjoyed if it is a general rejoicing, a community experience, a spontaneous expression. Under any conditions other than the village mela at Dussehra, the approach of Basant, or the coming of Sawan it is bound to be strained and mechanical. To be 'stageworthy' it must further be 'groomed' and coaxed into polished, disciplined, well produced items. It can enrich our ballet and become part of the repertoire of professional dancers. Documentary films can capture its variety and vigour. As I mentioned before Sarvodaya workers can make it part of their rural recreational activity. Colleges and schools can learn folk-dancing as a pleasant change from exercises and drill.

To appreciate it fully however, as part of burgeoning Earth, the discriminating must not expect folk-dancing to come to them, they must go out and discover it in its own setting before it disappears forever.

UMA ANAND,



• FOLK-DANCERS FROM MADHYA PRADESH



FOLK-DANCERS FROM RAJASTHAN



LAURENCE LeGUAY



LOU BERNSTEIN

... and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes
 and then he asked me would I yes ...
 and first I put my arms around him yes
 and drew him down to me so he could feel by breasts all perfume yes
 and his heart was going like mad
 and yes I said yes I will Yes.

JAMES JOYCE

We two form a multitude



ALFRED EISENSTAEDT

From *The Family of Man*—a photographic exhibition which opens for three weeks on June 18 at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay.

book reviews

WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA

by R. K. Narayan

THE MAKING OF A POEM

by Stephen Spender

THE POLITICAL ROLE OF WOMEN

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SIRS EL LAYYAN

(Unesco)

THE FLOATING WORLD

by James Michener

ONE FRONT ACROSS THE WORLD

by Douglas Hyde

CULTURAL FREEDOM IN ASIA

edited by Herbert Passin

WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA by R. K. Narayan (Methuen 9s. 6d.)

WHEN R. K. Narayan's first novel, *Swami and Friends*, was published in 1935, it proved to be a departure from much of conventional Indian fiction. In its fidelity to normal occurrence, its gentle humour and pathos, more implicit than explicit, and its complete objectivity, nothing like this had ever been written before. This novel held out a promise which was in a large measure fulfilled by the later novels of Narayan, though there were occasional lapses. It promised competence, for one thing, a refreshing freedom from sentimentality, and true narrative form instead of disguised social or political polemic.

Narayan's material is the life of Malgudi, a small town in South India, which has become a miniature world in itself, representative of the South Indian way of life. With successive works, his prestige as a writer has steadily risen, and now, with

Raja Rao having long ago subsided into silence and Anand having unfortunately made over his wonderful gifts to propaganda, he stands clearly in the forefront of Indian novelists writing in English.

Waiting for the Mahatma, his seventh novel, appearing at a time when more Indians than ever before are writing novels in English, has demonstrated that its author can still hold his own among the newcomers. Yet, when one looks to it for the successor of *Mr. Sampath* and *The Financial Expert*, one is disappointed. *Waiting for the Mahatma* is a slight departure from the 'Malgudi' tradition in that its theme concerns the loves of Sriram and Bharati. Romantic love, if the term could be permitted with regard to one so unromantic as Sriram, is a theme from which Narayan has scrupulously kept away, for the simple reason that it does not ring true of Malgudi. (In *The Bachelor of Arts* it is treated playfully as a youthful aberration). Here the

perspective is accordingly widened; the location is still largely Malgudi, but there is also the Independence Movement forming a background to the novel, national aspirations, a trip to Delhi, and Bharati and the Mahatma.

The story, though in the third person, is seen from the viewpoint of Sriram, a spoilt and immature young man, whose only occupation from childhood seems to have been sitting on the window-sill of his house and gazing at the passers-by in the street. The narrative proceeds smoothly till Sriram joins the Mahatma's group in the hope that it will bring him closer to Bharati. Soon, however, they are separated when all the Congress workers are jailed by the Government.

From that point on, the narrative begins merely to jog along. Sriram somehow escapes arrest and is drawn through various vicissitudes before being reunited with Bharati at the end of the book. These vicissitudes are in themselves excellently described. They are amusing and, above all, they have the ring of authenticity which is characteristic of Narayan at his best. But they become merely a chronicle of Sriram's adventures. Sriram, who like the chameleon takes his colouring from his surroundings, is misled by a disguised terrorist, then spends a good deal of his time in prison, and so on. These incidents do not serve any functional purpose in relation to the whole. They are so many bits jumbled together possessing a sense of continuity only because they happen to the same person. As a consequence, the quality of suspense, which is so necessary to a good novel, is almost entirely lost.

Narayan particularly excels in dealing with the genuine Malgudi characters like Granny, the Bank Manager, Kanni, the shopman at Sonur, and others—those delightful vignettes of South Indian life, rich in humour and truthfulness. In Bharati we have the most attractive femi-

nine character he has yet created, and this ideal woman comes out triumphantly alive. But all this is so much of good writing wasted, because the novel itself is a disappointment.

And what of the Mahatma? His role in this novel is, after all, a minor one. Perhaps the pointer is found in the publisher's blurb, which says that the tragedy of the Mahatma is that he is so much greater than his followers: followers like Sriram, to whom the line between self-interest and national interest is always confused; or the guards in the jail, whose ignorance of the general situation is such that they expect the Mahatma to become the Emperor of India after the British leave. But when the novel ends with the Mahatma being shot dead at a prayer-meeting, just a few minutes after he has sanctioned the marriage of Sriram and Bharati and blessed the couple, one cannot help feeling that here is a piece of unnecessary over-dramatisation.

G. V. VISWANATH

THE MAKING OF A POEM by Stephen Spender (Hamish Hamilton, 15s.)

IT is characteristic of Mr. Spender that in the title essay of this collection he defines the problem of creative writing as 'essentially one of concentration'. He then describes the supposed eccentricities of certain poets due to mechanical habits or rituals developed in order to 'concentrate'. Thus Schiller liked the smell of rotten apples when he was composing poetry, Walter de la Mare smokes, Auden drinks tea, Mr. Spender smokes and drinks coffee. Some artists attain concentration immediately and completely, others slowly and by stages. 'Myself,' says Mr. Spender, 'I am scarcely capable of immediate concentration in poetry. My mind is not clear, my will is weak, I suffer from an excess of ideas and a weak sense of form.'

Obviously, *The Making of a Poem* is a

continuation of Mr. Spender's *World Within World* and, in fact, includes an essay on 'Confessions and Autobiography'. Although he calls his book 'the notes of a writer on writing' he hastens to warn us that 'they are not, by recent standards of close analysis and exegesis of texts, criticism.' By this disclaimer and the autobiographical strain which runs through his book Mr. Spender obliges the reader to accept his views precisely for what they are worth, making explicit their intentions, scope and depth, going thus far and no further, winning acceptance by sheer unpretentiousness.

That is the secret of Mr. Spender's charm as a poet and a writer. He has succeeded in almost completely externalising his inmost qualities without creating a mask, an artificial public personality which speaks the worldly knowledgeable language of critic, editor and supporter of causes. He has therefore to be met on his own ground whatever the subject on which he expresses an opinion, even the very controversial if commonplace one, 'Situation of the American Writer'.

That subject has already received attention from the most prodigious talent of our time, but Mr. Spender makes his views prevail by a certain homely touch. He speaks as one would of a family with whom one has lived for a short time. The blend of objective perception with personal concern—Mr. Spender's most engaging virtue as a writer—produces a study of much sympathy and insight. His contention is that the family he is writing about is not a family in the true sense of the word; the American writer . . . does not belong to a community of literature. But Mr. Spender does not miss the developments which may indicate an instinctive movement towards such a community—the creative writing course and the writers' conference. This essay, Mr. Spender declares for the benefit of those who may not know, was brilliantly guyed by Thurber.

In his essays on *Georgian Poetry* and *The Essential Housman* Mr. Spender seems less critical than he might have been. In this he is expressing the recent tendency to see more merits in the immediate past than the same generation was willing to allow twenty years ago. Mr. Spender goes so far as to say that 'the work of Mr. de la Mare, W. H. Davies and James Stephens . . . is among the most considerable and the least bound by factors of time, of this century.' Although he does say most of the things against the Georgians which have been said before, the word 'considerable' as applied to Davies or James Stephens (leaving out de la Mare because of his more assured achievement) is a little odd, to put it mildly. Perhaps Mr. Spender thinks that the revolution against the Georgian conception of poetry is so completely successful that the older, more severe judgment of it may be humanely modified.

Mr. Spender's most speculative and ambitious essay is *Inside the Cage—Reflections on conditioned and unconditioned imagination*. I do not find this always very clear or illuminating. It is the least autobiographical of the essays in this book and that may be a source of its weakness—if I am right in considering it weak. Here is the first paragraph:

'Ideally, the artist should transform the environment into his own world. But since we live in bodies, which are dressed in clothes, which inhabit buildings, which are parts of cities which are placed in countries, the most we can expect to see art realise in our surroundings is a struggle between utility and an enhancing uselessness.'

In the first sentence Mr. Spender is talking about what the artist should do, ideally. In the second he states what 'we can expect to see art realise.' The logical relation between the two sentences is defective. And what is meant by 'enhancing uselessness?' The relevance of the sequence, 'since

we live in bodies, which are dressed in clothes', etc. is not clear.

I come across such difficulties repeatedly in this essay. For instance, on the first page referring as an example to buildings, he says that 'the useless is that aspect of architecture which is like a mirror where the eyes of the dead still see their delight reflected.' I must confess my inability to fathom this. There is unquestionably an argument and a very important one here, but the language does not assist it. Mr. Spender's subjective, lyrical lucidity is replaced by an idiom alien to him which struggles with major propositions about poetry, life and civilization. The conclusion, that to save civilization we must, in the words of Henry Miller, 'live miraculously, think only miraculously, die miraculously', sound obscurantist and unhelpful.

N.E.

THE POLITICAL ROLE OF WOMEN by Maurice Duverger (UNESCO 13s. 6d.).

THE *Political Role of Women* is an arduous survey which seeks to establish the actual degree of participation and influence of women in politics as opposed to the theoretical equality with which they are endowed in most democratic countries. It endeavours, in fact, to explore the sequel to the suffragette movement. For the purpose of this research, four countries—Norway, The German Federal Republic, Yugoslavia and France—have been selected. At first glance this seems a somewhat arbitrary choice, but the varied set of circumstances that prevail give the author better scope for the review.

Perhaps the most patent fact which emerges from the text is the difficulty of obtaining statistics on a satisfactory scale, and drawing conclusions from inadequate data. The charts, though more illuminating than the text, also deal with a very limited number of cases.

The review is conducted under two main sections—the part played by women in elections and their role in the political leadership of a country. Both factors are essentially co-related. A large section of the first is devoted to what is termed 'abstention statistics'. Among the welter of contradictory findings, the major one is that though more women than men vote from the purely numerical standpoint, a larger percentage of women abstain from voting. Among the reasons adduced for this, the main one seems to be indifference and an inherent reluctance on the part of women to be involved in politics. This section also cautiously probes the specific factors which influence the feminine trends of voting in elections. Age, religion, social beliefs and, in the case of married people, the duplication of the vote, are all considered.

From the point of view of political leadership, which is both a more interesting and a more pertinent speculation, very curious paradoxes emerge. Though most women are theoretically eligible for the majority of jobs, in actual practice they are found only in a circumscribed number. The positions of importance which they enjoy are generally restricted to matters of domestic interest and community welfare. They are therefore virtually excluded from influencing the larger issues of finance and foreign affairs. In most of the countries under review women have been enfranchised for some time, but they have not acquired a similar political significance. Despite the fact that Norway, for instance, has granted its women the vote since 1901, its political VIPs have numbered only a handful.

Though this book gives no statistics on India, (which would have increased its local interest), a glance at the conditions which prevail indicate that better advantage has been taken of the opportunity provided for feminine participation in the affairs of the country. Considering the period of emancipation in the other coun-

tries, we seem to have achieved a more concrete recognition of the rights of women. Despite social orthodoxy, women had emerged into the political limelight even before 1947, and not merely as a large voting percentage. If the women ministers be taken as an indication of the highest achievement in this line, it appears that their influence here, as elsewhere, is confined to special spheres. But the fact that on more than one occasion women have been included in more vital, even international fields, is a significant enough indication of what they might be expected to achieve eventually.

In the light of the generally progressive outlook of the country, the endemic controversy that rears its head as to whether women are suitable or not for governmental jobs strikes a strangely anomalous note. It is however less indicative of masculine orthodoxy than part of the deep-seated anti-feminist tendency of the human race, to which women as much as men subscribe wholeheartedly. The factor of conservative bias, though raised more than once in the book, is not adequately exploited, and yet in a way, this seems to be the most abiding undercurrent of the whole issue, and therefore deserving of deeper analysis.

Finally what appears curious is that if women have but a very minor and circumlocutory influence on politics, the survey seems hardly deserving of such intense investigation—unless one accepts the fact that there is an increasing realisation that such an influence could be turned to valuable account and developed into a vital political factor. Quantitatively alone, no party can afford to ignore the vote of women. The problem, it transpires from the survey, is not so much the mere use of political rights as the need for a concerted effort to reduce feminine prejudice against politics and foster an intelligent appraisal by women of political circumstances, so long considered some esoteric monopoly of the male

sex. The plea for political education cannot be ignored indefinitely by any genuinely democratic country, least of all by India, where a not negligible section even of the male population tends to take its politics too casually.

As a document of social psychology, the book only hints at the psychological factors that underlie the attitude of women, but unfortunately neglects to emphasise their importance. It seems therefore merely to have touched the fringe of the matter, to have suggested rather than analysed the more important and basic elements.

KOBITA SARKAR

SIRS EL LAYYAN (Unesco).

THREE political problems are uppermost in the minds of the Arabs of the Middle East (or, as we propose to call the area, Western Asia). These are: the question of Israel, the conflict between Arab and Frenchmen in North Africa and the unhealthy competition between Russia and the Western powers for seeking the favours of the Arab countries. At the back of these questions are several others, a full discussion of which is impossible in a short review. But it may be mentioned that these political problems have a very close connection with the social and the cultural pattern. In the social sphere the same problems trouble Egypt as are to be found in our country. Poverty, a rapid increase in population, lack of medical facilities, insufficiency of education, lack of technical skill, lack of co-operation between individuals and groups and a general paucity of industrialisation. In the cultural field there are more complex problems, such as the true basis of an Arab culture, the place of religion in modern times and the relation between Arab culture and the Western way of life.

In this pamphlet we are given a glimpse into the excellent work which is being done

in Egypt by Unesco, first for the people of Egypt, but indirectly also for all the Arab countries who might care to share in the experiment and benefit by it. *Sirs el Layyan* is a village in the district of Menufia, 45 miles from Cairo. In 1952, the Egyptian Government and Unesco jointly opened a training centre for the men and women who will later be in charge of fundamental education in the Arab countries. Their unit of work is a 'Social Centre', similar to our own community projects, where there are dispensaries, maternity clinics, classes for adult education, play-grounds for children, campaigns for health, and other activities. A team of 10 to 12 trainees of various nationalities goes into action and obtains the co-operation of the people. Thus the people learn the value of co-operation and the trainees learn the value of work and sacrifice.

The booklet gives us in true Arab style information of a new centre for social uplift among the fellaheen, the Egyptian peasants. It is written with enthusiasm and an Arab zeal. We have statements which sound extravagant in English, but which would be admirable in Arabic and are certainly true, in a sense. For instance, the Nile delta has produced for 5000 years the finest crops in the world; and the water of the Nile, however impure, is sacred. The project is described as 'Light and Hope for the Arab World' on the cover.

That fact is not piled upon fact as is often the case in Indo-British reports of similar projects, is a real advantage; for the Arab spirit looks at such things from a different angle. It is such movements which remind us of the Koranic injunction that God does not change the condition of a people until they make an effort themselves. Whether communism or capitalism is to succeed in the Middle East depends upon whether the existing economic structure can bear the strain of the

rapid demands which are being made on it by a strident and proud race.

A.A.A. FYZEE

THE FLOATING WORLD by James Michener (Secker & Warburg, 63s.).

THOSE disciples of Eric Gill and Ananda Coomaraswamy who believe that art and beauty are the valuable but incidental results of honest and skilful craftsmanship working within traditional moulds will find Japanese *ukiyo-ye* very much to the point. Sooner or later in the consideration of Japanese wood block prints one is brought up disconcertingly against the fact that the Japanese have never accepted *ukiyo-ye* as a serious art form and have discouraged those enthusiastic foreigners who acclaimed it as the finest flowering of Japanese art. Now there is a reaction in favour of the Japanese view, gently deprecating *ukiyo-ye* as not quite quite.

In the result Japan's colour prints have rarely been assessed in the light of what they were meant to be—an entertaining genre of pictures of the sophisticated world of Yedo in the Tokugawa era. The emphasis here is on entertainment, for there was no thought of art in the minds of those *ukiyo-ye* craftsmen whose aim was fame and fortune and whose guiding principle was nothing more profound than the fickle fancy of the Yedo public. Hokusai, Utamaro and Sharaku and innumerable others were conscientious enough craftsmen never to be satisfied with their achievements but they were not animated by any desire to produce superior art. They were, for one thing, too busy keeping up with the fast pace of changing fashion and reporting events in the theatre world and *Yoshiwara* in a spirit of commercial rivalry. If the *ukiyo-ye* prints are beautiful we have to thank conscientious craftsmanship, a civilisation of impeccable taste, a Yedo public

that had not been corrupted into accepting anything less than the best. The Japanese connoisseur would not dream of accepting a Hokusai print in lieu of a painting by Sesshu, but his very refusal to compare the two accords to the former its due place as an example of craftsmanship well and truly done in answer to a specific demand.

Mr. Michener is an enthusiast but fortunately one who restricts *ukiyo-ye* to the very special frame-work from which it sprang. A Japanese critic has noted very pertinently that had the Meiji Restoration occurred two centuries earlier there would have been no *ukiyo-ye* since there would have been no need or demand to satisfy. Of no other creative work can it be more appropriately said that it is inextricably of the times in which it sprang to life.

Under the Tokugawa shoguns with their ingenious system of checks and balances as a safeguard against rebellious daimyos Japan enjoyed two hundred and fifty years of peace. Commerce flourished and the despised merchant prospered. He patronised Kabuki and the Yoshiwara and the tea houses, enjoying his newly-acquired status with a bravado and gusto that are also so characteristic of *ukiyo-ye*. A certain flamboyance not incompatible with perfect taste developed in the theatre and *ukiyo-ye*, both these vehicles of democratic expression being used to poke delicious fun at the arrogant samurai and daimyo. Grievances against authority which, if openly expressed would have resulted in severe reprisals were discreetly hinted at in a form of drama known as *kyogen*.

Ukiyo-ye partook in full measure of this exuberance and with the carefree confidence characteristic of its merchant sponsors invited on itself the severe strictures and repressive laws of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Various sumptuary edicts were designed to safeguard the samurai from the corrupting influence of *ukiyo-ye* and much was said of the need to preserve the

national spirit. Censorship was introduced and publishers and artists were restricted on every side. Yet *ukiyo-ye* proved irrepressible, the merchants continued to amass fortunes, while the samurai wilted in conditions of complete ennui from which there was no escape except by means of the forbidden theatre, *Yoshiwara* and *Ukiyo-ye*. Gaiety thus triumphed over dictatorship, particularly because while the Shogunate knew how to protect its interests against undependable *daimyo*, it could evolve no technique for controlling the commoners, newly conscious of their power and capacity to enjoy life.

Ukiyo-ye finally died not so much because of repressive laws but because of the new social conditions resulting from the encroachment of the outside world on the secluded esoteric private world of the Tokugawa. *Ukiyo-ye* of street scenes, *Yoshiwara* maidens, mythological heroes and Kabuki idols no longer satisfied as the foundations of Yedo society crumbled away under the impact of western influence. Even in death the Tokugawa could not get rid of *ukiyo-ye* since both died together.

It is too often assumed that as a democratic art Japanese wood block prints were simple, if not crude, in content and appeal. Yet the symbolism of *Ukiyo-ye* was one of the most elaborate in the world. An understanding of it was essential for full appreciation and such understanding was sufficiently widespread in the Tokugawa era to sustain *ukiyo-ye* in all its varied and vigorous forms. No *Yedo-ite* needed to be told that a carp struggling against the river current was the symbol of courage or that lovers under an umbrella signified they were living together, though unmarried. Colours, specific poses, animals and birds evoked an array of associations without conscious effort on the part either of the artist or his patron. It was this culture that disintegrated in the middle of the nineteenth century and with it *ukiyo-ye* that was so essential



and unique a part of it. This was perhaps a not inappropriate fate for an art that devoted itself almost exclusively to the ephemeral affairs of the day.

Ukiyo-ye is variously translated to mean pictures of the evanescent or floating world, the world of pleasure, beautiful women, actors and wrestlers, street scenes and landscapes. One of the ideographs representing *uki* in *ukiyo-ye* also means grief. And this is presumably responsible for Mr. Michener's view that it would be difficult to devise a less appropriate title for colour-prints than *ukiyo-ye*. This presupposes an unvarying and unqualified gaiety without the slightest consciousness of grief. Yet traces of the latter are not absent in many

ukiyo-ye masterpieces. There is a sense of regret at the evanescence of the passing scene but there is equally a complete acceptance of this inevitability. Buddhist consciousness of the vanity and impermanence of the daily scene was allied to a keen awareness of the permanent in impermanent things. It is this quality that elevates the world of pleasure, beautiful women and some *ukiyo-ye* to a level higher than that for which they were intended. Mr. Michener's reproductions do justice neither to the text nor the original prints. Yet by their calculated mannerisms, their sense of line and design and their joyful acceptance of the fleeting moment, they convey to the reader some flavour of a unique period in Japan. N.J.N.

ONE FRONT ACROSS THE WORLD by Douglas Hyde, (William Heinemann 18s.)

KURUKSHETRA is in the heart of man,' said Gandhi. But Douglas Hyde thinks that the next Kurukshetra will be fought between Communism on the one hand and the Roman Catholic Church on the other. 'I believe that in the last analysis the battle for men's hearts and minds is between the man with the Communist faith and the man with the Faith.' The author travels through Africa, Pakistan, India, Japan and Korea, and finds repeated support for his thesis. The Koreans were made guinea-pigs by the west for military resistance to oriental communist aggression, therefore the west owes it to the Koreans now to make them their guinea-pigs for peaceful development. But guinea-pigs all the same, and not individual, upright (or blundering) men who could be left to work out their own peace and prosperity!

One Front across the World is a book which leaves the reader sadder but not wiser. Firstly there is a feeling of bewilderment that such naive, single-track thinking

is possible today. The suggestion that in the East men (because of war and catastrophe) have discovered the inadequacies of their own religions and are therefore attracted by the doctrines of Christianity, and that the Roman Catholic Church alone offers succour, physical and spiritual, to these starved masses, sounds very much like the panacea which Communism offers for the ills of the world, explaining away all the chiarascuro of life with the help of a dogma. This feeling is succeeded by one of amazement at the statements that the East is, mainly, materialistic, that a democracy backed only by materialism lacks an essential element, that Western democracy grew out of Christian soil, that Hinduism because of its tradition of tolerance and Islam because of its emphasis only on externalities are no barrier to Communism. Then, as the author's sincerity becomes obvious, there is a little alarm that a conscious, organised battle is being waged for one's soul by outside forces. One had hoped that there was now general agreement among thinking people about the aims of a socialist society and the principle of 'live and let live'. But the staggering figures of conversion to the Roman Church in the East show that one is not to be let alone.

Finally, one settles down and takes in the details of the journey, the heroism of the St. Columban and the Mary-knoller priests, the rapacity of the Communists, the rock on which the faith rests etc., with a feeling that, perhaps, things are not so topsy-turvy after all, that hope and tolerance and integrity are to be found outside the faith and the Faith; in fact, much nearer home.

When a writer sets out to put all truth to the touch-stone of a pre-conceived notion, it is not difficult for him to find the material for its support. The motif of this book is, in the words of Mgr. Quinlan (one of the heroes of the Death March in Korea): 'The Catholic world holds the key to the

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Communist problem. It isn't the hydrogen bomb which will destroy communism, it is we Christians.' The new man in Christ and the new man in Marx stand at opposite poles. The one attracts, the other repels.

So everything is grist to the mill. 'In Uganda when Bishop Graef first went to his diocese there were some five thousand Catholics there. Today there are more than a quarter of a million.' In Malabar, thirty per cent of the population are Christians, and the votes for or against the Congress have tended to take on a pro or anti-Christian character. In Red China today the Catholics (who are the last-ditch fighters of the time) have an influence which is out of all proportion to their numbers. The Christian yeast leavens the whole. In Korea, although the author has occasional qualms about the impact of the West upon Korean morals, his admiration for the stupendous progress the church has made there is great. As Mgr. Quinlan put it: 'We

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CULTURAL FREEDOM IN ASIA. Proceedings of a Conference at Rangoon in February 1955 convened by the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Society for the Extension of Democratic Ideals. Edited by Herbert Passin. (Charles E. Tuttle Co., U.S.A. Rs. 4/12/-).

IT is difficult to convey in a short review the intellectual richness and significance of this publication. In addition to the great merit of the papers assembled here, there is a unique atmosphere of discussion and the confrontation of ideas in an Asian setting. The editor has attempted to provide a picture of the Conference as a whole by including in the book the Opening Addresses, the Concluding Speeches by a selection of delegates, Messages, Notes on the Participants and eight pages of excellent photographs. A summary of the verbatim notes of the discussions which took place after papers on a given subject had been read out gives the reader 'the lively ebb and flow of the argument and a sense of the main ideas debated.'

It is obvious that the Rangoon Conference on Cultural Freedom in Asia was no merely formal gathering of intellectuals for the passing of resolutions and the adoption of prepared theses. The majority of delegates had to accept the discipline and responsibility of expressing their views in writing on a specific subject within the broader context of Cultural Freedom in Asia and to defend their views orally in a debate with the other participants, a debate in which apparently, no punches were pulled.

The Conference was divided into two parts. In the first, under the general heading *The Conditions of Cultural Freedom in Asia*, papers were classified under further sub-titles: *The New Resurgence in Asia*, *The Intellectual*, and *Impact of the West on Eastern Aesthetics*. Just to give some idea of the variety of views expounded it is worth mentioning that in this section

must ride on the crest of the wave, or the moment of opportunity will pass.' Fr. Mangan who had to turn away would-be Christians told the author wistfully: 'For fifty cents a day I could ensure a hundred souls for God each year....' The same heaven was at work in Japan, Indonesia and Ceylon.

On page 233 the author writes: 'Early in my quest I had discovered how the Almighty uses a great variety of types and qualities for His work.' And yet he has spun the yarn about the urgency of conversion to the Roman Catholic Church of those who have found their own faith wanting. Apparently the Almighty identifies himself with that Church alone! What about the heaven then stirred by Gandhi, Schweitzer and Vinoba Bhave?

One earnestly hopes, for the sake of such a believer, that the Church will catch the bus which it missed in the mediaeval ages. N. L. KHANOLKAR

there are papers on political thought, religion, music, literature and aesthetics.

The delegates had two things in common. They were opposed to all forms of totalitarianism and they believed in the ability of Asia to struggle against it. Beyond this point they were divided, sometimes fundamentally, but never, if one may use the word, fatally. A case in point was religion and its resources. Mr. Hajime Nakamura, Professor of Oriental Philosophy, Tokyo University put up the strongest case for the *Vitality of Religion in Asia* that I have ever read. The rationalist rejoinder is to be found in the discussion that followed. Laxman Shastri Joshi put his objections succinctly: 'My difficulty is that all the religions except Islam has as the ultimate goal, salvation or Moksha, which implies that sensual man is in bondage, and then discourages wordly aspiration. This cannot help but conflict with the aspiration in Asia for economic reconstruction and modernization.'

The battle is joined. A. K. Brohi, of Pakistan, says 'I do not admit that the Asian religions make a complete division between this world and the other world'. Prof. Nakamura rises to claim that all the consequences of this-worldliness can be 'deduced from Mahayana Buddhism or from the religious conceptions of the modernist thinkers, even in India, such as Vallabha, Kabir and Tukaram.' The challenge is taken up by Mochtar Lubis, of Indonesia, who 'on the question of religion as against communism' opines that 'the existing religions of Asia have become static and stagnant and so they are an easy prey to communism.'

Jayaprakash Narayan, whose interventions are among the most striking in the discussions, pleads in favour of 'the foundations that already exist while we repeat our religious formulas we do not translate them into practice. But because

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these formulas are there, half our task is already accomplished. What I am suggesting is that we take the precepts of existing religions which everybody accepts, and relate them not only to the spiritual life of the people but to their material life. This would overcome that inability which we all feel of the traditional religions today to solve the great problems that are facing the Asian masses—exploitation, inequality, poverty.'

Could anything be more stimulating and heartening than such a debate on a basic issue among Asian thinkers?

And this is only one of the innumerable exchanges which took place at the Rangoon Conference. Thorough acquaintance with the minds represented in this report of its proceedings is now an indispensable condition for understanding Asia, both in the East and in the West.

R. SIVARAMAN

The Indian Philosophical Congress

To The Editor, QUEST

Sir,

'Truth hurts', says Mr. Ookerjee in his 'Reply', writing in an obviously hurt tone. After his own deplorable performance he might have spared us that cliché. It is not always Truth that hurts, but also deliberate and dishonest misrepresentation, and a strong protest is not necessarily a sign of being hurt. It may be made so that one man's malice and mischief may not succeed in throwing dust in the eyes of numerous readers and mud on the reputation of the Congress and its President of the year who, I repeat, is justly regarded as an eminent scholar and thinker and whose published works are a standing testimony of his intellectual eminence. My reply was neither savage nor abusive. I have charged Mr. Ookerjee with sophistry and misrepresentation of a most reprehensible kind, not unmixed with muddle-headedness. I have substantiated these charges. His present reply only provides fresh and stronger evidence of the same. Let me come to the central charge concerning which there can be no further prevarication. Asked to substantiate his attack on Dr. Mahadevan Mr. Ookerjee points out that (a) Dr. Mahadevan considers the philosophies of Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, the Positivists and the Existentialists as being wrecked by the externalist attitude; (b) he says the seeker after wisdom has to turn the eye within; (c) he says explicitly that inwardness does not mean introspection, but intuition, that neither sense nor understanding can take us to the core of things, that theorizing cannot destroy ignorance and that the culmination of inwardness is in Advaita experience. From this we are required by Mr. Ookerjee to infer that Dr. Mahadevan regards the Western ways of demanding

reasons as 'perverse', that he is dogmatic and gives no reasons for what he says except that 'our sages have said so,' that he asserts that 'to doubt is to be lost' and that he advises everyone to 'discuss with half closed minds.' The readers may now judge whether intellectual dishonesty and chicanery can go further than in this magnificent non sequitur.

Dr. Mahadevan does believe, with good reasons, that an *immediate* grasp of Truth is supra-rational, or that reason itself points to a consummation beyond itself, but it would be ridiculous to conclude that therefore he condemns reasoning or does not himself reason. I may add that to defend a man against a scurrilous attack is not to turn him into 'a little god'. My intention was to reveal, not the divinity of Dr. Mahadevan, but the devilry of Mr. Ookerjee.

In his reply Mr Ookerjee has gone from absurdity to absurdity with giant strides. He says he does not make the silly assumption that the President should not prejudice any issue. But this is precisely the silly assumption he does make, or he would not have objected to the President prejudging the issue between Indian and Western philosophy. He now shifts his ground and says that he cited Dr. Mahadevan's Address 'as an illustration of the anti-western, anti-metaphysical trend at the Congress'—whatever that may mean. But this is sophistry of a very crude kind. Does he hope that his readers have forgotten what he has written? Let me quote him; 'Thus even before the Congress had begun its deliberations, these eminent men had already judged the issue between Western and Indian philosophy.' This is sufficient to expose the sophistry.

As regards the Symposium, Mr. Ookerjee has to be reminded that his original intention was to illustrate with 'facts' that 'in the Congress things happen which cannot be exaggerated'. He has not acknowledged his error in stating that it was a

teacher of philosophy who spoke irrelevantly on Death. Instead he shifts his ground and asks, What about A, B and C? Are they all outsiders? As a matter of fact two, and probably all three of these speakers were outsiders, i.e. not teachers of philosophy. Mr. Ookerjee is entitled to his nightmares, but he should have resisted the temptation to translate them into an article for *Quest*. The facts that now remain, according to him, are only two! (a) A speaker did not discuss the contributions of the symposiasts, though it is not denied that his speech was relevant, (b) the views expressed by another speaker were open to objections, i.e. Mr. Ookerjee does not agree with them. We may grant these revised facts, but how ridiculous it is to suggest that either of them comes under the category of things 'which cannot be exaggerated'. The philosophical objections raised by Mr. Ookerjee were actually dealt with by the speaker, but at this stage our critic must have 'fallen asleep'. The reader is referred to the speaker's published paper on Pantheism where the views on error are more fully stated. He will then see how intentionally Mr. Ookerjee has deviated from truth in describing the speaker as dogmatic.

Mr. Ookerjee is very hurt indeed (by Truth again) at my exposing his elementary mistake in Logic. He now wants the readers to be impressed by the fact that his keen logical mind enabled him to spot the error in 60 seconds! We would have been impressed by this but for the fact that the blunder is so elementary that an average student of Logic in the Intermediate class would have spotted it in under 10 seconds. One of Mr. Ookerjee's 'dull' students would have taken a few seconds longer. A good student would not commit this error. That a teacher of philosophy should do so in 'cold print' is a scandal. Mr. Ookerjee would like it known that he was honest enough to admit his mistake. He had abso-

lutely no alternative. (There are other proved mistakes which he has not admitted). He then immediately goes on to tell us that the elementary error is, looking at it another way, a profound truth! He could not explain this to me, he says, as 'we were posing for a picture.' Well, we went on posing for that picture another 15 or 20 minutes before it was finally taken—enough time for him to make the point which he now makes in one sentence. Perhaps he did not make the point because it hadn't occurred to him then. It is so obviously an after-thought and an attempt at a face saving quibble as to make pathetic reading. In the passage in which this howler occurs he is discussing error specifically from 'the logical angle' (p.59). He mentions that Logic studies the *formal* aspect of thinking and discovers *formal* principles (p.60). It is in this context that he makes the remarkable statement, '*if the data are not mistaken*, then the invalid use of *logical principles* results in error.' Mr. Ookerjee has conveniently forgotten the context and the words I have italicised. By no amount of quibbling can this statement be made to mean that in a 'scientific theory the bare result unsupported by the reasons by which it was arrived at is worth little'. It remains simply and exclusively what it is—an egregious logical blunder.

Next we are told that Mr. Ookerjee's own case excepted, admitting a mistake is 'an unheard-of event in the Congress'! What, is any one perverse enough to want proof of this statement? Is it not enough that Mr. Ookerjee has said so? We must believe without question that over the last thirty years every single delegate who attended the Congress sessions was, with the glorious exception of Mr. Ookerjee, intellectually dishonest. Could any one in his proper senses make such a sweepingly libellous statement, so patently false, so utterly dishonest? It shows up Mr. Ookerjee and the type of mind he has. Inciden-

tally, he has nothing to learn from others in the art of speaking in the grand manner and with a God Almighty attitude. I do not mind if he does not take his moral instructions from me, but he should certainly take them from somebody.

I have called Logical Positivists, *not* a particular individual by name, as stated by Mr. Ookerjee, 'metaphysical psychotics', meaning that their minds have lost contact with ultimate Reality. I said of another person that no one should take his lessons in *Indian* philosophy from him. It suits Mr. Ookerjee's purpose better to omit the word 'Indian'—so why not? But from this only Mr. Ookerjee, certainly not any one who knows logic, can conclude that I support his statement about examiners in Indian Universities, or even that I have not much respect for the whole lot of them. Another magnificent non sequitur! I have pointed out how absurd are the reasons he gives to explain why dull students take Philosophy. On this point he has kept a discreet silence, but he has not acknowledged his mistake. He now defends himself against the further serious charge of sending up students who write rubbish by transferring the charge to his Principal and Head of the Department! I have no doubt those gentlemen can look after themselves.

Mr. Ookerjee also expects his readers to be impressed by his private correspondence! His ignorance of how a controversy should be conducted in public compels me to mention that I too wrote him two letters, the first to show that his estimate of Dr. Sarkar's paper was the result of hasty reading and wishful thinking, and the second to point out that in the meantime he had shifted his ground, added a dogmatic error and shown a chronic inability to concentrate on the point at issue. He has not yet admitted his mistake even though he may have realized it.

To disprove my statement that there was

a good deal of profitable discussion Mr. Ookerjee quotes me as saying *after* a discussion, 'this (i.e. a good discussion) is the sort of thing we want.' He then predicts that I will tell a lie and deny that I said this—a cheap remark, typical of Mr. Ookerjee. But why should I lie? The truth itself is very damaging to what remains of his reputation as a thinker. The conclusion he draws from the statement is that throughout the Congress session a good discussion was what we were not getting. This is incredible! How the deuce can one say, *after* something has happened, that this is what we want unless this is what we had already got? Obviously what I meant was that I wanted the good discussion to continue. And to conclude from this that according to me there was an utter lack of good discussion everywhere in the Congress session is too amazingly fantastic. Perhaps here Mr. Ookerjee was trying to illustrate his logical discovery that 'if data are not mistaken, then the invalid use of logical principles results in error'!

Finally a word about Mr. Ookerjee and Indian Philosophy. He has referred to his paper on Metaphysics and Mysticism. The whole discussion in that paper is irrelevant because he is attacking a point of view which is certainly not that of Indian Philosophy. He does not support his eccentric interpretation by even a single reference to the philosophical classics of India. He couldn't have done so even if he had wanted to. It might interest the readers to know that he prefaced his reading of the paper with the confession that he did not know any Indian philosophy, but that he had gathered 'some impressions' by discussing with 'some friends' who held the Indian point of view! That is Mr. Ookerjee. One who reads his writings in *Quest* and takes his word for it that he represents Western philosophy can with far greater justification conclude that all Western

philosophy must be so much sophistry and foolishness.

Bombay

J. N. CHUBB

THE WOOD AND THE TREES

To The Editor, QUEST

Sir,

If the cause Dr. Chubb is defending and his defence of it were as strong as his language, I would lay down my pen and be his admirer. In his Article and Reply he uses at least 53 expressions of personal abuse, but since he is a greater authority on the art of abusing than I could ever be, we may take his word for it that he has been 'neither savage nor abusive'. He speaks of my 'malice' and 'mischief', 'intellectual dishonesty' and 'chicanery' and of my not being in my 'proper senses'; but he has failed to supply any motive for my 'devilry'. Dr. Chubb, on the other hand, is bound to the Congress by bonds of loyalty, and loyalty is Dr. Chubb's strong virtue. He and his hero, Dr. Mahadevan, are 'people of importance' there, and they are Editors of the Proceedings—those very Proceedings where my 'scandalous' Papers are printed!

Far from making a 'scurrilous attack' on Dr. Mahadevan, I referred to him as 'eminent'. Believing he was a philosopher, I criticised some of his apparently philosophical utterances. In answering my specific criticism Dr. Chubb only refers to Dr. Mahadevan's great 'reputation', calls all my words 'unabashed misrepresentations' and says I have 'demeaned' myself. Honest criticism becomes a 'scurrilous attack', and difference of opinion, 'bad taste'. This is to make a man into 'a little god', a very different thing from 'revealing his divinity'. And seeing the tin gods Dr. Chubb worships, to be called a devil by him is a distinct honour, for which I thank him.

I have clarified my position regarding Indian Philosophy to Dr. Chubb, but he

persists in misunderstanding me. His referring to my knowledge of it is, of course, an 'ad hominem' argument, which does not touch my thesis. Indian Philosophy might be a splendid thing, and yet the Congress can be a farce. I again admit that I do not know the ancient 'classics of India', but I do so without the slightest blush, for my quarrel is not with *them*. It is with our contemporary expounders who claim that Indian Philosophy is superior to Western philosophy. I do not remember my having used the phrase 'some friends', but even if I did, does it follow that because my information came from friends, it was incorrect? Does my friendship automatically disqualify one from being a reliable interpreter of Indian Philosophy? But in truth, my estimate of Indian Philosophy comes from Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Mahadevan and Dr. Chubb—persons whom I could scarcely hope to include among my 'friends'.

In 'Mysticism & Metaphysics' and in *Quest* No. 5, I have plentifully quoted from Dr. Chubb and Dr. Mahadevan to show that they do think Indian Philosophy far superior to Western, not only in results but in method. The opposed methods are Intuition and Reason. Take these samples: 'Tons of theory will not be capable of destroying the darkness of ignorance...' (Mahadevan); '... We are required to plunge into 'the Night of the Senses and the Spirit' to enter the great 'Cloud of the Unknowing' in which all mental formulations totally drop away...' (Chubb). In the light of scores of such unambiguous passages it is sheer obtuseness to assert (as Dr. Chubb has often done) that I have misunderstood. In his address, Dr. Mahadevan does not discriminate between the good or bad arguments of Descartes, Spinoza, etc., he dismisses them *because* they use arguments, for his conviction is that no 'externalist attitude' can give Truth, and to use Reason is to have such an attitude. To con-

clude from this that Dr. Mahadevan 'regards the Western ways of demanding reasons as perverse' etc. is not such a big step. What else can one conclude, seeing that throughout his 22 page Address he does not make a single attempt to discuss the connection between spiritual experience and theory, and seeing that he favours the former without a shred of real argument? For, references to our seers, a historical survey and impressive language do not, in my opinion, constitute an argument.

It can be seen from the above that Dr. Chubb's (one and only) objection to my paper 'Mysticism & Metaphysics' side-tracks the issue. What I have shown there is that *if* Indian and Western philosophies are so very different (as is claimed by people like Dr. Mahadevan, in season and out of season), then they are two incomparables and no question of the superiority of one over the other can arise. *If*, however, one of them is superior to the other (this too is claimed), then the two cannot be so very different, and the high-handed method of proclaiming the superiority of Indian Philosophy because it uses Intuition and not Reason, must be abandoned. This is the dilemma I have worked out in my Paper, and in doing this an intimate knowledge of Indian Philosophy is not at all required. My arguments must be tested on their merits and shown to be fallacious, and Dr. Chubb has failed to do this. Dr. Mahadevan, in his 'dignity and wisdom', has desisted from taking up the gauntlet I flung at him.

Let me deal with a few other minor points. I am sorry that I thought 'outsider' meant 'not belonging to the Congress,' while Dr. Chubb meant 'not a teacher of philosophy'. My muddle-headedness again! But surely some teachers of philosophy did speak—and speak irrelevantly—in the Symposium; anyway there were scores of them in the audience, and yet not one of them, nor the President, (no 'outsider' in any

sense) protested even mildly against so many 'outsiders' wasting our time by talking about death, by cracking puerile jokes, by delivering long-winded sermons in a philosophical discussion on the Nature of Error. About our President's weak chairmanship his doughty champion has not a word. These are the things 'which cannot be exaggerated'. I am unable to place 'the speaker' who is supposed to have dealt with my 'objections', nor do I understand which 'objections' the mysterious Doctor is here referring to.

Dr. Chubb says he applied 'metaphysical psychotic' to all Positivists and to nobody in particular, his colleague, to whom the words were seemingly addressed, being only, I suppose, a symbol of that tribe. On that occasion Dr. Chubb also said, 'I don't know where he learnt his Metaphysics!' This too was addressed only to the group! And doubtlessly Prof. M. (who was to consider himself only a symbol) acted in very bad taste to protest to the Chairman, as he did, about the poor Doctor's innocuous remarks!

Does the omission of 'Indian' in the sentence 'no one should take their lessons in Indian Philosophy from him' make a real difference? The man has been teaching Indian Philosophy, he has published a book containing several chapters on that subject, he has been an examiner, and Dr. Chubb has no respect for his knowledge of Indian Philosophy. Should it not follow that Dr. Chubb does not think too highly of some examiners?

Philosophy deals with the broad features of the Universe and with Reality, and not with factual or historical details; hence one is seldom completely stumped for an answer and high-sounding vagueness can pass for profundity. That is why dull students hope to, and do, pass in Philosophy. Queer that the subtle Doctor should not have realised this!

In *Quest* No. 5, I successfully answer

ered the charge that I send up 'students who write rubbish', by showing that I put up a very strong case against it. Dr. Chubb has not disproved this. He couldn't do so. He is thus foiled in showing a discrepancy between my principles and my practice. His venom now frames a more serious accusation (quite unconnected with the main issue) that I transferred the charge to my Principal and the Head of the Department. These gentlemen have no need to look after themselves nor do they require Dr. Chubb's championship, for the same charge cannot apply to them. In deciding whether to send up students they are guided by their own principles, and in Wilson College we respect one another's opinions.

Now about my 'elementary mistake in Logic'—the Doctor's trump card. Let me be honest with him. When he showed me the mistake, I confess I *was* puzzled at my 'howler', and, not having a ready-made answer, I at once admitted my error. But in the context of my whole Paper I did not think it of sufficient moment to give it a second thought. I did not suspect the Doctor would use it as evidence. One may state a truth, and yet not be able to explain or justify it at short notice. In this sense my explanation was an 'after-thought'. It does not destroy the formal character of Logic, for it is true irrespective of any special subject-matter.

But let us, for argument's sake, grant that it was a 'blunder'—childish, irredeemable, absolute. How far does this take us? Dr. Chubb has not denied that the error is an insignificant one and leaves the main part of my Paper untouched. He is making this mole-hill into a mountain because he wants to throw his readers off the main scent. My contention in *Quest* No. 4 was that the Congress was a farce and that the anti-western attitude was unsound. This contention and the facts and arguments that support it can hardly be refuted by a little error (be it even elementary) in my Paper.

And, as I have pointed out before, to make a slip is one thing, to jump up on the platform and talk of everything except the subject under consideration is quite another. The great Doctor could of course never have made a slip in his life, or—hardly ever. Incidentally, to refer to private correspondence is immoral, but to refer—earlier—to a private conversation is perfectly moral.

The nimble Doctor's dialectical acrobatics are delightful. 'How can one say, after something has happened, that this is what we want unless this is what one had already got?' says he. Bravo! a *petitio principii*! But surely I did not say there was not a single good discussion at the Congress. I have said 'on the whole' (*Quest* No. 4, p. 30), and in the case of phenomena like conferences etc. most statements are to be taken as true *on the whole*. What was the need for Dr. Chubb to tell the Chairman repeatedly that he 'wanted the good discussion to continue'? Was it not the order of the day? Did he not expect it to continue? Then what a waste of precious breath! Or was he, from previous experience, apprehensive that it might be a fickle transitory phase? 'I myself do not feel...we can be complacent about the standard of the papers read and the level of the discussions that followed.' (*Quest* No. 5) These are not my words, they are the worthy Doctor's, but they echo *my* views. Strange! But *Truth is stranger...*
Bombay S. OOKERJEE

This correspondence is now closed.—EDITOR

To The Editor, QUEST

A QUESTION OF VALUES

Sir,

Recently in a Bombay weekly I reviewed a book on New China by the Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly who had visited that country sometime ago.

While dealing with the vital question regarding the advisability of India's following the Chinese way, he maintained that India should keep to her democratic path but was lost at the same time in admiration over the achievements of New China. I thought it fit to point out in my review that these achievements were not worth the price being paid for them by the masses of China. Like in all other totalist countries China's economic progress (which incidentally, does not compare so very favourably with India's) has been brought about at the expense of untold misery on the part of the people of the country. And in my review I said so in no uncertain terms.

A few days after publication of the review, coming out of a shop I happened to run into two old acquaintances of mine. Without returning my greetings they just turned their faces and walked away, though not before letting me know in a few terse words that my 'reactionary' review of the book on China had disgusted

them too much to allow them to have anything more to do with me.

We all know about the Marxist's indifference toward the human aspect, in as far as it does not help the furtherance of his interests, but I must confess that its disquieting quality had not struck me before with such immediacy. As I watched the retreating figures of my friends, or rather my former friends, I could not help being repelled anew by their intransigent ideology which entails such complete disregard for the person as such. I had known the two of them for quite some time and yet the mere fact of my not sharing their belief that conditions in New China were gradually approximating those obtainable in Paradise was enough to estrange them from me for ever. I know that the inability to share such beliefs regarding communist countries implies vital differences of opinion over fundamental questions, but why must that necessarily involve the severance of all human relations?

Calcutta

P. K. SAHA

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Pudumaippithan is the nom-de-plume of Mr. S. Vriddachalam, who died a few years ago while still comparatively young. Tamil fiction at the time he began his literary career was almost entirely confined to escapist stories, artificial in the extreme, and almost always dealing with the upper middle classes. Pudumaippithan was the first writer to revolt against these conventions.

Daya Krishna (Delhi) recently published his dissertation on *The Nature of Philosophy* for which the University of Delhi awarded him a doctorate. His articles have appeared or are shortly to appear in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *The Philosophical Review*, *Ethics*, *The Journal of Religion* and *The Journal of Philosophy* (U.S.A.), *Mind*, *The Review of Economic Studies*, *Diogenes* (France), *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* (Belguim), *Studium Generale* (West Germany), *The Eastern Economist*, *Commerce and Thought* (Delhi). A recent article of his on Marxist Economics has aroused international comment and is being translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish and Arabic.

Robert Flynn works as a research analyst in Human Relations Area Files Incorporated, U.S.A. This is a social science research organization sponsored by sixteen member universities, with headquarters at Yale. It is a unique kind of reference library which organizes material on a wide variety of subjects and then makes it available to each of the sponsoring organizations through photostat and microfilming methods. The reader is not merely referred to lists of books on any particular topic but is actually provided with full summaries of them and comprehensive data from all relevant sources.

N. V. Haldankar (Bombay) is one of the prize-winners of the Agfa Grand National Photographic Contest 1955.

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