

An
Adventure
of
Ideas

QUEST

Editors: Abu Sayeed Ayyub, Amlan Datta

SIBNARAYAN RAY

Albert Camus

EDWARD SHILS

The Culture of the Indian Intellectual

BISHNU DEY

Art and Education

ABU SAYEED AYYUB

Varieties of Moral Experience

A. B. SHAH

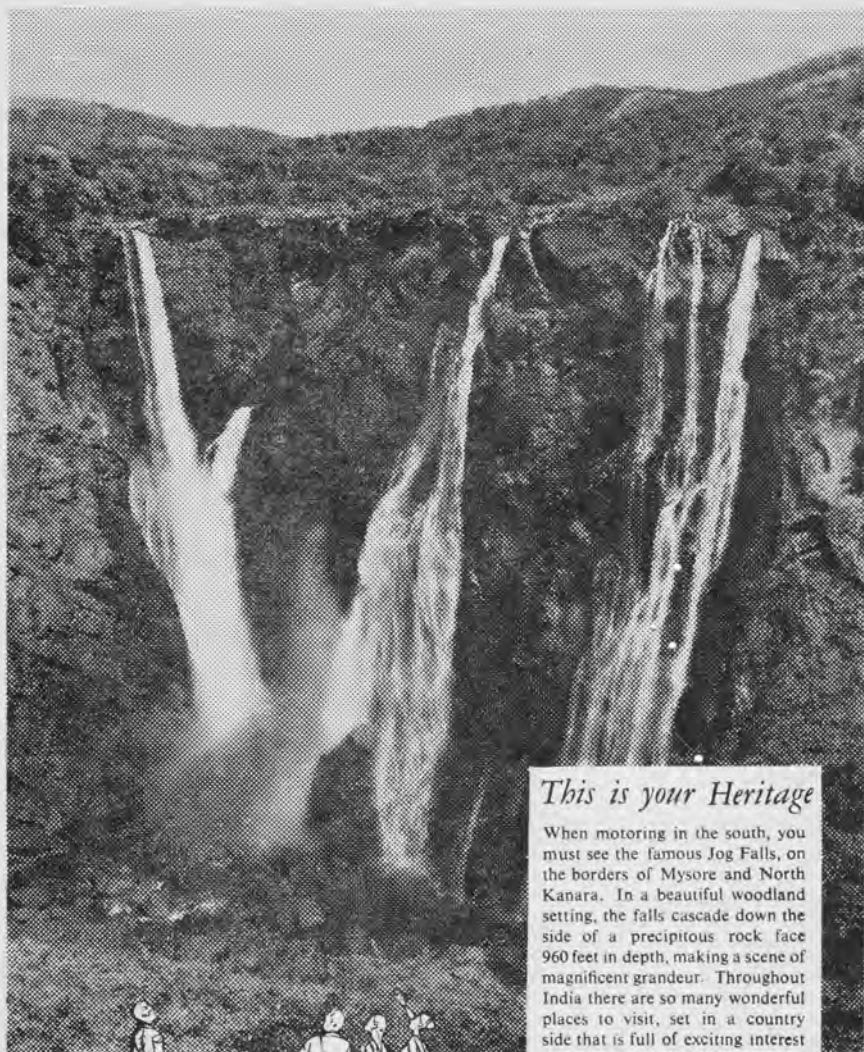
Democracy and Public Opinion

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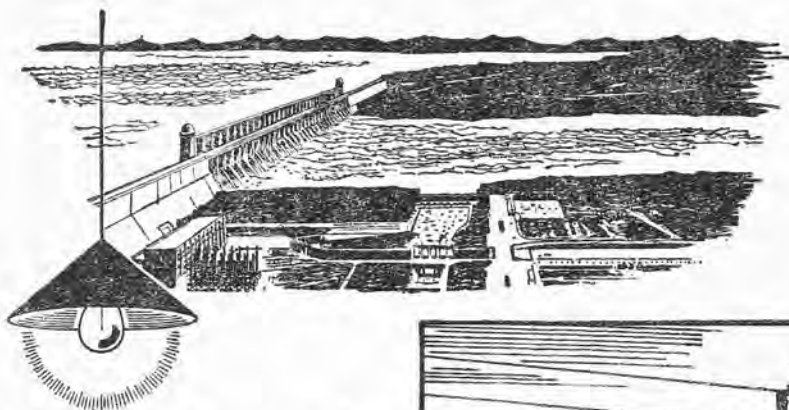
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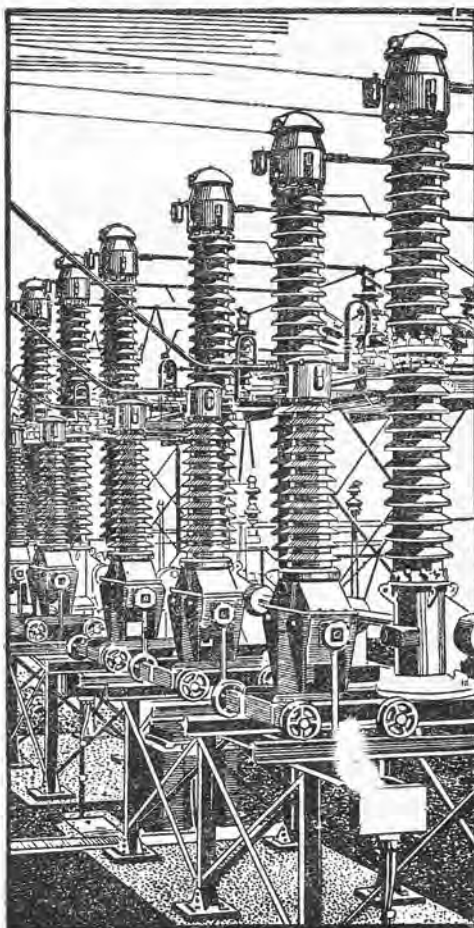


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Why is Indian food 'hot'?

YOU: Why is our cooking 'hot'? Because we like it that way, I suppose.

WE: There are other reasons, too. People who know about food will tell you...

NUTRITIONIST: A lot of what we like or don't like in food is governed by factors that would seem to have little to do with cooking. Climate, for instance.

YOU: But what does climate have to do with spices in our food?

NUTRITIONIST: In hot countries like ours, food deteriorates faster on keeping. This is because the climate encourages bacterial and enzyme action in food. So, food goes bad quicker and more easily than in cooler climates. To check this, food has to be preserved—spices in food act as preservatives because they check bacterial action.

YOU: I didn't know that...

NUTRITIONIST: And not just that. Spices tend to stimulate the appetite—a very necessary thing in hot climates like ours.

YOU: A good thing, too. Look how good they make food taste! Imagine eating bland food without any spices at all. Awful!

WE: This leads us to another point. It's not just blandness that we dislike—it's a lack of variety in flavours, whether or not the food is spiced.

NUTRITIONIST: We cannot eat food that tastes the same, day after day. That's why we *vary* our food. This helps us get the proteins, carbohydrates, fats, minerals and vitamins that we need.

YOU: All this is very well, but the taste of food hardly seems to change sometimes, however *varied* our diet.

NUTRITIONIST: But this has to do with

cooking methods: How we cook our food and what we use for cooking.

WE: Take fats. They are essential for most cooking operations. A lot depends on the kind of fat you use...

YOU: Well... but I don't understand.

WE: The point is, a fat can make or mar a meal. It can help bring out the natural flavour of food or impose its own taste. Therefore, the choice of a cooking fat is as important as the choice of the things it cooks.

NUTRITIONIST: Besides, a good cooking fat adds extra food value to cooking. Essential Vitamins A and D, for instance.

WE: That brings us to DALDA Vanaspati, which meets all the requirements of an ideal cooking fat.

YOU: Surely, one only uses DALDA for frying.

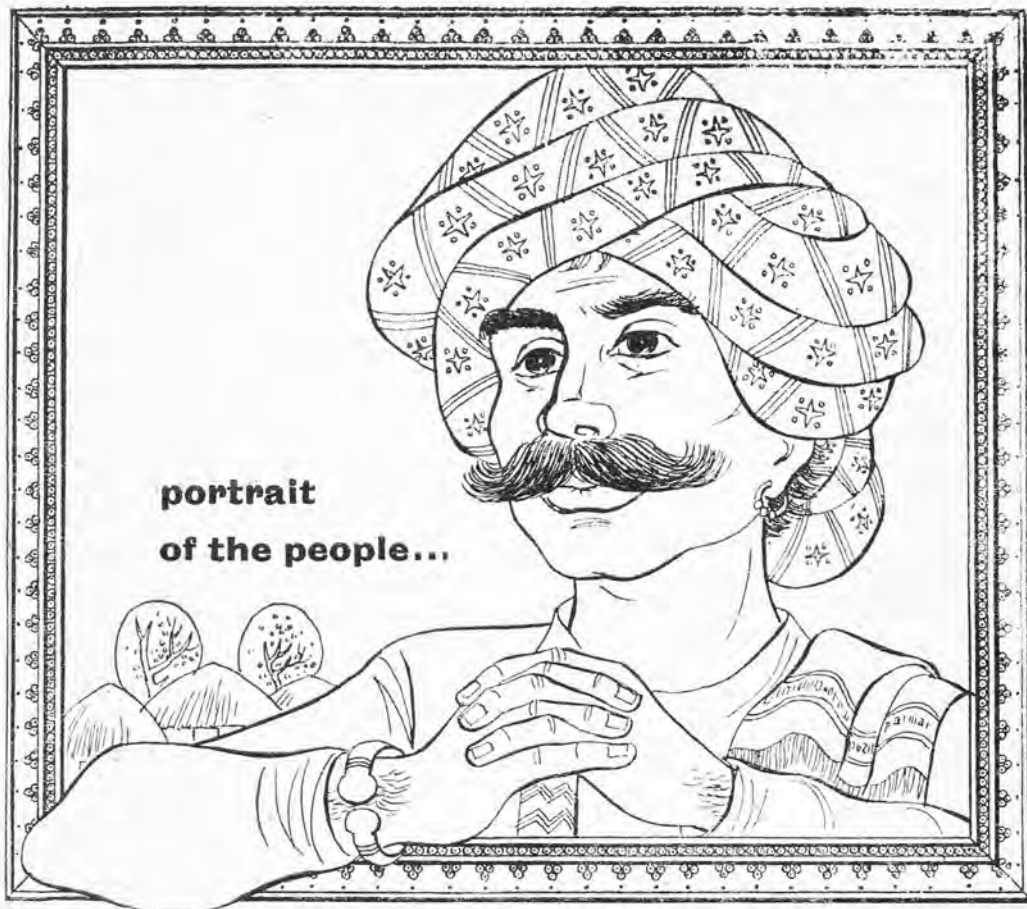
WE: That is needlessly restricting its use. DALDA is good for all cooking. It helps bring out the natural flavour of food—and does not add its own. What's more, it contains Vitamins A and D. Seven hundred International Units of Vitamin A and 56 I.U. of Vitamin D are added to every ounce.

YOU: How do these vitamins help?

WE: They don't make any difference to the taste of food, if that's what you mean. But they are essential for health. And DALDA comes to you in hygienically sealed tins, so you can be sure of its goodness.

YOU: Interesting... never thought that the choice of fat had so much to do with the taste of food. Mind you, we've used DALDA for years, but now I can see it being used for *all* our cooking.

WE: Millions of people are doing so today—why not you?



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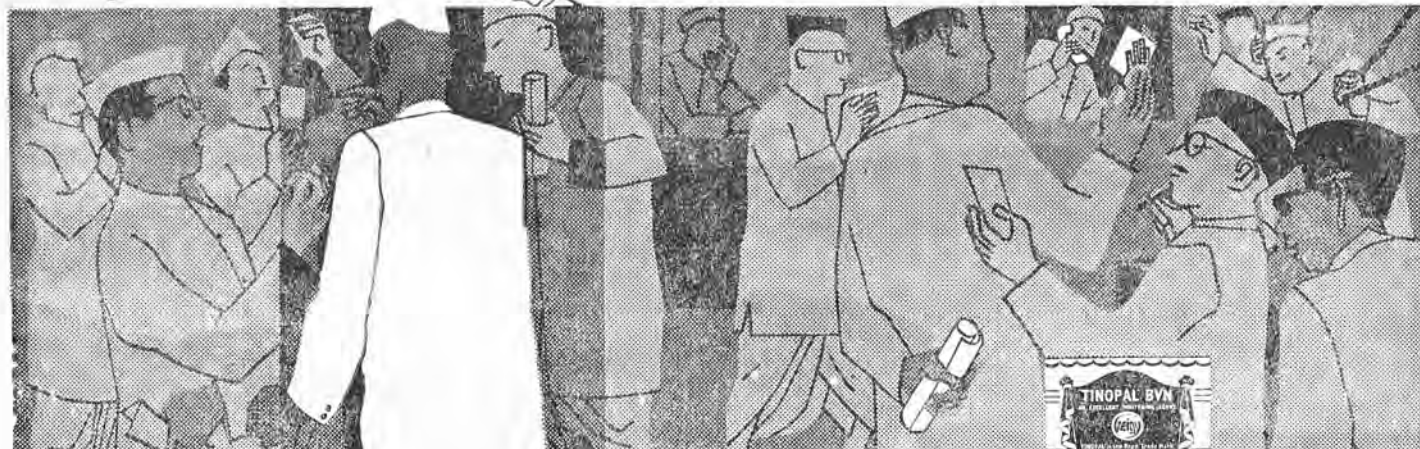
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Q U E S T

A Quarterly of Inquiry, Criticism and Ideas

Edited by ABU SAYEED AYYUB *and* AMLAN DATTA

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Albert Camus

By SIBNARAYAN RAY

"I still think that this world has no higher meaning. But I am also sure that something in it has meaning. This is man, for man alone in the universe insists upon having a meaning."

LETTERS TO A GERMAN FRIEND

ARTISTS, wrote Ezra Pound, are the antennae of the race. Gifted with sensitivity in much more than average measure they feel earlier and more acutely what is happening to the community in their own age. And since their vocation is to crystallise their experience into significant form, we turn to their works for a key to the contemporary human situation.

But a work of art is more than a document of an epoch. Artists are creators. Their feelings, in being expressed, are transformed into novel and unique visions which transcend their time and society, because they are at one and the same time very individual and very universal. This is why a playwright of Periclean Athens or Elizabethan England or a poet of classical China may be discovered by a modern Indian reader as his kin-in-spirit, signalling across the barriers of history and geography. The artist is the loneliest of men in the act of creation; and yet by that very act he reaches out to all mankind.

More poignantly than most other writers of his generation, Albert Camus' (whose sudden and premature death in a car-accident at the age of 46 we deeply mourn) sensed, expressed and thus helped to make us conscious of the profound spiritual crisis of modern civilisation. In his memorable speech of acceptance of the Nobel prize, he himself rightly emphasised his preoccupation with his own time. 'Born into a corrupt society in which are mingled revolutions that have failed, techniques gone mad, dead gods and outworn ideologies,

in which second-rate powers are capable of destroying everything but can no longer convince us, in which intelligence has sunk so low as to serve the cause of hatred and oppressions,' he tried to comprehend and illumine the universal nihilism of his generation. 'I have been through despair, confusion, violence, and the vertigo of destruction', he wrote on an earlier occasion, 'I cannot judge in a detached way an age to which I fully belong; I can only judge it from within by becoming one with it.'² Yet the task which he set himself as a man of his times and as an artist was to go beyond this nihilism, 'to find' (in his own words) 'some law to live by,'³ to extract from disorder a unity which justifies life and inspires creative efforts. He was thus not only a spokesman but also a path-finder. This double responsibility to which he dedicated his art — of knowing and expressing the anguish of modern man and at the same time of reaching and communicating a vision that would sustain man's faith in himself — gave unique significance to his work, and made him one of the greatest writers of our epoch.

Albert Camus was born in Algeria on November 7, 1913. His father was a farm labourer who was killed at the Battle of the Marne in 1914. The contrast between the splendour of the Algerian landscape and his destitute childhood appears, on his own admission, to have left a lasting influence on his life, sharpening his sensitiveness to the absurd opulence of nature,

absurd because it was so utterly indifferent to social injustice, and quickening his spirit of revolt which was, however, saved from sterile bitterness by love for his co-sharers in privation. 'I bit into the already sun-gilded fruit of the world', he wrote in one of his earliest essays, 'overwhelmed as I felt its strong, sweet juices trickle from my lips'.⁴ But 'the joys of the Algerian landscape are without hope', a statement which unconsciously echoes Mallarmé's famous phrase (in a very different context): 'magnifique mais qui sans espoir'.⁵ The contrast thus possibly hastened his confrontation with the 'absurd', but it also contributed to nourish the other two elements of his personality, his passionate dedication to the sensuous and his commitment to solidarity with those who suffer and are forced to silence. 'I open my eyes and heart to the intolerable grandeur of the sky gorged with heat'.⁶ But the artist 'stands mid-way between this beauty which he cannot do without and the community from which he can not uproot himself'.⁷ The writer 'cannot, today, enter the service of those who make history: he is in the service of those who endure it'.⁸

Born in poverty and deprived of his father before he was barely one year old, Camus was stripped very early of the twin illusions natural to children (but blindly held on to by many older people who are afraid to grow), that the world waits on man's happiness and that there is a loving all-powerful guardian to protect man from suffering and disappointment. He, however, did not let despair cripple his will or intelligence, nor did he try to teach himself the balancing subterfuge of the accosting profile. He worked his way through the university of Algiers, doing jobs successively as salesman of car accessories, broker, police clerk and meteorologist, and took his Master's degree in Philosophy with a thesis on Plotinus and Augustine. He organised

a theatre group, *L'Equipe*, produced several plays (one of them, composed by himself and his colleagues, was banned by the Government of Algeria), was temporarily banished on the charge of subversive politics, travelled in Italy, Austria and other places, published two slender volumes of travel journals (*L'Envers et L'Endroit*, 1937; *Noces*, 1939), served as a journalist on the *Algiers Républicain*, and then came to Paris in 1940 to work for *Paris-Soir*. Next year he returned to Algeria, but went again to France in 1942. His strong libertarian sentiments drew him very soon into the Resistance movement where during the next years he worked with the famous group 'Combat' and later on became editor of its organ. Here he had as his colleagues and regular contributors Malraux, Sartre, Bernanos, Raymond Aron, and François Bondy. But the solidarity of the French Radical intellectuals that had been forged in the Resistance movement disintegrated soon after the end of the war; and in 1947 Camus withdrew from politics, leaving the editorship of *Combat* to Claude Bourdet (presently editor of *France Observateur*), to devote himself fully and completely to his vocation as a thinker and literary artist.

Already in 1940 Camus had begun work on his first novel, *L'Etranger*, which was published in 1942, to be followed immediately after by the book of essays, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*. These two volumes established him immediately as a writer of major significance. In 1943 and 1944 were published clandestinely two of his four 'open' *Lettres à un Ami Allemand*, which traced with amazingly supranational candour and insight the common source of German totalitarianism and French passivity to the infectious disease of moral nihilism and pleaded for the affirmation of 'human justice against eternal injustice', of 'human solidarity against man's outrageous destiny'.⁹ The imaginary German friend to

whom these letters were addressed had set up despair as a principle, thus pushing it to the point of rupture where anything was permissible including murder and deception. The writer of the letters, on the contrary, had felt in despair the imperative to create happiness as man's protest against universal unhappiness. Two plays, *Le Malentendu* and *Caligula*, were also published in 1944. The years that followed his withdrawal from active politics were very rich in both fictional and speculative writings. There were novels (*La Peste*, 1947; *La Chute*, 1956), plays (*L'Etat de Siège*, 1948; *Les Justes*, 1950), stories (*L'Exil et le Royaume*, 1957), and essays on diverse themes (*Actuelles*, 1944-48; *Actuelles II*, 1948-53; *L'Homme Révolté*, 1951; *L'Eté*, 1954; and *Réflexions sur la Guillotine*, 1957, published jointly with Koestler's reflections on the same theme). These reveal not only Camus' deepening knowledge of the crisis of our age, but also his very individual development towards an affirmative humanism in contradistinction to the three most widely prevalent ideologies among his contemporaries – communism, existentialism, and various reformulated versions of the Christian faith. The development involved him in severe controversies with many of his elders and colleagues, among them André Breton, Gabriel Marcel and, specially, Jean-Paul Sartre and his school; and we owe to these debates some of the clearest statements of his mature ideals.

The hard struggle of his early years followed by the grim period of Nazi occupation had left its mark not only on his mind but also on his body in the form of tuberculosis, and when I met him briefly in 1957 he was convalescing from a recent attack. But although he had maintained that 'suicide was the one truly serious philosophical problem',¹⁰ he was then and in the following years far too occupied with the

aspiration to put 'in the centre of my work the wonderful silence of a mother and the effort to rediscover a justice and a love which would be a match for the silence'¹¹ to be remotely tempted by the 'stupid felicity of stones'. 'After twenty years' work', he wrote in 1958, 'I still believe that I have not yet begun my work'.¹²

And then, only a few days ago, (on January 4 this year) as if to confirm his defiant thesis of 'eternal injustice', the 'inexorable order of things'¹³ tripped him up in an accident and snatched him away at the fullness of his creative powers.

One of the ambitions of the true artist, wrote Camus, is to bear witness to the human condition under the auspices of his age.¹⁴ The age to which he bore witness, his own and ours, is both the product and the repudiation of the *weltanschauung* which separates the modern from the medieval, and which was conceived during the Renaissance and developed in the following centuries. The Renaissance placed man in the centre of its world view, the human individual with his almost unlimited power of self-transformation, 'his freedom to develop himself by his own energies' (Humboldt), who by virtue of his reason not only established his existence, identity and integrity, but was also assured of harmony with the law-governed universe and of sharing a common essence or nature with other fellow humans. Rejecting the medieval conception of *humanitas fragilis*, Pico della Mirandola extolled man as unique in creation because of his freedom to choose between alternatives and his power of multiformity. There was in this view no conflict between man's freedom and the order of the universe; for, this order corresponded with man's reason which by bringing him knowledge also increased his power to remove limitations on his unfoldment. Nor was there any unbridgeable gulf

between the unique individual and the human race. Descartes demonstrated that the self's existence was proved beyond doubt by the act of reasoning (*cogito, ergo sum*); and his senior contemporary, Grotius, explained that reason was both the proof and the content of human nature which was the source of universal human rights and laws, of ultimate values and norms. Humanist philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries amplified and propagated these notions; and in the nineteenth century, thanks to the spectacular advancement of the sciences and the industrial revolution, this confident and dynamic world-view, evolved in the West, began to penetrate and transform the culture of various non-western communities, thus opening the perspective of a universal civilization which would replace God by man, faith by scientific method, and reconcile reason and freedom relating both to human creativity and the growth of man's power to manipulate his environment.

But a contrary process had also set in, the heart-breaking implications of which became clear only in the present century. Technology improved the living standards, but at the same time proposed to subordinate man to his own invention, the machine. Its logic pointed to standardization and uniformity, greater organization and concentration of power, obliteration of individuality and reduction of men to the masses. While man's knowledge advanced and his power increased, instead of expanding the frontiers of individual freedom, this knowledge and power appeared to be enmeshing mankind in a net of total slavery. Atomic physics has made the very survival of mankind depend on the whim of a few power-maniacs. Man is thus alienated from and subjected to his own creation and has become a helpless spectator of his futility.

The mass-society ushered by the industrial revolution embodied a paradox. It

enforced solidarity by effacing all distinction and thereby made the inner-oriented individual acutely conscious of his discrete existence, now threatened with extinction. While the community surrendered itself to conformism, individuals of finer sense and greater integrity found themselves shut in, mistrusted, unable to communicate with other people who had lost their privacy, and incapable of regaining their inner harmony broken under the impact of their violent self-consciousness. The hypothesis of a common human nature, instead of promising, as it had done to the earlier humanists, the development of the individual into *homo humanus*, now appeared to portend the triumph of mediocrity or the apotheosis of the lowest common denominator. The unique individual could no more aspire to grow into *L'uomo universale*; he became, in the words of Stendhal, 'un homme malheureux, en guerre avec toute la société'.¹⁵ He was a stranger, an outsider, obsessed with his inescapable loneliness. Inhibited by his sense of impotence on the one hand and propelled by the urge for self-assertion on the other, his mind began to swing between the alternative temptations of suicide and murder.

The growth of the sciences also appeared to reinforce certain ancient doubts about the tenability of the humanist world view. While astronomy accentuated the contrast between the awful immensity of the universe and man's inconsequential place in it, physics revealed how the processes of nature were utterly indifferent to man's survival, not to speak of his self-unfoldment. Evolution had no meaning in the cosmic context. Man's efforts and aspirations, his values and ideals, were alien to a universe ultimately fated by the 'degradation of energy' to complete homogeneity and disappearance of all forms (Second Law of Thermodynamics). The support which these values might derive from

human nature was severely shaken by the interpretations given to the findings of biology (especially genetics), anthropology, physiology, psychology and the social sciences. Although within each of these disciplines there were many contradictory schools of thought, and although a unified view of man based on the data of the different sciences has yet to emerge, the main trend would seem to be to dispossess man of the image of himself offered by the earlier humanists. The belief that man is essentially rational, moral and creatively inclined has given way in our century to a readmission of the cynical view which stressed unreason, disorder and the destructive impulses and cast doubt on integrity and growth. Human nature is now supposed to be inextricably tied to its dark animal ancestry; behind the changing facades of civilised norms and ideals are preserved the instincts and habits formed during the long period of man's savage existence. Moreover, the individual is subject to the iron determinism of heredity, but at the same time he is found to be an easy prey to reflex-conditioning. Besides, he is torn within himself, his subterranean impulses being engaged in a perpetual struggle with his inhibitions. His intuition of selfhood is of dubious worth; and his values are relative and unstable, changing from time to time, place to place, group to group, even person to person, and in the same person from one state of mind to another. Man's ideals are prone to disintegration under pressure of man's deep-seated animalism on the one hand and of quickly-changing social and physical environments on the other. No wonder that confronted with such an image of himself in the mirror of science modern man would feel overcome with vertiginous despair.

Man's alienation—from the universe, from society and from himself—is, of course, not an altogether novel discovery

of the modern mind. The Greeks certainly were aware of it, and the later Stoics tried to grapple with it at least in some of its aspects. Christianity emphasised its metaphysical dimension in the doctrine of original sin, but then 'skipped' it by its blind faith in ultimate 'atonement' and grace. In the nineteenth century it again began to occupy the imagination of the more sensitive writers and intellectuals, due on the one hand to the rapid decomposition of faith in a providential order under the impact of scientific knowledge, and on the other to the 'dehumanization of humanity' brought about by the industrial revolution. Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Marx and Nietzsche were deeply concerned with alienation, albeit with different degrees of intensity, and they groped, each of them, towards his own particular vision of transcendence. But in no country did it grow into such an obsession with creative writers and intellectuals as in France. In Stendhal's conception of existence as a prison enclosed and 'honeycombed with high walls' where the individual is an *étranger* or outsider, torn between *logique* and *espagnolisme*, a conflict which leads ultimately and inevitably to *le fiasco*; in Baudelaire's agony of unaccomplished transcendence (*un dépassement figé*, as Sartre put it)¹⁰; in Mallarmé's symbolism of the Swan and the Faun; in Flaubert's ruthless exposition of the process that ends in the 'double breakdown of personal and material relations' (from which Proust claimed to have learnt so much)—we witness the fearful progress of a refinement of self-consciousness which can end only by destroying itself.

It is, however, in our present century, denuded of nearly every assurance and hope by the experience of repeated mass-murders on an unprecedented scale, of totalitarian tyrannies dedicated to the systematic destruction of human will and intelligence, of knowledge making con-

science a victim to power, that man's absurd existence has become the universal theme of literature and philosophy. Kafka, Unamuno, Eliot, O'Neill, Huxley, Lorca, Sartre, Ionesco, Jean Genet—the list of the explorers, great and small, can be endlessly extended. This was also Camus' theme. But though he came late and had to begin rather early, he brought to his exploration such intellectual clarity, moral earnestness and wealth of imagination that he soon surpassed many of his older contemporaries.

Camus grappled with the antinomy of existence in its multiple forms—between man's irrepressible urge to find a sanction for his creative and moral pursuits in a universal and eternal order and the absolute indifference of the universe to that urge; between knowledge and ethics, understanding and judgement; between art and history; between the private and the public, the individual and the race; between self-transcendence and being true to oneself. In consonance with the great tradition of French literature his mind worked on two planes—of the abstract, logical or discursive, and of the concrete, fictional or poetic. The planes, though conceptually discrete, were often in reality fused, the logical concretising itself into a myth, the fiction baring its heart to reveal a philosophical debate. As Sartre rightly pointed out, Camus had the Mediterranean temperament which showed itself in 'the turn of his reasoning, the clarity of his ideas, the cut of his expository style, and a certain kind of solar, ceremonious and sad sombreness'.¹⁷ But Sartre, I believe, was somewhat misled when he assumed that Camus' discursive writings were but commentaries on his fictional works. In the first place, while the plays, novels and stories illumine from various angles the multivalent experience of the absurd, the essays, especially the later ones, place their accent on the need for and possibility of going beyond despair.

This might not be quite so obvious from a comparison of *The Stranger* with *The Myth of Sisyphus*; but it could be hardly missed from a close reading of *The Just*, *The Rebel*, the two volumes of *Actuelles*, the later essays in the collection *Summer*, and *The Fall*. The essays, in other words, move very clearly towards a constructive philosophy which would rescue human values from ontological nihilism; but the thinker's vision of 'a new renaissance', of 'doors opening from the walls of imprisonment',¹⁸ hardly communicates itself to his plays and novels. The only exception to this dichotomy is *La Peste*. Secondly, although neither in his fictional nor in his philosophical writings, Camus permitted any illusions about resolving the ultimate dualism between the human and the cosmic, his effort to discover ways for sustaining man in his quest for values in defiance of a meaningless universe rarely took him beyond a narrow stoicism in his novels and plays. In his essays, on the other hand, a much wider range is indicated, from pagan sensuousness to the creation of beauty in art — 'this living virtue on which is founded the common dignity of man and the world in which he lives'¹⁹—, from the certainty of the 'invincible summer and the ever-returning sap'²⁰ to the *efficacité* of authentic revolt, from solidarity in suffering to unity in love, from the epicurean cultivation of the good life for its own sake to man's perennial quest for truth and urge for freedom. This difference makes Camus' death in an accident all the more tragic. For, although he could certainly pursue his thoughts on an abstract plane, Camus, as he himself repeatedly emphasised, was primarily not a philosopher but an artist who could best seize and communicate the full meaning of his thoughts in the concrete form of fiction. The transmutation of the logical into the aesthetic, even in a mind capable of moving on both planes, permits

no hurrying or shortcut. It needs time and patience and the slow maturing of power. Camus had the patience and, I believe, he was developing the power. Death denied him the time; and although what remains is rich enough, we nonetheless have good reason to feel cheated of the fulfilment of an even greater promise.

Camus' reckoning with the absurd began quite early in his life. The rich sensuousness of his two early books of travel is poignant with the realisation that the world, so magnificent, holds out no hope of salvation beyond death, and that man must seek no justification for his joy or sorrow. It was, however, in his next two works that he came to real grips with this revelation. Meursault, the hero of *L'Etranger*, has lived a life without meaning or purpose, resigned to the course of events, a stranger like many of us to his human self, his will paralysed by habit, incapable of love and bereft of feeling and memory; in short, without any perception of the tragic dualism of man and nature. A blind combination of circumstances turns him into a murderer; and then, condemned to death, he begins to discover his humanity and its fragile uniqueness in a foreign universe. This discovery gives him the strength to reject the false hope of salvation offered by the prison chaplain. 'Emptied of hope', he lays his heart 'open to the benign indifference of the universe', this time, however, not in passive boredom but with a tragic consciousness of life's absurdity.

In *L'Etranger*, the awakening comes only towards the end, to reveal a dimension of meaning that had been concealed until then to its narrator-hero. The meaning is analysed in its rich complexity in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*. Not only is the individual divorced from the universe, he is also a stranger to his race; he is even a perpetual stranger to his self-consciousness. The sentiment of

the absurd is born in our recognition of this total estrangement. The discovery that everything in existence is foreign to man's subjectivity, is non-rational and amoral, that whatever we create or cherish is predestined to decay, that even the individual's own self is caught in an unresolvable ambivalence between the datum of the passing moment and the desire for the eternal—this leads man to what Camus claimed here to be the only really philosophical problem: suicide. By facing this problem squarely in the face we find out the meaning of life. In Camus' imagination this meaning was embodied in the ancient myth of Sisyphus. Sisyphus was condemned eternally to push up to a mountain peak a huge piece of rock which would slip back to the bottom every time it reached near the top. Like him, man is ever trying to put the stamp of himself on an indifferent world. The attempt is, of course, fated to failure; but the very perseverance in this effort in the full knowledge of its foredoomed futility bestows on man a spirituality which is unique and its own reward. 'The clairvoyance which constitutes his torment consummates his victory'.²¹

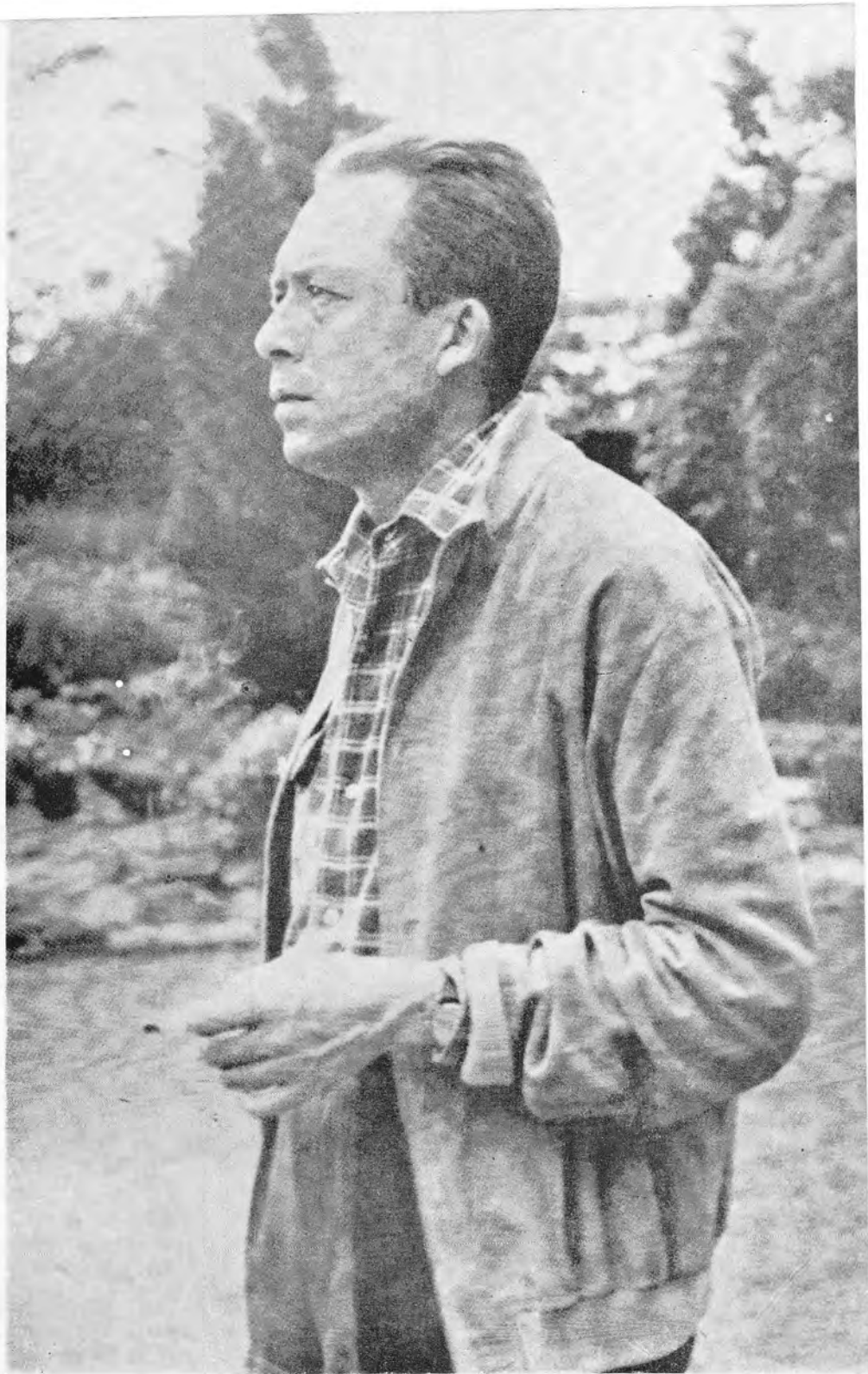
In the plays and novels which followed these two books the sense of victory, however, is rarely communicated. What we have are situations revealing the absurd from different angles, with or without any lucid awareness of it on the part of the protagonists. Even those who achieve the clairvoyance of Sisyphus do not seem to radiate their intuition of a significance-yielding futility. In *La Chute*, possibly Camus' most daring and complex work of fiction, Clamence who, like Coleridge's Mariner, tells the story of his 'fall' in a confessional monologue, has acquired through ruthless introspection a clairvoyance of absurdity which is without parallel even in Camus' writings. Before his 'fall', as a brilliant and successful Parisian lawyer who had chosen to defend the weak against

the strong, he used to live in the tranquil innocence of self-satisfaction. From this Eden he was driven out by a sudden and mysterious laughter which shattered his complacency and urged him to pitiless re-examination of his life. This was his first 'fall', which from Camus' point of view was really his awakening to his human privilege. He tried to muffle the laughter, but although it sometimes became dim it would never disappear. And so, after having made his exploration of the existential inferno, he finally realises that there is no exit. And yet in the end he too finds this knowledge impossible to bear and has to seek escape in ironical duplicity. This is the real 'fall'; for Clamence who has already been dispossessed of his innocence now loses the honesty born of knowledge.

No one knew more acutely than Camus that living all the time in the awareness of our alienation is a terrible fate. It would drive most people to insanity, suicide or murder. To live consciously in defiance of the world's meaninglessness required nourishment which could scarcely be drawn from the experience of defiance alone. But Camus would permit no illusion to cover or compromise our knowledge of the absurd; the nourishment in no case should be a dope. He, therefore, like Meursault, rejected the false comforts of religious faith; like Dr. Rieux, the diarist of *La Peste*, he must find his resources from within strictly human grounds. To ascribe moral character to an amoral order was not only intellectually dishonest; it deprived man of his tragic dignity and uniqueness. Nor would he have anything to do with that other even more deadly and tempting illusion of this age: communism. In *L'Homme Révolté*, Camus explained with exemplary cogency and lucidity the many reasons why communism should be revolting to a man of conscience: its deceptive resolution of the antinomy of the human and the non-

human by subordinating both to a common dialectical process; its consequent reduction of the moral into the historical; its glorification of collective violence as the means to revolution; its total enslavement of the individual, in the name of liberty and justice, to historical, social and economic determinism on the ideological plane, and to the party and the state in real practice. 'Communism degrades men into things, entombs knowledge in ideology, and transforms our tragic pursuit of freedom to cheerful resignation to slavery.'²²

Rejecting the 'bad faith' (*mauvaise foi*) of both Christianity and communism, what spiritual sustenance could he discover and offer which, without obscuring the clairvoyance of the absurd, would nonetheless inspire men to 'fight openly against the death-instinct which is at work in our time.'²³ I believe that central to Camus' affirmative philosophy was his slowly maturing conception of human nature. It is in this recognition of a 'human essence', as he himself took pains to point out, that he fundamentally differed from Jean-Paul Sartre and his school of existentialists.²⁴ In most of his plays and novels, however, it is the negative implication of this concept—the suffering, confusion and anguish which characterise man as different from the rest of the world—which seems to preponderate. If, nevertheless, they move us so profoundly, this is because they force us to a sudden and ruthless confrontation with our tragic humanness, and thus act as the mysterious laughter in *La Chute*. In *La Peste*, the positive significance begins to illumine the negative. The epidemic which broke out in Oran brought with it not only death and suffering; it threatened to dispossess the citizens of what gave meaning to their lives—of love, self-respect, honesty, fellow-feeling, the very will to live. Yet, at the same time, this challenge of the plague also revealed to those who were willing to



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fight it the concealed spiritual resources of humanity. Tarron, the stranger in this tale, though almost as nondescript as Meursault, came to acquire that wisdom towards which his earlier prototype had begun to grope only towards the end of his life—that men, in spite of their absurd situation, did not have to choose between being either victims or hangmen, but that there was a third choice, that of the true healers. In Grand, the humble municipal clerk with ‘all the common features of people of in-consequence’, the sympathetic Dr. Rieux felt the presence of an ‘unobtrusive heroism’ concealed behind a comically sentimental facade. And the Doctor himself, although he had originally chosen his profession almost ‘absent-mindedly’, developed in the course of his obdurate fight against the epidemic into a ‘saint without god’. Thus in this novel we are introduced to both the qualities which unite men—their solidarity in suffering and their struggle for health, happiness and life. However, for a more explicit and detailed elaboration of his philosophy we must go to the essays, from *Sisyphus* to the ‘German’ letters, to the *Actuelles* volumes, to the collection *Summer*, but most important of all, to *L’Homme Révolté*.

Man’s essence, according to Camus, is what unites mankind and separates man from the world. Man’s uniqueness is also the source of his oneness with other men. (To Sartre, on the contrary, there is no human nature, there is only ‘a universal human condition’.)²⁵ Camus took from the Stoics their theory of *humanitas*, but radically reformulated it by divorcing it from the cosmic process. The human essence gives to the individual his integrity which creates order out of the disorder inflicted on him by the world; it provides him with an image of himself which he struggles to preserve against the corrupting pressures of the pre-human; it makes him the originator

of values which have the authority of his conscience but no support in any supra-human design or order. If these values are universally valid for all men, that is because they reflect what is universal to the human race. Camus thus emphasised one form of alienation—the cosmic—to indicate how the other forms might be grappled with—of the individual from the community, of the ‘is’ from the ‘ought’, of the fragmentary from the integral self—through man’s affirmation of his humanity.

Man alone in the universe seeks to understand reality. The effort always leads to new failure, yet it is never abandoned. This urge for knowledge is the intellectual content of human nature. He alone is gifted with the ‘hunger for a superior unity’, with a vision of beauty triumphing over chaos and decomposition, with a power to externalise this vision in art, and although he knows that ‘everything will return to meaninglessness in the end’, he nonetheless perseveres ‘to dominate the course of the flood.’²⁶ This pursuit of significant form reveals man’s aesthetic nature. Man is committed to ‘rectify the reality’ which he is trying to understand. He elicits from the sky and the desert and the sea such exhilaration as has no correspondence in nature, and brings forth from within himself ‘regulating presences’ or norms unknown to nature—love, friendship, sympathy, honesty, freedom, justice. This is his moral essence.

At the heart of this intellectual, aesthetic and ethical conception of human nature is Camus’ vision of man as the eternal rebel. Having acknowledged that the universe is intransigent, man refuses to resign himself to this knowledge. For he also possesses the intuitive certitude of his creative essence. This twofold knowledge is the source of the sentiment of the absurd, but it also gives man dignity and self-respect. ‘There is nothing nobler than the human mind at grips with a reality that transcends

it'. When the inner certainty gets dim, man finds his situation unbearable and is tempted to suicide. Thus man's existence is sustained both ontologically and psychologically by his essence. On the other hand, when he forgets the intransigence of the non-subjective, man arrogates to himself absolute freedom, and then driven by dreams of unlimited power he takes recourse to murder and violence. Thus, in history, we again and again find rebels changing themselves into tyrants. Creative revolt must acquire the wisdom of moderation which tempers freedom with knowledge. It refuses the illusions of 'atonement' whether by conquest (as promised by fascism and communism) or by self-abnegation (as demanded by Christianity). Its aim is to defend and bring into being such values which promote the individual's humanity in a non-human world.

Within the circumambient desert of contemporary nihilism Camus thus tried to develop an ethical oasis. If nothingness were all, there would be no question of good or evil, right or wrong. But since the human essence also exists, there is for man a universal criterion of value. Whatever leads to life, happiness, reduction of suffering, knowledge, beauty, creative expression, sense of human solidarity, is good. What leads to death, suffering, suppression or obscuration of knowledge, ugliness, impotence, or estrangement of man from man, is evil. So long as humanity exists, there will

always be the conflict between good and evil. But the distinction is clearly there, and therefore the choice. By choosing what is good, man will of course not transcend his dualism with the universe; but he will give to his absurdity the richness of meaning.

This is a very bald and inadequate précis of some of the thoughts and convictions which Camus developed from his exploration of the contemporary human situation and which he expressed with great beauty and lucidity in his essays. It is possible to question, as some critics have already done, as to how much of this tragic humanism would survive close logical analysis. To this question I propose to turn in the second part of this essay. There is, however, no scope for doubt as regards his magnificent contribution, as artist and thinker, towards expressing and illumining our universal despair and towards reorienting the 'men of finer sense' from destructive to constructive inquiry. As the title of *L'Exil et le Royaume* indicates, Camus saw man as an exile in a foreign universe who nonetheless carried his own domain within himself. It is a measure of his greatness that more intensely than possibly any other literary artist of his generation he should have communicated to us through his 'mutilated oeuvre' both the anguish of this exile and the certitude of our kingdom.

(1) In preparing this essay, besides Camus' writings, I have drawn upon the following books and essays on him: John Cruickshank—Albert Camus and the literature of Revolt; Albert Maquet—Albert Camus, the invincible summer; Philip Thody—Albert Camus, a study of his work; Emmanuel Mounier—L'Espoir des Désespérés, 'Albert Camus ou l'appel des humiliés'; J. P. Sartre—Situations I, 'Explication de l'Etranger.'

(2) Actuelles (3) Nobel Prize Speech (4) Noces (5) "magnificent without hope", from Sonnet beginning "Le vierge, le vivace..." (6) Noces (7) Nobel Prize Speech (8) Ib. (9) Lettres à un Ami Allemand (10) Le Mythe de Sisyphe (11) L'Envers et l'Endroit, preface to the new edition (12) Ib. (13) Le Malentendu (14) Actuelles (15) Stendhal, Le Rouge et le Noir (16) J.-P. Sartre, Baudelaire (17) J.-P. Sartre, Situations I, "Explication de l'Etranger" (18) Actuelles II (19) L'Homme Révolté (20) L'Été (21) Le Mythe de Sisyphe (22) L'Homme Révolté (23) Nobel Prize Speech (24) L'Homme Révolté (25) J.-P. Sartre, L'Existentialisme est un humanisme (26) L'Homme Révolté.

Democracy and Opinion

By A. B. SHAH

I. Introduction

THE problem of the satisfactory functioning of democratic institutions may, in a sense, be equated with that of ensuring the operation of enlightened public opinion at different levels of decision-making in social life. Lincoln's characterization of democratic government as 'government by the people' can only be understood in this sense. To interpret this phrase literally, as some critics of representative democracy have done, would be to underestimate the complexity of modern social organizations. This is not to make a plea for gigantism; it is only a reminder of the limitations imposed by the scientific revolution on possible decentralization. Secondly, just as 'economic autarchy' on the individual or national plane is an out-dated concept, so also the concept of autarchy in the larger field of public life is equally an out-dated, indeed an atavistic, one. The problem of making representative democracy an efficient instrument for the realization of human values is, therefore, not one of transforming it into 'direct' democracy, but of making it more sensitive to the citizen's needs and aspirations. And since power, even if originally in a diffused state, tends to coagulate into fewer and larger clusters, eternal vigilance is the only way of preserving and improving the usefulness of democratic institutions. That is why enlightened public opinion is, in the ultimate analysis, the only guarantee of a functioning democracy.

But what is enlightened public opinion?

It certainly is not *vox populi*, though there can be no public opinion, enlightened or otherwise, in the absence of freedom of thought and expression. However, 'enlightened' is as important an attribute as 'public' of the type of opinion that is indispensable for democracy. For the 'sovereignty of the people', taken as an absolute of political theory without any normative or functional restrictions, is but an abstraction that can play havoc in public life. Indeed, it has already done so, and we who live in the mid-twentieth century should not find it difficult to perceive that the transition from Rousseau to Marx and Lenin is a natural and logical one.¹

Whatever else enlightened opinion may be, it is characterized by sobriety, rationality, empiricism and comprehensiveness of approach. Sobriety does not exclude passion; it only harnesses it to the service of a creative purpose. Rationality implies an awareness of the likely causal implications of the action one recommends. Empiricism ensures that one's reasoning is rooted in the facts of experience. It guards against the all-too-human tendency to wish away, and thereby shirk the responsibility of charting out in detail the road for covering the distance between the ultimate and the actual, between dream and reality. Comprehensiveness would guarantee that the inter-relationships subsisting among various

¹ cf. J. L. TALMON — *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*. Talmon also shows how direct democracy is bound to lead to totalitarianism. This, however, is not relevant here.

departments of life would be explored and taken into account before deciding upon action. Only a sober and discriminating community of men, used to thinking in a critical-constructive spirit, can discharge the responsibility of bringing such enlightened public opinion to bear on the problems of democracy and help keep it living and vital.

II. *Pre-conditions of Enlightened Public Opinion*

Without subscribing to economic determinism it is easy to see that men cannot think intelligently and dispassionately in the absence of political stability and economic security. Freedom from fear and anxiety is a necessary, though by no means a sufficient, condition for the proper functioning of man's finer faculties. It is true that there are exceptions and that there can be too much of security to be conducive to an active inner life. However, if a statistical distribution were prepared of men's ability to think in a detached and fruitful manner, there is every ground for believing that this ability would be found to have a high positive correlation with the feeling of security prevalent in society. And since we are concerned with *public opinion*, the example of exceptional men is not relevant.

However, stability and security are not enough. For unless men participate actively in the co-operative adventure that democracy is, their thinking on problems of public life is likely to remain abstract, *ad hoc* and often irresponsible. Enlightened public opinion cannot exist in the absence of a wide-spread habit of, and conditions for, social participation on the part of the common man.

These conditions are of two inter-related kinds: institutional and cultural. It is only

in a pluralistic society that social participation, with the privileges and responsibilities implied by it, is possible. A welfare state, even if necessary in the initial stages, is not favourable to such participation. It follows that while building up a welfare state on the foundation of an inherited law-and-order state, steps should also be taken to ensure that as the economy develops, more and more of the state's welfare functions devolve on voluntary agencies. The growth of the welfare state should carry within it the seeds, not of its withering away—that would be utopian and hence fraught with danger—but of its transformation into an 'operative criticism of institutions.' As the programme of handing over the implementation of the Community Development Projects to non-official agencies shows, the present Government (it must be said to its credit) is aware of this need, though perhaps not so keenly or intelligently as one would wish it to be.

The effectiveness of the institutional condition is largely dependent on the cultural tradition and the contemporary intellectual climate of the country. Democratic institutions cannot function effectively in the absence of a secularly oriented tradition of cooperative endeavour in public life and of an atmosphere of vigorous criticism of ideas and actions on an impersonal plane. It is in this respect that the present leadership in both the political and the cultural field has failed. Perhaps 'failure' is a misleading term to use, for it presupposes an attempt having been made whereas, in fact, a real awareness of the problem seems to be lacking.

III. *The Cultural Tradition of India*

The cultural tradition of India is not favourable to free and responsible thought; nor was the growth of such a tradition possible in a caste-ridden, feudal society

dominated by an other-worldly outlook. The pre-ëminent role assigned to religion encouraged reliance on authority and made a fetish of simple living and unrestricted speculation, leading to a withdrawal of interest in secular affairs beyond one's own concern. The masses, so long as they are masses, could never afford to bother themselves much about public affairs. But even the élite, during the whole long period from the time of the Upanishads to the beginning of the renaissance in the nineteenth century, seems hardly to have been interested in anything but scriptural hair-splitting, religious ritual and generous gifts from the princely or the merchant host. Leaving aside the *Mahabharata*, one rarely comes across an example of serious political thought in the intellectual heritage of India. Perhaps it was not necessary in the past to think afresh over problems which were so neatly solved by ancient sages. But an unfortunate consequence of this tradition has been that even today most of our intellectuals do not consider a serious interest in social theory and practice worth their while. We know the result.

IV. *The Intellectual Climate*

Our intellectual climate suffers from the inhibitory influence of this cultural tradition. The vigour of thought, the spirit of adventure in exploring unfamiliar hypotheses, the clash of ideas out of which may emerge an increasingly clear vision of truth, the critical but tolerant examination of non-conformist opinion, the recurrent scrutiny of established reputations, the sympathetic understanding of the difficulties of those who are trying to give an empirical embodiment to abstract ideas—all these are yet to be the common feature of our intellectual life. On the other hand, we are easily led to imagine that we have a mission, a messianic rôle to play, and feel no hesita-

tion in sitting in judgement over things we do not even understand. Our criticism is mostly destructive and our advocacy generally pedantic—witness the unqualified condemnation of, for example, the Community Development Programme and the apologia for joint co-operative farming. Our front-rank intellectuals, especially economists and political scientists, often give the impression of intellectual adaptability verging on dishonesty. As may be expected, they show no inspiring concern for the distinguishing virtues of an intellectual—a contempt for power and the rewards it brings, love of the life of the spirit, a feeling for truth irrespective of where it may lead and a sense of stake in preserving and enlarging the liberties of the mind—which alone in the ultimate analysis can guarantee not only the growth of democracy but also their own survival. The intellectual's refusal to transcend the rôle of the 'expert' (often a poor expert at that), his refusal to recognize his rôle as the 'monk of the modern times', and his admiration of the three wise monkeys immortalized by the Chinese fable are evident not only in politics but also in the cultural field; not only in relation to Government but also in relation to the masses; not only in public life but also in his profession. If at all he practises criticism, it is generally irresponsible and is directed against Government as the least likely to retaliate, especially since all he is doing is to give a sophisticated formulation of popular grievances.

Whatever be the historical causes of this 'betrayal of the intellectuals', its effects continue to be depressing. The only 'public opinion' in India seems to be that of political leaders. Motivated by considerations of power politics, their criticism is generally destructive, one-sided and irresponsible. The ruling party too is rarely sensitive to criticism unless it has the sanction of a mass movement behind it. Enlightened

public opinion can hardly grow in such a situation.

The emphasis on rapid technological progress without emphasising the liberating significance of science as *quest* is likely to create problems of power and of social mal-adjustment, posing a serious threat to the very integrity of the individual. Even in advanced countries of the West, where technology was subject to the humanizing influence of the Greek and Christian traditions, failure to appreciate science as a cultural activity, necessitating a radical revision of method and outlook in approaching the problems of man, has led to social mal-adjustment on a large scale. In India, where science is yet to grow from the cultural soil of the country, the current *one-sided* emphasis on technological and economic progress is likely to engender greater difficulties.

This is not to suggest that plans of economic development with the help of modern technology should be held in abeyance or toned down until the proper cultural development has taken place. But it is not right to neglect the cultural conditions of democracy on the plea that 'first things must come first'. Neither logically nor empirically is there any ground for believing that there can be only one 'first' thing at a time. In planning for human development one may even go further and assert that economic and cultural development can best take place in conjunction, each acting upon and accelerating the other, rather than in succession as though one were a cause alone and the other a consequence alone. The contrary belief is an illustration of how subtle and insidious the impact of Marx has been even on the minds of confirmed democrats.

If a cultural renaissance is to accompany the technological revolution and act as a guarantee against the rise of the 'New Class' in India, it has first to be distinguish-

ed from revivalism and cultural chauvinism. To talk of Indian culture as something *basically* different from the culture of the rest of the world is to-day at best a partial truth. To suggest in any serious sense a resuscitation of the ancient culture of the land is meaningless in a context which differs so radically from that in which it once flourished. The past cannot be revived; at best, some of it can be incorporated in a new synthesis suited to the present. But synthesis presupposes a critical appraisal of our heritage in the light of modern knowledge, and therefore implies a readiness to reject some of its pivotal ideas, howsoever clear and comforting they may be, if examination reveals them as inert and sterile today. Cultural revivalism can prove dangerous by insisting on re-establishing continuity with the past and thereby keeping out vitalizing elements of contemporary world culture.

V. The Universities

The universities are a natural agency for the promotion of such a renaissance. For the primary and basic function of a university is to give the ordinary man such education as would make him a good professional and would enable him, culturally, to live 'at the height of his times'.² Defining culture as 'no more nor less than the repertory of *active* convictions as to the nature of our world and our fellow-creatures, convictions as to the hierarchy of values of things—which are more to be esteemed, and which less', Ortega points out: 'Any age presents very disparate systems of convictions. Some are a drossy residue of other times. But there is always a system of live ideas which represents the superior level of that age, a system which is essentially characteristic of its times; and this system

² Ortega y Gasset — *Mission of the University* pp. 60-61.

is the culture of the times... The man who lives on a plane beneath the enlightened level of his time is condemned, relatively, to the life of an infra-man.³ It is men who live at the height of our times that alone can initiate a cultural renaissance in our country. But living at the height of one's times needs an intellectual effort, addressed 'not to descriptive analysis, after the usual manner of research, but to the task of simplifying and synthesizing the quintessence of science, without sacrifice of its quality of substantialness.'⁴ No Indian university, so far as the writer's knowledge goes, has undertaken or even encouraged such an intellectual effort. Our universities have produced some brilliant men of oriental learning, but very few of them have functioned as more than scholarly apologists of the Indian way of life. We have started producing first-rate specialists in natural and social sciences. But here, again, hardly any of them has attempted 'the task of simplifying and synthesizing the quintessence of science.' Instead we have developed a tradition of pedantry and the lack of reflection, under which 'any nincompoop... who has made a third-rate scientific discovery, ... without having reflected a quarter of an hour on the mission of the university, propounds the most pedantic and ridiculous reforms.'⁵ As a result, in our cultural life we see the distressing spectacle in which 'fools act on imagination without knowledge, (and) pedants act on knowledge without imagination.'⁶

The state of university education is worse in India than is suggested by Ortega's description with the University of Madrid in view. In addition to the absence of the intellectual effort referred to earlier, our

colleges and schools also suffer from growing bureaucratization in their internal administration. There is absence of free discussion and of participation by the teachers in the shaping and implementation of the policy of their institution. As a result our educational institutions fail miserably in fostering academic virtues and democratic values.

VI. Mass Communication Agencies

What is true of our educational institutions is equally true of the press and other media of mass communication. The press enjoys a considerable degree of freedom from governmental control. But that by itself is not enough to make it a free and responsible agency for the formation of enlightened public opinion. For there are very few newspapers and periodicals, especially in the Indian languages, which consider objective reporting and a critical evaluation of events more important than serving sectional interests. Slanting news and playing up to mass prejudices and mass passions are a common feature of the Indian press; and editorials, when not cheap diatribes and vulgar abuse as with a section of the language press, are generally pointless homilies or attempts to score only a debating point. Journalism in this country is more a trade than a profession.

The All-India Radio is in a different category. It is completely controlled by Government and claims to be an educative influence. Unfortunately, what it purveys by way of educating its listeners is neither instruction nor entertainment. The talks and discussions that it arranges on current events and problems are inane and conformist in character. There is no effort—nor, let us add, the desire—to make people think above the newspaper level, to present to them a thorough-going analysis of all sides of a controversial problem like prohibition, co-operative farming, foreign policy,

³ *Ibid.* pp. 65-66 (Italics in the original)

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 70

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 62.

⁶ A. N. Whitehead—*The Aims of Education*, p. 98.

casteism, and so on. The AIR's servility to Government policies and prejudices is so uncompromising that only those who are willing to chant "Hosanna!" or at least keep quiet on them can speak at its microphone. That it does not experience any dearth of speakers only emphasizes the remarkable flexibility of the Indian intelligentsia where money or publicity is concerned.

VII. *Leadership*

Since those who control or operate the media of mass communication and run educational institutions are primarily governed by extra-professional standards, the major responsibility of developing enlightened public opinion would devolve on public leadership, mainly political leadership. Political leadership in India, however, generally goes by clichés. Having been brought up in the period of the anti-British struggle, most of the old guard did not have to think beyond slogan-mongering in order to mobilize the masses. Under leftist pressure, terms like 'socialism' came into vogue but their implications for detailed planning were never worked out by the 'theoreticians' of any political party. A naïve faith in the miraculous, all-round curative potentialities of national independence inhibited a clarification of ideas and of the programmes and policies that flowed from them. On the other hand, perhaps as a defensive psychological effort, our leadership since Tilak has fallen back on the hoary past of India as superior to the world-conquering modern culture of the West. As a result, the task of bringing about a social and cultural along with an economic revolution in India was never considered as important as that of winning on the political front. Mahatma Gandhi saw the significance of constructive, social work, but his outlook on life was outmoded. The only tangible effect of his constructive programmes was to make the

political movement a truly national movement in the scope of its appeal. But he could not leave any lasting impact on the non-political plane of the country's life. Today, twelve years after Independence, caste and superstition are as strong in India as ever before. If anything, they have invaded and corrupted even government and education in the post-Independence period. During this same period, again, linguistic and regional loyalties have often proved stronger than the tenuous bonds of a common nationality.

Caste, linguism and regionalism are old evils with us and so long as they continue to dominate our public life no enlightened opinion is possible. It would not be right to blame political parties for having failed to eradicate these evils. Their guilt lies in exploiting, for their party ends, the dark passions let loose by these forces, all the while swearing by nationalism, democracy and socialism. Even the most 'saintly' among our political leaders have condoned their co-workers' acts which elsewhere would have placed them beyond the pale of civilized society.

Apart from the failure on the plane of values, our political leadership has also failed to go to the root of our reconstructional problem. Leaving aside the communists, who have for every problem a ready-made solution of a hundred years' standing, no political party has made any effort to train its party cadres in the theory and practice of social action, nor made them carry out detailed studies of specific problems like education, agriculture, industrialization, nationalization, caste, and so on. Even parties which claim to be working for democratic socialism behave as though the Fabian Society never existed.

The Indian context, as seen above, is not favourable to democracy. Our cultural tradition, our intellectual climate, our educational institutions and mass communi-

education agencies, our political leadership—all these are, at present, unsuited to the growth of enlightened public opinion, and to that extent unsuited to the satisfactory functioning of democratic institutions. Fortunately, the new recruits to the three parties of democratic socialism show some awareness of the fact that good intentions are no substitute for painstaking study. Also, the new educated middle class that is coming up from the culturally backward communities is to a considerable extent free from the stranglehold of the past. Having been the victims of an authoritarian social structure, they have no stake in the undemocratic aspects of the present set-up. If we get a breathing space of about twenty-five years, we may hope to see Indian democracy beginning to flower out as one of the greatest in the world.

VIII. *The Asian Context*

Whether we get such a breathing space will depend to a certain extent on the Asian context. This context, too, at present is not conducive to planning for human development in India. The communist offensive in Asia necessitates the diversion of a considerable part of our resources and effort to the need of our survival as a free country. Our doctrinaire insistence, not only on non-alignment but also on going it alone without accepting military aid from friendly democratic countries, makes the situation more difficult. The emphasis on 'speaking with one voice', the paucity of resources and the one-sided emphasis on the economic aspect of democracy, all these, until the other day, enabled the communists to appear in a better light than those who stand for democracy. The authoritarian character of the pre-scientific, Asian culture lends added strength to the communist appeal. The leadership of the democratic socialist movement, including Nehru, did

nothing to point out to their admirers in India and in other non-communist countries of Asia the essentially anti-democratic nature of communism on all planes—philosophical, ethical and social. If anything, it has indirectly helped communism by its theory of equi-distance and its practice of Orwellian neutrality in the global conflict between democracy and totalitarianism. Nehru has been the most guilty in this respect. His talk of communism having the same ideals as democratic socialism, but differing only in methods, not only indicated a failure to understand communism but also gave it the reputation of greater efficiency in working for human welfare. We should be grateful to People's China for disillusioning India and other free Asian countries to a certain extent at least.

Disillusionment with communism does not automatically lead to a strengthening of democracy. Indeed, the rise of military or semi-military dictatorships in some of the Asian countries, though it is partly explained by the fear of communist aggression or subversion, is also a confession of the failure of political parties to abide by certain fundamental rules of the democratic way. The absence of responsible public opinion was one of the causes that permitted party politicians to flout all canons of integrity and the sense of responsibility in public life. Indian political leaders do not seem to have learnt anything from the experience of these countries.

IX. *The Problem of Creating Enlightened Public Opinion*

The safeguarding of democracy in India in the context described in the preceding paragraphs would require the adoption of a short-term and a long-term strategy. The short-term strategy is essentially political and need not be discussed here. Suffice it to say that a radical re-orientation of our

foreign policy is indispensable, even if we continue to stick to the old labels of 'neutrality' and 'non-alignment.'

Of greater interest here is the long-term aspect of the problem. Since, as remarked in the beginning, the problem of democracy is in a sense the problem of enlightened public opinion, no amount of economic planning or of welfare activities can by itself ensure the success of our democratic experiment. A strong democratic will is a precondition for the satisfactory working of democratic institutions. The crystallization of such a will depends on the extent to which enlightened public opinion is the norm in the process of decision-making on the inter-personal plane. The long-term aspect of the problem of safeguarding democracy in the modern context therefore involves integrated planning in both the economic and the cultural field so as to create conditions favourable to the emergence and operation of enlightened public opinion. We shall consider in brief only the cultural aspect of such planning.

Enlightened opinion presupposes sufficient information on all the sides of a problem and the ability to use this information in a critical-constructive manner informed by the democratic spirit. For 'unless freedom of individual action', as John Dewey puts it, 'has intelligence and informed conviction back of it, its manifestation is almost sure to result in confusion and disorder.'⁷ The purveying of such information and the formation of such attitudes as will foster the democratic spirit is

a major, perhaps the most important responsibility, and also the privilege, of educational institutions and mass communication agencies. If they are to discharge this responsibility effectively, certain reforms are imperative.

X. Reform in University Education

If we agree with Ortega y Gasset that 'the university consists, primarily and basically, of the higher education which the ordinary man should receive', a drastic reformulation of our courses of study and a change in our instructional methods become imperative. What this means in terms of concrete detail has been worked out at a number of places in the West, especially in the U.S.A. and England, and need not be summarized here.⁸ It is enough to state that we have to take to some form of General Education of all university students and an intensive programme of teacher-orientation to save a noble idea from vulgarization at the hands of men who do not understand it. For General Education means nothing less than 'the whole development of an individual, apart from his occupational training. It includes the civilizing of his life purposes, the refining of his emotional reactions and the maturing of his understanding about the nature of things according to the best knowledge of our time'.⁹ Judging from what some universities in this part of the country have made of General Education, one does not feel hopeful of a voluntary change from within.

Besides reformulating courses of study, it is also necessary to reform the administration of our universities and colleges. The present working of these institutions, especially of the colleges, is in most cases of an authoritarian character. Unless the teacher himself experiences the significance of democratic values in his day-to-day life, it is futile to expect him to communicate to

⁷ John Dewey—*Problems of Men*, p. 61.

⁸ See for example:

- (i) *General Education in a Free Society*—Harvard Committee's Report.
- (ii) *Crisis in the University*—Sir Walter Moberly.
- (iii) *General Education and Indian Universities*—G. D. Parikh.
- (iv) Reports of the two Study Teams on General Education sent abroad by the Union Government in 1956 and 1957.

⁹ Howard Lee Nostrand, in the *Introduction* to Ortega y Gasset's *Mission of the University*.

his students any but the most pedantic notion of what freedom and the dignity of the individual mean and why they are to be prized above the flashy rewards of power and privilege. As Dewey points out, '...unless democratic habits of thought and action are part of the fibre of a people, political democracy is insecure.... The relations that exist in educational institutions are second only in importance in this respect to those which exist in industry and business, *perhaps not even to them.*'¹⁰ Here again change from within is not easy to foresee.

A third reform in the universities and the colleges would be to institute departments of extramural education which would carry on follow-up work for the adult population of the surrounding area. This work could be of diverse but mutually complementary types. It could include the type of work done by folk schools in Denmark, of continuation classes for agriculturists and craftsmen, study circles for the local intelligentsia—all planned and integrated so as to serve the purpose of General Education on the one hand and of improving the professional efficiency of the citizen on the other. At present some universities, but practically no colleges, have departments of extramural education. There are also some other agencies, like the Institute of Higher Rural Education at Gargoti (in Kolhapur district) and National Extension Schemes, which carry on such work. However, most of this work is too haphazard and narrowly conceived to yield any lasting and significant result from the standpoint of transforming the outlook and attitudes of the people. A co-ordinating agency with sufficient power and funds, and manned not by experts in the orthodox sense but by men with ex-

pertise and vision, can bring about great things within the span of a generation.

XI. The Press and the Radio

The potentialities of the language press, especially at the district level, in the formation of enlightened public opinion have not yet been realized either by the Government or by political parties. Today the district press is practically starving and hence has little power for good or evil. But if it is helped to develop along healthy lines, it can be a powerful bastion of democracy at the base of our national life. Government subsidy to the small newspaper or periodical, preferably through autonomous professional bodies, could go a long way in this direction. Such help should be governed only by the standards of objective reporting and educative orientation of the paper, not by considerations of party loyalty or political expediency. The fact that there is no organization of editors or working journalists which, besides fighting for better service conditions and liberal press laws, also strives to impose on its members the highest standards of professional rectitude, is a sad commentary on how inadequate *vox populi* can be as a criterion of democracy.

The All-India Radio is another agency whose potentialities for the creation and growth of enlightened public opinion have not been exploited as yet. Perhaps so long as it continues to be controlled exclusively by the Government, it cannot but remain a crude and futile effort to identify the administration's opinions with those of the best minds outside its charmed circle. As a recent study¹¹ of the B.B.C. shows, even though it is run by an autonomous corporation, it inevitably functions as the voice of the Establishment. In India the Establishment is young and still growing. It is likely to cut across all political and social groupings, since in a developing economy almost

¹⁰ *Op.cit.* p.66. Italics added.

¹¹ Henry Fairlie—The B.B.C., *Voice of the Establishment* in ENCOUNTER 71 (August 1959).

everyone has a stake in maintaining the over-all orientation of the country's policies. Even if, therefore, the AIR is placed under an autonomous corporation one need not expect any fundamental questionings being voiced through it. However, the dissent among the various aspirants to the Establishment may be of significance for the promotion of enlightened public opinion, as it was in nineteenth century England where the two contestants for political power through constitutional channels served the interests of British democracy in pursuing their own.

XII. Conclusion

The problem of developing enlightened public opinion, which would act as the rudder of an inexperienced democracy in the modern context, cannot be solved except by planning for integrated human development. Economic planning is but one part,

though a very important part, of such planning. Its other part, namely, cultural planning, requires nothing less than a cultural renaissance, which can be initiated by releasing the creative potentialities of educational institutions and mass communication agencies. This is primarily the function, in a sense, indeed the *raison d'être* of the intellectuals and the higher strata of the intelligentsia. At present, however, they have neither the vision, nor the character, nor the resources to discharge this responsibility, for economic under-development is generally accompanied by cultural under-development too. A realization, by the leadership in the different fields of our national life, of the need of a cultural renaissance and of the operational implications of this need is a pre-condition for the democratic regeneration of India. The responsibility of the Government is all the greater, for it has to pay the piper without trying to call the tune. Whether it will meet the challenge, the future alone can show.

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Varieties of Moral Experience

By ABU SAYEED AYYUB

"Man is not man at all unless social; but he is not much above the beasts unless more than social".

F. H. BRADLEY

I

The Ethic of Enlightened Self-interest

THE 17th century philosopher Spinoza and the 20th century philosopher Russell, whose philosophies differ almost in every other point, agree in defining the good in terms of desire. There is an oft-quoted passage in Spinoza's *Ethics* which states: 'We neither strive for, wish, seek or desire anything because we think it to be good, but on the contrary we adjudge a thing to be good because we strive for, wish, seek or desire it'. And Russell said as recently as in 1954: 'I infer that the definition of good must bring in desire. I suggest that an occurrence is good when it satisfies desire'. It is true that for Spinoza such a notion of the good is valid only at the level of imagination. And it may be urged that Russell is not saying that 'good' is 'what is desired', but 'what in fact satisfies desire', thus bringing in some kind of objectivity in his conception of the good. The objectivity, however, is only spurious. For when anything is desired, its attainment will necessarily satisfy that desire, whatever total dissatisfaction or pain it may bring in its wake due to the frustration of other desires. Therefore, Russell's definition is equivalent to the more popular definition of the good in much positivistic ethical writing today, viz., 'the good is what is desired'. Perry broadens this a little when he stipulates that 'value is any object of any interest', but in essentials the two are not different.

Such a definition of the good undermines

ethics from the start. If the good is only the desired, then there cannot be any moral obligation to pursue the good. In fact, at this level morality, obligation, duty, etc., have no meaning. It is the level at which all children and unfortunately many adults too live, moved hither and thither by the sway of momentary impulses and desires. As intelligence grows and maturity is reached (not as universally as one would like to believe), it is realised that our desires and impulses are not always compatible, that to fulfil one we have to deny others, that to pursue indiscriminately every good, i.e., every desired object, is to live a very mutilated and frustrated life. Our desires are of many sorts: they differ not only in intensity but also in comprehensiveness and persistence; not only in being more or less compatible with a greater or smaller number of other desires, but also in their ability to give rise to shorter or longer chains of desires of varying quality. In such a complex desire-situation man can escape dissipation, frustration and suffering only by the exercise of his reason — that type of reason which Kant called 'practical reason'. Reason can lay down principles of coordination and subordination among desires, evolving in due course a comprehensive policy of life with many sub-policies under it. This policy tells him that he 'ought' to do this rather than that, 'ought' to live in this way rather than that way, and prevents him from acting impulsively and living under the sway of momentary desires.

In short, we have reached the life of prudence or enlightened self-interest. The

goal may be said to be the maximisation of one's total satisfaction in life by controlling the more incompatible and impetuous desires. Since one acts as one *ought* to act rather than as one merely *wants* to act — the 'ought' of course being dictated by one's enlightened self-interest — we can characterise the principle of such a life as a moral principle. My suggestion is that where an act is directed to an end which is selected by desire alone, the act is not characterisable as moral. When a mother sacrifices her comfort and health for the well-being of her child, that sacrifice is not a moral act. Normally, the conduct of mothers towards their progeny is not on the moral but on the instinctive plane. But when the end is selected by reason, and desire obeys reason, we have clearly the emergence of morality. That is why I accept prudence as a moral principle, though not as the highest moral principle.

II

The Ethic of Duty

In my opinion, Kant's most signal contribution to ethics lay in pointing out a still higher level of action at which all can, and some do, rise. At the level of prudential ethics other persons count no doubt, but count, in the last analysis, only as means to my own self-satisfaction. When I deliberate between two courses of action, one of which is for my own benefit and the other for the benefit of another, the deciding factor is the consideration as to which course will enable me to satisfy better my integrated system of desires, considering my life as a whole. But one of the three ways in which Kant interprets the moral law is: So act as to use humanity, both in your own person and in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end, never simply as a means. This is obviously a very different plane of action which needs a sort of Copernican revolution to reach. Here for the first time my own self, which so long occupied the central position in my

scheme of life, is displaced and becomes peripheral, the connection between duty and self-interest is severed, and my own satisfaction or well-being ceases to have any unique importance for me. Though the acts of beneficence dictated by the two kinds of morality may coalesce in certain situations, the spirit behind the two is completely different.

There are those among moral philosophers who see in ethics nothing but the band spectrum of self-interest spread out towards its 'enlightened' regions. Naturally they have made persistent attempts to derive the ethic of duty from the ethic of prudence. It is not the expedient act, however, but acts directed to the benefit of other people and to the promotion of social welfare which are usually regarded as duties. One kind of beneficence, the value-payable kind, is obviously a dictate of prudence. But a more genuinely other-regarding conduct is also traced to self-love. Apart from all calculations of return benefits, doing good to others is, according to these philosophers, an immediately satisfying emotional experience for the agent, because love for all men is believed to be an essential ingredient of every man's emotional make-up.

I doubt if there is sufficient empirical basis for this wishful belief. Far from being a part of human nature, love of mankind is an extremely rare phenomenon. Love of friends and relations is a familiar enough emotion; I can also understand the occurrence of a loving concern for a stranger whom I have casually met for a little while, or at least of whose individual existence I have acquired some distinct consciousness through sharing a neighbourhood or an important common interest. But that I or any other man living in Calcutta should feel an active emotional stirring for an Alaskan fisherman whom we have never seen or heard of, whose life and ways are altogether unknown—this is something that I cannot visualise. It is another matter that if I come to know that he lacks the bare amenities of life or has been wounded in an air raid, I

should consider it my duty to send him what help I can. But this sense of duty comes from a *rational* regard for his human existence and from a recognition of his right to a full and free life. This is precisely the rational ethics of Kant, I, or anyone, for that matter, can rationally acknowledge the value of every human person and accept the obligation to preserve and promote it; but few, if any, are emotionally capable of loving all. Possibly, the phrase 'love for man or mankind' is used without a full acceptance of its meaning, and probably all that is meant by it or that it can properly mean is only a rational regard for the other's rights.

It may be objected that such rational regard too is not universally or even widely present. To this my reply is that I can envisage such a progressively universal enlightenment of reason ensuing from progress in education, but I cannot understand how one person can be *taught* to love (in the strict sense of love as an actively felt emotion) all other men, known and unknown. The objector may persist and point out that love for the tribe or nation or clan is quite a living and powerful emotion in the minds of men. No doubt it is, but its genesis and precise nature are seldom examined. With the family, tribe or nation there is a kind of self-identification based on a conscious unity of interests. But even more important, there is a differentiation of this group-self from other group-selves; the emotional integration within the group is a complementary phenomenon to the emotional alienation of the group from other groups. Tribalism and nationalism, whose important ingredients no doubt are strong feelings of love for the tribe or the nation, flourish on strife and reach their highest pitch in times of war. Love for mankind would become a very real emotion if and when hatred of the Martians becomes real. Until then, it would be wiser to base our ethics on the disinterested rational regard for the human person—as Kant had stipulated.

I conclude that the ethic of duty is *sui*

generis; it cannot be reduced to or deduced from the ethic of prudence. In fact the two ethics are connected with two different conceptions of value.

III

The Consciousness of Values

With the emergence of rational morality on the human plane as distinct from prudential morality on the egocentric plane, a development of our value-consciousness takes place which deserves notice. Although, in contrast with Kant, I prefer to regard the principle of prudence as a moral principle since under it desires are subordinated to rational control, the control still is in the interest of desires themselves. We can continue to define 'good' in terms of 'desire', though the definition has to be somewhat stretched in so far as the highest good on this plane, the maximisation of satisfaction, is not usually an object of an actual desire. It is to be regarded as what 'ought to be desired', or, in Russell's terminology evolved in reply to his critics, 'what we desire to desire'.

But when we come to Kant's principle of rational morality: 'act so as to treat every human person as an end and never simply as a means', we have come to the plane of objective values, i.e., 'value' not definable in terms of 'desire' or 'interest'. The fundamental point in this principle is that other persons are ends for me in their own right, not in so far as I happen to take an interest in them or to love them. Their status as ends is quite independent of the facthood of my interest in them, love for them, or desire for their welfare. I am speaking of course of natural interests and desires, for the apprehension of objective values may itself be described as implying an interest or love (in Brentano's language, 'right love'). We shall come to this later. The point here is that if I cease to find interest in other persons or to desire the unfolding of their personality, it is not *their* persona-

lity which loses value. On the contrary, it is *my* personality which will fall in value—in my own genuine value-consciousness.

This is to be contrasted with the situation that arises in the consciousness of the lower values, the subjective values, or the values definable in terms of desire. If I cease to like mangoes, then mangoes just cease to have any value for me—though they may continue to have value for those who still like them. There is no question of my own value falling in my eyes concomitant with the fall of the value of mangoes for me. On the egocentric plane of values my own value is absolutely fixed; the value of everything else rises or falls according as my interest in them (or desire for them) rises or falls. This plane has a morality of its own, the morality of prudence. But genuine morality, as I have pointed out, is on a different plane—a plane whose centre is not occupied by one's own self. Every self becomes an object of value in an absolute, objective sense. Robert, Ram and Rahim are values out there, whether in a moment of ennui I lose all interest in them, or in a moment of malice I disvalue them.

A few remarks on the much debated issue of the subjectivity and objectivity of value-experience seem to be called for. I think positivistic philosophers are unduly chary of drawing an analogy between our value-experience and our cognitive experience. In epistemology the definition of the objective as 'what is directly given' must be amplified into '*that* given on the basis of which predictions about the future course of cognitive experience can be made and verified'. For what is merely given in perception may well be illusory. The veridical nature of what is given in one perceptual experience is taken for granted in that experience, but remains infirm and shakable by all kinds of doubt. It remains in need of confirmation through further perceptual experience, or through conceptual recognition of it as a case of a previously established generalisation.

Similarly in the field of value-experiences we have veridical experience as well as

illusory experience. For instance, if I am deeply moved by a poem and as a consequence rank it high in value, but on re-reading it the next day find it insipid and continue to find it so on other occasions afterwards, then I shall conclude that my first value-judgement was wrong, and, therefore, the value that appeared to be in the poem was only a subjective projection of my mind. On the other hand, if later readings confirmed my first value-judgement, then I should be justified in regarding the poem itself as possessed of high objective value. Confirmation in other people's experience will strengthen my critical judgement but is not essential to it.

It may be pointed out that though a particular value-experience can be verified in the future experience of one and the same person or, in more favourable cases, of a group of persons, one never expects, far less finds, universal confirmation. This is one important reason why values have been treated as subjective in contrast with the contents of cognition which can claim objectivity through universal confirmation, or at least through the possibility of that. All this is a mistake. We have seen in our analysis of the principle of genuine morality that it is based on the recognition of a value-experience whose claim to universal validity must be accepted; otherwise we cannot have any genuine morality at all. Thus, on the one hand, we have this value-judgement whose universal validity must be granted. On the other hand, the universality which science claims is spurious. The verifiability of scientific experiences is also relative to a group—large, though not confined to any land or race, capable of expansion, but not in fact embracing all humanity now or in the foreseeable future. This group is constituted by the acceptance of certain basic attitudes and beliefs which can be logically denied by any one and are factually denied by groups anchored around certain religious dogmas and by still others who according to the scientific community are steeped in ignorance and

superstition. (Vide Polanyi—*The Logic of Liberty*, Part I).

In the field of art and beauty our value-experience has its universality diminished and confined to a particular tradition and culture, sometimes to tiny aesthetic groups. In romantic love, which is undoubtedly an area of some of our deepest value experiences, the precincts are narrowed down to a single person. This variability of the area of universality should not blind us to the fact that within each area there is the possibility of consilience and confirmation. Therefore within each field we can speak of objective values, though error and subjectivity have to be allowed for—just as they have to be allowed for in the case of perception and inference. The objectivity of science is usually regarded as objectivity *par excellence* because of the exaggerated importance which the scientific community commands in our society, mainly in consequence of the power over natural forces with which it can tantalise mankind—surely a doubtful gift in the absence of wisdom. Scientists are the magicians of our times; unfortunately they never succeed in producing any wisdom out of their hats. It is fair to admit that they never even try to do such a trick.

IV

Value and Obligation

Unlike facts, values put us under an obligation to pursue them, preserve them, promote them, etc. I have spoken of three kinds of values broadly: the subjective value of desire, or rather of the desired; the objective and particular value of art, knowledge, etc.; and the objective and universal value of the human person which according to me constitutes the basis of morality in the full sense. These three values put us under three different kinds of obligation, and, therefore, give rise to three different kinds of morality.

There is no obligation bound up with the object of immediate desire. But on the plane of desires we can build up a policy

and a goal. This gives rise to a kind of morality which we can call prudential morality. On another level altogether is the genuine human morality whose basic principle I have equated with Kant's second formulation of the moral law. This absolute and universal law which expresses the strongest possible obligation has been already commented on. Before passing on to a third type of morality expressing a weaker and more restricted obligation, I should like to examine a little further Kant's maxim.

Humanity in other persons as well as myself is always to be treated as the final end of my moral actions—is the purport of that maxim. This sounds rather vague and not quite accurate. In what way can I make my own person the end of my moral actions? The *de facto* existing person that I am, it may be presumed, is a pretty poor specimen of humanity. And even if I were not such a bad fellow, surely Kant did not mean that actions done with the goal of maintaining and furthering this fellow, this 'I', could be truly moral actions. At best these actions would fall under the principle of prudence. Kant had spoken of my moral perfection as one of the ends of my moral action in one sense, though in another sense his theory does not admit any ends in morality. Others have substituted for it self-perfection in general; still others—amongst whom the acutest moral thinker was probably F. H. Bradley—have put forward the realisation of my ideal self as the final end of my moral choice. But I do not see how I can perfect my self within the precincts of myself, nor can I conceive myself as an ideal self unless I go out of myself into the world of objective values. Niebuhr had said: 'Existent being does not seek the complementary good necessarily for the sake of achieving its own state of perfection; it may well seek and serve the complementary good as an end and thereby grow towards its internal good, the realisation of its essence, without direct concern for the latter. . . . That may come as by-product' (*The Centre of Values*). This is

surely an understatement, a half-truth. Not only I *may* realise my essence through outside goods complementary to myself 'without direct concern for my essence'; that is the only way I can do it. Man's pursuit of values is always in the world outside himself; his inner perfection can only come through his self-transcendence. Self-realisation is necessarily a by-product of world-realisation.

Art, knowledge, love and the social good—all present themselves as goals before the self. Self-realisation by itself cannot be properly set as a goal for the self, unless by it we mean nothing more nor less than the realisation of these objective values. And where there is apprehension of value there is also apprehension of some kind of obligation towards it. The relation between value and obligation may be characterised, after Moore, as synthetic *a priori*. But obligation does not mean in all cases absolute obligation. We cannot say that everyone must cultivate art or knowledge, must realise himself through romantic love, or even that he must dedicate his life to the promotion of social good or to the service of mankind. There is no absolute universal obligation or duty towards any of these things. Though striving after one or more of these is commendable, failing to do any does not render a man morally blameworthy. If one lives a plain and unambitious life, earns his daily bread by honest toil and does not shirk the little responsibilities of his quotidian existence, he also is a good man—even though he love not the Muses, nor go out to nurse the lepers.

There are of course some absolute moral obligations which everyone must fulfil, some duties which cannot be left undone without incurring blame. A recent moral thinker, Toulmin, has put them all under the maxim: 'so act as not to cause any avoidable suffering'. This, I think, is too broad and mild a way of formulating the principle of duty, for it would easily admit of many acts of commission and omission which we all regard as a clear dereliction of duty. For instance, if a tradesman was

making a small extra profit by using a yardstick measuring only 35 inches, he could hardly be convinced that he was 'causing avoidable suffering'—particularly if he took care to cheat only his rich customers. But even if it remains doubtful whether by any particular act of cheating I am causing any appreciable suffering to anyone, it is obvious that whenever I cheat someone, I am using him as a means to further my self-interest: I am not treating him with the dignity which he as a person, as an end-in-itself, always claims. I am, therefore, failing in my duty. I know of no better expression of the principle of duty than Kant's second maxim.

Nevertheless, I must persist in asking: what precisely is meant by telling me to treat the person of another as the end of my moral action? A little earlier I had raised the same question about treating my own person as an end. Similar difficulties arise in both cases. For it is not the existing paltry, sometimes perverse, selves of every man which I can regard as the end of my moral will. The question is the same, but there will be two different answers, depending on whether the question pertains to my self or to other selves. And this difference is an important difference.

Treating myself as an end meant, as we saw, pursuing the ends which are presented to myself, and these ends are not within my self. Shall I, in regarding other selves as ends, regard the ends presented to them as the ends of my moral obligation? But how? For one thing, it is most difficult for me to find out what are in fact the ends of each and every individual. For another, could I, effectively and conscientiously, cooperate and, by actively helping him, participate in another's pursuit of ends which he accepts as his own but which I reject for myself? If the answer is in the negative, should I help everyone to realise ends which I regard as the proper ends for myself? This again does not seem to be the right thing to do. Here two alternatives present themselves:

1. I may regard the principle of duty

as only a negative principle. My duty is not to promote another's good but to recognise, in thought and in deed, his right to pursue his own good — provided of course he does not thereby infringe upon anybody else's right to do the same. In other words, my duty is not to put any obstruction in the way of another's pursuit of what values he chooses for himself, rather than to give him a lift in my own moral car. This negative duty itself will create two positive duties: (a) to work for the creation of those material conditions which enable everyone to pursue his good, (b) to work for the prevention of the rise of such social conditions, and for their demolition if and when they have arisen, in which an individual or a group restricts in any way the right of other individuals and groups to pursue the good life according to their conception of the good.

It will be seen that in modern times these two positive duties which were once duties to society are being rapidly transferred to the State, the moral relation between one individual and another assuming more and more the negative form of non-interference. The second duty is clearly a political duty: it is the duty of maintaining the democratic state against the attack of totalitarian forces from outside, but even more from inside the body politic; and it is the duty of standing up against the totalitarian state and to work for the restoration of democracy, wherever democracy has been destroyed. As regards the first, with the conceptions of the socialist state and the welfare state fast gaining ground the world over, duties of private beneficence are being increasingly replaced by the welfare measures which must be undertaken by the state in regard to the livelihood, health and education of all its members. When there are no unclothed or unfed neighbours, when the sick are well nursed in public hospitals, what charity can I perform? I can go and sit by the side of a bed-ridden fellow citizen, but I should make very sure that my company cheers him instead of boring him. To speak for myself, I am maddened by kind visitors

when I lie sick, unless they happen to be congenial friends. Of course in economically backward Asia, there is still a great deal of scope for these positive obligations of private charity. But our need for economic and social change is much greater. These changes are under way, and I am sure would be sufficiently advanced in a couple of decades for the Asian ethics of duty too to pass from the positive to the negative phase in person-to-person relation.

II. The second alternative is that I may find out ends which are not just ends for me or ends for you, but the proper ends for all men; and having found this out, assume the positive duty of helping all men (irrespective of what erroneous notions they might entertain in their heads) to pursue and realise these natural or proper ends. When I conceive my duty as not only to *help* but to *make* all members of society realise this 'good for man', this 'natural goal for mankind', I am well set for Communism.

V

Scientific Ethics

Communist ethics is important for us for two reasons. First, it is a very good example of a school of ethical thought which commands great popularity and some prestige today under the name of 'scientific ethics'. The biologists Waddington and Julian Huxley and the psycho-analyst Eric Fromm are its other well-known contemporary exponents. The basic premise which underlies it is the assumption that there is such a thing as a common human nature and 'in order to know what is good for man we have to know his nature.' This knowledge, we are told, science is competent to give us. But Eric Fromm puts his theory under great stress right from the start by making the contradictory statement that 'the infinite diversity of personality is itself a characteristic of human existence.' (Fromm: *Man for Himself*, pp. 18 & 50). If every man's nature differs from every other

man's, how can there be a 'theoretical science of man'? Fromm liberates his scientific ethics from this stress via his notion of 'productive living'—which embraces all the things calculated to delight the hearts of even the most romantically idealist moral philosophers. Marxists are more inveterate materialists and devotees of the positive sciences. So instead of swinging right towards idealism, their ethics turns left towards economic determinism. And this brings us to the 2nd reason why Marxist ethics is important for us: it is an astounding example of a moral theory which begins as an ethic of unlimited freedom and ends up as an ethic of unabashed control. This about-turn over 180 degrees has been in the interest of, leastways in the name of, science.

Marxists present freedom as at once the highest end for man and the inevitable finale of the movement of human history, which naturally reminds us of the Hegelian identity between the real and the rational. The *summum bonum* in which the dialectic of history will culminate is described in the *Communist Manifesto* as 'an association in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all'. Unlike Hegel, for whom freedom was a highly philosophical notion at times bordering on the mystical, Marx and his followers are anxious to give a concrete form to this idealist notion — and the rub is there. Before we come to that, a moment's diversion may be permitted.

The conception of freedom as the highest good for man is as prevalent in the West today as it was in India two thousand years ago. The two freedoms, however, are very different from each other. The Western notion of freedom is based on a positive attitude towards the world ('world —and life-affirmation' in Schweitzer's language), and the Indian freedom on the negative attitude of withdrawal. For the present we shall be concerned with the Western conception of freedom. I want to ask the question: can freedom be con-

ceived at all as the end or as an intrinsic value? If so, in what sense and to what extent?

W. H. Auden has said somewhere that "liberty is not a value but the ground of value." This is true in a very obvious sense. Whether we understand freedom as 'freedom to' or 'freedom from', surely I want to be free to do certain things or to be certain things. And what are the things which I want to be free from? First of all, I want to be free from the forces and powers which obstruct the continuation of my life or restrict its growth. Secondly, I want to be free from the forces and powers which thwart my endeavours to realise the values which I hold dear. Is it not clear that I value freedom as a means to other values (as 'the ground of value') rather than as an end-value? If there was nothing else that I valued, freedom itself would cease to be a value for me. And it does not make sense to say that other values are only a means for the attainment of the goal of freedom. I may want economic and political freedom to enjoy works of art, but I do not cultivate music and poetry to gain freedom —unless 'freedom' is being used in a mystical sense as almost equivalent to the Indian notion of *moksa*. *Moksa*, which is often translated as 'freedom' and literally means that, had a double significance — at least in Vedantic thought. Negatively, it stood for liberation from pain, evil and illusion — necessary adjuncts of our phenomenal existence. Positively, it was conceived as equivalent to the state of bliss associated with the intuitive experience of oneness (more punctiliously referred to as 'non-difference') with the noumenal reality, Brahman. Less intelligible to me is the Buddhist goal of *nirvana* (complete negation of all being) and the Sankhya ideal of *kaivalya* (withdrawal from being-to-the-world to being-as-self).

Yet there is a sense in which freedom can be understood as an end or intrinsic value, though not as *the* end. For myself, freedom can only be a means to other values. But when I regard it in connection

with other individuals, it becomes an end for me. We have seen before that the person of the other is an absolute value, a *sine qua non* of morality. Our binding duty towards the other is not to do good to him directly but to bring about conditions in which he can realise his own good. We can also express it as a duty to preserve and promote the freedom of the other. For him of course his freedom is only a means to other more ulterior values which he strives to realise in his life. But as far as I am concerned, another's freedom must be treated as an end-in-itself in all my other-regarding actions.

After this diversion I return to an examination of the Marxist version of scientific ethics. Even more than the biologists and psycho-analysts, the Marxists are enamoured of science and determined to turn ethics into a positive science of human nature. According to their prescription, science after a proper study of human nature must tell us what is good for man, and society after it has mastered the forces of production (instead of being its slave, as it at present is in the non-Communist world) must ladle out this scientifically determined human good in ample measure to all. Freedom, at this stage, is identified with each man's ability to obtain this universal human good from scientifically planned society and socially planned science.

Marxists, however, find the old-fashioned 'desires' and 'interests' of the bourgeois ethical philosophers too abstract and subjective for their scientific minds, and so substitute them by 'needs and requirements'. The 'good' is not the satisfaction of 'desires and interests'; it is the planned fulfilment of the more concrete and measurable entities, 'needs and requirements' of all. These empirically ascertained 'needs and requirements' may run counter to the subjectively entertained desires and aspirations; even so, the good of man lies in the fulfilment of the former, not of the latter. Maurice Cornforth, for instance, states that

'struggle for freedom means in essence people's struggle to be able to satisfy their own requirements, material and cultural, for which is needed knowledge of those requirements and of how to satisfy them, and the power to effect that satisfaction.' And Howard Selsam bases the Marxist aspiration to possess a scientific ethics on the confident assertion: 'In more and more spheres we have reached the possibility, if not the actuality, of determining what men ought to want *in terms of what they actually need* within the possibility of scientific determination'. He goes on to add, 'It is not too fantastic to suggest that there are cultural needs in the sense of requirements under given conditions of the development of healthy and stable personalities, that can be empirically arrived at, and that may run against opposed desires under certain conditions.'

The difficulty is that 'requirement' or 'need' is an extremely restricted concept, and is always relative to some norm agreed upon or arbitrarily set up. Such an agreed norm of a 'healthy' and 'stable' body is not difficult to formulate; consequently medical science can tell us what amount of oxygen, sleep or exercise we need daily for the upkeep of a healthy and stable body. But while 'need' or 'requirement' are the correct words to use in connection with our biological functions, they seem to be singularly inapplicable to our cultural and spiritual activities. What kind of poetry and how much of it does a man 'need'; and is it really necessary for all men to read poetry at all? It is a fact that some men desire poetry; we can even say that all men ought to desire poetry, in the sense that poetry is something worthy of being desired by all. But what point would there be in insisting that even those who do not enjoy poetry, nevertheless 'need it'. Need it for what? If we say need it for the development of a 'healthy and stable personality', then, first of all, that is doubtful, for surely we can think of some great men endowed from all accounts with healthy personalities who did not care for poetry; for example,

Gandhiji. Secondly, there is no accepted norm of a healthy personality in reference to which we can determine the amount of poetry or political action 'needed'. If the qualification is made that it is only people with a particular type of personality-structure who need poetry, and a different type who require politics or mountaineering for their fulfilment, then do we not come back to Eric Fromm's 'infinite diversity of personality as an essential character of man', thus undermining once more the basis of objective scientific ethics?

And if we insist on applying the word 'need' to the sphere of our cultural and spiritual activities by unduly stretching its meaning, insurmountable difficulties crop up in 'empirically arriving at our cultural requirements under given conditions'. These requirements or needs are by their very nature incommensurable, scientifically indeterminable, whereas our biological needs are precisely what can be determined by the empirical methods of science. As a result, philosophers of 'scientific socialism' are always under strong temptation to confuse the two. The zeal to apply science to ethics results in slurring over those values which are unamenable to scientific treatment and over-emphasising those which are. The recalcitrant higher values of life tend to be treated as interchangeable with the scientifically docile biological values, or as their byproducts, or worse still, are made instrumental and subservient to the lower values.

I would not have given so much space to the Marxist exposition of 'scientific ethics' if it were merely a matter of theoretical disputation among moral philosophers. Marxists being honest believers in the unity of theory and practice, a theoretical error committed by them is a practical danger for the rest of the world. Belief in an ethics which is claimed to have all the empirically verifiable objective validity of a positive science results in the cocksureness that they possess scientific knowledge of what is good for each and every member of society. Consequently, they feel not only

morally justified but morally obliged to compel another to live his life in such a way that he proceeds towards the realisation of this scientifically determined good for him even against his own desire or judgement. Such compulsive beneficence, in my opinion, is permissible only when the other is a child or a moron. In all other cases it does incalculably more harm than good. Apart from theoretical arguments, I am opposed to 'scientific ethics' on the same grounds on which the Communists support it — it constitutes the 'moral' framework of a totalitarian state. In mankind's adventure of ideas, 'economic determinism' and 'scientific ethics' are two important backward steps. Along with the notion of 'the chosen race, nation or class', they are landmarks in humanity's backward march — backward along the great road 'from force to persuasion'.

VI

The Ethic of Values

In this concluding section of my paper I want to return to the question of the relation between value and obligation. I have spoken of three different types of value, and three different types of obligation — consequently three different types of morality — which go with them. Connected with the value of happiness (which I have equated with the maximisation of a person's satisfaction achievable through the coordination of all his desires) is *prudential morality*; with the value of each human individual (which can also be expressed as the value of freedom) is *the universal morality of duty*; and finally with the values of truth, beauty and moral perfection is a morality which may be characterised as axiological.

This third type of morality which centres around our apprehension of any of the 'eternal values' is what I would like to call a *personal morality*. The obligations embraced by it cannot be expressed in the form of universal and inescapable obligations. We cannot say that it is the duty of every-

one to appreciate the *Ninth Symphony* or *The Brothers Karamazov* or *The Principia Mathematica*; nor even can we generalise and maintain that it is everyone's duty to appreciate the arts and sciences and metaphysical speculations. No one, I am sure, can be morally blamed for his failure to carry out any of these obligations. Lack of response to the great values embodied in art and knowledge can be considered a defect but not a dereliction of duty. Positively, we can at best use the language of 'fittingness' and state that it would be fitting for everybody to appreciate the masterpieces of art, science and philosophy, but we may not use any stronger language than that. And what does the above statement amount to except that the speaker himself responds positively to these values? There is only one value whose universal validity must be granted, in so far as non-recognition of that value renders a man morally blameworthy (there is no question of any demonstrative proof in the sphere of values). That value, as I have pointed out before, is another's human dignity or his freedom. If you object by saying that even in this case, what does my claim for the universality or universal validity of the value of freedom amount to except to this that I myself respond to it positively, then I shall put to you three questions. (1) Do you not respond to it positively? (2) What would you think of anyone who denied the value of another's personality or his freedom? (3) Does not the denial of the value of human person stand on an altogether different footing from the denial of any other value like art?

I am not making any distinction between the value of the person, his personality or his freedom. For the former two values are ideal values, they are not values-in-existence but values-to-be-achieved. Therefore the value of personality is tantamount to the value of freedom to develop that personality. I need not repeat that this is an absolute value for another; to the person himself the ultimate value is not his freedom but the ends he wants to realise

through his freedom. The value of these ends is relative to his personality. This holds not only for values in art or knowledge; it also applies to moral excellence. There is no absolute obligation or duty towards moral perfection — except towards that moral perfection which is attained when one respects in thought and deed the freedom of another. Towards other types of moral excellence our duty, in my opinion, is optative; it is of the same category as our obligation towards the cultivation of art or knowledge.

Let me give an example: If a man is attacked by a tiger in a lonely field and a passerby moved by the cry of the victim rushes in and grapples with the tiger unarmed and is killed in the attempt to save another life, he undoubtedly attains the high moral value of self-sacrifice, and deserves praise for it. But it cannot be said that he was morally obliged to do so or it was his duty to do so; nor can he be properly blamed for running to the nearby village for help instead of rushing in himself, though he was aware that there was every likelihood of the victim being killed before help from the village could reach the spot. Such heroic moral performances are not the only moral values the attainment of which falls outside our sphere of duty. If I, a great lover of drama, possess a ticket for a Hamlet show by a touring company, and finding that an indigenous friend is keen on seeing it, give it to him and deprive myself of the aesthetic joy, I might have done something praiseworthy, but it was certainly not my duty to do that. My point is that it is only one type of moral value, not all moral values, which it is our duty to attain or try to attain. Other moral values, like the values of art and knowledge, fall within the domain of axiological morality.

The values which a person apprehends and the different positions which they occupy on his scale of values, constitute the framework of his personality. And the scale of values determines a set of principles of action which are themselves arranged in some order of priority and subordi-

nation for him. The coordinate body of these principles constitutes for each person his personal morality. This personal morality is an ethic of objective values. The objectivity of these values of course holds primarily within the perspective of a personality, though it might find confirmation in the experience of a cultural group.

The personal ethic of values may clash with the universal ethic of duty in some situations, but there would be no point in speaking of two ethics if they clashed all along a man's life — as Schweitzer thinks they do (vide his *Ethics and Civilisation*). When they clash, the weaker personal ethic should yield place to the stronger ethic of duty. But we are familiar with the transgressions of great artists and mystics which are often forgiven or overlooked. Society, I believe, has a point to gain from such forgiveness, though certainly it would have been better all round if occasions for such forgiveness arose less frequently. The point is that great artists and seekers after truth who have an overbearing passion for their vocations are often greater benefactors to society than those more directly devoted to social service. Society benefits from them even though their aim is not to serve man but to serve the gods. In fact, whenever their devotion to art and knowledge yields place to their devotion to society, art and knowledge suffer, and, therefore, indirectly society suffers.

To a man who deeply appreciates art or a particular work of art, it is a painful experience to see its value denied by others. But there is nothing that he can do about it; in particular, he cannot blame the others morally. Calling them philistines or boors

will spoil his manners without improving their taste. He could use the language of persuasion — more effectively if he were himself an artist. That is to say, he could produce a work of art on another work of art. This is a form of criticism, to my mind the highest form. The point, however, that I want to make here is that it is even more painful to see the value of art inverted instead of being simply denied. What is most shocking is not the indifference of politicians to art but their determination to use it as an instrument of their politics. You are aware that a whole theory of criticism has grown up in recent times in support of this inversion of values. This theory is known as Socialist Realism.

Equally deplorable is the tendency in recent times in some societies to lose a sense of value towards knowledge as end and to develop a heightened sense of value towards it as means. I do not think there is a proper theory of criticism to support this inversion in the sphere of knowledge parallel to Socialist Realism, but the instrumentalist theory of knowledge is a near approach to it. Unfortunately, this instrumentalist view of knowledge is not confined to the capitalist countries and their friends, as the instrumentalist theory of art is to the communist countries and their friends. I am afraid this must be accepted as one of the depredations of the human spirit under the wheels of technological advance.

From the point of view of the ethic of duty these value-inversions may not be condemnable as immoral. From the point of view of the ethic of values there could be no worse crime.

Presidential address delivered at the Ethics and Sociology section of the Indian Philosophical Conference, Cuttack, December 1959.

The Culture of the Indian Intellectual*

By EDWARD SHILS

WHILE being, to a detached observer, indelibly and incontestably Indian, the Indian intellectual nonetheless feels himself insufficiently Indian. The feeling of being cut off displeases him and troubles him; sometimes it obsesses him. He worries a lot about not being Indian enough, about being estranged from India. His laudation of the sober and shrewd wisdom of the Indian villager, although often a way of hitting at the political leadership of the country is also an effort to reaffirm his membership in a community which he fears he has neglected or even deserted.

The malaise which we are discussing here—and which is certainly *not* universal among Indian intellectuals—is not a product of being ‘uprooted’ or ‘unIndian.’ It seems to arise, to a far greater extent, from being Indian, being aware of it, even excessively aware of it, and being in a sense ashamed of it. It is distressing to me to assert that worthy people are ashamed of their nationality and it also appears paradoxical when it is asserted of people who are so nationalistic. But however distressing it is, it is not really paradoxical. Some of the nationalism of Indian intellectuals is a reaction to their unhappy feelings about the inferiority of their country to other countries; it is an effort and desire to see it elevated in its achievements and its status. This uncomfortable sense of national inferiority accounts for the often clichéd praise of India which Indian intellectuals often put forward in public and which seldom finds expression in

private conversations—and which is much more observable in Indian intellectuals abroad than in Indian intellectuals in India. It accounts for the frequent praise of Indian spirituality, as well as for the exhilaration which flows from the prominence of India in the United Nations.

Almost without exception, Indian intellectuals want India to be very different from what it is. They not only feel badly about its poverty, as anyone with a spark of human feeling would, they sometimes even seem mortified by its poverty, as if it were a moral deficiency rather than a misfortune which they have not caused. They are ashamed that their country is not a “modern country,” that its institutions are not abreast of the institutions of Great Britain and “the modern world.” They feel that their literature is on the whole inferior to the foreign literature which they read, that Indian science does not stand in the forefront of world science. They are extremely sensitive to the adjectival qualification of every activity undertaken by Indians. The extraordinary need to be really ‘Indian’ resembles the intermittent need of American intellectuals to be really ‘American.’¹⁶ The loving ‘xenotropism’—this attraction to the foreign, this loving and hating preoccupation with what Kingsley Amis has recently called ‘abroad’—is to be accounted for largely by the sense of the superiority of foreign things and the inferiority of Indian things. Far more often than one would like to see or hear, when a problem is discussed, it is less the problem as such that is the primary consideration

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and more India's rank or relationship to it. When Indian novels are discussed, for example, emphasis is laid on the nationality of the author rather than on the quality of the achievement—and when the quality is discussed, then, if the level of achievement is high, it is the position of India on that level which engages attention; if it is low, likewise.

Of course, intellectuals should not be parochial and must be part of a transnational intellectual community and, equally obviously, they should be attached in sentiment to their nation. But intellectual work, whether it be scholarly, scientific, literary, publicistic, or artistic, must be concerned with problems which arise from the situation it confronts and it must be carried on within an intellectual tradition; the standards of aspiration and judgement which guide it must likewise be conjoined to the situation and the tradition. More often than I would like, I have noted that certain intellectual activities have been undertaken in India because they were also being done 'abroad,' and, hence, ought to be done in India; I have often observed that certain ideas were appreciated because they emanated from abroad, and that certain standards were espoused because they were *British* standards, or conversely, and far less frequently, *Indian* standards.

The world, especially the Western world, and India's relation to it, is too much on the mind of the Indian intellectual. It is above all too much on the minds of those without administrative responsibilities, or technical tasks, which demand all they have to give and which provide the rewards of salary, esteem and satisfaction. But insofar as even these persons have general intellectual interests they too disclose the pull of the foreign and especially of the Western. The English language newspapers—the papers read by the intellectuals—are filled with international news but this international

news almost always refers to the status of India among the nations or to colonial questions in which Indians see reflected their own actual and potential status and influence. Literary works and scientific works are frequently assessed by whether they measure up, not to some standard as such, but to a standard embodied in a foreign work.¹⁷

I have been told on numerous occasions that the greatest events in the establishment of India's national self-esteem were: the Japanese victory over the Russian fleet in the Russo-Japanese war, the election of R. P. Paranjpye as Senior Wrangler at Cambridge, Rangit Singh's winning of the Ashes and the award of the Nobel Prize to Rabindranath Tagore. All of these events have a common pattern: in them, the West is forced to acknowledge the merits of India (or of a quasi-India, e. g., Japan) as a non-white Asian nation.¹⁸ It is well-known that a review of a book by an Indian in a British publication is far more valuable to the author than a more intelligent and ampler review in an Indian publication. A very distinguished Indian, one of the most eminent men in the world in his field of work and a controversial but deeply respected personality, a man of pride and honor, wrote a very good book. It was widely and intensively discussed in India and although the sales were poor, it was a real success. Yet the review which the author most wished to call to my attention was a reasonable and appreciative but very brief review in a famous British publication. The high evaluation of the British University degree as compared with Indian degrees is another instance.¹⁹ Any sort of contact with a British university has similar virtues. An Indian scholar of international repute went to much inconvenience to show me the written opinion of a British professor who, as an external examiner, had passed a very favourable judgment on the doctoral

dissertation of one of his pupils. It is well-known that Indian scholars would, in general, sooner publish their papers in British journals than in Indian journals, and that they would greatly prefer to have their books published under a British imprint to having them brought out in India.

The sad fact is that India is not an intellectually independent country. The way in which the fact is perceived varies widely, but most Indian intellectuals are aware that, in one way or another, India is living neither from its own inherited intellectual capital nor from its own intellectual efforts in the present day.²⁰ Their distress arises from the absence of any other alternative. They are aware that they are acknowledging India's intellectual inferiority when they eagerly read the *New Statesman and Nation* and *The Economist* and when they cursorily look at *Thought*²¹ and *The Eastern Economist*, if they ever do. They know that when they go into a bookshop they look more carefully at the books printed in England than they do at the books printed in Bombay or Calcutta. This is the product of a belief that British publications are better—more interesting to read, more pleasant to see, and more informative. It all goes more deeply than this but it is no different at the deeper levels, only more complicated and more ramified. There seems to be nothing cringing in this feeling of the superiority of the West. It is not done out of base motives.

V

The truth of the matter is that the British not only ruled India for a long time but they also took partial possession of the Indian mind. They did not conquer the mind of India any more than they conquered all of the territory of India but where they established themselves they did so very firmly indeed. Just as they imposed themselves on an Indian society much of which they left

intact and which survived their dominion, so they imprinted themselves on the educated Indian mind while much of its deeper structure lived on. The antagonism which their sovereignty over India aroused and the humiliations which their conduct often inflicted on Indians did not undo this profound penetration. The capacity of the Indian attachment to English culture and political institutions to withstand the innumerable affronts which Indians suffered at British hands is not simple to understand.²²

The better missionary colleges, such as St. Xavier's and Wilson Colleges in Bombay, Scottish Churches College in Calcutta, Madras Christian College, and St. Stephen's in Delhi, and the few government colleges—notably the Presidency Colleges in Calcutta and Madras and Elphinstone in Bombay—did their work remarkably well. The colleges started by public-spirited Indian initiative, such as Ferguson College in Poona and Ripon College and City College in Calcutta and those initiated by some of the more progressive rulers in the princely states, were not less effective in the same direction. They might not have created centers of independent thought and research—they did not intend to do so—but they did impress their subjects on the minds of their students—above all, they impressed on their students a sense of the radiance of Western culture. Some of the Englishmen who came out to teach in India were great teachers who loved their subjects and their pupils, and many of the Indian teachers in government, missionary and private colleges had the same qualities. English literature, above all, took a firm root in the Indian heart.

Mr. Aubrey Menen said a few years ago that the English literature taught in Indian colleges was foreign to the experience of the young Indians who studied it so laboriously. It was unintelligible in its subject matter and alien in its spirit and was there-

fore meaningless to them.²³ This seems to me to be utterly fallacious. In the educated classes of India, the understanding and appreciation of English poetry is, if not as widespread, as perceptive as it is in England or America. The strength of feeling with which it is quoted seems to be as great and as genuine as anywhere in the English-speaking world.

It would carry us very deeply into the mysteries of life itself to attempt to explain how and why Indian boys of the Victorian generation fell in love with Shakespeare and Wordsworth, Blake and Byron, Tennyson and Browning, and those of a later generation with Auden and Spender and T. S. Eliot. It would certainly be far from the truth to say that the Indian intellectuals loved and were fascinated by English literature because they stood in awe of the tall red-faced men who from a distance exercised a cold authority over them. It is true that Indians were impressed by the stern, devoted and impersonal authority of the British, however much they also rebelled against it. More important, however, is the fact that many Indians, in their colleges, in their offices as lawyers and civil servants, in their littered lairs as journalists, and immersed in their Victorian Indian domestic scenes, really loved the great English poets and prose writers.

Nowadays, trying to explain it, they sometimes say that 'we loved these writers because they spoke for liberty' or that 'they taught the value of the ideals of freedom and national self-respect even though they did not live up to those ideals in their treatment of India.' There is undoubtedly an element of truth in this, but not the political truth that the present generation sees in it. More truth lies in the statement that they were fascinated by the beauty of the poetry and the lofty eloquence of the prose. (It must be remembered that among Indian intellectuals, there are some who are power-

ful orators with a true gift of rhetorical grandeur in English, and that the best Indian writers of English prose have risen to a level as austere and as forceful as the best English prose anywhere today.)²⁴

The appeal goes deeper than this. There is a hidden truth in the Indian claim that English literature revealed to them the idea of liberty but the liberty which it revealed was more than political. In English literature, Indians with a yearning for sensitive personal relations, for personal liberty and responsibility, for a private sphere into which admission was a product of affection and voluntary decision, found a land of their heart's desire.²⁵ Naturally, there is also not infrequently an unattractive element of snobbery in the Indian feeling for England but this presupposes an already existing and sincere admiration for the moral qualities displayed in English literature. This is far more important than the snobbery and 'aping their masters' which are sometimes put forward to account for the inclination of the Indian intellectual towards British culture.

This holds equally for British life and institutions. How often have Indian intellectuals of every sort, leftists, moderates, conservatives, old men who studied in England thirty and forty years ago and young men who have just come back, told with a catch in the throat of the wonderful times they had in London, where life was free and the world was open. The kindness of Graham Wallas and Harold Laski and the Webbs at the London School of Economics, the *New Statesman* fresh and crisp on Friday morning, the theatre offering Shaw and Chekhov and Shakespeare, the endless hours of cheering talk, the red double-deck busses, the walks in the country on Sundays and the trips to the continent during the vacations, and Hampstead Heath all year — all these furnished a world full of exciting adventures which

can never pass from memory. The bleaker experiences of their student years in England, beetle-infested basement rooms in Camden Town and Holland Park, the dismality of the English winter, the disapproving landlady, the penury, the meagre meals cooked over a gas ring – these come back to memory less readily than the sunny side of their life in England.²⁶ Except for those who returned to the plateaus and peaks of the ICS or the service of the more enlightened princes and who enjoyed the responsibilities of the district and the strict and benevolent supervision and guidance of a hard-headed yet humane British collector or magistrate,²⁷ life could never be the same. The pressure of the extended family, the reappearance of an unchosen young wife after years of separation, the long period of searching for employment suitable to one's qualifications,²⁸ the hard work under squalid and uncomfortable conditions, the bitter struggle for existence without surcease or remission embellished the memories of the years in England. Those who did not go because they lacked the means had the accounts of those who did and they had *The New Statesman and Nation* and the Left Book Club and the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* to bring them close to this happy land where men discussed without end, where the imperious red-faced Englishman whom one saw at an awful distance in India turned out to be a kindly human being, cultivated, fatherly and genial, where the oppressive, impersonal Empire was transformed into a happy friendly kingdom.

It has occasionally been said that the attraction toward England will decline as the years pass. There is little sign that this is so. There are more Indian students in England now than before Independence and the eagerness to go to England seems undiminished.²⁹

Except for a few doctrinaires and a few

who have really thought about the matter, there is almost unanimity in reply to the question as to the country from which India has most to learn. It is England.

There are former terrorists who do not hesitate to say, now that 'our oppressors have climbed off our backs,' that 'the English are better than the Indians.' One former terrorist, who later became an editor of a famous Marathi daily, said that if he and his comrades assassinated an English collector, his English successor went about with complete indifference to the danger which had overcome his unlucky predecessor. He would go alone, fearing nothing, into the very village where the acts of violence had been committed. If on the other hand an Indian were the successor of the murdered official, he would shirk his duties in the district, and would try as hard as he could to conduct his business from his office at district headquarters.³⁰ There is a very widespread prejudice, which might in fact correspond to the truth, but which is certainly seldom based on direct experience or observation, that 'when the British were here there was far less corruption and favouritism' and that communal ties played nothing like the part in British administration and justice that they have since Independence.³¹

Just as 'Englishmen have better characters than we have' so their institutions at home are commonly asserted to be far better. 'They know how to conduct parliamentary government,' 'they do not attempt to place their nephews in any post that comes within their authority,' 'they know how to get along with one another,' etc. Only a few who as students, or as political exiles, appreciated the Bohemian life of Paris or Berlin, felt that London with its acidulously suspicious landladies, its dark and damp basement 'digs,' its sombre winters and its dreary Sundays was no fit place for a young Indian. For the others, it still

remains the heart's capital, where an Indian can be more at home than anywhere else except the district where he spent his boyhood.

Not that many express the wish to become expatriates. There are a few who envisage their declining years in a cottage in the Home Counties or at exquisite teas in Bloomsbury, having read too passionately the writings of Virginia Woolf. Those who have returned home under the combined pressure of affronts suffered and maternal insistence, do not allow the flame of Anglophilia to die out. Rather these persons feel themselves to be more British than their friends and, accordingly, of better substance, more sensitive and more perceptive.

England is more than the home of English literature and of British institutions. It is the home of 'modern thought,' that magician's stone which could transform India and make it into a country which is not only one's own but also an object of pride and a source of self-esteem. Practically all of what certain Indian intellectuals refer to as 'modern thought' comes to them through England and the medium of English. The number of persons who read French, German, Russian or Italian is negligible as compared even with the United States or Great Britain. Europe comes to them through England and English. Hence, as so many Indians put it, English is India's 'window on the world.' Even where the 'world' which is seen through the window is French or German or Russian or American, the 'window' remains British. Science, Marxism, psychoanalysis and existentialism are not British but these too come largely through translations made in England, through British books and periodicals.³²

The belief in science as the guiding principle of an outlook which could guide India out of its poverty and enthrallment by the past has come to India through British writers. The liberal and socialist confidence in

science was learned from English writers, first from T. H. Huxley, and then from Bertrand Russell and Harold Laski,³³ and latterly Professors J. B. S. Haldane and J. D. Bernal. Indian Marxism rests on a foundation of British scientism,³⁴ which alleges to apply science to the study and transformation of society.

It must be recognized, however, that among leftist Indian intellectuals its scientific pretensions do not constitute the main appeal of Marxism, although these are often adduced as its justification. The appeal of Marxism, which is very great indeed, and not just among Communists, rests on its claim to create a modern society, a modern India different from the India in which the Indian intellectuals are so enmeshed and by which they are so often abashed. Marxism appeals to Brahmin intellectuals because it derogates the trading classes and denies their usefulness. It permits intellectuals who feel derogated to envisage a society in which their own ideas as to the good life will prevail. It promises the overthrow of the hated and dazzling British and the Anglicized ruling groups who are guided by their ideas. It promises the liberation of colored men from the white men who are equated with capitalists and foreigners. It permits India to deny the West, which it knows as a British West, and to do so on behalf of an ideal which is, at the same time, Western in content and origin.

The state of intellectual dependence on Britain shows itself even in these actions which could also be viewed as declarations of intellectual independence from the traditions of British thought. The most esteemed Marxist writers, apart from R. Palme Dutt who is himself half Indian, are Maurice Dobb, Maurice Cornforth, Christopher Cauldwell and J. D. Bernal. I encountered only one person, a gifted poet with a complex sensibility, who read Marxist literature which did not emanate from the United

Kingdom and which was not written in English—and for his intellectual independence, he has often been in trouble with the official Party intellectuals who have thought him far too individualistic.³⁵ Soviet Marxism, except for the books printed by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow and sold on the streets by illiterate boys at subsidized prices, e.g., Rs. 2 per volume of the works of Stalin, Rs. 4-8-0 for the first volume of *Das Kapital*, etc., comes to India through Great Britain.

In fact the Soviet Union which, for many Indian intellectuals, vaguely figures as a leading modern country really does not in itself attract the Indian intellectual very much. Practically no one reads books about the Soviet Union and certainly practically no one studies it in a scholarly way. Even though he claims that it represents the model for India, the leftist Indian intellectual does not care to learn about it in intimate detail.³⁶ Even the leftists feel closer to England—not least when they deny what they think it stands for.³⁷

English literature, the British culture of freedom, a vague notion of socialism, which derives from Britain, British scientism, British parliamentary democracy—these are the elements of modernity which draw the Indian intellectual. Even where he departs from the model, where he becomes a Communist, or a critic of democracy, the point of origin leaves its traces and the new viewpoint shows a continuing inclination in the British direction.

There are, of course, elements of 'modern culture' which appeal to Indian intellectuals, which are not at all British in their origin. But these too are variants on the basic themes of the attachment of the Indian intellectual to Britain. Let us mention only two of these which in the past three decades have had some vogue in India—psychoanalysis and existentialism.

Psychoanalysis as a profession has only a

very small following in India. There are only about twenty members of the Indian Psychoanalytic Society and thirty associate members and there are very few who seek to acquire the qualifications for membership. Very few Indians undertake psychoanalytic treatment and those who are sophisticated and wealthy enough to desire it and afford it seem to prefer to go to England for it. Nor do the works of Freud or Jung attract many Indian readers. Psychoanalysis has not penetrated the middle strata of the intellectual classes in the way in which it has in Britain and America. It has not affected the development of anthropology as it has in America nor have any of the humanistic disciplines received its influence. It has not become a part of intellectual opinion.

Nonetheless, it means something to Indian intellectuals. It is part of the complement of ideas which constitute 'modern thought' and it is the object of sympathetic judgment.

Its attraction seems to lie, as it did in the 1920's in Great Britain and America, in its liberative significance. Psychoanalysis, like the writings of Aldous Huxley and D. H. Lawrence, is, as far as the Indian intellectual is concerned, a criticism of traditional beliefs and prejudices. It is the justification of the individual living on his own responsibility, free from dependence on his family and the other authorities who dominate man's life. Its approval is an expression of the individual's desire for personal liberty, like his attraction to England and English literature.

The affirmative attitude towards psychoanalysis is an aspect of the Indian intellectual's criticism of the traditionality of Indian life. It is a hand outstretched towards freedom.

In the past decade, existentialism has appealed greatly to Indian intellectuals, particularly the younger ones and those

who pride themselves on being fully 'abreast of the times'—which means 'Western times.' Not only extreme, non-Communist Party leftists who found in Sartre's praise of Communism a powerful Western support for their antagonism to their own lumbering, liberal, mildly socialistic government but other intellectuals as well regard familiarity with Sartre as indispensable. Here as in other spheres of intellectual life and in other countries, contemporaneity has its snob appeal. But it cannot be the sole explanation. The *Schwärmerei* for Sartre and Camus has another and a deeper root. It is an affirmation of individuality; it is a declaration of the individual's responsibility for his own action in a world he never made; it demands personal integrity, authenticity of judgment and choice. It discloses human beings attempting to live in 'the realm of freedom.' It is of a piece with the sentiments and dreams which impel the Indian intellectual to think of England as a land of dreams realized—as a dimly illuminated pattern of what the good life might be like.

VI

Let us return to the original charge against the Indian intellectual which is made by so many Western and Indian observers. Is the Indian intellectual 'un-Indian' and 'rootless'? Is he 'schizophrenic'? Is he 'ambivalent'? Is he torn between his attachment to traditional Indian practices and values and his attachment to modern Western, and above all, British, institutions and beliefs?

The 'rootlessness' of the Indian intellectual is not a hard fact. It is a painful phantasy of many Indian intellectuals which the actual situation does not confirm. The Indian intellectual is neither 'un-Indian' nor 'rootless.' He is as Indian as any modern

Indian can be, he is, as much an integral part of his society and culture as any modern man can be when he lives in the midst of a traditional society. He partakes of Indian culture and he accepts much of it. His belief that he is 'cut off from the people' is the result of an impossible demand which he, his fellow-intellectuals, Indian politicians, and foreign critics unthinkingly assert. The subjective experience is real but the facts which it alleges to mirror are not.

When Indian intellectuals are asked whether they feel ambivalent, whether they have a sense of inner conflict, practically all of them deny it. Only about one per cent of all those interviewed asserted that it was true of themselves. One of these, a university teacher with an extremely subtle and differentiated mind, and whose few written works exhibit intellectual refinement and profundity was pained when I told him that I did not think the Indian intellectual, as I had observed him, was a battlefield of severe inner conflict. He said he felt the conflict very acutely. When he wrote about philosophical and sociological problems, he felt drawn into the categories of Western thought and at every step he felt a betrayal of what was essential in him. Another, less gifted man, intellectually omnivorous, a broken failure in life who had never been able to pursue any single course of action persistently, told me that he felt the conflict in almost every word he spoke. While he was talking to me, he said that he felt that every sentence ought to be recalled and cancelled. And, indeed, his discourse was an affecting dialectic in which he felt the need to contradict everything he himself asserted. When he spoke to me, he felt that he was being swept into Western ways of thought, and within himself, a voice cried out against it. When he read Western books—and he was always reading them—he felt

he should not be reading them but should be reading Indian books instead. When he read Indian books, his Western conscience troubled him. At home with his family, he felt that he could not participate wholeheartedly and unsophisticatedly in the daily life of his household. His immersion into Western culture had, he felt, destroyed his naive Indianity. A third man, whose extreme sensibility I remarked at the very beginning of our meetings, and who made several unsuccessful efforts to expatriate himself to England, has ended in terrible unhappiness. Now he is back in India, having been returned there following a diagnosis as a victim of 'extreme and incurable schizophrenia.' It is possible to assert that the actual schizophrenia of this man was an acute expression of a tendency which is widespread among Indian intellectuals. There are a few other instances which could be cited. But these are all I could observe. For the most part, the Indian intellectuals I met manifested none of this conflict in ways that a reasonably experienced observer could detect.

It is obvious that the Indian intellectual lives in the zone in which several fundamentally divergent styles of culture intersect. But who does not in the modern intellectual world? Do not particularistic attachments to family, party, nation and church characterize intellectuals in all countries, and are these not at variance with the universalistic attachments to an international community of science, scholarship, literature and art, each with its own traditions sustained across parochial boundaries? Does not an American scientist who is a patriot, also live in two worlds? Does not a member of the Roman Catholic Church who is an economist or an astronomer live in two worlds? Who among intellectuals could contend that his outlook and his attachments and his daily domestic actions

are entirely harmonious and logically unitary?

Man does not need complete consistency. A thoroughgoing harmony between thought and action, between intellectual aspirations and social loyalties, is not essential to most men. There are, of course, intellectuals, spiritually musical, who need consistency and in whom there is an urgent necessity for systematic and rigorous coherence. They are, however, few. Most of us can fairly easily sustain the co-existence of logically incompatible elements in our lives. Why, it may be asked, should the Indian intellectual be different?

The Indian intellectual has many problems. His creativity is more stunted than his great traditions, his acute intelligence and verbal fluency require. His effectiveness and productivity are more restricted than his capacities make necessary. There are brilliant exceptions to these general observations, but in the main they are valid. There are numerous factors, crudely observable which go a long way towards accounting for these defects in intellectual performance. The poverty of India which the vast majority of Indian intellectuals share to an extent sufficient to impair their functioning, the poor quality of modern Indian intellectual institutions, the unfruitful relations of most of the intellectual classes with the reigning authorities, the content and the form of transmission of traditional Indian learning, and, finally, the necessity for modern Indian intellectuals in many spheres of intellectual activity to express themselves in a language which is not their mother tongue, all go quite far towards explaining why the achievements of the Indian intellectuals are less good than one would like to see them.

It is, however, also possible that below the surface of consciousness, there is a conflict between the submission in many spheres to the pressure of traditional Indian

institutions, and the aspirations towards emancipation, towards the freer, fuller, and personally more responsible life. It is also possible that this unconscious conflict is resolved by the defeat of the aspirations towards individuality. At present, and with the intellectual resources available to me, I am skeptical about the charge of 'ambivalence' and 'schizophrenia.' The validity which it does possess is of narrow scope and it works among many other factors.

Any society which passes from tradition-bound particularism to modernity inflicts this burden on its intellectuals. The problems of the Indian intellectual are aggravated by the exogenous character of the universal culture to which he aspires, by the fact that it is not the product of an internal evolution of his own traditional Indian culture. Even if it were endogenous, as were the scientific and religious transformations of the Victorian age, uneasiness and torment would be the fate of the most sensitive and only a manly confrontation of the tasks of the day and age could overcome the anguish.

It does seem to me to be excessively derogatory to the Indian intellectual and what is more, beside the point, to write him off as a neurotic 'marginal man' who hangs suspended between two cultures without belonging substantially to either of them. Such a view denies the genuineness of his attachments and aspirations, and it falsifies the nature of the Indian intellectuals and the intellectuals of all other countries as well. The Indian intellectual is a member of a species which seeks universality while living in the grasp of a particularistic existence. His problems and his solutions are only variants of a universal experience.

However universal the problem, the solution is not easy to find. No excogitation, however powerful, will conclusively reconcile the conflicting demands of tradition and modernity, nor will an officially con-

trived linguistic policy overcome the further complication which weighs on the Indian intellectual. Such resolution as is possible will be a product of time, of time which resolves problems through supplanting them by new problems, and through the gradual generation of new traditions which only the passage of time can nurture.

The problems of the Indian intellectual will find their solution, to the extent that any problems are ever solved, by the emergence of traditions and institutions which foster individuality and creativity. If the Indian intellectual can come into a situation in which he perceives real tasks, then he will draw on whatever resources are within himself and his cultures, traditional and modern, to solve them. Then the synthesis, so much yearned for, will come forth. It will come, furthermore, not from deliberate efforts at synthesis but from ardent exertions to solve real scientific problems, to discover something true and important through scholarship, to write poems and novels about what one sees with one's own eyes, feels with one's own feelings, imagines with one's own imagination and to apply one's knowledge and skills to the handling of tasks for which one is responsible with a responsibility which one accepts.

If and when these things happen, and they cannot be expected to happen soon or all at one time, then the Indian intellectual will cease torturing himself with accusations of 'rootlessness,' and his critics will cease assailing him with charges of 'ambivalence.' Then he will take his place as an intellectual among intellectuals, like the French, the British, the Russian, the German and the American intellectuals. He will feel himself to be at a creative center, of the world's creative centers, and his provinciality and self-derogation will fall away. Then his real problems as a serious intellectual will begin.

¹⁶ One need refer here only to a few of its manifestations such as Van Wyck Brooks, *America's Coming of Age*; Waldo Frank, *Our America and The Rediscovery of America*; Harold Stearns et. al., *Civilization in the United States*, and more recently Newton Arvin et al., *Our Country and Our Culture*. In general in their populism, in their 'xenotropism' and their national sensitivity, American intellectuals often disclose striking similarities to their Indian fellow-intellectuals.

¹⁷ Indian authors, at least when they write in English, seem to have in mind as their 'invisible' audience, a British audience. I will cite at random an extreme case. The late Subhas Chandra Bose was a fervent nationalist politician whose hostility to Britain was so great that during the War he organized an 'Indian National Army' which under Japanese patronage conducted minor military operations against the British in Southeast Asia. In his *Autobiography* (Calcutta, 1948), published in India and ostensibly for Indian readers, this enemy of Britain repeatedly and expressly explains the meaning of various conventional Indian rituals and practices—well-known throughout India—as if his audience, being British, would naturally not know of them. The same disposition is found in many other persons whose alienation from Britain is not so pronounced.

¹⁸ I am deliberately omitting the importance of 'color' among Indian intellectuals. It is far from insignificant but it is too complex for cursory treatment.

¹⁹ There are good reasons for these preferences in terms of more effective distribution of books, a wider readership and better training, etc., but there is also, it seems to me, a very considerable enhancement in dignity in having the British connection as such.

²⁰ Unfortunately, the continuation of this condition seems to be accepted without comment. During the prolonged, nation-wide debate on the future of English, it was almost universally agreed that English must be retained, in one way or another, because it is India's 'window on the world.' It was time and again stressed, even by the most severe Hindiphiles, that it would be through English that India could 'keep up with developments in modern knowledge.' It was assumed by practically everyone that India would continue to be a recipient and not a creator. Very few persons, most notably Mr. C. D. Deshmukh, took the view that through the use of English, India would not only be able to receive instruction in science and scholarship from the Western world, but would also be able to make its contribution as a creative member of the universal intellectual community. But then Mr. Deshmukh is no dejected and rejected intellectual. At present chairman of the University Grants Committee, he was formerly Minister of Finance of the Government of India, before that Governor of the Reserve Bank of India and before that a very prominent member of the Indian Civil Service. Educated at Elphinstone College, Bombay, and Jesus College, Cambridge, he is also a distinguished Sanskrit scholar.

²¹ In 1955, *The New Statesman* had approximately 3000 subscribers and newsstand purchasers in India. *Thought* reported a circulation of about 6000. But whereas *The New Statesman* is frequently referred to in public and private discussions and one is proudly told by Indian intellectuals that they read *The New Statesman*, *Thought* is seldom mentioned.

²² It is often said that Indians are 'touchy.' If they are, then it is all the more remarkable that their attachment to British things has been so powerful. The history of Anglo-Indian relations from the Mutiny to Independence is a long history of poignant Indian overtures toward a modern liberal culture on British lines, of repeated British rebuffs and Indian agitation in response to those insults. The complex relationship, and a hint of the underlying reasons, is movingly expressed in Nirad Chaudhuri's dedication of *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*: 'To the memory of the British Empire in India which conferred subjecthood on us but withheld citizenship, to which yet every one of us threw out the challenge: CIVIS BRITANNICUS SUM; because all that was good and living within us was made, shaped and quickened by the same British rule.'

²³ Mr. Menen made this assertion in the course of an article on 'The Way New India Thinks' (*Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 196, 1955, pp. 42-5) in which he said that since independence India has seen the coming forward of a new generation free from the burden of British education and hence intellectually free to confront India's real problems. The text for Mr. Menen's assertions about the new Indian outlook was the *General Report of the Committee of Direction: All-India Rural Credit Survey* (Abridged Edition, Bombay, 1955). He apparently did not

know that this document, which is a work of exceptional interest, was the product of Mr. A.D. Gorwala, Professor D. R. Gadgil and Mr. B. Venkatappiah. Professor Gadgil was educated as an undergraduate at Queen's College, Cambridge, and then took an M. Litt. there. The two other authors were members of the Indian Civil Service with the high level of English education characteristic of that body and both deeply intimate with English literature to an extent which would be unusual even among the more cultivated members of the Administrative Class of the Civil Service in Great Britain.

²⁴ Among Indian publicists, Mr. A. D. Gorwala writes in a style which for economy, trenchancy and force is not inferior to the best prose being written in contemporary English and American journalism. The prose of Mr. Khasa Subha Rao, the editor of *Swarajya* (Madras) has the same outstanding qualities. The authors of *The Summary Report of the All-Indian Rural Credit Survey* are responsible for one of the most arrestingly written government documents produced in the present century in any English-speaking country. Among contemporary critics of English and American literature, 'Krishnanath,' who writes in *Thought*, is probably not excelled in subtlety of perception or in clarity of expression. The fact that many Indian writers still express themselves in the sonorous style of the Victorian age and that many write clumsily and ineptly should not overshadow the heights that are sometimes attained or the disproportion between expression and appreciation.

²⁵ It is not for nothing that E. M. Forster is a great hero of the Indian intellectual, and it is not just because India is his subject-matter. It is because he speaks for that 'other kingdom' on the other side of the sea, for personal relations, which would bring liberation from the individuality-deadening impact of the extended family system and the individual choicelessness of the Indian social structure.

²⁶ A wonderful book could be written about the Indian student in England from the 1870's onward. Chapter VII of Mr. David Garnett's *The Golden Echo* (London, 1954) offers a melancholy and exciting picture of certain phases of Indian student life in London before the First World War. With this exception, however, British and Indian writers have left this important subject untouched.

²⁷ A. D. Gorwala, one of the most distinguished of Indian Civil servants in the present century, after describing the official duties of a newly qualified member of the ICS then goes on to tell of the unofficial processes of assimilation of the recently returned young man. 'The nature of this unofficial training was somewhat remarkable. It was often administered quite imperceptibly. Social contacts furnished the real occasion for it. A good Collector's house was often a second home to the young Assistant Collector. He was encouraged to drop in of an evening. Hardly ever was the Collector so busy or so occupied with his own avocations that he would not have time for a few words with the young man. In addition, he might ask the new magistrate to come and have tea with him one evening a week. Almost in passing, he would suggest that it would perhaps be a good thing if he brought along any particular cases in which he had written judgements or in which points of evidence were perplexing him. The young Assistant Collector would arrive at 4:30 with his bundle of cases. Seated on a comfortable sofa in an attractively furnished drawing room, plied with good tea and excellent home-made cake, the touchiness and arrogance so characteristic of the intelligent, inexperienced young prize-winner to whom for some period at least all the world seems inferior, would fall off like an old garment. Differences of kind or race would sink to insignificance and the young man would, sometimes to his surprise, find himself talking freely, listening with attention, proffering his work for examination, pleased at the praise, not hurt at the warning and advice.' *The Role of the Administrator: Past, Present and Future* (R. R. Kale Memorial Lecture 1952: Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona, 1952), p. 9.

²⁸ John and Ruth Unseem report that in Western India, less than 10 percent of the foreign trained "ever have jobs in which they work full-time in the field in which they have taken specialized training." *The Western-Educated Man in India* (New York, 1955), p. 81.

²⁹ Indian students coming to study in the United States will probably soon out-number those in the United Kingdom, but except for specialists in science and technology, the United Kingdom is almost universally preferred, and the degrees of British universities still command more esteem than the degrees of any other universities.

³⁰ I cannot vouch for the truth of this assertion, but the fact that is asserted is surely significant.

³¹ Only a few months ago, I heard an editor of one of the best daily newspapers in India say that when the British ruled India, although they might have discriminated between Englishmen and Indians, in matters affecting only Indians unalloyed justice could have been expected. Now, he asserted, discrimination on the basis of caste and sheer corruption are common. A certain kind of romanticism concerning the purity of administration during the days of the British Raj is fairly frequent. More realistic portrayals of the actualities of British administration in India may be found in Penederel Moon, *Strangers in India* (New York, 1945) and H. E. Beal, *Indian Ink* (London, 1954), a charming novel of the life of a lower Indian official in Orissa under the British.

³² Even Soviet propaganda in India uses English as its medium. Up until recently, the bulk of Marxist and Communist literature, leaving aside pamphlets on purely Indian topics, was imported from London.

³³ Harold Laski's aura has been dissipated in England and America in the nine years since his death—but not in India. In Ahmedabad, in the ancestral home of the family of the late speaker of the Lok Sabha, G. V. Mavalankar, his son, Professor P. G. Mavalankar, has established the Harold Laski Institute of Political Science. The Institute publishes a periodical and sponsors an Annual Harold Laski Memorial Lecture. This latter has been delivered in the last few years by Dr. K. M. Panikkar and Professor D. R. Gadgil, among others.

³⁴ It also has other sources such as Bengali terrorism which drew inspiration from the Irish and Russian terrorist activities and the echoes of the Russian Revolution, as well as from Mazzini and Young Italy.

³⁵ The wife of this Communist intellectual was present while her husband was speaking of a friend who is a Communist member of the Lok Sabha. She interjected an appreciative comment: "He is such a wonderful speaker. He has the most beautiful Oxford accent."

³⁶ There are at present some Indian students in the Soviet Union as well as a number of older intellectuals who are advising on the translation of Indian books into Russian and Soviet books into Indian languages. A colleague recently returned from Moscow, where he met some highly educated Indians, reports that according to their observations, the Indians in the Soviet Union take a culturally condescending attitude towards the Russians. It is what one would expect—only Britain really counts.

³⁷ A high official of the Communist Party who had actually studied in Berlin and who on returning to India was persecuted by the British police, allowed himself to be interviewed by me for several hours as long as he believed I was an Englishman. I had mentioned at the beginning of our conversation that I had once taught at the London School of Economics. At our second interview it became clear to him that I was an American. He said that he could not continue to cooperate with my inquiry and when I remonstrated with him, referring to his cooperation at our previous meeting, he justified having gone so far by his mistaken belief that I was British.

Language and Sensibility in Hindi Literature

By R. S. CHATURVEDI

FORM and content in creative writing find an integration largely through the medium of language. But then, the role of language in literary creation is not easy to decide. If we could define and understand the proper relationship between language and sensibility, it would indeed go a long way to resolve the tension between form and content. These are similar, and to some extent, the same problem. As a matter of fact, the literary creative process could not be understood, far less explained, if one did not look into these three dimensions of language, sensibility and the literary form—these three together being the means of recreating the whole experience of the writer.

In the traditional modes of criticism it was generally argued that language followed the pattern of the writer's content or sensibility. According to this system, the poet's language was almost a maid in attendance to the exalted royalty of his sensibility. Some such metaphors have actually been used in the older works of criticism. For courses in elementary literary criticism, language and sensibility were talked about as two different entities. The language-in-attendance theory also smacks of this mostly unreal distinction. But could we not alter the whole proposition and examine it anew; that is, coming to a position where language upto a certain stage determines and limits the nature of sensibility, and not vice-versa? Starting the argument from the 'wrong' end is not merely due to any sense of curiosity; this rather new view would find support even in linguistics.

It has been a tricky problem for the ling-

uists to decide the order of precedence between thought and language. It is nearly impossible to imagine the existence of one in the absence of the other. But in the history of advanced literatures it is not so difficult to know as to which is the determining factor of the two. According to the accepted theory, the differences between the languages of, say, Maithili Sharan Gupta, Sumitra Nandan Pant, Agyeya and Raghubira Sahay (four practising poets of almost four different generations of Hindi poetry) have been caused by the differences of thought-content between them. But there is a grave fallacy in this view. It has been forgotten here that language is used not merely for literary communication alone; it is an integral part of the whole human life. Whatever experience the poet wants to communicate, he must first have realized it in some form of the socially existing language. This indicates that before the actual poetic creation takes place, the poet would have filtered his sensibility through a language, which may not be identical with the one through which he is expressing himself in his poetry. What is the language of this poetic filtering? If the poet's sensibility were to determine the poetic language that he uses in his literary creation, then from where has he got the language through which his own experience is revealed to him? What language serves as the medium of his common human experiences? Is it not a fact that on one level it is the language he inherits from and shares with society that determines the nature of his sensibility? Actually, the extent to which a parti-

cular language has been developed may decide the pattern of sensibility of the people speaking it, so far as the interplay of language and sensibility is concerned.

A writer has to use language in both the situations, of precreation and of actual creation. The form of the first he gets from society (language is a social phenomenon by nature), while to the second he contributes something of his own also, but to the extent to which his intelligibility is not at stake. The language that he acquires from his social set-up is the base, and his sensibility is naturally determined by that—which he later on communicates through his own language. This poetic language usually bears his stamp, and may have a special character through the use of imagery etc., but it cannot radically depart from the common social language in which the poet has realized his experience. That is why the increasing capability of a language to carry the load of meaning generally enriches its literary sensibility. According to this view, now, the difference between the poetic experience and texture of Maithili Sharan Gupta on the one hand, and that of Raghu-vira Sahay on the other, has been caused by the types of language accessible to them. In this context one can also note that the recent change in lyric-poet Bachchan's sensibility, discernible in his collections *Pranay Patrika*, *Dhar ke Idhar Udhar*, *Arati aur Angare*, is to a great extent explained by his rather undue emphasis on the common man's language.

The view that linguistic development influences and determines the power to think gets convincing proof from the history of Hindi literature. At about 1000 A.D. when, out of the shadows of the Aṇḍramsha, Hindi emerged as an independent language, it could not absorb, much less express deep and complex thought-contents. After that, Brajḥasha and Awadhi, despite their great poetic wealth, just could not develop with-

in their structure logical and scientific thought-patterns, as they were suited to carry only a particular type of sensibility. That is the reason why even in such a refined language as Braj not much critical or philosophical work could be done. This was not on account of the difference between the language of prose and the language of poetry. By its temper, Sanskrit too was a language of poetry, but there one can find a number of excellent critical treatises on various subjects. The fact is that with the birth of the Modern Indo-Aryan languages, when the wheel of linguistic development had gone full circle, a new type of sensibility arose. This sensibility of early Hindi literature is different from that of its close predecessor, the Aṇḍramsha literature. It was the same people, but a new and roughly hewn language compelled them to start afresh.

Coming to the modern period in Hindi literature, khari-boli Hindi dominated the scene as the literary language since the times of Bharatendu Harishchandra. But even after considerable maturity and refinement it could not express the subtler emotions and ideas properly till Pt. Ram Chandra Shukla started his literary career, wielding language with meticulous care. Work on the principles of literary criticism and aesthetics in Hindi was mostly done by him and after him. Development in literary sensibility, thus, can be traced through various stages of the linguistic growth of Hindi.

There are some more examples to prove that the internal structure of a language determines the sensibility of the people using it. I cannot speak with competence about other Indian languages, but in Hindi, I suppose, the problem of obscenity operates largely at the level of language. In Hindi the common vocabulary concerned with sex-life is utterly crude. The phonesthetic theory of the linguists generally

supports this view. In English for the word 'pregnant' one can use phrases like 'in the family way' or 'expecting'; and these certainly are no vulgar slang. But Hindi has not been able to develop words for sex-life which do not have jarring over-tones. It is clear that obscenity lies not in the concept but in the term which indicates it. When this terminology becomes acceptable to the common man as well as the elite, many taboos about sex-life in general will disappear from our social life. Common belief on this, point, however, is the other way round. The line of argument is that since a particular situation in our sensibility is treated as obscene, therefore its linguistic expression must also be obscene. But the linguistic maturity of the writers alone can express our sensibility fully and without inhibitions. In Agyeya's famous novel *Nadi ke Dweep*, the language used by the writer is so mature and deep that the love-scenes of Bhuvan and Rekha, as also the abortion scene of Rekha in the hospital, are neither vulgar nor obscene. Rather, these portions may be regarded as some of the best pieces of modern Hindi writing. This is an indication of how the vigour of language reflects itself in the literary sensibility.

Lastly, I shall take up the case of Hindi fiction to support my view. What appears

to be 'backwardness' in Hindi fiction, compared to European standards, is on one score due to the limited capacity of our language to express the new meanings which are the products of modern life and culture. We do not have a language mature enough to communicate the complicated and subtle human situations, the half-experienced and sometimes unexperienced feelings and emotions. Consequently, the sensibility of Hindi fiction, and, I believe, Indian fiction in general, is yet to be modernised. Even a casual study of French, German or English fiction would reveal to us the gulf between our times and our actual position in literature. Stefan Zweig's *Beware of Pity* or Camus' *The Outsider* just cannot be written at present in our languages. Not only that, such works would not lend themselves to successful translation either. The fact is that our more developed sensibility owes a great deal to the European languages and literatures. But still it cannot find full and correct expression in our own languages because of the latter's immaturity. It is true, as indicated earlier, that language and sensibility, though traceable in their separate patterns, make an integrated phenomenon. And yet one can feel the upper hand of language while studying the growth and development of a literary sensibility.

All-India Writers Look to the Past and to the Future

By DAVID McCUTCHION

THE third All-India Writers' Conference was inaugurated on the morning of the 16th December, 1959, by Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer. Welcoming him, after a prayer sung by Kalakshetra students, the Chairman, Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Home Minister of Madras, spoke fervently of 'Tamil Nad with its hoary tradition of literary excellence'. He discussed the approaches of different types of writers, from those 'whose mind lingers lovingly over the glories of the past, over the legacies bequeathed to us over the generations', to 'the realist of today' who 'wants to take life in the raw, passion in all its violence, and strip the soul of the last shreds of conventional clothing'. To all he extended a hearty welcome. It could be felt, however, that 'those young, angry, men' were not admitted without grave doubts. For 'one of the most welcome features of Tamil renaissance is the increased awareness it has created, of the deep debt we owe to the wisdom of the past'. And 'no aspect of life that could contribute to good, healthy and purposeful living has been neglected by the ancient Tamil books'.

Dr. Aiyer took up the theme of freedom. Reading clearly and boldly, with meticulous phraseology (he had taken particular care over his phrasing, he declared, in view of the audience), he warned the writer against a more insidious kind of oppression than that of political persecution, state regulation or lack of patronage. The modern democratic ideal encourages the tyranny of the majority. The facility of mass communication tempts us to exploit the trivial, sensational and vulgar. But freedom lies in the possibility of developing the full powers of the mind, neither paralysed by conformity nor disrupted by anarchy. When we seek to establish cultural freedom, this must also mean 'freedom from the cinema'. Sri Subramaniam, the day before, had talked of the government taking various measures to prevent the publication of 'undesirable books'. Dr. Aiyer called for self-discipline and re-education. For when governments intervene, the danger arises of favouritism and subsidizing ideologies. Reader and writer must

look for guidance equally to the Indian tradition and to the West. Over against the European ideology of analysis and enlightenment stood the Indian tradition of *dharma*, reverence and tolerance. Moving away from this tradition, the Indian writer has tended to be 'overwhelmed by the occasional, the incidental and the temporary.' To offset this, and the cheap emotionalism of popular appeal, Dr. Aiyer advocated more translations of the Indian classics—popular versions—to usher in a new renaissance. No Indian literature had yet attained the breadth of any European literature, but in adopting Western forms of thought and expression on our way to attaining this breadth, we must not lose contact with the peculiarly Indian features of our outlook—tolerance, sanity and sanctity.

Sri Tarasankar Banerjee, in his Presidential Address, was also concerned over freedom. His was an impassioned plea that political interests should not be allowed to vitiate the affairs of literary gatherings. He recalled how, at Tashkend, where the second Asian-African Conference was held, 'the raucous note of political propaganda drowned the ethics, reason and humanism which should be the keynote of all culture everywhere at all times.' He spoke 'as only Indian culture can speak in the face of danger' in reaffirming the principle of *Panch Sila*, 'the non-violence of the strong man.' Under no circumstances should we deceive ourselves for the sake of expediency, for 'if truth goes, *Panch Sila* goes with it.' He called for free discussion of all issues 'constructively and with allegiance to our country and derivatively to our vocation and to none and nothing else.' He was bitterly critical of 'the ultra-modern movements in our literature of which we are often so pathetically proud', asking how far they are in keeping with 'the glorious traditions that Tagore and others built upon the synthesis of our culture with what is good and vital in the western civilisation.' He went on to attack the 'beggarly mentality' of cultural subjugation to the western yardstick, which he attributed to the self-styled 'progressive sections' of the country; 'The hula hoop has its intellectual,

literary, political and philosophical counterpart. Are we to reject 'because of the blandishments of ism-pedlars' a culture so vital that it has continued uninterrupted since history began? He was 'not a revivalist, but a survivalist.' Not only India but a whole world 'suffering from moral imbalance' had need of the 'living element' in Indian thought and culture.

'The Indian Tradition and the Contemporary Writer' was taken up next morning in seminar. Initiating the discussion, Sri Raghunath Aiyar considered Hinduism 'the central concept of Indian life'. The characteristic feature of this tradition was its 'world view'. The Hindu does not feel separate from the world or antagonistic to his neighbour: 'Life ought to be an attempt at increasing harmony, at establishing greater and greater *rapprochement* with everything about you.' The chairman, Sri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, gently imposed a five-minute limit on subsequent speakers, and Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, with admonishing finger and wickedly glittering eyes, called to our attention the traditional Indian ideal of literary expression: maximum meaning in minimum words — the *sutra*. He quoted the words of a Rig Vedic *mantra* which 'contain within themselves the entire circle of knowledge attainable by man.' Following him, Sri Jivan Naya Thirtha delivered a vigorous declamatory attack on Western influxes. But Sri Kazi Abdul Wadud, comparing Madhusudan Dutt with Bharat Chandra, found that Madhusudan, 'charged with the spirit of new humanism of his time', had gained immortality, whereas Bharat Chandra, 'traditional in form and outlook', is a poet of by-gone days. He conceded the importance of tradition, but concluded that 'the role of thought — by which must be meant true and noble thought — is mightier still.' At this point Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya put in the inevitable plea for less generalisation: exactly *how* are we going to adapt the Indian tradition to the contemporary situation?

Sri Krishnan Kutty wondered whether the Indian and Western traditions must necessarily clash. After all, Indian regional traditions differ among themselves yet constitute a harmonious whole, and what about 'Indo-Anglian' literature? Prof. Vinde Karandikar agreed: 'The Indian tradition is to have a number of traditions.' Each language has its own tradition. Nor does the whole of a tradition operate at one time: he distinguished 'active' and 'passive' principles. He gave an example from Marathi literature which showed two principles operating: the desire to understand reality (traditional) and the desire to transform it (modern). We should confine our discussion to regional tradi-

tions. 'What about the Sanskrit tradition?' demanded Dr. Mukherjee. Prof. Karandikar assured him that would be brought up later. Sm. Rajeswari Padmanabhan ('Anuthama') then read a paper full of poetic similes to insist that 'tradition is the soil which nurtures us.' Idealism is necessary: we must not dwell excessively on 'squalid realism'. And although there are many traditions — each caste has its own tradition — he could think of at least one truly *Indian* ideal — the sanctity of marriage and of womanhood ('the ladle in one hand and the cradle in the other'). Or Indian hospitality. Nevertheless, a writer writes for the universe.

Thereupon Sri Sibnarayan Ray put aside his pipe and stepped firmly out to the front in order to establish once and for all the situation of the contemporary writer writing for the universe. The modern Indian writer is not merely Indian, but something more than what an English or French writer has ever been, for we now share a *universal* heritage. We are entering a new phase in the history of human culture — the cosmopolitan phase. Our problems and values are quite different from those of earlier court and folk literature: 'No Indian writer worth his salt does not accept democratic values' — yet he belongs to a highly stratified society. We have been inspired for more than a century by foreign culture: 'We accepted Shakespeare, we accepted Shelley...' He contrasted our present interest in the actual concrete individual with the traditional Indian concept of *rupa* — the ideal type as expressed in Indian sculpture. Nevertheless tradition can help 'to a certain degree'. He acknowledged the existence of 'an unconscious background that distinguishes us all over the world as Indians.' But he denied that the great Indian tradition was the Hindu Brahminical tradition — that died under the impact of Muslim culture, whose contributions are so smoothly overlooked — music, painting, the Taj Mahal... Let us be Indian by all means, but let us resist the setting up of any Un-Indian Activities Committee!

Sri Gangadhar Gadgil emphasised the need to distinguish between history and tradition, for tradition is 'the way we interpret history at any particular point.' Tradition is not fixed, like history, but continuously changing — it is 'something lived'. Our tradition was created by people who rejected tradition. He therefore concluded that 'to depart from tradition is the best way to serve tradition.' Creativity springs from the tension between the currently accepted and personal experience. If we are so 'shrilly conscious' of our tradition at the moment, it is because socially we are rejecting it. At the same time official propaganda is trying to

create an *ersatz* tradition with its five-year plans and agricultural development schemes. He called upon the contemporary writer to reject government appeals to build up new stock responses. A writer must only 'be himself'.

The westernised intellectuals now seemed to have the situation well in hand, but the voice of traditional wisdom was quickly raised. Sri D. Y. Deshpande looked to Sanskrit for his definition of tradition: it is *parampara*, i.e. 'one coming after the other', i.e. the continuity of creativity, i.e. an original response within a continuity. The 'oldest and proudest' tradition, he declared, is the Indian tradition (sporadic claps). The ancient seers built up this tradition on the basis of the relationship between man and the cosmos. They established the four basic urges of man — aesthetic, ethical, utilitarian and cosmic — and through the infinite combinations and permutations offered by this four-fold system of values, established ever 'new and newer' forms of expression. Truth is cosmic. If the contemporary writer in his rebellion extends his craving for freedom to cosmic heights, he will return full circle to ancient wisdom. The stage was now taken in support of this contention by Sri. K. Srinivasan, who declared that he came from neither Bombay, Bengal, Kashmir nor Kerala, but from 'Bharat'. Sri Srinivasan spoke with great volubility, forceful gestures and startling imagery to establish that 'the *atman* is more enduring than the atom.' All Indian traditions are one and every son of Bharat is but the living vehicle of this continuity.

Unfortunately the continuity of the present discussion was now shattered, and subsequent speakers largely contented themselves with idealistic reassertions and attendant side-issues. Sri A. G. Venkatchari warned us against the dangers of the cult of personality, if we worship our leaders (e.g. Gandhiji) as incarnations of the Indian tradition. He affirmed his faith in the unity of traditional Indian values—freedom, humanism, *dharma*, truth and love. Hence we must 'avoid at all cost the use of force to bring about social change.' Dr. Raghuvira emphasised that the Indian tradition is also deeply rooted in Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, Malaya, Tibet, even in Mongolia and Japan. Hence our opportunity of producing writings which can appeal to all these countries.

So far discussion had all been in the terms of professors, pundits and intellectuals. But now Sri Adya Rangacharya stepped up to avow that as a practising writer he never stopped to consider these things consciously: he just wrote. These

modern young men always supposed that the past was dead and only the new was alive. Well, he was not new, but he thought he was alive. So, 'if you feel that the old is bad and the new is good, I say, get on with the new and leave the old to God.' The chairman, in winding up the discussion, echoed this plea for tolerance. He found no contradiction between opposing speakers, provided both were 'seriously interested in truth'. We need new opinions — the tradition will assimilate them all. As a young man he had been condemned for his daring, but now he was called 'the grandfather of the Kannada short story': every rebel becomes old-fashioned. The important thing is to communicate — not to deviate so far as not to be understood. Man, he concluded (in the Indian tradition) is universal beneath appearances: we need only be 'worthy exponents of the good and the true.' That same evening, as if to reprove any lingering doubts, the Kalakshetra performance of Sita Swayamvaram effectively demonstrated that the Indian tradition is a living source of inspiration in the present.

Not all the seminars were restricted to subjects of relevance only to the Indian situation. A particularly vigorous discussion of 'Form and Content in Creative Writing' took place on the following morning. Sri Sibnarayan Ray, the initiator, defined content as 'what a piece of writing is about' and form as 'how it is written': the two are always inextricably fused. But whereas in music this fusion is complete ('what it is about is how it is said'), with literature we reach 'the other end of the spectrum' where content is 'obstreperous'. Thus pure form is unacceptable in literature (*pace* Mallarmé), because language always refers to something outside the words. Nevertheless, poetry, as opposed to prose, may be said to aspire to the condition of music. Sri Ray confessed to his lack of clarity on the exact nature of the relation between form and content — 'inextricably fused' — but recognised that a distinction was useful. In translation, for instance, we must understand that what carries over is by and large the content — the suggestivity of the original form is largely foregone. A writer must realise the limitations as well as the scope of a particular style or form. For example, only a certain number of things could be said in the *payar* structure of nineteenth century Bengali poetry. Similarly the heroic couplet was unsuited to lyrical effusion. He believed that in *Hamlet* Shakespeare was attempting what could only have been achieved in a novel — a study of psychological introspection. Every language also has its

peculiar qualities: Bengali, for instance, hinders the expression of masculine sentiments.

Sri Sankar Ram then spoke up for the writers, 'who don't bother to think out all these things.' For him content ('the product of the soul') was the most important thing. Form is the product of the intellect. When the content is 'really great', it will dictate its own form. Sri Anirita Rai fiercely attacked all art which laid undue emphasis either on content ('socially wholesome' though it may be) or on form (damned out of hand): any attempt to split form and content was a violation of the creative process. A number of speakers proceeded to worry both sides of the question, establishing their own terms and largely failing to correlate their contributions. Fascinating among them, Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee asserted that literature must seek its source of inspiration not in cities but in the country. He based his argument on the *sutras*, backed by the 'immortal language' of Emerson: 'There is virtue yet in hoe and spade.' The poet must be 'planted down among the farmers', for language is immediately dependent on nature. He regretted that at present words operate like intermediaries reflecting the divorce between expression and sense, whereas they should 'fly like bullets' to the heart of truth.

Soon however a different type of mind made itself heard. Prof. Vinde Karandikar defined content as 'the entire consciousness of life presented by the artist' — not just the ostensible subject. Form is its total organisation. He discerned three stages in the aesthetic process, at each one of which the relation of form and content calls for separate consideration: (1) at the level of *intuition*; (2) at the *material* level, where the artist is wrestling with his material, trying to give it 'a local habitation and a name'; (3) at the level of *perception* — as it is *received*. The ideal unity of form and content is most closely approached at the intuitive level, but is never really possible at the material level. At the received level every reader brings a whole new background, creating an entirely new relationship of form and content. Sri Gangadhar Gadgil took over from Prof. Karandikar. A work of art is 'organised experience', and meaning depends on the way experience is organised. Knowledge is not necessarily rational: art is concerned with non-rational understanding. All consciousness is ultimately derived from symbols, in the sense that these convey an idea — the idea of an organised experience. The whole work of art is a symbol, built up of symbols, and these symbols constitute form. Experience at the earliest level is conceived in the form of symbols, and this is the real function

of language, whereas in a scientific statement there is 'dichotomy' of form and content.

Subsequent speakers were not prepared to plunge with Messrs Karandikar and Gadgil into these abstract depths, preferring instead to wade around at the brink. Indeed, Sri Kazi Abdul Wadud told us to beware of literary abstractions because they are 'bodies without souls'. There was an interlude of virtuoso entertainment from Sri P. Lal, who presented (in one case actually sang) seven examples of poetry in each of which he made some minor alteration, and asked how far the poem was changed. When order was restored, Sri Adya Rangacharya declared that form alone made literature an art, but Sri Raghunathan attacked the 'vulgar intentions' of art for art's sake because of its indifference to social and political questions: it is the artist's responsibility to uplift the masses. Sm. Kokilam Subbiah of Ceylon then returned to the question raised by Sri Lal, deciding that if you replace a word, even by a synonym, you do change the meaning. But Sri Prabhakar Padhye excitedly denied that it made any difference if, in Sri Lal's example from Blake, you changed 'tyger' into 'tiger'. Sri Lal defended himself with brief urbane precision. Lunch was approaching, so the initiator declared his understanding much clarified. The chairman, Sri Gulabdas Broker, concluded the seminar by reading his paper which effectively summarised the arguments of the morning.

In the afternoon Rajaji addressed the delegates. He advised young writers to try out other professions before they attempted to set down their experience of life. He reminded them of the high moral function of art: 'What you write must generate conscience...and the impulse to good conduct.' Literature may seek to please, but must be infused with *dharma*. He advocated the 'art of reticence': 'halve the matter — leave the reader the other half!' He feared the genius of the Indian languages might be the genius of volubility. Finally he warned young authors against jealousy and over-zealous criticism. As Goethe had said, 'It takes talent to produce even what is not satisfactory.' A man may have faults, but all the faults combined together may produce something good. Sri Tarasankar Banerjee offered thanks to 'our guardian'.

The advocates of concreteness and particular examples, as against the exponents of abstract argument, were fully served in the seminar on 'The Art of Translation', which took place on the third morning. All participants agreed on the *necessity* of translation (initiating renaissances, bringing nations together: . . .), yet all admitted that

the perfect translation is impossible. One thing however was certain: translation is an art — far better to be a good translator than a poor original, as Mrs. Chouhan from Delhi put it.

Around these general principles many subsidiary problems were investigated. Should the translation reproduce 'the living voice of the man', as the chairman, Sri V. Sitaramiah, required in his introductory remarks, or should the translator recreate it in terms of his own personality, as Sri S. D. S. Yogi so vehemently insisted? And what about the context? How is it possible, as Sri Lal pointed out in his admirable analysis of certain specific problems he had come up against in his translation of *Shakuntala*, to carry over a system of values which is entirely foreign to the society for which the translation is intended? He further commented on the intricacy of Sanskrit imagery and structure. Can the English language support: 'Meanwhile, O fair one, as is done of the fresh flower, by the bee, the flavour of your tender and untouched lower lip is being gently tasted by my longing for a sip?' (sighs of wonder from the pundits). Sri Lal suggested that this be cut to: 'You can go, after I have kissed you, as a bee kisses a flower.' (gasps of horror from the pundits).

Mrs. Chouhan castigated the 'people with diplomas' who rush in to translate with no understanding of the genius of the language: 'mere grammar simply will not do.' She mentioned examples of irresponsible translations from Shakespeare ('so quickly finished!'), and deplored the slovenliness of translators who do not even bother to check the pronunciation of proper names (false transliteration). Pure Hindi, at its present stage of development, was quite inadequate for translating humorous writing, or Maupassant, or Shaw (e.g. no word for 'affair' as used in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*); Urdu can overcome these difficulties. She disliked the 'cultural hotch-potch' that results from translating 'church' by 'temple', 'sweets' by 'pan', etc. In the course of the morning innumerable examples were given of mistranslations due to ignorance or inflexibility. Principal J. H. Kaul of Kashmir, however, defended the incompetent

translator: 'We must rush in — we can't wait for geniuses.'

This note of realism and compromise was later echoed by Dr. K. N. George of the Sahitya Akademi, who pointed out that competent translators simply are not available in the necessary numbers, nor is it possible to find anyone for certain combinations (Telugu — Kashmiri, Kannada — Oriya, etc.). Are we to wait till such translators are available, or shall we translate through English, because more competent translators are available through English than through Hindi? These specific problems of the Indian situation had been raised by the initiator, Sri T.M.C. Raghunathan, but most speakers had preferred to define the ideal. Prof. E. Chelishev of the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies said how familiar the discussion had seemed to him, for they had similar problems in the U.S.S.R. with its seventy-two literatures. He himself was frequently at a loss for equivalent expressions in his present work of translating Mahadevi Varma, Jai Shankar Prasad, and Suryakant Tripathi. A few more speakers claimed their allotted five minutes, the initiator summed up, and the chairman declared how much he had profited.

There is no doubt that the seminars — nine in all — had served most useful purposes. It may not have always proved possible to follow an argument through from speaker to speaker, but this was to be expected on account of the radically different types of mind taking part — the controlled intellect, with its logical clarity and precision of language; the excited, muddled and immediate type of mind, speaking directly from the heart; the traditional pundit opening and closing with a Sanskrit quotation; the lovers of "noble thought" and the brutal 'realists', or the inspired bard who might suddenly burst into a 'Hymn to the Conference'. This made it difficult for a speaker to be certain what knowledge or attitudes he could assume in his audience, so that some uncompromisingly addressed themselves to the like-minded. But it was precisely in the confrontation of these diverse minds — all belonging equally to India — that the Conference best served its All-Indian purposes.

POETRY

ENTERPRISE

It started as a pilgrimage,
Exalting minds and making all
The burdens light. The second stage
Explored but did not test the call.
The sun beat down to match our rage.

We stood it very well, I thought:
Observed, and put down copious notes
On palaces and peasants' lot,
The way of serpents and of goats,
Three cities where a sage had taught.

But when the differences arose
On how to cross a desert patch,
We lost a friend whose stylish prose
Was quite the best of all our batch.
A shadow falls on us—and grows.

Another phase was reached when we
Were twice attacked, and lost our way.
A section claimed its liberty
To leave the group. I tried to pray.
Our leader said he smelt the sea.

We noticed nothing as we went,
A straggling crowd of little hope,
Ignoring what the thunder meant,
Deprived of common needs, like soap.
Some were broken, some merely bent.

When, finally, we reached the place,
We hardly knew why we were there.
The trip had gnawed at every face,
Our deeds were neither great nor rare.
Home is where we have to gather grace.

NISSIM EZEKIEL

BANALATA SEN

JIBANANANDA DAS

I am a weary wanderer on life's many roads,
 Passing in darkness from Ceylonese waters to the Malayan Sea,
 In the shadows of Bimbisar and Ashoka,
 Lost in the deeper darkness of the city of Vidarbha.
 A lost soul, O foam-lost, lost in life's sea,
 I found peace for a moment with Banalata Sen of Natore.

The vanished nights of Vidisha in her hair,
 Her face a sculpture of Sravasti;
 Helmless, a broken sailor on a distant sea
 Lost, O foam-lost,
 Sees rise slowly the grass-green island of spice—
 So she turned her bird's-nest eyes,
 'Where have you been?' said Banalata Sen of Natore.

Night falls

At day's death with the soft fall of dew,
 The hawk wipes the smell of sunlight from his wings;
 The lights of the earth close: twinkling fireflies
 Collect in careful manuscripts.
 Lost, all the birds return,
 Foam-lost, the seas return,
 Lost in life's sea, all giving and taking;
 Only darkness remains,
 Only darkness, and her face: the face of Banalata Sen.

Translated (from the Bengali) by P. LAL and SHYAMASREE DEVI

THE RETURN

You and I, we knew each other, and played
At the edge of the waste of childhood in a fog of dreams,
And life like a distant wall
Returned our laughter and our whimpering.

But little we knew how long water had sped under the bridge;
We were filled with sudden fear when we looked back
And saw thorns fencing all behind us.
(God had expelled from Eden persons who knew too much.)

Then I went out in adventure and forgot you.
I forgot my childhood, my family, my friends. I forgot all.
I wanted to change the world and to draw again the human face;
Fashioning my youth into weapons I wandered.

Some people clapped their hands, many others frowned –
Few are those who can see the dirt on their own faces.
Now I sobbed every evening when the clouds hung low.
Hanging the weapons on the branches, I sought to understand the stars.

History rolled irrevocably on, from station to station; the itinerary of humanity
is traced in advance...
Enough. I came back, my hands emptied even of enthusiasm.
On the rock of indifference I sat, and spent my days
Listening to my hairs grow white in silence burying my soul.

Then one evening I met you again, by chance;
I was so changed you could not recognise me.
But in your voice yet echoed our past
And the invitation to shelter in the hospitality of your body.

TO THUY YEN

(Translated from the Viet-Nameese by the author)

A GIRL'S FACE IN A WINDOWPANE

'Girl,' the mirror muses,
 'Beauty is fragile
 And may be fractured by a shimmer of the moon
 Or may be rearranged by a wish of the weather,
 But your heart is beautifully breakable,
 And once broken, may never be repaired!
 The mirror smiles —
 While her hair blows like wild grass in the wind —
 And then twists her face into a lovely pain.
 Her fingers skim her foaming hair
 Like some white birds in her dream!
 As her years
 swirl round and away into
 the empty spaces of her heart,
 and her eyes river into tears,
 she shakes the mirror for an answer
 to a question she cannot ask!
 Reflecting on the ruin of her face,
 The mirror composes it into a smile —
 But she cannot pluck her lost face
 From the weeds of years,
 for flesh is a rose
 deep in love with the teeth of time,
 and fades into a dying smile
 as the diamond teeth dig deeper!
 Oh, girl, forget the mirror and your face,
 Laugh like a blade of grass in its spring morning,
 Be seasonable and wise!

THE PAPER BOATS

I love to see
The drops of rain on water
And children sailing
Little boats of paper;
Little boats
With dreams on board
Sailing away
And fading
Into eternity.

LONGING

The trees smiled
The flowers invited me
To taste their perfume.
The clouds parted
And opened to me
Their tinted glory.
But my heart was numb
With longing
To walk across the bridge of time
Which broken lay
And my sweet hour
On the other side.

PERIN C. MEHTA

SHORT STORY

The Discovery of Telenapota

By PREMENDRA MITRA

WHEN Saturn and Mars come together, you too, may discover Telenapota. That is, when you, an indifferent angler — never had a catch larger than a 'punti' — find, after weeks of slogging, a couple of days' leisure; and someone comes and tempts you, saying that somewhere there is a magical pool in which the world's most simple-minded fish are anxiously waiting to swallow any bait — well, you are already on your way to discover Telenapota.

Discovering Telenapota, however, is not as easy as all that. Late in the afternoon you will have to board a bus packed to its roof with men and things. Once inside, you will be pushed about by fellow passengers, get drenched in sweat and coated with dust. After two hours of such clammy misery you will be suddenly dropped, without any warning.

Before you collect your wits and look around, you will find that the bus is disappearing over a bridge across the low swampy puddle in front. The thick jungle around is dark, as if night was already there, though the sun has still not set. The air is damp and stifling, and the place is eerily quiet. There is not a soul in sight. Even the birds have left the place, as if in fright. Your mind will be filled with strange fancies and you will imagine that from out of the marshy morass below some sinister curse is slowly rearing its ugly head.

Leaving the main road and getting to the

side of the swamp, you will find that someone has cut a narrow muddy path into the jungle. But even that unformed path gets lost amongst the thick groves of bamboo and big, leafy trees.

To discover Telenapota you should have a couple of friends with you. You, yourself, will be going there for fishing, but what induced your two friends to go, you will not be able to tell.

Your most immediate problem will be mosquitoes. They will come in hordes and you will try to drive them away by stamping your feet on the ground. Not quite knowing what to do next, the three of you will stand there and look enquiringly at one another's faces. Soon it will grow quite dark, and you will not be able to see clearly the faces of your companions. The buzz of the mosquitoes will become louder and louder and their attacks more insistent. You will start wondering whether you should not try to get to the main road and catch a bus back.

Just then, a weird noise will startle you. It will seem to originate at the point where the mud track gets lost in the jungle. To your startled nerves, it will appear to be an inhuman cry forced out by someone wringing the dumb wood around. You will become tense, with expectation and waiting. Mercifully, you will not have to wait for long. Presently, you will see, through the darkness, the gentle swaying of a faint light

and a bullock cart will come out of the wood with a slow, rocking gait.

It is a tiny cart and the bullocks are no bigger. You will wonder whether they did not come out of Lilliput. However, you will not wonder for long and the three of you will get inside the covered awning. The space available is small, and you will have some difficulty in accommodating three pairs of arms and legs where there is room for only one; but you will manage it.

The cart will return along the path it had come. The wall of darkness in front of you will appear impenetrable. But, much to your surprise, the thick dark jungle will yield a narrow tunnel-like passage, a little at a time, for the cart to pass. The bullocks will go unhurriedly forward, as if creating with each step the path they slowly thread.

For a while, you will be acutely bothered by having to sit anyhow in the narrow space available. Gradually, however, your limbs will get benumbed. A feeling of being drowned in the deep darkness around will fill you. You will feel that you have left the world you knew far behind and have entered another that was full of mists and empty of all feeling. Time will appear to have stopped.

You will have no idea how long you have had this feeling. Suddenly a racket of beating drums will jerk you into a wide wakefulness. You will find that the driver of the cart is furiously beating an empty can. You will also see that the stars have come out.

You will ask what the matter was. The driver will reply, most casually, 'Oh, just to drive those damned tigers away.' You will be about to ask how it is possible to drive tigers away by just raising a racket, when he will add reassuringly, 'No, not real tigers. Only panthers. Ah, yes. Unless they are really hungry, a can and a stick are all you need to keep them at a safe distance.'

Tigers! Within thirty miles of the big city! Before you have had time to wonder about it, the cart will have crossed a wide moor. The late moon will have, meanwhile, arisen. By its pale light you will see that you

were passing through an area full of ruins of deserted palaces and mansions. A solitary column here, a broken arch there, a wall of a courtyard and a portion of a temple further on — there they will stand like litigants, waiting in futile hope, for the recording of some evidence in the court of Time.

You will try to sit up and a tingling sensation will go all over your body. Once again, you will be overwhelmed with your former feeling of having left the world of the living behind and of having entered a misty world peopled only by memories.

You will have no idea how far gone the night was then. Indeed, it will seem to you that night never ends here and everything lies submerged in a stillness that has no beginning and no end. The whole thing will remind you of those specimens of extinct animals they keep, immersed in acid bottles, in museums.

After a few turns the cart will stop. You will collect your benumbed limbs and get down, one by one — stiff, like wooden dolls. The first thing you will notice is the strong rancid smell. You will guess — rightly — that the stink is of rotting leaves in the pond right in front of you. By its side, stand the ruined remains of a big mansion. With its caved in roofs, fallen sides and frameless windows, it stands there like the battlements of a fort, in guard against the moon.

You will learn that you will have to spend the night in this house. You will find for yourself a habitable room, — comparatively speaking, that is. From somewhere the cart driver will fetch a broken lantern and a jug of water. It will seem to you that ages must have passed since a pair of human feet stepped into the room. Someone had tried to clear the room and rid it of the accumulated dust and dirt, but not very successfully. The musty stench will show that it was done long ago and was even then not welcomed by whatever spirit it was that lived there. On the slightest movement, little bits of plaster and mortar will fall on you from the walls and the roof, like curses from the angry spirit. A few bats

will be all the time shrilly questioning your right to be there for the night.

Of your two companions one is a toper and the other would have slept through a storm. You will have hardly spread your bed when the latter will fall upon his and start snoring, and the other begin to seek the consolation of the bottle.

The night will wear on. Soot will slowly accumulate on the glass of the broken lantern and soon it will shut the light out wholly. As if in response to some mysterious broadcast, all the adult and able-bodied mosquitoes of the region will come out to greet you. If you are a knowledgeable person, you will know from the distinctive manner in which they sit on the walls and on you that they belong to the blue-blooded aristocracy of mosquitoes—the anopheles variety, the carrier of malaria. By then, both your companions will have become oblivious, for different reasons, of their surroundings.

It will be oppressively hot. Taking the electric torch with you, you will try to escape from it into the terrace. At each step, the danger of a brick of the stairs giving way will try to dissuade you from climbing further. But something will draw you on irresistibly. Ignoring the danger of falling down, you will keep on and finally get to the top.

On arrival, you will find that at most of the places the parapet has come off in bits. Into every crack and hole in the walls and the roof, small trees have taken firm root. It will seem as though they were fifth columnists, already there, making things easy for the inexorably advancing jungle.

And yet, by the pale light of the declining moon everything will appear transformed and beautiful. You will fancy that if only you looked long enough, you could find in which of the secret chambers of this sleep-drenched palace, the captive princess has been sleeping through the ages with the golden and the silver wands beside her.

Even as you will be wondering about this, you will notice a faint light in one of the windows of what you had taken to be

a totally ruined house, across the street. After a while a mysterious shadow of a figure will come and stand by the window blocking the light. Who could she be? Why should she be awake when everyone else was asleep? Try as you may, you will not be able to know the answers. Looking after a brief moment, you will see that the figure was no longer there and the faint light had also gone out. Was it real, or did you fancy the whole thing? It will seem to you that from the bottomless depth of this world of sleep, a dream bubble had floated silently up for a moment into the world of the living and had as silently melted away.

After a while, you will come down the stairs carefully and fall asleep by the side of your companions.

Getting up, you will be surprised to find morning there already and the place full of the chatter of birds.

You will not forget what you had primarily come here for. Before long you will complete your preparations and find yourself a seat on one of the broken moss-covered steps by the pond. You will throw your line into its greenish waters and wait patiently.

The day will wear on. A kingfisher from the bent branch of the tree across the tank will swoop down, now and again, in a flash of colour. Each time it will return to its perch with the successful catch and, as if to ridicule you, will burst into a frenzy of babble: giving you quite a turn, a fat and long snake will come out of some crack in the steps and get unhurriedly into the water: it will swim across and get out on the other side: two grasshoppers, their glass-like wings fluttering, will go on trying to land on the float of your line: a dove will call intermittently: its lazy notes will fill you with lassitude and your mind will wander.

You will be startled out of your mood of reverie by the sudden sound of ripples. The still water is no longer still and you will find your float gently rocking. Looking sideways, you will find a woman pushing away the floating weeds and filling up her

shiny brass pitcher. There is curiosity in her eyes and her movements are easy and free from any awkwardness. She will look straight at you and at your line. She will then pick up her pitcher and turn away.

You will not be able to guess her age. Looking at her face — calm, reserved and sad, you will think that she had already traversed the pitiless road of life; but if you looked at the thin unnourished lines of her body, you will think that she had never grown out of her girlhood.

Even as she is going away, she will turn and say, somewhat suddenly, 'What are you waiting for? Pull hard.' Her voice is so mellow and sweet that you will not think it odd that she—a stranger—should have spoken unbidden to you like that. Only the suddenness of it will make you flustered and when, eventually, you get the hook out, you will see that the bait is no longer there. You will feel a bit of a fool and will not be able to help looking at her. She will also look at you and then turn and go away with slow, unhurried steps. As she is going, you will think that you saw the suggestion of a bright smile light up her sad and peaceful face.

After this, nothing will disturb the loneliness of the place. The kingfisher, perhaps realising the uselessness of trying to shame you, will have flown away. Even the fish will ignore you, apparently in contempt for your angling skill. Once again, you will have a feeling that the happening of a moment ago was not real at all. How could there ever be a woman like that in this land of sleep?

After sometime, disappointed, you will collect your tackle and start back. On returning, you will find that news of your fishing skill has reached the ears of your friends. Slightly peeved at their cracks, you will ask how they came to know about it.

'Know about it?' the toper will reply. 'Why, Jamini saw it just now with her own eyes.' Feeling curious you will ask who Jamini was. You will learn that she was the person you had seen at the pond and that she was distantly related to him. You will

also learn that you were having your lunch at her place.

Looking at the falling ruins across the street—wherein the shadowy figure had caused you such wonderment the night before—its wretched condition will give you something of a shock. You could not have imagined that the veil of night, now stripped rudely by the harsh light of day, could have concealed a nakedness so ugly. You will be surprised to learn that that was where Jamini lived.

It will be to one of the rooms in that house that you will go for your lunch. It will be a simple meal and Jamini herself will serve it. As you had noticed before, there was nothing awkward or ungainly about her demeanour. Looking at her now at such close quarters, you will also be struck by the sad immobility of her face. It was as though all the mute agony of this forgotten and deserted place had cast its shadows across her face. Her eyes will seem to be submerged in a sea of infinite tiredness. It will seem to you that one of these days she herself will dissolve slowly, very slowly, into these ruins.

You will notice that even while she was serving, Jamini seemed to have something on her mind. Maybe, you will also hear an occasional faint voice calling from a room upstairs. Every now and then Jamini will leave the room rather hurriedly. Each time she returned, the shadow of suffering in her face will appear to have deepened and her eyes will betray a helpless anxiety.

After finishing your meal, you will sit down to rest awhile. Jamini will hesitate a few times, and then call out, in desperation, from the other side of the door, 'Manida, could you please come over here once?' Manida is the toper. He will go to the door, and the conversation that will follow, will be loud enough for you to overhear.

Jamini's voice is greatly troubled. 'Mother is being troublesome again. Ever since she learnt that you were coming with your friends, she has become quite unmanageable.'

Mani will reply somewhat irritably, 'Bother! I suppose it is that old notion of hers? She believes Niranjan is here?'

'Yes. She goes on repeating—"I know he is here. He hasn't come up to see me only because he is embarrassed. Go, fetch him. Why are you keeping things from me?"—Manida, I really don't know what to do. Ever since she became blind she has become so irritable. She won't listen to anything. Flies off the handle all the time. I am sometimes frightened that she will die in one of her fits.'

'What a mess! If only she had her eyes. I could have shown her that Niranjan was not here with me now.'

The shout of the shrill, angry ghost of a voice from upstairs will be clearly audible this time. Jamini will say in a pleading voice, 'Do please come with me once, Manida — see if you can make her understand.'

'All right. You get along. I'll be there.'

Mani will get back to the room muttering to himself. 'Why in heaven's name doesn't this old crackpot die? She can't see, she can't use her limbs, and yet she is determined not to die.'

You will ask him what the matter was. Mani will reply in an annoyed tone, 'Matter? Oh, nothing very much. Years ago, she had fixed Jamini's marriage with Niranjan — the son of a distant cousin of hers. The last time the chap was here, was about four years ago. He told her then that as soon as he returned from abroad he would come and marry Jamini. And ever since she has been waiting.'

'Hasn't Niranjan returned?' you will ask.

'Why, of course not. How should he return when he never went at all? Of course, he was lying. He had to, seeing that the old ruin wouldn't let him go. And why should he bother to marry this rag-picker's daughter. Oh, yes! He is married all right and rearing a family. But who's to tell her all this? She won't believe you, and if she did she will straightaway die of shock. Who's going to take that risk anyway?'

'Does Jamini know about Niranjan?'

'Oh, yes. But she can't speak about it to her. Well, let me go and get it over.' Mani will turn to go.

Almost without being conscious of it, you will also get up at the same moment and say, 'Just a second. I'll come with you.'

'You? With me?' Mani will wheel round, plainly surprised.

'Yes. Do you mind?'

'No, of course not,' Mani will reply, a trifle taken aback, and proceed to show you the way.

After you had ascended the dark and broken stairs, you will get into a room that looked more like an underground tunnel than a room above. There was only one window and that too was shut. Coming from outside, at first everything will look blurred to you. After a while you will see that in a large, decrepit wooden cot a shrivelled up woman, wrapped in a torn rag, lay still. By the side of the cot Jamini stood motionless like a statue.

At the sound of your footsteps, the bag of bones will show signs of animation. 'Niranjan? My child! So you are here at last! Could spare a thought at last for your poor wreck of an aunt! You know, I have been keeping death at bay, hoping that you'll be here some day. You won't slip away again like last time?'

Mani will be on the point of saying something but, interrupting him, you will suddenly blurt out, 'No, Auntie, I promise you I won't.'

You will not look up, but you will feel the bewilderment of Mani and the stunned surprise that will break out in Jamini's immobile face. You could not have looked up even if you wanted to. Your eyes will be riveted to the sockets of the old woman's sightless eyes. It will seem to you that two tongues of darkness issued from those empty sockets and licked every inch of your body — to test, to know. You will feel that those few still moments were dropping like dewdrops into the ocean of time.

You will hear the old woman saying, 'My son, I knew you would come. That is why I am still living in this house of death

— counting the days.' The effort of speaking so many words will leave her panting. You will look up at Jamini. You will fancy that somewhere, behind the steely mask of her face, something was slowly melting away, and it will not be long before the foundation of a vow — a vow made up of boundless despair, a vow taken against life and fate — will give way.

The old woman will speak again. 'I am sure Jamini will make you happy, my son. She surely will. There's none like her, even though I, her mother, say it. I am old and ill and out of my senses most of the time. I try her beyond endurance. But does she snap back? No, not once. This graveyard of a place — you search ten houses and you won't find a man — it's only the likes of me, more dead than alive, that you'll find here — and here, Jamini, a slip of a girl, carries on and manages everything.'

Even though you will want to, you will dare not lift your eyes lest someone might discover the tears that have been welling there. Sighing, the old woman will say, 'Promise me you will marry Jamini. If I do not have your promise I will know no peace even in death.'

Your voice will have become nearly choked. You will be able merely to say, 'I promise you. I will not fail you.'

Soon it will be afternoon. The bullock cart will appear once again to take you back. One by one, the three of you will get inside. As it leaves, Jamini will look at you with those sad eyes of hers and merely remark, 'You are forgetting your fishing tackle'. You will smile and reply, 'Never mind! Let them be. I missed the fish this time but they won't escape me the next'.

Jamini will not turn her gaze away. Her eyes, you will see, were lit up with a smile that was full of gratitude and tenderness. Like the white clouds of autumn, it will float across your mind and suffuse it with an ineffable gladness.

The cart will rattle along. The lack of space will not bother you this time; nor will the monotonous creak of the moving

wheels sound harsh. Your friends will, perhaps, discuss how a hundred years ago, malaria, like a relentless flood, carried off Telenapota and left it here, in this forgotten borderland of the world of the living. You will not be listening, for your mind will be elsewhere. You will have ears only for your own heartbeats and hear in them the same words, echoed over and over again — 'I will come back, I will come back'.

Even after you reach the city — with its hurrying crowds and harsh lights — the memory of Telenapota will be bright in your mind like a shining star — distant yet intimate. A few days will pass with their petty vexations and troubles. If, in your mind, a slight mist had begun to form, you will not be aware of it. Then, just when you have overcome the obstacles and start preparing to return to Telenapota, you will, suddenly, feel the shivering touch of the oncoming fever. Soon the headache and the fever will be on you and you will lie down with a lot of blankets. The thermometer will register 105°F and the last thing you will hear, before falling unconscious, will be the doctor saying, 'Well, well! Where did we pick up this malaria?'

It will be days before, weak and exhausted, you will be able to come out of the house and sit in the sun. Meanwhile, unknown to yourself, your mind will have undergone many changes. Telenapota will have become an indistinct dream, like the memory of a star that has set. Was there ever such a place as Telenapota? You will not seem to know. The face that was hard and serene, and the eyes that were far away and sad — were they real? Or, were they, like the shadows of Telenapota's ruins, creatures of the misty realm of your imagination?

Telenapota, discovered for one brief moment, will be lost again in the timeless immensity of night.

Translated from the Bengali

by KIRONMOY RAHA

The Distant Signal

By SEAN PURCELL

IT was my brother saying there were no cowards in our family that decided me. He was two years older than I, and this was the first time he had not protested that I was too young to climb the distant signal. No one would know better than my brother, for he had been to the top more times than I could remember. Not only that; he knew I was no longer afraid of heights as I used to be, for in the closeness of our bed at night I had confided to him the details of my secret excursions to the little station and how I went up the ladders there while the signal-box was deserted in the quiet of long, summer Sundays.

The distant signal was different, of course. For one thing it was much higher than those near the station, and the narrow iron ladder was almost perpendicular beside the tapering concrete pylon. It was years before that I had first seen Dan, the station-master, swing to the top with practiced ease to change the lamps. Ever since that day I had been possessed with a morbid fear that some day I, too, would have to climb the distant signal.

The prospect became an obsession.

Whenever we went into the fields that bordered the railway I would lag behind, pretending to be more interested in trying to poke rabbits from their holes, while my brother and the others argued fiercely over their respective feats in scaling local landmarks. Nearly always these arguments ended with one of them claiming that he could climb higher on the distant signal than any of the others. Then they were off, racing through the fields to where it rose, slender and defiant, from beside the grassy bank of the cutting.

The day it happened we were lying in

the tangled bracken of the bank, munching noisily the apples we had taken in a raid on Old Mickey Connor's orchard. Dickie Corrigan was the first to suggest the climb, and before anyone had a chance of voting for or against the venture he was scrambling through briars and long grass to the line below. He ran along beside the tracks until he came to the signal. Then, rung by rung, he clambered up with gay abandon. My brother followed, then Billy Corrigan and Tommy Costello, but it was only my brother who went right to the top.

I remained behind, but soon they were back to taunt me. It was Tommy's brother, Tiny Tim, who first dared me to go. He was like that, always wanting someone else to provide the entertainment. He must not have noticed the effect the challenge had on me. Or maybe he did. Maybe he just wanted to be cruel and spiteful. Anyway when I hung back he began to pipe, 'Aw, you're afraid. Cowardly, cowardly Nolan.' The Corrigans joined in. They danced around me, chanting the insult, stopping every now and again to challenge, 'Well, are you going to climb it, coward?'

As I said, it was my brother who decided me. Up to that I had stood there, knee-deep in bracken and almost sick with fear, seeking vainly for a way out. When he spoke I sidled down the bank. I reached the ladder, climbed three iron rungs and looked back to where they stood. 'O.K., I'll climb it,' I told them in a strange, shrill voice, 'But if I fall and get killed, you'll be to blame.'

Then, changing my feet from one sun-warmed rung to the next, I began slowly to move upwards. I counted the steps... nine... ten... nineteen... twenty. Then I lost count. The ladder seemed to go straight

up now. The sweat trickled through my brows and I felt a salty stinging in my eyes. The azure sky turned to a misty grey as my head began to swim. It became a wild, spinning pattern of blinding orange patches. In the oppressive heat and only half aware of the surroundings, I continued up.

It was a burst of shouting from below that restored me suddenly to full consciousness. I dared not look down, but I tilted my head a little, expecting to see the iron-meshed platform within reach. Instead my eyes followed a dizzying series of bars before taking in the cage-like structure still far above. Tears of consternation made warm tracks on my face and splashed on my bare arms.

I hesitated before continuing the ascent. Perhaps the shouting was meant to convey that I had done as much as they expected. If that was so, I decided bitterly, I would give them much more than they expected.

More resolute than ever, eyes shut tight, my wrists and feet beginning to ache, I pulled myself further up into the humid space of the August afternoon. It seemed a long time after when my hand gripped a bar of unfamiliar thickness. It was the face of the platform. I grabbed the side bars and dragged my breathless body to the resting place.

Sitting there, knuckling the moistness from my eyes, I became aware of the silence below. Why was there no chorus of cheers as I expected? I rose carefully, holding firmly one of the rails which protected the platform on three sides, and waited for the reeling landscape to assert itself before daring to look straight down. At first I saw no one, then Tiny Tim emerged from beside the bank, waving his hands above his head. Of the others there was no sign. I could hardly believe that there was only Tiny Tim to acknowledge my achievement.

A movement in a field of stubble caught

my eye. There they were, racing farther away towards a fence between the stooks where two men were staking a long net in which they would trap a rabbit they were about to ferret from his burrow. They had baited me into that awful venture; now I was forgotten. They were off in search of something more exciting.

But I would show them. I would give them something to talk about for months. With a gesture of bravado I waved to Tiny Tim. Then, ever so gingerly, I reached out, gripped the steel blade of the signal and let my feet drift into space. This was to be the crowning act, something even my brother, who was the boldest of them, had never dared.

The strength drained quickly from my arms and with it went my new-found spirit of recklessness. I swung my feet back towards the ladder. They brushed the side of it, but I could not curl my foot about the upright rail as I had hoped. I tried again but failed again. My arms ached. I trusted all the weight to my left hand and slid the right a shade inwards on the signal blade. I brought the right close up to it again and repeated the action.

I was swinging my feet back towards the ladder when I heard the mechanism below snap into place. Its meaning had not registered in my numb brain when the blade dropped suddenly downwards and I slid, screaming, into space.

Since that day I have never known the close friendship of any child. The Corriganes and Costellos, even my brother, had little time for a boy who hobbled about on crutches. Today the children scurry from the street when I approach. Sometimes they call names from a distance. They are filled with an impression of cruelty by the sound of a wooden stump for a footstep.

Only I have a feeling that it is the children who are cruellest.

A R T S

The Problem of Art and Education in India

By BISHNU DEY

SOME years ago there was an interesting seminar in Delhi on Art and Education, and I had the privilege of participating in it. The first paper was on the Purpose of Art in Education and I find that I still have in my mind the same vague questions I raised there. Now, it is true that there has been a lot of 'progress' in our country, and since 1947 various worthwhile ideas have travelled into the official world in India.

Indeed, there was a time when even the validity of the title might have been questioned. The generation of our grandfathers was doubtful about the purpose of art in education as well as in life. They had reasons to be somewhat terrified of art which meant a certain fauvism, a certain wildness that, in spite of Ruskin and Morris, shocked their Indo-Victorian puritanism. They wanted to be gentlemen, in the respectable shadow of the middle-class Englishmen whom they partly knew and partly imagined. Since those sturdy days of self-assurance and successful effort, ideas have developed even in our midst and have been clarified; and now we all, at any rate those of us who like to call ourselves intellectually advanced, agree that art has a capital A and has a purpose, if not quite obviously or practically in life, at least in what is called education. And education is also supposed to have a purpose, apart from the competitive merits of degrees and the

rewards of employment. Upto this point, all our superior persons will agree, at least verbally; but after that, the quibble begins, because purpose leads us to the question of values, to the total consideration of our real life. What should be the values of the good life of everyone of us, to be realised by the entire people? I. A. Richards has said well in *Speculative Instruments*, that this greatest of human efforts cannot be made whole-heartedly unless the salvation we are seeking is for all. And, in the context of life in a divided society without the necessary functional healthiness of a unitary governing mythos, it is likely that this realisation of the importance of art may turn into mere play of the fancy and egotism of some lucky (or unlucky) persons, like Zhivago or Humbert. Even as a cult, as mere aestheticism, it is all very unsatisfactory, whether from the point of view of the frenzied egoist or from that of the humane altruist. And there is no half-way solution here to the problem of regaining wholeness. The concept of humanity as a whole cannot be arrived at by any squeamish balancing of public sectors and private sectors; the sectors have to be unitary. No man is an island. Indeed, there was some justification in the pig-headed love of safety-value sanity on the part of our rather solid grandfathers. They were so terrified of the panic wildness of unattach-

ed sensibility, that they came to question the value of sensibility itself, even when, as an aim, it is not dissociated or split.

However, let us leave these big problems to philosophers and kings or at any rate ministers, and remind ourselves that art or aesthetic activity extends and intensifies our perceptiveness and sensitivity. That a child or a young person should be given the scope to enrich and develop his perceptivity and sensibility has at least the labial assent of every educationist.

But do we want our young people to be sensitive, perceptive, self-conscious personalities? If we encourage our young to develop and purify their sensitivity, we have to give it the sanction of something valid in actual life and help the sensitive mind to place itself unshakeably in the midst of our bewildering world; and, in and through the various active and receptive relationships between the two, grows a mind aware of itself in relation to the world. There may be very little comfort in this growth, none of the advantages of dead habit and routine in this deepening and extension of a child's or an adolescent's mind, but it does take the young mind to a higher stage of nervous organisation and a deeper consciousness of oneself and the world. Whether this will express itself positively or negatively depends largely on society, but in certain stages of social life even the resistant or the negative artist or layman has a great role to play. Of course, problems of mere good living often triumph over the idea of the good life. But even though we admire our worldliness and advise our sons and nephews to follow this easy path of success, we have not got the brazen courage to avow this fact openly. So we quite often find a compromise: We give our homage to those who did not surrender to this middle-class temptation the freedom and adventure of the mind, of the sensibility—particularly when these nonconformists are great

men of the past, that is, when they do not embarrass us or compete with us actually; and on the other hand, we try to make the best of our life here and now, this life which is so real, so earnest and not at all 'an empty dream'.

The artist mind, active or receptive, does indeed bear the stigma of nonconformity; the artist is a protestant if the order of things does not provide any scope for tension and dialectic even within the framework of the status quo. Thomas Mann called this bohemianism of the artist 'a defence-mechanism and a counter-attack upon bourgeois civilisation'. It was this that led a fine American poet, Wallace Stevens, to his distinction of the whole man from the technician and the bureaucrat. Now, it is true, that the stronger are the powers-that-be against the whole man, the wilder and more whirling are the words of protest against the whips and scorns of time, against the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes. And, at times, there is savage despair when the finely made man can only say: Tired with all these for restful death I cry.

Indeed, the artist is a kind of Hamlet in this Elsinore of ours, and he can but dream of a republic of Hamlets, who accompanied by the Fortinbrases of the world have passed through the self-conscious purgatory of Hamlet, without losing their love of life. It is easy to laugh at this in shavian fashion. Even the usual joke against the artist really cannot restore our self-confidence. After all, the main function of such jokes, as Myrdal once said, is to create a collective surreptitious approbation for something which cannot be approved explicitly because of moral inhibitions. The age-old idea of the whole man has gained ground even among departmental files, and any one who pretends to think a little realises that some-

thing must be done against what Dewey called compartmentalisation of occupations and interests which brings about separation of that mode of activity commonly called practice from insight, of imagination from executive doing, of significant purpose from work, of emotion from thought and doing. This division is responsible for the exclusive specialisation of function and the supremacy of those functionaries who are sometimes called experts, and leads to a consequential narrowing of the mind and outlook of the rest of the people who, as everyone from Lord Greene to I. A. Richards has remarked, out of weariness are glad to save themselves the necessity of thought.

It is here that literature and art can play an essential part. As has been simply said by Whitehead: their services to economic production would be only second to those of sleep or of food. Have not we all experienced how rhythm expedites tiresome work, or how precise beauty of form in the environs or of the tools increases and improves the quality and quantity of work or output?

I have noticed how in a Calcutta girls' school, the head of the institution with her passion for painting, handicraft, acting, music and dance organised along with the usual academic courses the production of many things, including Tagore's ballet-operatic compositions, and how the pedagogically backward students who excelled in the art-activity improved in their studies as well. The same experience is recorded by A. L. Stone who ran an experimental school on his own in Birmingham (*H. M. Stationary Office, London: Story of a School*). And once this is admitted to be true in the life of a healthily organised nation, it is quite clear how important should be the emphasis on the concept of the whole man in education, what purpose art has in that field—a field which, we forget in our mechanical way of thought, is as

wide and interrelated as life itself. We are all quite familiar with the usual criticism from men occupying high positions as well as from the common man that our schools and colleges are unsatisfactory. We seem to forget that the teachers alone are quite helpless so long as the dominant values outside the school or the college do not change. After all, the poor teacher has to follow the path of least resistance for safety's sake. And an unsatisfactory state of education is a reflection on the entire community, on all of us, for the confusion, the suffering, the poverty, the incompetence and the corruption around us.

It is here that the purpose of art as of literature, indeed any purpose, is defeated in our education. Art becomes only a subject for a specific examination or only a hobby detached from the rest of life or other interests. It is tolerated but a little looked down upon. For does not art encourage certain obstinate qualities which are of no help to any one in getting on in life? Does not pre occupation with art make people 'eccentric', 'unpractical', 'complex'—where getting along the easy path of success is the supreme value? Are they not 'forgetful', 'inattentive' to many things and unduly attentive to many others? Are they not unduly questioning, given to irony, excessively sensitive, rather slow, as they have to obey the demands of the working of their whole being? Why should the object, the concrete, the real, the difficult matter so much to these people that they come to obstruct the traffic of competitive life with its one way regulation of success or failure?

Even in our admission of art as something important, we are, therefore, liable to be half-hearted, and beauty quite often frightens us, or, at any rate, is an embarrassment to us, though we may find at times in our midst an aged artist or two who have at last achieved unambiguous success: and,

then, of course, we have to award them an order of merit or some such prize!

So the problem is how to fulfil this purpose of art in education. We all know that it can be fulfilled only when education is realised in its widest implications and circumscribes the whole of a people's life. But let us restrict our focus to education as such and we find that, owing to the limiting conditions already touched upon, the larger purpose of art in our education is daily defeated. Partly due to short-sighted planning and partly due to executive incompetence, art-education in our schools and also in art schools suffers from defects of compartmentalisation and unrelatedness to life around the school. Now, it is true that life around may be a little too impoverished and a little too disturbing, as most of our cities are senselessly ugly and our villages decayed, and a belief seems to be growing in a programme of further uglification (itself an ugly word)—both from the architectural point of view as well as from the point of view of civic convenience. It is difficult for a fresh young mind to imbibe into his nervous system the importance of totality and balance in design or sensible organisation of form, when the sky and the riverine green earth cry at him with the pain of evernew but out-of-date and formless skyscrapers cutting through earlier pseudo-gothic roofs and imitation-Greek pillars and false Renaissance domes, as we find in Calcutta.

I wish to draw your serious attention to the deep-seated effect of the damage done by ugliness and vulgarity around us. Surely every one knows how the entire nervous organisation itself is affected in the young by constant visual and aural ugliness. For example, the prevalent habit of listening to bad music and films and loud-speakers not only prevents the willing and unwilling listeners and spectators turning to something fine and good, it engenders bad taste

and loudness in the impressionable personality. It is here that the educator's protestant role has its clinical function. The mind should resist, should be critical, because (without the necessary tension) it is impossible for a sensitive mind, an artist mind, to grow, and for education to have any vitality, so long as men of goodwill, or men of taste, numerous as they are in our country, remain ineffective.

It appears that not enough consideration has been given to this aspect of art and education in our official world. Until this consideration is given, we will continue to find signs of further weakness in our education and also in our art activities. Some of the symptoms are well-known to us.

First of all there is the anaemia of artyness. As art now has no roots in life and as the artist or art-worker has to turn into a dilettante, and a rather ill-regarded dilettante too, we find a very superficial attitude to art and, as a matter of fact, to all beauty growing among us. This artyness, it is true, does beautify a little a person's house or at least his drawing-room and perhaps his wife's clothes, and even that is some consolation. But this superficiality has far-reaching dangers: it is fake, it is not genuine and it encourages smugness. And this pretence becomes an incurable habit. It is out of this artyness that there has grown a false interest in our so-called folk art, which is dying and can never be revived in its present state. It is out of this surface attitude that we had that Oriental-cum-Indian Artism, which has helped us neither as art nor as something living. And the most recent symptom is the trend towards so-called modern or abstract art, which can honestly be arrived at only as a logical step in development from the academic realistic art experience of Europe. Without the historical necessity and without the background of stages of experience, there can be no genuine modern art—that fearful progress

in self-consciousness on the part of painting or sculpture'. Perhaps we could learn from the stylisation of our classical and popular art in our efforts toward modernity, but that would require a closer identification with the life and art of our people, and an ever fresh mind which creates and discovers—as Jamini Roy has been doing for the last fifty years.

What is more important, as it affects numbers, is the growth of this debilitating, hoodwinking attitude, beyond the Art Schools. And this has encouraged the habit of sentimental shortcuts toward the growth of a mind, to the formation of taste and imagination not as something organic, related, real, but as something to be acquired accidentally and then dropped when one does not need it any longer. Redemption is possible even for an honest and humble attitude against art which is not pretentious. One can fight against George II who said: 'I hate all Boets and Bainters'. But artyness is an insidious enemy. We can ill afford the wastefulness of pretence. It is time our educators became aware of this.

Minor improvements are no good; as a matter of fact, their face value may beguile us away from the major symptoms. One of our leading art colleges, for instance, has at last decided to give its students the advantage of what is called a life-class. Of course, within the narrow limits of art in

our education life-classes are not enough. Perhaps more outdoor sketching is a minor help, and not merely in the neighbourhood of the school or college. No doubt, students should be encouraged to camp out not merely in search of immediate subjects, but to explore and discover our villages and cities in all their different aspects. That would also enable them to study local arts and crafts on the spot and learn from work with the local craftsmen. And there should be considerably more interest in the history of art and in aesthetic questions. Theory classes and discussions encourage intellectual adventure and at the same time help the art worker to place himself in the history of art, so that the hunt after originality may cease and the artist's vision may have that compulsive urgent quality which is of primary value in art work and in the development of the artist. And then we will also pay more attention to whether a thing is well-made, rather than whether it is striking or whether it exhibits certain preconceived notions of beauty. Art need not be synonymous with commercial advertisements. But all these are minor considerations, the purpose of art in education takes us out to larger social issues—ultimately, as Mann has said, to politics. It is no good importing details of methods in our education which are not a growth but an imposition.

DISCUSSION

I. A Much Closer Look at the Swatantra Party

By PILOO MODY

A CLOSER Look at the Swatantra Party^{*} by Ellen Roy^{*} has brought her to the conclusion that although the Swatantra Party promised to be a party with a difference, it has not fulfilled or cannot fulfil its promise. She has based her arguments at times on remarks made by prominent members of the Party which have been contradictory. Although she cannot be blamed for being confused at what apparently sounds contradictory, her failure to grasp the significance of the principles cannot be excused when she is taking 'A Closer Look'. One may not doubt the validity of her facts, but one can seriously question her thought processes in arriving at her conclusions. It is assumed by Ellen Roy that opposition to cooperative farming and emphasis on the private sector are the only subjects on which the Swatantra Party has strong opinions. These subjects, she says, are not popular issues and they only reveal the social character of the new party. From this she arrives at a remarkable conclusion, viz., that the Swatantra Party is a party of *Laissez-Faire* capitalists and orthodox communalists. She dismisses the economic platform of the Party as something that can be easily left to economists. She saves her most scathing remarks for 'Trusteeship', without trying to understand it.

The Swatantra Party is a party with a difference and the difference is neither

vague nor incoherent. This difference arises out of an approach towards human beings and is based on faith in the people. It believes that laws should not be enacted on the principle that human beings are bad and, unless restricted, would automatically indulge in anti-social activities. It believes that laws are made for punishing anti-social activities and should be aimed at the wrong-doers. You cannot devise a system regulating the affairs of human beings if you have no faith in them, for ultimately it is human beings who operate any system.

From this difference in basic approach arise the political, economic, agricultural and moral policies of the Swatantra Party. It is maintained that the Swatantra Party is not worried about democracy because it is not afraid of accumulation of power in private hands. This is true because the Party is more afraid of economic power vested in the Government. Today, State enterprises are justified in the name of the people and are formed to protect the people from the concentration of power in a few hands. This State capitalism is a cure more evil than the disease. The most anti-social cartels and monopolies of the past did not wield half the power that rests in the hands of our Government today. Whereas the power of these cartels and monopolies was purely economic, socialistic Governments today command a greater economic power combined with their already omnipotent political power, in addition to what-

^{*} *Quest* - 24, January-March, 1960.

ever judicial power they can usurp through constitutional amendments and the lure of public office extended to members of the judiciary. This concentration of power is tolerated in the name of the people through the organ of misrepresented socialist propaganda, and wielded by an elite oligarchy.

The true measure of the progress, welfare and happiness of the people lies in achieving a continuous increase in the per capita income within the framework of basic human freedoms—the freedom of choice, the freedom of occupation, the freedom of action and the freedom to apportion one's income between spending and saving. Without these freedoms a rising production curve can have no meaning.

Any socio-economic system should aim at this ideal, working out the optimum points in the rise of per-capita income as well as the spread of basic human freedoms. The one without the other is meaningless. The Swatantra Party will never contribute to a point of view which maintains that human beings have to be herded together like animals, deprived of their intelligent choice of occupation and consumer needs, classified into groups, and imposed upon with an unreal prosperity created by artificial economic surpluses, by discouraging the production of consumer goods, and by the simple expedient of printing money. This is what the Swatantra Party means when it says: 'a standard of living without any reference to its content or quality' is based on a purely materialistic philosophy.

In India where the Congress Government has forsaken a free market economy as well as a totalitarian economy, the results can only be chaotic. To begin with, the government has no control over the allocation of resources, and yet the output of consumer goods is determined by consumer demand. The Government can, therefore, have no control over savings.

In the grips of such a dilemma, arising out of their own confused thinking in economic affairs, and intent on pursuing pseudo-socialistic policies, the government has resorted to the imposition of crippling

taxation and expanding controls, reducing saving and increasing public expenditure in the process. It has gone on an orgy of extensive borrowing, mortgaging our future both at home and abroad, and has finally resorted to printing money, resulting in inflation over which they can have no control. Apart from the disastrous financial and economic consequences the effect of their policies on the producing members of our society has been monumental. Their first victims have been some of the ablest men in the country, and a complete paralysis is creeping over the middle classes and the agriculturists.

Similarly, the solution of the food problem has evaded the Congress. In our country where the major portion of the population derives its livelihood through the cultivation of the land, it is not recognized that the prosperity of the country must necessarily depend upon the prosperity of the farmer. Without increasing the purchasing power of the farmer there is little hope that our industry will find consumers for its products.

The Government prefers to tackle the problem of the low yield of our soils by social reform rather than by the use of scientific methods. The Government is dissipating the wealth and energies of the nation with grandiose ideas of cooperation and collectivisation, not aimed at solving the problems, but aimed merely at reaping political gains on the bandwagon of socialistic patterns. A change of land ownership only infringes on basic human freedoms; it cannot produce more food per acre. The depletion of organic materials in the soil, the careless and greedy exploitation of soils for quick cash crops, the ignorant maltreatment of the land, and the stripping of millions of acres of forests and grass cover: these are the vital problems of agriculture. Emphasis on soil-conservation and education in the use of terraces, strip cropping, contour ploughing, the increased use of grasses and leguminous plants to increase the organic material in the soil, and the intelligent use of commercial fertilizers;

these are the paramount needs of agriculture.

Unlike other economic activities a farmer's annual labour hinges on variable weather conditions. He has to apportion his seasonal earnings between consumption and reinvestment. For this he has to be assured of parity prices for his products, maintaining his purchasing power for industrial products. The great problem facing the farmer is to find the necessary credit for reinvestment, particularly after a bad year. One solution to this would be to do away with land revenue and put the farmer on the same basis as the industrial worker who pays Income Tax on a progressive scale. In terms of money this would represent a loss of about 85 crores of rupees to the State, but it would mean a solid investment in the agriculture of the country. This amount would then be invested into the land by the farmer in the form of fertilizers and equipment. The Government cannot maintain on the one hand that small holdings are detrimental to increased production of food and on the other hand pass legislation imposing a ceiling on land holdings. This is a sacrifice of economic principles at the altar of euphemistic socialist ideals for the purpose of political expediency.

Cooperation of any type is the essence of civilization, and service cooperatives have a great part to play in our agricultural economy in the forms of credit, storing, marketing, processing and modern transport facilities; but these should be organized in the self-interest of the farmer for his particular benefit. Cooperatives which are created through statutory measures that lay down the mechanism for regulating their affairs and for supervising their working, and which are interfered with by ministerial politics and bureaucratic controls are not cooperatives. The Government's idea of cooperatives is a rural extension of the ruling party, interesting itself in the elections, personnel and political bias of such societies. Cooperation in the field of providing services to an agri-

cultural community has no connection whatever with the more damaging and politically disastrous attempts of the Congress party to bring about cooperative farming. This dangerous misnomer is an attempt to misguide the farmer in a nefarious scheme to bring about state ownership of land and the establishment of communist type collectives. It is obvious that such a policy would bring about a perpetual hold on rural votes, sapping the virility of the Indian farmer and denuding him of his constitutional right and his inherent freedom of choice on matters involving the regulation of his own affairs. The Swatantra Party is vitally concerned about the social and economic welfare of the farmer based on his self-interest and on self-help, and not based on some intangible social reform accredited to the benefit of the State.

In order that the state may render service to each category of its people, it should restrict its activities to those fields where such help is urgently needed. The present policy of dissipation of energy on grandiose economic planning brings in its wake too many controls. It does more damage to existing patterns of production, without doing away with any of the evils it set about to cure.

Controls have never achieved a classless society nor have they brought about a leveling of incomes. They have, on the contrary, enhanced the fortunes of the dishonest and the unscrupulous, who are always ready to corrupt the poorly paid and harassed public official. Enormous responsibilities and power have fallen on small men incapable of shouldering such heavy responsibilities and unable to resist the temptation to improve their economic well-being through the exercise of their power. This has brought about an extensive moral degeneration of the country. Where compulsion cannot succeed the only civilised alternative is persuasion. This persuasion can only be effected by fostering and maintaining spiritual values, by preserving what is good in our culture and tradition. It will bring out what is noblest in human nature — the joy

of giving and the spreading of happiness enshrined in all religions. There is a great difference between the man who does not murder because he is afraid of judicial sanctions, and the man who does not murder because it is morally revolting to his nature. To think that Gandhiji advocated trusteeship to allow the rich to get richer is absurd and completely lacking in an understanding of his philosophy. Trusteeship is merely an example of the basic law: that the purest ends cannot justify the means adopted to achieve them. Gandhiji's ideas on trusteeship laid down the means, through which a regeneration of the moral fibre of our people could be achieved – the end in view being the social and economic welfare of our people.

To say that 'self-respecting people might prefer rights conferred by legislation to charity arbitrarily bestowed on them by self-righteous trustees', is an uncharitable interpretation displaying a confusion of

thought and lack of faith in human nature. Is the appropriation of property and the repudiation of obligations considered as the 'right conferred by legislation on self-respecting people'? It has also been alleged that the Swatantra Party is 'advocating material rewards for those who have the resources and enterprise to earn them and spiritual values for others who have not'. At no time has the Swatantra Party remotely given the impression of advocating such a policy. Free enterprise and the profit motive are not the monopoly of the rich but are basic human urges. Spiritual values are not commodities to be allotted to any particular group of people; they are the sustenance of civilizations and constitute the norms of human behaviour. The Swatantra Party advocates greater and higher spiritual values, through trusteeship, for those who possess material wealth, and at no time has maintained that the poor should trade their standard of living for spiritual values.

II. A Way Out—A Programme Party

By M. V. SASTRY

THIS is a plea for constructive thought on the present political situation in India. Rajaji indicated the way out when the Congress landed itself in a morass in about the year 1942. Now it is something different. The Congress of the day is seeking to land the people of the country in a morass. It is not a question therefore of helping the Congress out of an impasse. It is a struggle for existence – on the part of the people against the Congress. There is no section of the people which is happy. The vulgar pomp and satisfaction of men in authority and power rouses the gorge of every decent citizen. Nehru's Socialistic Pattern of Society is a myth.

All is fair in love and war, and therefore it may be legitimate for the critics of the

Swatantra Party to distort its policy and make it out to be an outmoded *laissez faire* theory, or even just 'anarchy'. It never seems to occur to them that the minimum of fairness demands that they should at least cast a cursory glance at the 21 principles of the party before launching on their criticism. Those who prefer to pin their faith in a Marxist economy of some shape or other, which had its roots in the 19th century and which has since been found to be decayed, may not prefer the progressive thought of the mid-20th century enshrined in the 21 principles of the Swatantra Party.

A monopoly does not cease to be such simply because it happens to be held by the State. The State itself comes to be owned by the Party in power and we ex-

perience the phenomenon of the emergence of a 'New Class' which suppresses the individual and oppresses the people. This is what the Swatantra Party is up against. The negative aspect lies in its opposition to the 'New Class' and the positive in its belief in 'prosperity through competition'. It is essentially a programme party.

While the Party does not believe in a class war it takes into account two important interests which are not only not antithetical but can be made mutually beneficial, and which any sound economy should comprehend, viz., the interests of the consumer and the producer. The Swatantra Party considers the interest of the consumer to be paramount, in that it is an interest which, in a sense, is common to all the individuals that compose a society. There is a play of natural forces in 'free competition' which puts the trader or the producer under an obligation to make his profit through 'turn-over' instead of through a high rate of profit. It is this that works to the benefit of the consumer, and can lead to an expansion of trade and industry capable of solving the extant unemployment problem. While this latter is conceived as a means to create and increase the volume of purchasing power, the purchasing power so created and increased is sought to be made substantial through a stabilisation of the 'currency'. That is why the Swatantra Party is against the exploitation of the Nasik Press and foreign loans, as the incidence of the total burden ultimately falls on the consumer. Ultimately even the tax payer's burden is transferred to the consumer. This is the reason for the Swatantra Party's opposition to crippling taxation which has come to include the newest type of Indirect Tax, in the shape of bribes to high and low, based on the principle 'every man has his price'—the slab being dependant on the status of the officer concerned. A trader or an industrialist will continue to make his profit willy-nilly, and this is achieved only by the transference of all the burdens to the consumer. We see therefore where the ultimate incidence is, And in the last analy-

sis, you can never invest more than what you save.

We find ourselves in a crisis: If profit cannot be made in the face of oppressive and indiscriminate State interference, private enterprise necessarily winds itself up, even if it is not wound up by the State or in bankruptcy. This circumstance necessarily leads to the monopolistic operations of the State. Where such operations lead to, has been vividly described by Djilas in *The New Class*.

Bernard Shaw observed: 'It is vitally important that a Government, however convinced of the evil of private property and profiteering enterprise, must not confiscate the one nor stop the other until it is ready to carry on and find employment for all concerned without checking their productivity for a moment. Otherwise nothing will happen but unemployment and national impoverishment'. This about sums up the warning needed in our present situation. Under the auspices of the ruling party we find that the State can provide profit and employment not to all but only to those who belong to the party in power and their hangers-on in varying degrees. The entire machinery of the State is geared to the operations of the Party in power. Besides a highly centralized party in power, we have quite a few extra-constitutional bodies like the Planning Commission and the National Development Council which are not responsible to anybody but their creator, the Prime Minister, though they are said to function as organs of Democracy!

Fundamentally, Government is not a business concern. It can never be and never should be such. When it comes to do business it is not doing so with its own money but with somebody else's—the people's money. Moreover, Government is not a mythical entity. Factually, it operates under the authority of a group of individuals called the Party in power. Nobody could describe the resulting phenomenon better than Djilas: 'The Communist leaders handle national property as their own but at the

same time they waste it as if it were somebody else's'. Adverting to State monopoly he says: 'The worst and most harmful element in capitalism from the workers' standpoint — the labour market — has been replaced by the monopoly over labour of the ownership of the New Class. This has not made the worker any freer'. It may really be to the businessman's interest to continue the system of licences and permits. But it definitely can be harmful to the interests of the consumer. The favoured businessman is always an anti-social factor. The authority which favours is equally so.

The present policies of the Congress and, under its auspices, of the Government are said to be very different from a Communist ideology and practice. This is partially true, and there is a chance yet 'to nip it in the bud', so to say. 'A little planning is as impossible as a little pregnancy', and something should be done about it before a monster is born.

There is everything to be said for a people's capitalism as against State capitalism which is another name for Socialism, a compendious name for the business operations of the Party in power. That is the *raison d'être* of private enterprise and free competition, and the reason against every type of monopolistic business, private or public. Essentially the so-called public sector is more private than the most private sector. There is at least a check in the form of a Police State over the operations of a legitimate private sector; this is noticeably absent *vis-a-vis* the operations of the public sector. Where the interest of the consu-

mer is paramount, there can be only one guiding principle — 'as much competition as possible, as much planning as necessary'. We cease to make a farce of the 'common man', and take into account a characteristic which is common to every citizen (high and low, without distinction of class, caste or creed) when we give paramount consideration to the interest of the consumer.

A different cycle then presents itself: prosperity is reflected by the consuming capacity of the people. You cannot consume more than you can produce. Therefore, increase in the volume of consumption necessarily depends on the increase in the volume of production. The consumer is interested in production for use. Consequently, the manner and tempo of development also adjusts itself. Industry has to be decentralized in more ways than one.

The land problem cannot be solved by attempting the impossible — the satisfaction of 'land hunger'. If it is not a demagogic device, it only presents the undignified picture of a cat running after its own tail. The uncertainties of the land policies of the party in power have succeeded in lowering food production. Instead of doctrinaire blundering, if a realistic land policy had been adhered to, it would have stepped up food production, resulting in the prices of essential foodstuffs coming down to their natural level and affording the needed relief to the consumer. This would have provided a firm base for an industrial superstructure capable of relieving the enormous pressure on land, and the extant unemployment and poverty.

Talking About Books

By SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

AS a Literary Pilgrim in England I was much more impressed by the Quiet Old Men than by the Angry Young Men. Among these wise men of the West I should include Sir Charles Maurice Bowra; Prof. F. L. Lucas; Frank Swinerton; Ivor Brown; and Prof. Wilson Knight. Perhaps also Sir Compton Mackenzie and Sir Harold Nicolson, though only in a peripheral way; and J. B. Priestley, who, from either point of view, is only betwixt and between (besides, he is much too mercenary, even for a Yorkshireman). And now I must remember something *I forgot to tell you*.

I was having tea with the poet, Miss Kathleen Nott, in a Lyons Snack bar on Regent Street. We happened to discuss contemporary autobiographies and we agreed that Diana Duff Cooper was slightly disappointing. 'But have you come across the autobiographies of Sir L. E. Jones?' asked she. 'Indeed I have,' I said, and added that I had greatly enjoyed *A Victorian Boyhood* and *An Edwardian Youth* though I had not been able to get hold of *A Georgian Afternoon*. 'In that case you must read his coming book *I forgot to tell you*,' said Miss Nott, whom I found a very sensitive and perceptive reader.

And so here is what *I forgot to tell you* by Sir L. E. Jones and published by Rupert Hart-Davis who seem to have an uncanny knack for the exotic, the exquisite and the exceptional. Sir Lawrence Jones is, quite definitely, one of the few Joneses who must be kept up with. His book is not exactly a sequel to the great trilogy, but really a sort of envoi or postscript. Just as the sun-dial counted only the hours that were serene, Sir Lawrence Jones remembers only the late-summertime of unbroken sunshine, the wide lawns, nectarines and peaches at Westonbirt in Gloucestershire, the flannels flickering at the distant nets and the ceaseless, caressing coos of the wood-pigeons. I remember seeing pigeons being fed in Russell Square and, of course, in Trafalgar Square, but I cannot recall their coos. The pigeons at Warwick Castle are, of course, cooing all the time, but there they are in true keeping.

All this brings back the days. But even when recalling Skye or Italy, Sir Lawrence Jones never describes scenery in merely aesthetic terms. Merely aesthetic descriptions neither bring the scene

before those who have never seen it nor satisfy those in whose memories it has once been immobilised. After reading Homer one has the clearest idea of the landscape, yet of this landscape only the barest account appears in the text. We seem to smell the mackerel-crowded seas after Sir Lawrence Jones has taken us round Skye.

There is an unforgettable sketch of an eccentric in Italy, one of the Ole-koi-hais. This man kept on reminding everybody of his thirty years as a Civil Servant, of his clashes with Curzon, of his decisive influence on Indian affairs as *eminence grise* to Mahatma Gandhi on the one side and various Viceroys on the other. The author apparently had not seen much of the pukka sahib or the sun-dried bureaucrat and was faintly amused by the civilian fancying himself on his English. 'Why his English should be faultless and idiomatic was never clear to us.'

Although he dwells chiefly on the sunlit days, some of his memories are what he calls 'vinegar'. But the vinegar is transmuted into nectar. 'Might I of Jove's (or Jones's) nectar sup, I would not change with thine.' The list of his dislikes, is, of course, capricious, but so is the list of Lamb's 'Imperfect Sympathies'. He is too charming to be capable of personal animus, though at different times he has strongly disliked Mrs. Barbauld, Mary Queen of Scots, Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain. He dislikes P.E.N. and also cocktail parties, apparently unaware that the two often tie up. The cocktail parties given by P.E.N. at 62, Glebe Place, Chelsea are among the highspots of London literary life and constitute a kind of clearing house of contemporary culture. One meets all sorts of writers and lovers of literature and I have met persons as different from each other as Daniel George, William Plomer, Cynthia Asquith and Lord Pethick-Lawrence. Nonetheless, there is substance in the author's charge that personal meetings with writers lead to disillusion. It is not for me to say whether the object of the P.E.N. is to enable a few writers to have free jaunts to Ankara and Tokyo, but, maybe, Richard Church and Lord Pethick-Lawrence will answer this charge. Sir Lawrence Jones also dislikes bridge, motor-cars, peers in head-dress and all forms of pageants. One is grateful to him for getting Sir

Osbert Sitwell's name wrong ('Sir Oswald Sitwell' p. 144). The Sitwells need a little chastening.

One closes the book and has a feeling that at the end of the day, a golden plover is calling over the meadow. It would be a pity if this ruminant were to run out of memories. 'What goes deepest with us,' he pleads, is 'not for printing'. Maybe. But memory is a capricious thing and one hopes he will remember more of his felicities, resurrect the lost days and make us glad. His book is a testament of happiness, of good fellowship, and of sincerity.

Polly Hobson's *Brought up in Bloomsbury* published by Constable gives nostalgia a very New Look. Ostensibly it is about the hopes, dreams and aspirations of an arty girl who longed for an entry into the closed shop of culture. The Bloomsbury that comes to mind when one thinks of Lytton Strachey, Clive Bell and Virginia Woolf was a very closed shop indeed. But it is not that Bloomsbury, despite the arty overtones, that is evoked by Polly Hobson (of course it is a pseudonym, but who is Sylvia, what is she?). It is rather an ageless Bloomsbury, greatly altered since the days of Jerome K. Jerome and Gissing, but bits of which were dear to Lamb and which Dr. Johnson too must have loved.

Life, for her, alternated between Tyseley and London. She became familiar with the strange smells of London, its heady April excitement. The smell of damp earth and lilac in the air, when she picnicked at Kew Gardens or Hampton Court reconciled her to her quasi-bohemian existence. Some of the figures are unforgettable — Mel who was too fond of feminine company, Pansy who had married an artist and led 'an unfortunate but distinctly glamorous life'; Ben, who reviewed detective stories for the *New Statesman*.

Percy Street was the centre of this Du Maurierish life. I have done a lot of street-haunting in Bloomsbury, and I remember Percy Street because of its relative width and its Greek (or rather Cypriot) restaurants. Their kababs are succulent, their prices are stiff. Much the same is true of Charlotte Street, into which one turns as one walks from Tottenham Court Road. Pansy's studio was in Charlotte Street.

Somehow one gets the impression that the Bloomsbury upbringing had maladjusted the lives of these arty people. Maladjusted, in relation to post-war London which Mel found unexciting after Cairo and Athens. 'The girls had become too serious-minded. There was no coffee-housing, no parties, little conversation.' And the writer (or the narrator) tried to remind herself that her life

was full, contented and happy. It just could not be done. She still cannot walk down Percy Street, without encountering ghosts from her own past, ghosts that refuse to be laid.

Fredric Warburg's *Occupation for Gentlemen* published by Hutchinson is the autobiography of a leading publisher. When Fredric Warburg acquired the assets of Martin Secker he re-christened it 'Secker and Warburg'. Secker and Warburg are topdrawer publishers and as the firm which published nearly all the works of George Orwell, have some claim to a place in literary history. Fredric Warburg has the reputation of being rather cold and sophisticated. One in fact who does not seem to have heard of Byron's wry comment 'And Barabbas was a publisher.'

Mr. Warburg 'blundered into publishing'. His family had urged him to go in for banking. He started life with Routledge — then, as now, a respectable but dull and mouldy firm. He started the Brodway Translations, forerunners of the better-known and more comprehensive Loeb Library and the Penguin classics. In many ways C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards symbolise Routledge; a case of a marriage of true minds. Warburg recalls all this and the To-day and Tomorrow series. There is a peculiar pathos about the best-sellers of other days.

It is typical of a publisher that his memories should dwell on the sales rather than the contents of books. And so it is hardly surprising that Mr. Warburg recalls the publication of the translation of Gabriel Chevallier's *Clochemerle* with more unction and pleasure than the fact that he had something to do with *Keep the Aspidistra flying* or *Animal Farm*. He recalls a few other successes. Two of these — Cedric Dover's *Half Caste*, a fair but bitter account of Eurasians, and Reginald Reynold's *The White Sahibs in India*, an energetic attack on British Imperialism, have a special significance for India. Unfortunately Reginald Reynolds' next book, *To live in Mankind*, is better-known but very disappointing. It is smug, unctuous and contains too much log-rolling. In that book he cracks up an ignorant opinionated Englishwoman who has harmed the cause of English education in India in an irreparable way. He never seems to have tumbled to the fact that the Memsahib in India, rather than the Sahib, spoilt racial amity. That is part of the theme of *A Passage to India*. When the Memsahib is sallow and shallow and fancies herself on English literature as well as Indian Literature, the results are embarrassing.

I met T. R. Fyvel at the B.B.C. office and interrogated him about George Orwell's sex-life.

Fyvel was a close friend of Orwell for about twelve years and at the request of his family wrote an article in *Encounter* to refute the theory that he was an unhappy or isolated person. Warburg discovered Fyvel in 1938 and published his *No Ease in Zion*.

Such are some of his encounters and adventures. The most wonderful thing about him is his gusto rather than his flair. He finds publishing great fun. He has invested this profession with some of the romance and glamour generally associated with less humdrum callings.

Gay Wilson Allen's magnum opus on Whitman has caused quite a stir. It was the talk of literary London in October 1959. I lunched with Prof. Allen at a Davies Street restaurant. He seemed a very perceptive critic eager to discover affinities between Whitman and Indian thought. He has also edited *Walt Whitman's Poems*. The publishers are Grove Press of New York. The introduction is scholarly and comprehensive. Randal Jarrell had stressed the importance of Whitman's images but here they are analysed at length. Four poems in particular may be noted—'Song of Myself', 'Song of the Open Road', 'Passage to India' and 'When Lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed'. Whitman's fancy like Coleridge's developed steadily, and in a mature poem like 'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry' it disintegrates the real world and creates a new and ideal unity. The clouds at sunset, the tall masts of Manhattan, the hills of Brooklyn stir the poet's fancy. Evidently, he invests fancy with a creative function, although Prof. Allen calls it the mediating faculty of the poet. Whitman's original diction is also stressed ('aria' and 'recitative' were two of his favourite terms), but there is no attempt to emphasise his loneliness which, in my opinion, was due to the fact that he was a homosexual. An important and significant book, nonetheless.

Fredric Warburg's autobiography is not a booklover's testament. And that is just what Lovat Dickson's *The Ante-room* published by Macmillan is. This, too, is the story of a publisher's ups and downs. The ante-room is a symbol of the outsider's predicament. The author had not been born into the literary world, though he entered it early. This book describes—at some length—how he left the ante-room of waiting and preparation and entered the world of literature. It should be wonderful to trace his progress in the subsequent volumes. He edited the *Fortnightly Review* and *The Review of Reviews*, founded his own publishing house and is now with Macmillan.

Lovat Dickson might seem to some a revenant from another age. His affinities are with the Geor-

gians and he would have been very happy at Little Iddens with Gibson, Brooke and Abercrombie. Very appropriately he dedicates his book to J. C. Squire. Although he has some nostalgia for Rhodesia, Australia and Canada, he regards the years spent there as merely novitiate. He is wrong when he says he has no aesthete's eye. But the beauty of Alberta or California could not hold him. The great book-world of London, which generations of bookmen have found seductive and irresistible was calling to him. The white cliffs of England constituted a two-fold symbol for him. The prodigal had come home. It was also the end of a pilgrimage.

Laurie Lee's *Roses in Winter* is the best travel-book of this decade, and it may be that his *Cider with Rosie*, also published by Hogarth, may earn an equal distinction among the autobiographies. Perhaps it is too early to say. Sir Harold Nicolson told me at the Albany that it was the most nostalgic book he had read for many years. Frank Swinerton told me at the Reform Club, Pall Mall, that it was the only book which brought back the days. F. L. Lucas at Cambridge was equally profuse with praise and prediction.

The spell of the book is a little difficult to analyse, though easy to succumb to. Laurie Lee does not give a coherent or systematic account and that is just as well for nostalgia is a mood and not a mechanism. True nostalgia cannot be moulded into a pattern. One dips into the ragbag of memories and the elder-blossoms, the current-cakes at breakfast, the holding of hands in the dark assume uncommon dimensions. There is an enduring quality, an element of timelessness about these country junketings. Laurie Lee's world is one which Thomas Hardy would have loved.

Laurie Lee's poetic prose may be part of the fascination. His book suggests a comparison with Francis Brett Young's *Winterslow* or John Moore's *Portrait of Elmbury*. Laurie Lee evokes the pastoral simplicities as well as the pastoral melancholy of the Cotswold Village where he grew up with easy assurance. The kitchen was the symbol of that restricted, sheltered life. ('Our waking life and our growing years were for the most part spent in the kitchen and until we married or ran away, it was the common room we shared.') It was scruffy, warm and low. Towels toasted on the guard. The mantel was littered with fine old china, horse brasses and freak potatoes. Granny Wallon's wines were famous in the village. No one ever solved the mystery, of the transmutation of sugar, yeast, cowslips, and dandelions into a divine drink. Granny Wallon was very cagey about it

and never let on. Those were the days of penny ales, tuppenny runs and home-made cider.

Laurie Lee's sketch of his mother has a poignant quality faintly reminiscent of Cowper and Dr Johnson. He admits that in trying to recapture his mother's presence he is pulling at broken strings. The years run back through the pattern of her confusions. He is haunted by her flowers and songs, her unshaken fidelities, her attempts at order, her relapses into squalor, her daily-weeping for the author's dead sister. The summer nights when the green of the yew trees filled the kitchen and she sat down to play the piano, often return to his memory.

The pageant of the seasons has a special importance when life is sheltered. Summer in that Cotswold village was the time of sudden plenty; of slow hours; of diamond haze; of dragon-flies and hay-stooks; of green apples and liquid walnuts. 'All sights twice-brilliant and smells twice-sharp, all game-days twice as long.'

And then there were the outings and festivals. The village was ruled by the squire as elsewhere. This particular squire was a crumbling moot tree and its shade was indispensable for all celebrations. The outings were both sacred and secular. The ladi-da gestures, the communal gluttony, the lamp-light and decorations of the parochial church teas remind the writer that the world has sophisticated itself in the meantime.

But, in a peculiar way, the central thing in the book is the 'first bite at the apple'. Memory of one's adolescent loves has a keepsake, album-leaf quality. There is nothing pornographic about these memories, though he does sail rather near the wind. Nowhere else has an early sex experience been invested with a poetic and sacramental quality. 'Night and home seemed far away. We were caught in the rooted trees. Knees wet with dew I pondered in silence all that Jo's acquiescence taught me. She shivered slightly and stirred her hands. A blackbird screamed into a bush.' Rosie Burdock with her fuller initiation came after this, and the cidrous kisses of Rosie evidently still haunting Laurie Lee's memory lend a tang to the book.

J. M. S. Tompkins's *The Art of Rudyard Kipling* published by Methuen is the second of the really comprehensive studies of a neglected writer. The other one is C. E. Carrington's. In the fifties, Miss Jhabwala, the novelist, wrote a long article to prove that Kipling was permanently on the shelf. I was asked by the editor to write a rejoinder and I claimed that he had some of the marks of a major writer and would be remembered for a long time. That controversy revived the Indian interest

in Kipling, I was repeatedly told by the B.B.C. people at Bush House.

J. M. S. Tompkins sounds like a portmanteau form of Tom Atkins with whom a writer on Kipling should have something to do. Actually, she is a governor of Bedford College and rather sceptical of biographical material. Her judgments and assessments—she modestly disclaims any title to be comprehensive—are based on the books only. And only on the novels. That is rather a pity for Kipling is a major writer in the Leavisian sense, only in some of his poems T. S. Eliot recognises this in his anthology. And Somerset Maugham's edition of his short stories is a tribute from one great Tusitala to another. Miss Tompkins suggests that apart from *Kim*, Kipling need not be seriously considered as a novelist. The essential thing about *Kim* is its picaresque character and a comparison with some of J. B. Priestley's picaresques might be profitable. But Miss Tompkins does not show any awareness of this.

Miss Tompkins relies much on *Something of Myself*. In *Something of Myself* Kipling claimed that he was dealing with large superficial areas of life. The simplicity of *Plain Tales from the Hills* is, however, not so easily explained. Kipling was experimenting with living, spoken English. How he manages to combine a colloquial style with economy of statement and an almost incandescent imagination has never been fully revealed. Apart, of course, from Oscar Wilde, who even to-day has the last word: 'As one turns over the pages of *Plain Tales from the Hills*, one feels as if one were seated under a palm-tree reading life by superb flashes of vulgarity. The bright colours of the bazaars dazzle one's eyes. The jaded, second-rate Anglo-Indians are in exquisite incongruity with their surroundings. The mere lack of style in the storyteller gives an odd realism to what he tells us.'

In the chapter 'Man and the Abyss', Miss Tompkins very percipiently notes the two convictions which emerge strongly in his work. The first is that man is a creature that can do his best work only under pressure. He is radically imperfect but has potentialities of great work in him. The second conviction is that the adult human being is in service. He wears some yoke or harness, whether it be the obligations of a profession or a position, the demands of his genius or those made by society on the sons of Martha. Such a point of view must be attributed partly to his Methodist heredity and partly to the prevalent late-Victorian conception of the white man's burden. Miss Tompkins feels that Kipling felt that fascination for extreme things that marks Elizabethan drama.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Metaphysics of Tantrism

THE subtitle on the covering page says 'traditionally ascribed to 'Sankaracharya,' and this statement of reserve prompts me to begin literally *mediis in rebus*, as the chapter on the authorship of this great work of religious poetry files as Ch. III in this beautiful volume. Professor Brown, now one of America's leading Indologists and Chairman of the Indian department at the University of Pennsylvania (which, incidentally, is the only School in the U.S. that has a full Indian graduate programme), shows that the foundations for the traditional ascription of the *Saundaryalahari* to the preceptor of the Advaita system and the founder of the Dasanami order of monks, Adi-Sankaracharya are slim. His arguments are strikingly simple and, so I feel, convincing: the teachings of the poem are not compatible with any phase of the doctrine propounded by the author of the canonical commentaries (of the Upanisads, the Bramasutra, and of the Upadesasahasri); this has been known even to orthodox scholars for quite a while, but was somehow not expressly stated, possibly due to feelings of deference. However, Brown's arguments are strong; the nose-ornaments (muktamani) mentioned in vs. 61 did not appear before the year 1000 A.D., and the verse cannot have been interpolated. Hence on this point alone the Adi-Sankaracharya's authorship can be impugned. Taking the cue from some older scholars, Brown sug-

gests that the work may have been composed by any 'Sankaracharya'—for every Head of one of the four Mathas has held the title ever since.

I would add that even the fact that *tantric* devotees all over India invoke Sankaracharya as the 'Adiguru', the first preceptor of the *tantric* or *agama*—tradition, does not really reduce the force of Brown's argument — which, by the way, has been presaged by Hindu scholars as well (P. K. Gode, H. R. Rangaswami Iyengar — Brown lists their argument succinctly): for the charismatic force attaching to the great scholastic is enormous — and whatever is known about his career, through legend and fragmentary hagiography, and through the traditional ascription of a number of beautiful hymns to Devi to him, makes him supremely eligible as a permanent preceptor for all Saktas; in addition to this, the Saktas have always been slightly apologetic about their ways and thoughts, and they have been taking great pains to show their teachings as Vedic in origin — hence the supraorthodox Acharya's popularity with them.

Professor Brown's book is probably the final achievement, from a scholarly angle, with regard to the *Saundaryalahari*; and its make-up certainly matches its scholastic merit. In the first place, this is the first really critical edition based upon a large number of manuscripts of all-Indian provenance. I have counted no less than 51 manuscripts, a number that need hardly be superseded.

A complete word list makes it possible to check this work for authorship against

THE SAUNDARYALAHARI or FLOOD OF BEAUTY—Edited, translated and presented in photographs by W. Norman Brown, Harvard Oriental Series 43, publ. Harvard University Press, price: \$ 7.50.

works ascribed to Sankaracharya or any other prominent teacher.

Brown has also incorporated the only two manuscripts which have illustrations, and these illustrations fill 50 plates nine of which are reproduced in colour, the rest in velvety black and white, in which the manuscripts were painted in early western Indian and Rajputana style; the Nagari text which they illustrate — stanza for stanza is extremely clear and legible.

The exhaustive introduction and the English translation are Brown's original contribution, apart of course from the superb arrangement of the whole book which stands out high in the best tradition of the Harvard Oriental Series. We now have to turn to the Introduction — omitting Part 3 on Authorship, which we have already described.

The Introduction opens with a structural description of the poem, which is followed by a section on the teachings of the work. He avers that the Devi of the poem encompasses both the *purusa* and *prakrti* of the earlier *Sankhya* system, and that she is the equivalent of the *Brahman* of the advaitic philosophy. Brown then says that the feminine principle conjoined to the masculine 'creates' the cosmos by exercising its power to produce change, though the masculine element remains subordinate in this conjunction.

This certainly sums up the doctrine argument of the work, but I am not too happy about Brown's using 'creates'; his edition will no doubt be the one edition read in the West in future — the West is fortunate in having the best edition so far made — but 'create' to the Western mind connotes an *actus ex nihilo*, i.e. the function of God as conceived in the three mediterranean religions. There is no such 'creation' anywhere in Indian tradition — the most commonly used root is 'srj', which means 'to let out, exude, emanate'. The second clause of Brown's statement (i.e. 'exercising the power to produce change') shows that he is very well aware of this yet, Western students are likely to get a wrong connota-

tion in their minds; I would suggest 'emanates the cosmos' for the next edition.

There is an interesting feature which will be welcome to the critical student who is no Hindu: the Srividya, i.e. the *mantra* which embodies the quintessence of the Saundaryalahari, is actually given (p 17) — and it is given correctly, a matter some believers may feel uneasy about. The text only hints at it by way of indicating its syllabic construction, in line with all Indian texts concerned with *mantra*. To my knowledge, this is the very first time that the Srividya has been put down in print anywhere; let us hope Professor Brown has not incurred the Devi's wrath by this scholastically meritorious deed. I do not quite know how facetious one can be in these matters.

Prof. Brown thinks that the notion of the 'nadis' is old; this is of course perfectly true, but I do not know if the three arteries (*ida*, *pingala*, and *susumna*) which figure supreme in tantric literature are actually mentioned in early Upanishadic thought. But then again, Brown is right if by 'early Upanishadic thinking' he just means early as compared to codified tantric thinking, for at least the extant Sakta tantras are all definitely more recent in origin.

The Sanskrit text which follows the introduction (the latter concluding with a precise indication and evaluation of the used manuscripts) is printed on the right page in beautiful Nagari characters with its English translation facing each stanza on the left opposite. Brown's translation is the best and the most elegant one that has yet been made. Prof. Edgerton in his review of the book (J.A.S. XVIII 3 May 1959) calls it 'remarkably graceful as well as comprehensible.'

The text is followed by a series of notes on variant reading as well as on points in the text with which the non-tantric can hardly be familiar. The notes are arranged with reference to the individual stanzas. There is a short excursus into musical theory which Sri Shivasharan (M. Alain Danielou, the renowned French musicolo-

gist and Director of the Adyar Library) has furnished to Prof. Brown.

Next follows the section captioned 'Critical Apparatus'. This is a verse for verse collation of variant passages as they occur in the manuscripts used; a thoroughly scholarly compilation. It is followed by the word index mentioned above, and the remaining 90 pages or so are given to the illustrations. The reproductions are on the left side, and they are explained on the right page facing them.

This is a marvellous book; it has only one great drawback — it is very expensive for Indian standards (thirty-six rupees), though here in America it can be regarded as cheap — much less exciting books published in this country cost as much or more.

SWAMI AGEHANANDA BHARATI

SOURCES OF INDIAN TRADITION:

Compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary, Stephen Hay, Royal Weiler, Andrew Yarrow. Columbia University Press. 1959 London; Oxford University Press Rs. 32.50.

THE Indian Mind is a complex entity. It has passed through several vicissitudes, has come under the influence of various complementary as well as contradictory elements and has always tried to carry out a 'Synthesis', a word which might well sum up the whole Indian outlook towards all things and Indian culture as well. One who has a desire to understand this very interesting complex entity must have before his mind's eye the whole progress of Indian life, right from the Rgvedic times upto the days of the creation of Pakistan, and also must have an idea of the thought that developed on the Indian soil during these very eventful centuries. This in itself is a tremendous task indeed; but this is exactly what the present book with its introductory essays and translations of Indian historical material, enables the reader to carry out. The articles contributed by distinguished scholars; A. L. Basham, R. N. Dandekar, Peter Hardy, V. Raghavan,

I. H. Qureshi and J. B. Harrison, all of great repute, have an internal unity as well as continuity, and the reader, therefore, as he progresses in his reading, has the whole drama of Indian life unfolded to him. One closes the book with the feeling that an ambitious task has been admirably achieved. The chronological sequence kept up in the discussion enables one to follow the development historically and in a way to visualise the phenomenon almost as happening—so vivid is the impression created.

The early part of the development of Indian life is a 'Synthesis'. The Aryan life assimilated the best of every thought and culture that it came into contact with. Even the Upanisads show this fusion of different thoughts. Pessimism which is a characteristic of such differing systems of thought such as, the Upanisadic, the Buddhistic and the Jain, is hard to explain. (p. 41) The buoyant Aryans turn into philosophers, who are pessimists and renunciationists. As Buddhism and Jainism reveal, even the martial Katriyas could not escape this Call of the Forests. The impact of this fact on the pattern and the structure of the society, as well as on the political theories and outlook on life has been very clearly pointed out. The progress from the Rgvedic to the post-Buddha ideology is a march towards a democratic ideology, a class-less society. The Brahmanists had developed a most comprehensive system of social thought which is the basis of the Hindu society in all later centuries. The life of the individual as well as of the whole society was organised on a plan that was not materially changed by Buddhism or Jainism, two thoughts that appeared as a reaction to, and criticism of, Brahmanism. Synthesis could work very well with these thoughts that arose and flourished on the Indian soil. Thus it is that Hinduism became a way of life.

But this Synthesis could not work at all with Islamic thought. It always remained as an 'unassimilated ideology' and the fusion of the Hindu and the Muslim thought never took place. The reason may be that

even before its entry into India Islamic thought had attained a definite shape, and whenever any attempts at fusion were made they were resisted from within no less than from without. All this makes a really revealing study. The book at once places before us the achievements as well as the failure of Hinduism. Further, the reading of the book becomes illuminating and refreshing, for here one is able to compare the Vedic pattern of life with the Islamic pattern, the Upanisadic mystic thought with that of the Buddhists and the Muslim mystics, the political thought of Kautilya with that of Muslim theorists.

One is not likely to agree with the chronology as accepted in the book. Archaeological proof appears to be the only sort of proof acceptable in these days. But having the entire eventful drama replete with momentous events and movements before one's mind's eye, one is likely to consider the span allotted to this development, from 1200 B.C. onwards as too short, for then the events have to be crowded in a manner which lacks conviction. However, there is no doubt that the book will introduce a reader to all the important sources of Indian Tradition and will enable him to understand its current and development.

T. G. MAINKAR

LOKAMANYA TILAK—A biography by G. P. Pradhan and A. K. Bhagwat, 1959, pp. 380, Demy Octavo. Jaico Publishing House.

PROFESSORS Pradhan and Bhagwat have written an eminently readable account of the life of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. A biography that holds the readers' interest right through, but does not verge on fiction, is not an easy thing to write. An insistence on factual veracity and historical objectiveness can quickly introduce into a biography the qualities of chalk as an edible. In avoiding this, the authors have been exceptionally successful. In consequence, they can be pardoned for producing 'yet another' life of Tilak and doing so apparently in

response to a prize offered by the All-India Congress Committee on the occasion of Tilak's birth centenary celebrations in 1956.

One is never quite sure why biographies come to be written. It is, one supposes, natural to man to find the story of another man's life interesting. In another fundamental sense, the life story of a man may be the life story of a nation or a national group. In other words, writing biographies may be an interesting way of depicting history. To be sure, to one familiar with the concept of 'growth point' in contemporary economics and sociology, it would be one of the most satisfactory ways of depicting historical movements.

With a life like Tilak's, the danger is obviously that his personal biography would be made the biography of the nation. In spite of commendable dispassionateness, the authors do not quite succeed in avoiding this danger. An occasional luminary, an Aurobindo Ghose, a Bipinchandra Pal or a Lajpat Rai does appear in the scene. Nevertheless, one does not quite escape the implication that most of the worthwhile national resurgence that took place in India in those days took place in and around Poona. In effect, Tilak really becomes too big to be fitted into anything at all, far less just into the rise of the middle class nationalism in India. In a sense this is unfair criticism. Professors Pradhan and Bhagwat are perhaps the only biographers who make any effort to cut down the Lokamanya to a more or less human size. But they don't quite do it. One wonders whether it is really possible to see a person more objectively than the authors have done and yet make it a biography. In a land addicted to deification, this effort at objectiveness whets the appetite.

In assessing Tilak, the authors take a point of view that may perhaps be called the national liberal point of view. This position, it would seem, lands them in a kind of difficulty. As liberals, they find some of Tilak's methods very unsatisfactory, particularly those in connection with his controversies with Agarkar and Gokhale

(p.47) and yet the nationalist bias cannot be quite got over. The authors leave no doubt that in their opinion Tilak was clearly wrong in at least failing to keep quiet about the Agarkar line of thought (p. 66), yet it does not prevent them from coming to the conclusion that 'His (Tilak's) concentration on political issues through the method of revivalism was thus a correct step both from the point of view of expediency and from his understanding of mass psychology,' (pp. 95-6) The alternative hypothesis of a completion of the change in British attitude towards India by the 1890s taking the bottom out of the liberal movement have, unfortunately, not been adequately examined by the authors, a factor that could have not only given them the key to Tilak's success as a political leader, but also illuminate the unfortunate event in the rise in India of mysticism and political tantrum as popular substitutes for world-view and social action.

In consequence, a number of questions are kept hanging in the air. Was Tilak a reactionary? Was he anti-Muslim? It has been claimed by another of his biographers that he was not. Was he a chauvinist? Was his revivalism essentially of the nature of political tactics, or was it that he was instinctively a conservative, dragged up to certain progressive ideas on the basis of his associations with a number of very extraordinary persons? The authors are not quite clear about their answers, and one is left with an uneasy feeling that they could not answer the questions with a clear conscience on the occasion of the centenary of Tilak's birth. After all, the justification born out of success or inevitability has proved itself to be a doubtful kind of validation on more than one occasion.

A couple of small points may be mentioned in the context of the very great pains that the authors have taken to ensure objectiveness. In page 110, the authors write on Gokhale's performance on the occasion of military vandalism in plague-affected Poona as follows, 'Gokhale took the only course open to a gentleman; but there

was no doubt that the apology.....was an irrecoverable blow to India's national prestige.' Considering the political capital that Tilak made out of the so-called apology, it would have been better if Gokhale's letter admitting failure to substantiate his earlier statement were reproduced. Gokhale, in effect, retracted almost nothing and it is quite unlikely that the incident could be anything like an 'irrecoverable blow to India's national prestige' in any real sense. Again on page 58 the authors mention that 'Tilak ... proved that Sharada Sadan was a proselytizing institution. The truth of Tilak's arguments was corroborated by later events' In fact, there is nothing to substantiate any charge of duplicity against Ramabai. Couldn't it have been that the agreement as regards no efforts to convert the inmates being made was actually modified at a later date and that under fairly extreme provocation? Besides, is it entirely objective to regard proselytization as *ipso facto* wrong and therefore unjustified?

KSHITIMOHAN MUKERJI

A PASSAGE TO ENGLAND. By Nirad C. Chaudhari (Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London. Price Rs. 10/-).

GENERALLY when one of our intellectuals goes abroad and returns after a few weeks, the local sit-at-homes are never surprised by the impressive accounts of the traveller's impressions. These are usually about how the American drives his car on the right hand side of the road, and how the Britisher uses his left hand for the fork, and some equally ponderous details.

It was therefore a pleasant surprise to find that *A Passage to England* (bringing by its title as it did memories of Dr. Fielding and Marabar) by Nirad C. Chaudhari was a very sincere account of the impressions of an observant man with a keen taste for English culture.

Nirad C. Chaudhuri invited by the BBC, and given, once he was there, a free hand,

introductions, and money, used his time in England both wisely and well. His kindly eye observed their living, their eating and drinking; their playing and even their loving. He went, he saw and was conquered, if I might be allowed to abuse this hackneyed cliché. The Cathedrals were visited, and so were the great houses; Parliament was seen and a glimpse was had too of the Great Churchill. Everytime, everywhere, the correct reactions surged in his heart: admiration, ecstasy. 'No', the traveller seems to say with a definite shake of the head. 'They don't order things so well in India'.

He admired the English very much. Whatever he saw was compared with its Indian counterpart and found not only not wanting but also infinitely superior. When he tells us why he admires them, we are often forced to agree with a smile. One however wonders whether the naïveté displayed at times is true or simulated. He says that the strong silent Englishman is not a myth. His admiring description of one such person who did not care to explain his remarks is worth going a long way to read. One almost sees the tongue in the author's cheek when he pathetically says that this friend did not explain what Mallard, gorse, and bracken were, after pointing them out to him. We are forced to imagine the poor bewildered traveller rushing post-haste to his room and looking them up in a dictionary. The English streets and English people unlike their Indian counterparts are silent. A description of bus travel in Delhi makes this point beautifully clear, and one wishes that the author had written the entire book in this vein.

His views on the British attitude to money, love, politics and culture are illuminating though his generalizations on Indian matters are perhaps too sweeping to be convincing, atleast to some Indians. Indians, we are told, like their wives to be fat, even corpulent. Indian women of fashion are over-dressed; Indian politicians are stodgy. Indians worship money and instead of using it properly as the English

do, hoard it. How, one may ask, can one hoard money, while one hasn't even enough to spend?

He has in fact written a most entertaining book describing the sentimental journey of a Bengali Hindu, who is simple and innocent. No, not clever, if we are to believe what the author says. He lives a few weeks in England, sees, talks, drinks wine (bottles and bottles of it), gets politely mobbed at times, raises smiles, smiles himself and returns home, with happiness in his heart and an ill-fated bottle of contraband wine in his luggage.

His style is strong, fresh and masculine. A telling phrase here and an evocative word there make it clear that N. C. Chaudhuri is a writer of some distinction. Though one can't say he is another George Mikes, his book is at once interesting and entertaining.

K. B. RAO

CONTEMPORARY INDIAN SHORT STORIES — Series I: Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1959. Pp. 132; Rs. 3.50 (cloth binding), Rs. 2.50 (Paper binding).

THE anthology under review consists of fifteen short stories selected from each of the fifteen Indian languages (including English) recognized by the Akademi. About the object of the anthology, Dr. Humayun Kabir writes in his foreword, 'The present anthology attempts to give through English translations a cross-section of Indian literature at the present time... This anthology will serve the dual purpose of cultural exchanges within India and the introduction of an aspect of Indian culture to the world outside.' The anthology appears to have been hastily planned and presented. One therefore wonders how far it would help in achieving the objects set out by Dr. Kabir in his foreword.

The collection presents an odd mixture of the best, good and the not-so-good stories. There can hardly be any difference of opinion about the short stories selected from Assamese, English, Hindi, Kashmiri, Malayalam and Oriya; because their excel-

lence is imprinted deeply on the mind. The same cannot, however, be said about the short stories in other languages. It is very difficult to justify the inclusion of such stories as: *Nose-Jewel* (Tamil), *Brother Abdul Rahman* (Sindhi), *Manu* (Marathi), *Miracle* (Punjabi) etc. in the first representative anthology of Indian short stories like the present one.

Of the other short stories, Laxminath Bezberoa's *Bhadari* (Assamese), captivates by its simplicity and primitive grandeur and the picture of Indian womanhood it depicts, Bhabani Bhattacharya's *A Moment of Eternity* (English) is a powerful short story, which conveys very effectively the sense of tragedy and irony in human life. Dhumketu's *Letter* (Gujerati) and Mukhopadhyay's *The Price of Flowers* (Bengali) might appear sentimental and naive by current standards. Premchand's *The Child* (Hindi) is strikingly unorthodox in its theme and appeal.

The Curds-seller (Kannada) moves very leisurely and fails to catch. It must be quite a charming little tale in the original Kannada. But, somehow, one feels that in the translation some of the subtle graces of the original have been lost. The language of the translation does not appear to be quite 'English', it is full of vernacular idioms typical of the soil.

The Bride's Pyjamas (Kashmiri) is a delightful little short story recounting the sudden awakening of youthful passions in a pretty old couple at the sight of the bright rose-red bridal pyjamas. It is simply a poem of Love Eternal which triumphs over all sadness in life and makes for happiness. Nabir Shalla and Khotan Didi, who make the couple, come out alive from the pages of the story and leave an unforgettable impression on the mind. The beautiful blending of humour and pathos in the story gives it a rare charm. This Kashmiri story is the best piece in the whole anthology and deserves to be included in a world anthology of short stories,

The Talking Plough (Malayalam) is a very touching tale of a son of the soil. The Indian farmer's love for his land, his cattle and his complete identification with them are powerfully conveyed through this little tale.

Manu (Marathi) is more in the nature of an essay in philosophy than a short story. This story could hardly be said to represent the wealth, variety and vitality of the modern Marathi short story. The story *Only a Dog* (Oriya) is massed by plain narration. *Miracle* (Punjabi) fails to move the reader as the writer has not been able to blend the situations in the story into a perfect harmony. *Brother Abdul Rahman* (Sindhi), *On the Boat* (Telugu), *Tiny's Granny* (Urdu) are entertaining; but one hesitates to accept these stories as the best representatives of the languages concerned. Such stories confirm the impression that selections for the anthology have been arbitrary. One hopes that the work of selections for the series to follow would be entrusted not to one individual but to a representative body of noted writers in each language.

Though the stories selected here are not of a uniformly high standard, the publication of such an anthology is a most welcome event at the present time, when the cultural atmosphere in India is vitiated by linguistic prejudices and jealousies. However, one feels that the Akademi would serve the cause of 'cultural exchanges' within the country better if, along with English translations of representative short stories, it undertakes publication of their translations simultaneously into all the fourteen Indian languages. Such translations would have a wider appeal, beyond the small minority who read English, and enable a vast majority of the people in this country to find in them a reflection of the urges and experiences shared despite the differences which keep them apart.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE By L. W. H. Hull. Published by Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1959. Price : 25s. net.

THE author has undertaken the stupendous task of reviewing the development of science from its beginning till today. Naturally the reader may find many things missing; he may even find some faults in the detailed working up of the narration: he may, for instance, ask from where Mr. Hull has derived the information that the Arab writers on Mathematics ... 'learnt Arithmetic and Algebra mainly from the Indian mathematicians Arya Bhata and Brahmagupta.'? Further, he may question the authenticity of statements like: 'Within 100 years of Mohammed's death there was a Moslem empire from the Indus (*sic*) to the Pyrenees....' But these are matters of detail. In a book like Mr Hull's defects in regard to details were unavoidable.

Mr Hull has a philosophy to offer. Or, should we say that he was discovered a law in the development of science? There are, in his opinion, three chief enemies of science — (1) Platonism, (2) Ecclesiasticism, and (3) Roman barbarism. '... It was Plato's theory of Ideas which did most harm to science.' Aristotle is not so guilty in his eyes: 'Aristotle's philosophy was less harmful to science'. But the Romans were the worst. They were '... insensitive and utilitarian. The extension of Roman power over the Greek world, though it did not altogether halt science, was a main cause of the decline which preceded the Dark Age.' And Constantine the Great ushered in the Dark Age. 'He established Christianity as the official religion of the Empire....' Yet 'Some records of Alexandrian achievement fortunately escaped destruction' as the Alexandrian scholars, persecuted by the Roman Christians, could find refuge in Christian Constantinople. All hope for the development of science was lost when political power joined hands with ecclesiasticism.

Mr. Hull accepts the popular belief that in the middle ages the Christian Church

waged a struggle against independent thought. Mr Hull arrives at this conclusion logically, for already at an earlier stage of the book he concludes that ecclesiasticism is not conducive to the development of science. Like all traditional scholars who base their accounts on books on books, he shares the superstition that the Middle Ages were really a Dark Age. He does not realise that it was an age of precipitation. He also refuses to recognize that idealistic philosophy has contributed as much to the development of science as the materialistic and secular outlook on life have done. As a matter of fact without the Churches, European civilization would have ceased to be what it is. There is nothing on record to show that the Church stood in the way of scientific development through heresy hunting and by discouraging the pursuit of science till late 16th century. On the contrary, there is ample evidence to show that Giordano Bruno and Michael Servetus were burnt in the sixteenth century not because of their scientific views, but because of their religious opinions. Canon Koppelnigk and Johannes Kepler received much encouragement from the Church fathers. The Church decided in 1616 that the Copernican theory was a heresy but it took another 17 years to make its judgment public.

Mr. Hull's thesis runs as follows: 'In Roman and medieval times, with such science as there was, the intellectual interest gave way ... to the practical.' With the advent of the Renaissance intellectual curiosity became the main force. The Greek spirit was revived. But in the modern age owing to the '... urgency of technical demands, military and economic, intellectual curiosity now takes the second place.' He is alarmed at the bleak consequences of specialization. 'We must realise Clifford's hope: 'Dynamics and Prose Composition have met together; Literature and Biology have kissed each other. Perhaps not yet, but the good time is coming.' We may then avoid another (possibly not distant) Dark Age.' Yet the spirit of Plato is des-

vised though, to quote Whitehead, 'Plato shared reasons with the Gods and Aristotle with the foxes.'

M. K. HALDAR

'THREE TRADITIONS OF MORAL THOUGHT' By Dorothea Krook (Cambridge 1959) 30 sh.

MRS. KROOK combines a subtle analytical ability with a surprisingly naive dogmatism; hence 'the pure elucidation of special problems' is often more instructive than her 'main theme'. This main theme traces three 'fundamental interpretations of moral experience' and the place of love in life: (1) the Platonic-Christian tradition which believes in 'an order of transcendent values' and 'the supreme transforming and redeeming power of love', (2) the Aristotelian-Hobbesian tradition which takes pleasure and utility as moral ends and rejects the power of love, and (3) the Humanist tradition which resembles (1) in asserting transcendent values, and resembles (2) in denying God or 'supernatural sanction'. It denies 'the divinity of Christ' while admitting the greatness of his Gospel.

Mrs. Krook's grouping is odd. One would not normally put Plato and St. Paul into one camp, or Aristotle, Hobbes and Hume into the opposite one. And surely Mill, Bradley, Arnold and D. H. Lawrence all as Humanists make a very mixed party!

Mrs. Krook analyses Plato's *Dialogues*, to show his belief in a transcendent world of values and his rejection of 'the morality of worldly success'. Her exposition of Plato's views — might is never right, the gratification of desires indiscriminately is not happiness, ethics is inseparable from politics — and her comments on the Socratic Method may be warmly recommended, along with the Appendix on the Dialectical Method, to any student of Plato. But calling Socrates 'the greatest Christian of the pre-Christian world' having the 'closest affinities' with the New Testament, is really 'going too far'. She thinks that Socratic doctrines demand in 'a strictly logical sense', a 'revealed God and a revealed Gospel', and she



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pities Socrates for being born before the Word was made Flesh.

St. Paul, who saw God 'face to face', could affirm what Socrates could only guess at. This chapter is frankly unreadable by mere philosophers – such childlike dogmatism, such divine obscurity, such lofty verbiage! This is typical: 'Paul also yearns to abide with Christ; but he has... the unspeakable comfort... of possessing the cause, the will, the strength and the means... The cause is the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection; the means, the several sacraments of the Church...; the strength is given by prayer and fasting, assisted constantly by the beneficent operations of the Holy Spirit...'

The secular tradition is fathered by Aristotle. Plato's is the 'high' view of man; Aristotle's the 'low' view, excluding both 'the furthest reach of moral perfection' – sanctity – and absolute 'depravity'. His ideal is the Man of Justifiable Pride, a mean between these extremes, self-sufficient in practical wisdom, deficient in all Christian virtues (specially humility), the man who seeks virtue because he scorns to do as inferior men do. Mrs. Krook makes out at least a plausible case to show Aristotle's 'hostility to the moral philosophy of Socrates', but I feel she has, while correctly exposing Aristotle's lapses, not been altogether fair to his ethics, and has been guided more by her prejudices than by the philosopher's words.

Whether or not we accept that Hobbes's doctrine is 'Aristotle's taken to its logical conclusion', Mrs. Krook's indictment of Hobbes's philosophy is clear and deserved. However, her answer to it is weak because once again she appeals to the Redeemer 'preaching the gospel of love'. 'Since Hobbes gives us Leviathan, we are obliged to give him back the Son of God'. This would hardly convince Hobbes. Similarly, her answer to Mill's doubts about Immortality and God's Omnipotence is: 'he has failed to take account of the Christian answer to the problem supplied by the story of the Fall and the doctrine of Original

Sin' – which she considers a 'profoundly illuminating' 'solution'. She even convicts Mill of naiveté!

The chapter on Bradley is sympathetic and instructive. Mrs. Krook is in tune with his doctrines of reality as organic, of 'my station and its duties', of morality being completed by religion. But again she spoils an excellent job by dragging in the 'Mystical Body of Christ' and the 'sacrament of baptism, though she admits Bradley 'does not believe' in all this. For what she calls Bradley's 'fatally limited' definition of morality as life 'under the aspect of will', she substitutes 'under the aspect of love, and thinks all his 'insuperable difficulties' would 'immediately be eliminated'!

That 'the Word is love' was realised, be it 'clumsily and imperfectly, by D.H. Lawrence in his book, *The Man Who Died*, which Mrs. Krook expounds in her chapter called 'Messianic Humanism'. Lawrence criticises Christianity for urging one to give more than one takes, while, he says, *real* love is a 'relationship of giving *and* taking'. But, comments Mrs. Krook, though true of human love, this is untrue about the God-man relationship – God 'gives and gives, ... and man takes and takes'. Much of this tedious and almost unreadable chapter is like good advice on the morality of sexual love to people about to marry. An Appendix discusses the Church's attitude to the question. The book ends on a messianic note about the reality breaking upon the world and consuming logic in its redeeming fire.

Mrs. Krook's 'subsidiary' thesis is that a philosopher's literary style should play a big part in our appraisal of his philosophy. It has not been substantiated, and her notion of the relation between literature and philosophy is nebulous. Her own style, though usually clear, is verbose, and she is inclined to use irritating expressions like 'the historic Church' and 'the master of dialectic'. She annoys most in her role of Christian theologian; when she analyses particular philosophies she is most rewarding.

S. OOKERJEE

THE ROLE OF JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES IN INDIA'S ECONOMIC PROGRESS Jaico Publishing House, Bombay
1) 1959, Rs. 2.00

THIS book is described as 'a collection of authoritative essays'. These essays form the texts of lectures organized by the 'Forum of Free Enterprise' in the last quarter of 1958. These lectures were arranged with a view to acquainting the common man with the various aspects of the operation and philosophy of joint-stock companies.

There can, however, be a difference of opinion regarding the 'philosophy' of joint-stock enterprise which the Forum of Free Enterprise and most of the authors of these essays are trying to present. It is true that the joint-stock companies in India (about 30 thousand in number) are primarily responsible for the industrial and economic development of the country. We may also accept, though with a pinch of salt, the statement that they virtually legislate the standards of living of the people. The criticism against the private sector has been that this power of legislation has not always been used in the interests of the common man. It is against this background that the growth of the public sector will have to be accepted and judged. It is no use trying to equate the

cooperative principle with joint-stock economic activity by facile reference to joint-stock enterprise as 'one of the finest examples of co-operative endeavour.' If the joint-stock enterprise wishes to attain the dignity of co-operative effort it will have to accept the principle, referred to in one of the essays, of having 'the profit motive pre-conditioned by the ideal of service.' It would be easier for the private sector to convince the public regarding its *bona fides* if it can translate into action the hope expressed in one of the other essays: 'We should, therefore, try to achieve a state in which no workman is exploited but every worker gives his best efforts and gets his adequate reward in proportion to his efforts; a society in which there are no parasites and where every man is given full opportunity and in turn contributes his full share to the development of our country. Let us hope that everyone of us will work in such a way that we do not fail our country. Let us have the courage to add the hope that our country will not fail us.' (p. 76)

If our Free Enterprise fulfills this promise, then there is every reason to believe that in the present Indian set-up its courageous hope that the country will not fail it need not be belied.

D. A. DABHOLKAR

OUR REVIEWERS

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K. B. RAO reviewed Shudha Mazumdar's *Ramayana* in *Quest* 21.

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D. A. DABHOLKAR's review of S. Chandrashekhar's *China's Population* appears in *Quest* 24.

CORRESPONDENCE

THOUGHTS ON DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION

Dear Sir,

The rural landscape in India is changing fast. A 'revolution' is afoot. The pattern of rural government and administration is being transformed. The Report of the Balwantray Mehta Committee which is now the basis of rural organization in some nine States, has endorsed the view that within the district a well-organized democratic structure of administration should be created in which the village panchayats will be organically linked up with popular organizations at a higher level.

The plan of 'Democratic Decentralisation' based on this report, which was launched with the usual fanfare in Rajasthan on Gandhi Jayanti last year, rests on the assumption that there is a direct link between local self-government and democracy. Studies in Indian village life have undermined this view. But supporters of Democratic Decentralisation argue that local government is an instrument of political education; that in spite of—or through—mistakes, people will in the long run learn to govern themselves. It is difficult to see how anyone familiar with the sordid history of urban government in India, during the past three quarters of a century, can seriously put forward this argument.

The emphasis that is now put on the 'autonomous' village is largely due to the spell of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. Ambedkar's warning in the Constituent Assembly, against taking the Indian village—the den of superstition and reaction—as the basis of democracy, was disregarded. The triumph of Gandhism is enshrined in Article 40 of the Constitution. It is also argued that apart from the influence of Gandhi, India has had a long and rich tradition in local government. This is a myth perpetuated by nationalist historians determined to read the nation's past in the light of a golden sunset. When Ripon sought to revitalise local institutions in the eighties of the last century, the village panchayat had almost ceased to exist.

The notion that democracy and decentralisation are synonymous is widespread. This confusion is largely due to the semantic corruption for which

the Communists are primarily responsible. It must be borne in mind that decentralisation is not always a virtue, even as centralisation is not necessarily an evil. Indeed, Great Britain and other western democratic countries have witnessed in the post-war years a narrowing down of local autonomy as traditionally understood. It is also significant that the terms 'decentralisation' and 'participation' receive their unqualified support mainly from totalitarian countries.

Finally, there is one feature of Democratic Decentralisation which requires careful consideration. It will undoubtedly lead to the intrusion of party-politics. During the national struggle the Congress did not hesitate to use the organs of local government for consolidating its position. In doing this, the Congress has, perhaps, unconsciously set an example for others. Richard Park writes: 'A similar pattern seems to be emerging today in the tactics of contemporary political opposition groups. Both the Socialists and more particularly the Communists have been showing an uncommon interest in capturing local governmental positions of authority.' The experiment in Democratic Decentralisation might unintentionally help the process of Communist infiltration. Against this possibility, the country must guard itself, particularly at the present juncture of world politics.

We are living in an era in which the time factor is most important. It is futile to argue that democracy is a slow but sure process of social change. People in underdeveloped countries are constantly comparing the tempo of progress in democratic and in totalitarian systems. The world is witnessing a rivalry between democratic and totalitarian systems, in which the latter have several advantages. Science and technology pressed into the service of the totalitarian State is showing spectacular results. This fact in itself presents the greatest contemporary challenge to democracy. At such a time, India, critically and strategically placed in the Asian scene, cannot afford to fritter away her already limited resources in experiments of dubious value.

Yours etc
S. P. AIYER

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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DAVID McCUTCHION is a frequent contributor to *Quest*.

NISSIM EZEKIEL is one of the best-known poets of the group of Indian writers who are known by the weird name of 'Indo-Anglians'. His last book of verse *The Third* was published last year. His next *The Unfinished Man* is scheduled for appearance in March 1960.

JIBANANANDA DAS's deservedly famous poem 'Banalata Sen' has been translated before. This translation is by another important Indo-Anglian poet, P. Lal, who teaches English literature at a Calcutta college.

TO THUY YEN, poet, short story writer and critic, is a frequent contributor to literary periodicals in his country (Vietnam). He is 23.

K. RAGHAVENDRA RAO teaches politics at the Karnatak University, Dharwar. His poems have been published in India and abroad. He and P. Lal were co-editors of *Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry*.

MRS. PERIN C. MEHTA is principal of Jamshedpur Women's College.

PREMENDRA MITRA is one of the foremost writers of short stories in Bengal today and an eminent poet. Had he been equally successful as a film producer, Bengali literature would probably have been the poorer for it.

SEAN PURCELL, 'is 24, comes of a poor rural family in Southern Ireland. *The Distant Signal* is his first work of fiction to be published.'

BISHNU DEY, a distinguished Bengali poet and critic, is head of the English department, Calcutta Central College.

PILGO MODY is a practising Bombay architect who studied architecture at the University of California.

M. V. SASTRY, MLC (Andhra), was a former co-worker of M. N. Roy to whose *Independent India* he contributed regularly.

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What we want to find out from you is what sort of pesticides you need

(*said Tata*)—and how we can make our present products better

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So if we make it our business to ask a few

questions (*said Fison*), don't think us rude...

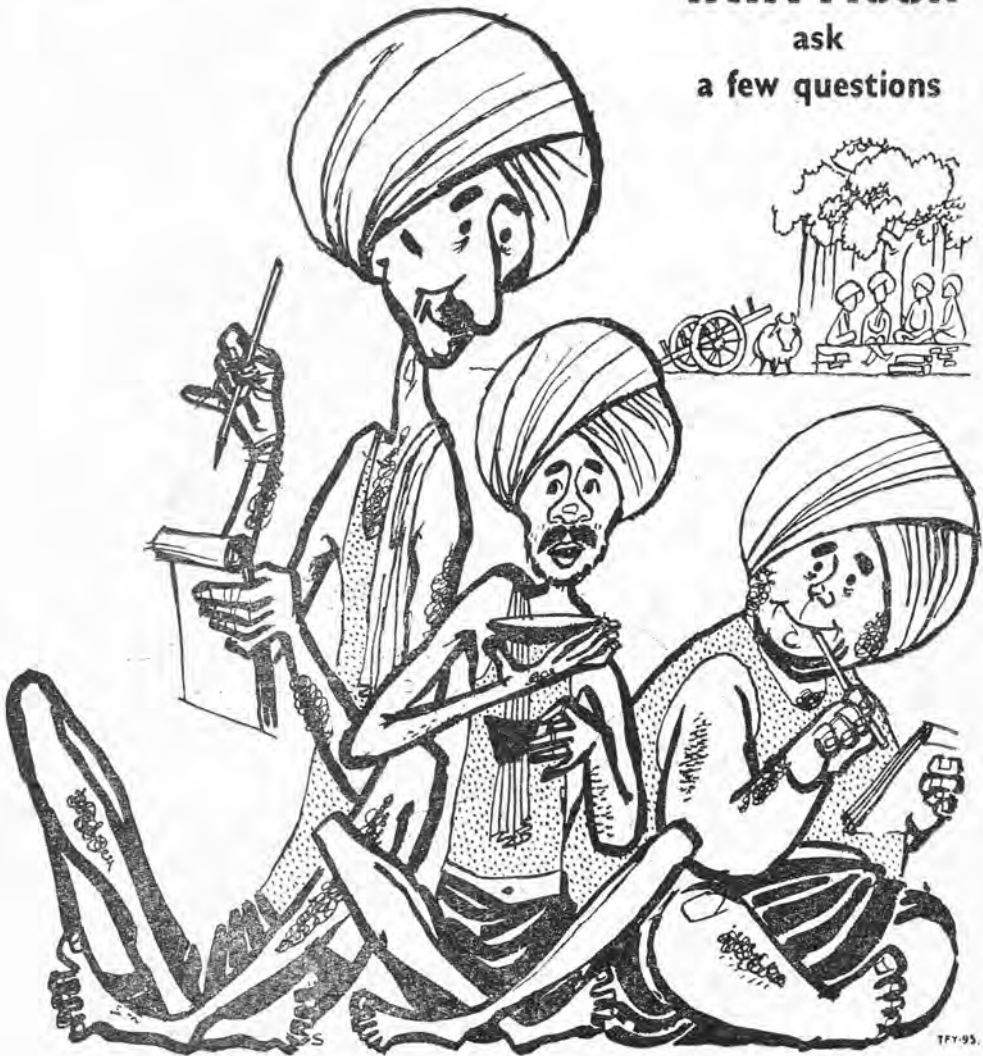
It's all in your own interest (*said Tata*).

And ours too, of course!

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TATA-FISON

ask
a few questions





*a
million
hands
are
not
enough!*

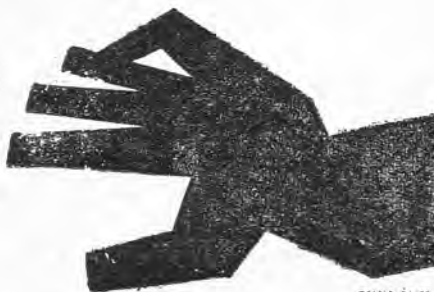


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when tomorrow comes...

For him a spade is not yet a spade.

The telegraph wires hum a strange tune, the
distant drone of a plane means faraway places, mystery.
And imitating father is a new kind of play.

When tomorrow comes, play will turn to work.

Life will take on a different purpose. A spade
will be a spade, and care will be part of living.

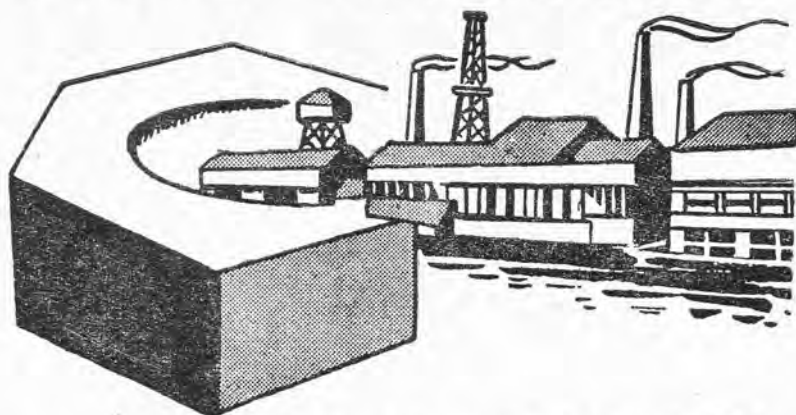
Today's striving and effort is for the world
he will grow into, a world that offers a little more—
a little less of the care, a little more of the joy.

Today, as in the past, our products help to make homes cleaner, healthier, happier. But today we are also working for . . . Tomorrow, when the evergrowing urge for better living will demand still greater efforts. And we shall be ready with wider service, new ideas, new products . . .

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Use of the Metric System was permitted in the COIR industry from October 1959. In the SUGAR industry the change-over started from November 1, 1959.

The pace will further quicken from April 1960 when the VANASPATI and PAINT industries 'go metric'.

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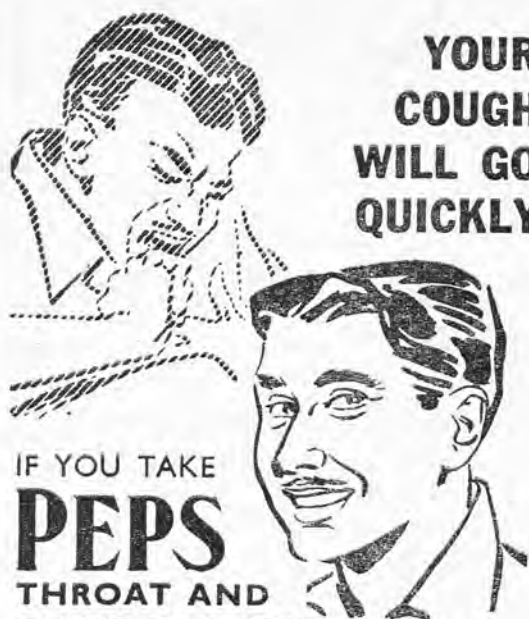
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*the beginning
of a
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FIFTY YEARS AGO, Sardar Pratap Singh Bhumra, now 87, was assembling cranes and electrical equipment as India's first steel works was taking shape in the wilderness of Chhotanagpur.

His son Jwala Singh joined the steel works his father helped to build. Drawing upon his mature technical skill, he suggested an improvement to soaking pit cranes which won him a reward from Management and appreciation from the American manufacturers.

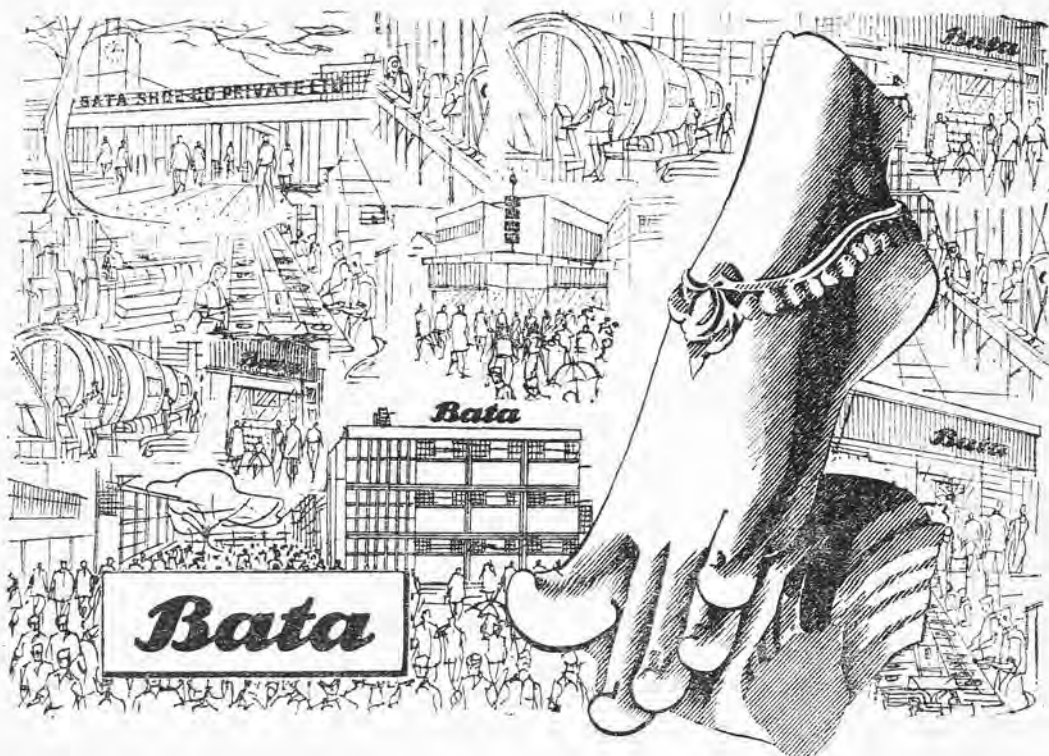
Hari Singh, Jwala Singh's son, imbibed the family tradition early in life. A young electrician in Tata Steel's Skelp Mill, he was recently sent to Japan to study advanced crane maintenance.

Thus, a tradition of skill is being laid at Jamshedpur, where industry is not merely a source of livelihood but a way of life.

JAMSHEDPUR
THE STEEL CITY

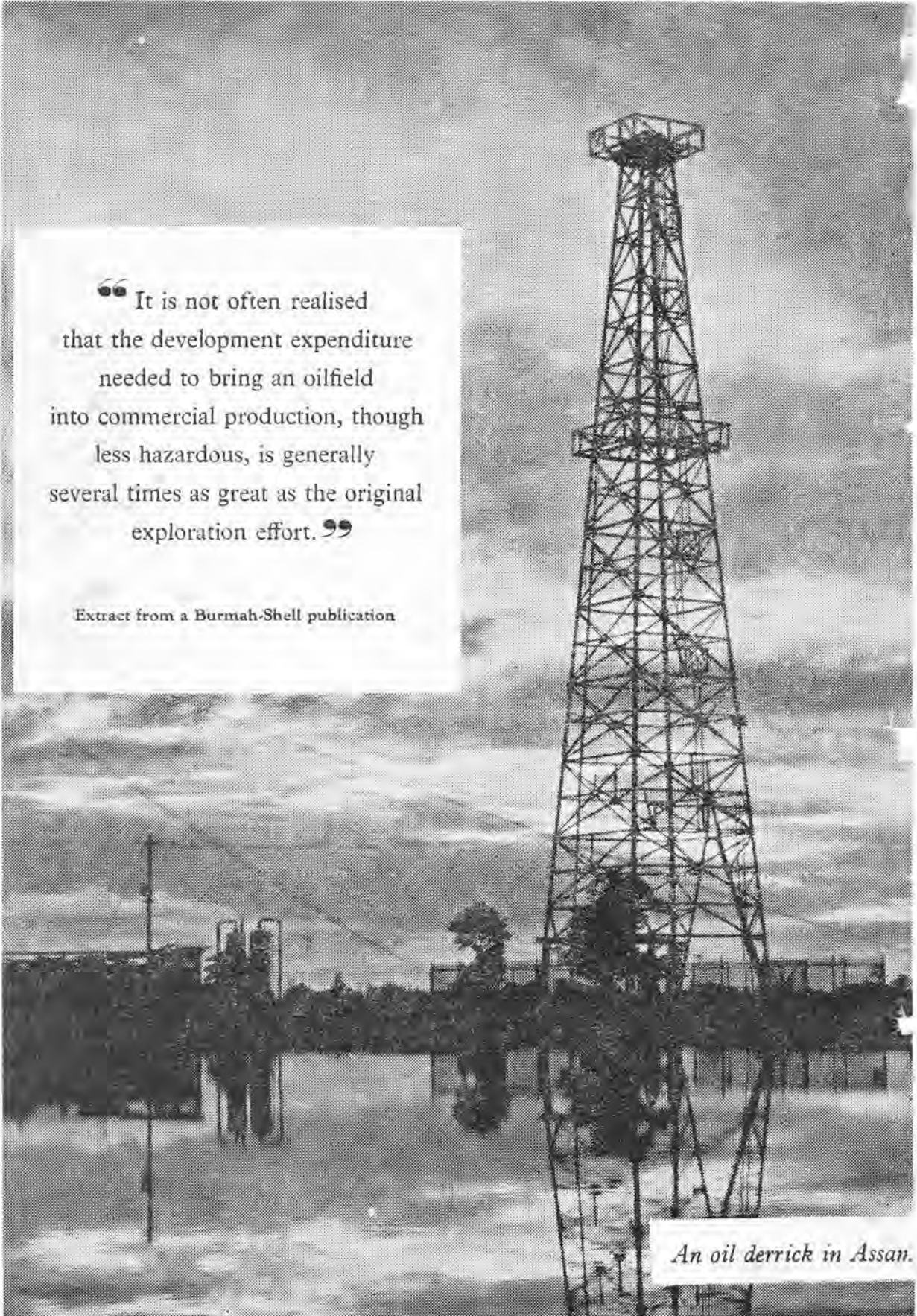
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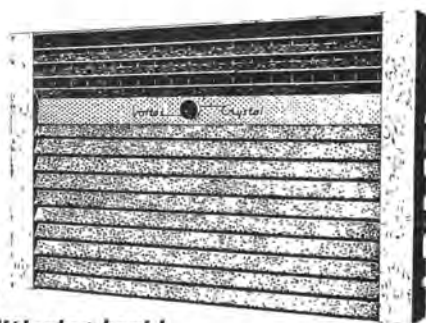
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