

An
Adventure
of
Ideas

QUEST

Editors: Abu Sayeed Ayyub, Amlan Datta

SUSHIL DEY

Affluence and Growth

GEORGES FRIEDMANN

Reassessment of Modern Societies

JYOTIRMOY DATTA

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RAYMOND ARON

De Gaulle's Algerian Policy

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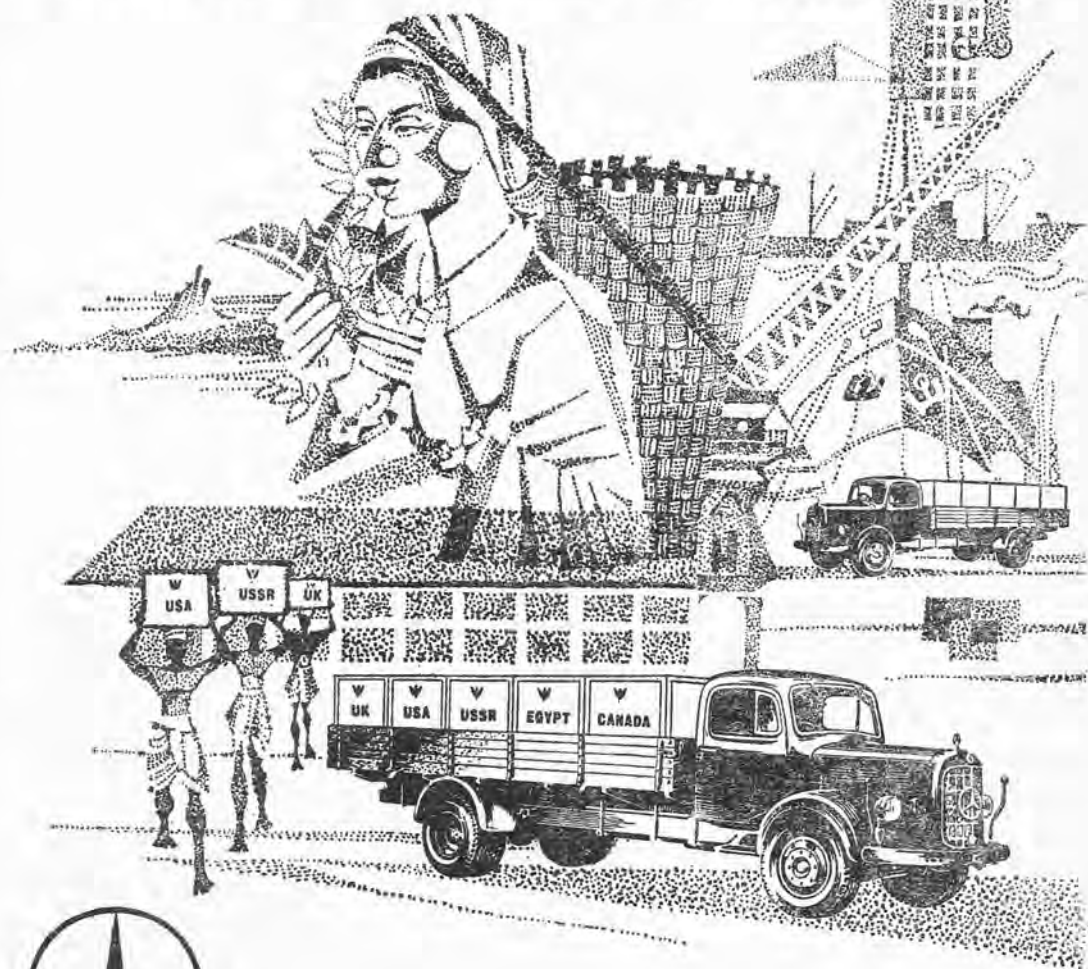


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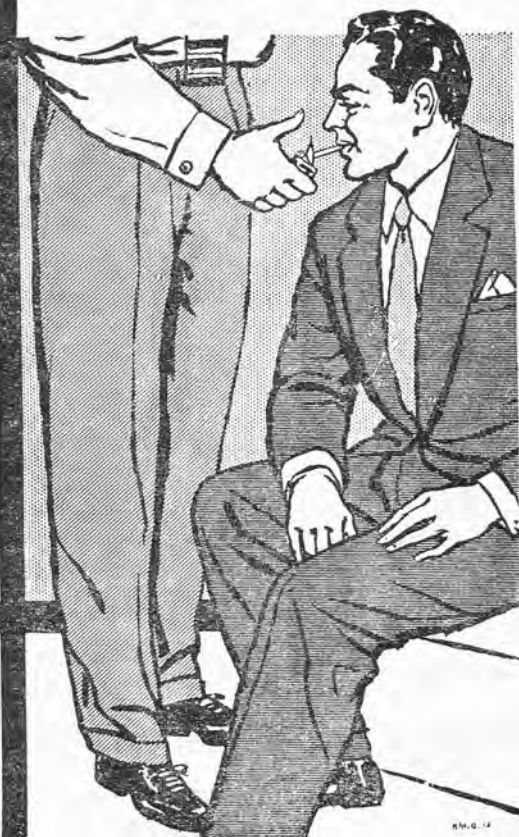
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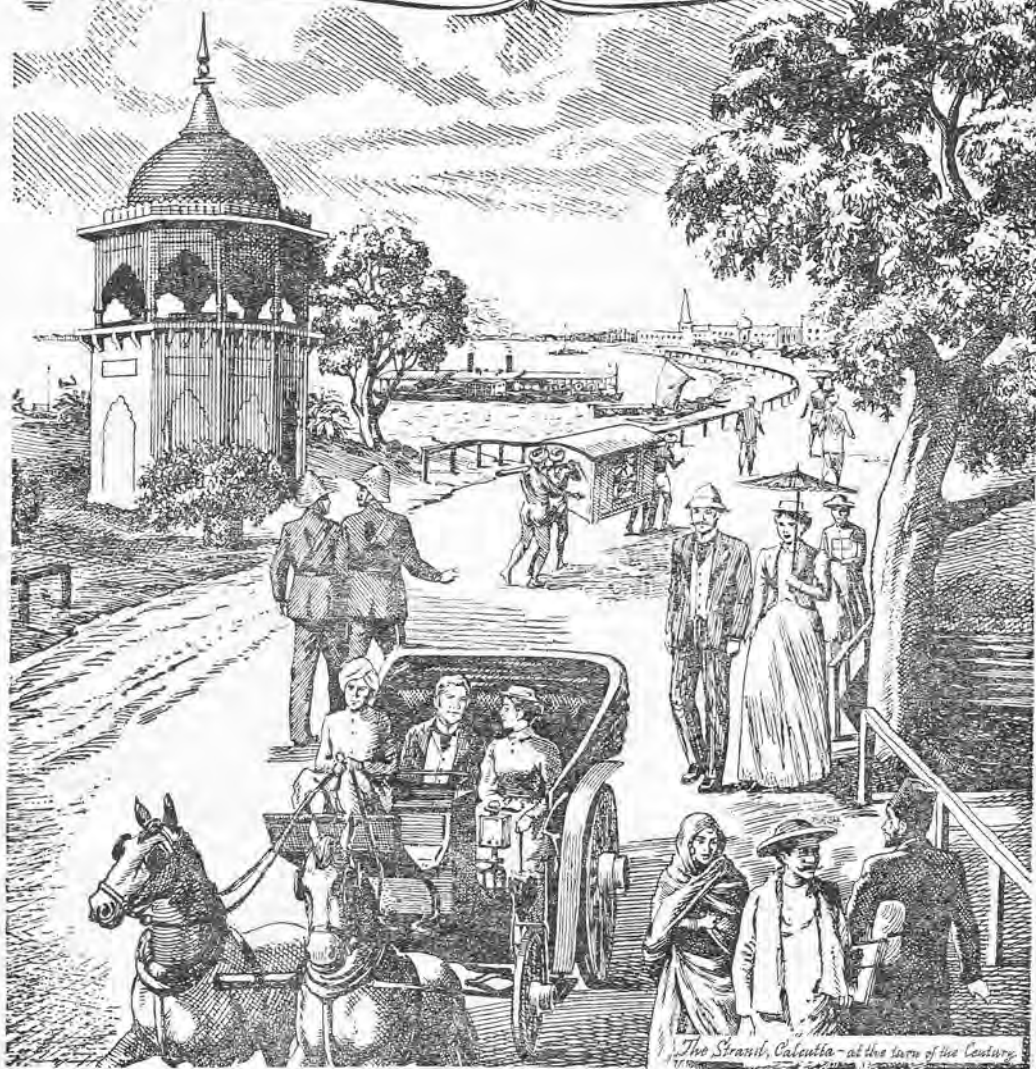


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A Quarterly of Inquiry, Criticism and Ideas

Edited by ABU SAYEED AYYUB *and* AMLAN DATTA

Advisory Editors : NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI *and* LAXMANSHASTRI JOSHI

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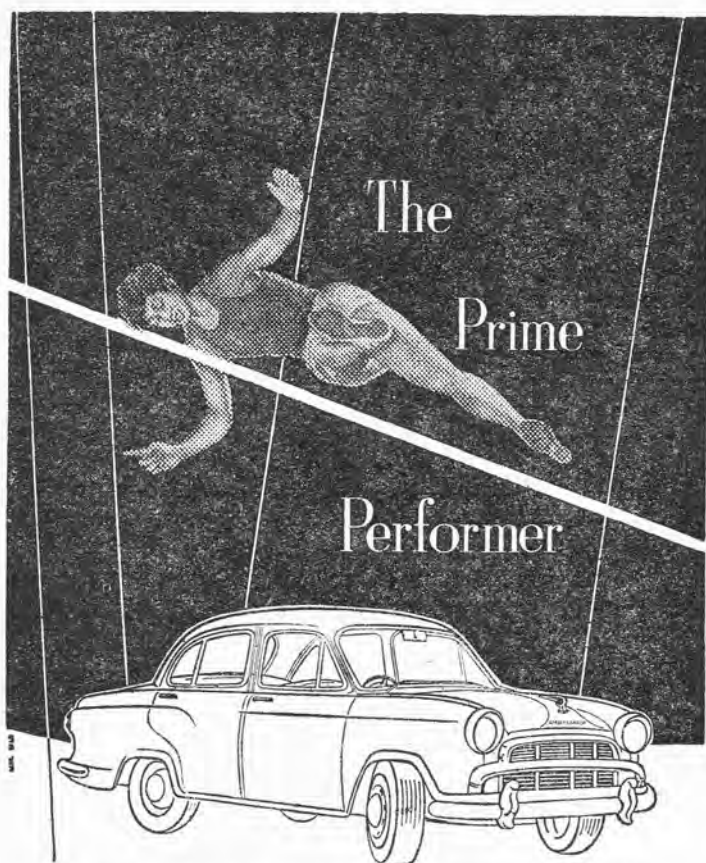
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Affluence and Growth

By SUSHIL DEY

THE developed part of the world reached a new upsurge of prosperity some time ago. There have been minor set-backs from time to time. These are no longer termed depressions, but recessions, which are not strong enough to reverse the general trend. There is also every confidence that, with good management, pockets of distress which continue to appear can be caught up in the rising tide. This overall picture is not true of North America alone. The post-war miracle has continued in West Germany. In England it is widely granted that they have never had it so good. The same upward trend can be observed in other advanced economies. This includes Russia, where the thaw after Stalin not only relaxed political rigours, but revealed significant improvements in consumption standards and promised more. An international agreement on even partial disarmament could touch off an immediate further expansion of staggering proportions.

There is a noteworthy feature of the current prosperity of modern states. It is not confined to isolated individuals or a favoured class. It is widespread and touches everybody. Admittedly, it does not touch everybody equally. Disparities in income may be enormous. But destitution has been largely banished. Social pressures build up for a rising minimum for all. At the same time, public policy, made wise by past experience, finds much of this pressure in accord with the postulates of economic advance on an even keel. There is a deliberate attempt to maintain a high level of demand through appropriate fiscal management. A decline in private enterprise, incomes and consumption is countered by an offer of capital and other incentives or

made good by straightforward public disbursements, distributing material benefits far and wide in cash and kind.

These techniques of control are, of course, called for only in economies dominated by production under private auspices. They can be dispensed with where the public authority has the monopoly of all or most of production and adjustments of different parts of the economy are automatically accomplished according to central direction. Socialism has no technical problem of distribution, inasmuch as there should be no unabsorbed output. The pattern of output conforms to allocations for different categories of use determined in advance by the central authority. This must necessarily override the choice of the final consumers, but that is another matter. Basically, that is a human and psychological issue rather than economic. The principal economic score against socialism has been its failure to exploit the productive potential with maximum effectiveness through denial of full play to the individual's incentive to work.

This score is most valid where the individual is the prime mover in production, and the judgment and heart he puts into his effort make a large difference to the quantity and quality of the output. This can be seen in peasant farming, which has been least susceptible to socialisation for this reason. This would also hold good in considerable measure in industrial production where it is carried out by competing units of small and medium size. It is worth recalling that even the propounders of scientific socialism recognised the progressive character of private production in its competitive phase. Undertakings organised

with the aid of modern technology present, however, a very different scene. These are closely related parts of gigantic complexes, deploying elaborate and intricate equipment, operated under a disciplined routine, in which the individual worker has a severely limited role to play. The chain of action is too far-flung and devious for his effective grasp, he is in no position to influence its direction or shape, and has no scope or competence to use his own discretion. Foresight, understanding, judgment and initiative are still needed to put the system into motion and maintain it in efficient function; but such exercises are necessarily restricted to a small managerial elite. The human factor is not ignored. In fact, it receives increasingly meticulous and scientific care, through vocational and technical training, assurance of fair wages, insurance and pensions systems, courses in personnel management, time and motion studies, provision of recreation and welfare arrangements and even recognition of collective bargaining and methods of sharing of profits. But the focus on the human function has shifted from that of originating specific action to serving as an agent in a vast and impersonal production process.

Thus, the individual initiative of the mass of people has ceased to count for the efficient operation of the apparatus of modern production. It is the adoption of this apparatus which is responsible for the current prosperity of the developed economies, whether they are free or managed. Those which advanced under private enterprise put together this apparatus in piecemeal fashion over a long period of erratic progress. They had the advantage of an early start and of the open frontiers for capital accumulation which existed in the past. Late-comers were under the dual pressure of catching up with the others, while depending mainly upon their internal resources for their advance. They took

recourse to central planning. It might be interesting to speculate whether the harshness with which economic reconstruction was accomplished in Russia could have been avoided if technical assistance and capital aid had been available from outside in as generous a measure as it is for many others today. The answer seems to be that the harshness could have been abated to some extent, but not significantly avoided, because the structural change called for to accommodate the new technology is only possible by a massive internal effort. The prospect is no different for the newly developing countries of today. Notwithstanding all the outside aid they can get, they cannot accelerate for the economic take-off of which they dream without stringent measures of central planning and control. Granted this aid, the degree of stringency will depend on two facts: first, how advanced is the base from which the start is made now; second, how soon is it planned to reach the front?

Having arrived at the front, can the controls be then relaxed? It would not appear to be so. By fortunate circumstance, the free economies attained their advance by an easier route in leisurely stages and in an exhilarating climate of open challenge to pioneering spirits. But the price of consolidation of each advance was to sacrifice a little of the pristine freedom of sturdy individualism. All modern economies are centrally managed, some more, some less. Whether achieved by private enterprise in the main or under central direction, once established, modern technology imposes its own internal logic by which it must be worked. All advanced economies, whether their ancestral record is capitalist or socialist, act under the common compulsions of the same technology. In the essentials of their operation and their impact upon the people, the contrast between the two economic systems has therefore lost much of its sharpness. The distinc-

tion between capitalism and socialism has now mainly a historical significance in respect of the methods by which economic advance was pursued in the past. It is commonly believed that they represent opposing ideologies which have continuing relevance for directing public policy. This belief must be questioned, since both capitalism and socialism seem to be headed for the same destination of progressive expansion of production and a rising standard of material attainment for the people. This is a commendable goal, but cannot be identified with the ultimate purpose of organised existence which an ideology is intended to define and towards which it is meant to inspire action. If capitalism and socialism have ceased to be meaningful models even for economic action today, it is permissible to suggest that they could never have served to express the larger and more abiding values of man's aspiration.

Scientific socialism has been professedly concerned with economic ends and claims its supreme virtue and historic destiny to be to lay down an institutional framework in which the expanding forces of production can have unfettered play. Its opponents have argued that they can do better in the same respect under their system, but they could do so without eclipse of man's economic freedom. In fact, the latter are able to fulfil their promise only by increasing encroachments on this freedom in the interests of the effective functioning of an expanding economy. Both sides are fighting for the same end and are coming to adopt the same overall strategy, one of them exultantly, the other reluctantly and haltingly. It is consequently no matter of surprise that they do not represent true alternatives of public policy to the newly independent countries striving for economic betterment. If anything, the preference of these countries is for the course which seems more straightforward and logical and promises speedier results. The expression of this pre-

ference is tempered in practice only by calculation of favours which may be expected from one or the other side.

If there is true possibility of a different course of human development, that still remains to be adequately propounded. There are many indications that such a plea would be timely, because the consequences of allowing technological progress to become the overriding determinant of the pattern and quality of human living has begun to cause disquiet and concern among the most prosperous nations. This is a significant portent. In the past, arguments against unrestricted pursuit of material expansion came mostly from the poor or from advocates of an ascetic life. They could be dismissed as making a virtue of necessity or proceeding from an individual or sectarian idiosyncrasy which had no application to normal behaviour. Perhaps the only notable exception was the philosophy of the good life preached and practised by the Athenians of classical Greece. This was not an ideal of privation or mortification, but of the fullest growth of the human personality by a harmonious development of all its appetites and faculties. But although the world has continued to retain every admiration for the works of intellect and craftsmanship of that period, the social organisation of the city state based on slavery was considered to have no relevance for the problems of later times. Perhaps this total rejection was unwise. Perhaps features of the Athenian pattern deserve to be salvaged for reinterpretation in contemporary terms to show the way to sanity in human growth.

Professor Galbraith's term of affluence has now become current to describe that state of material development which begins to produce serious toxic effects for man's continued growth. The trouble in the affluent society is no longer the adequate distribution of income. This is assumed to have been largely accomplished and the people in general have assurance of reason-

able satisfaction of their material needs. But the economy, having been geared for automatic acceleration, continues to pour out supplies in a swelling stream. Consumers begin to multiply their possessions for vulgar display. Thrift ceases to be a social virtue. The rapid turnover of durable goods is induced by trivial variations in successive models of the same product. Advertising activity inflates beyond all proportions and resorts to subliminal devices in order to capitalise primal cravings. Tastes are perverted, sensibilities blunted, discrimination lost. There is less and less scope to take pleasure in creative acts. Recreation is reduced to passive surrender to stimulation manufactured in the mass. There is a spreading sense of lack of a larger and liberating purpose in existence. This particularly affects the teen-agers and the young. The beatniks and the angry generation flaunt new postures in speech, dress and deportment to express the pure essence of destruction and negation of all values in life. The outbursts of teddy-boy groups and the stilyagi provide cruder outlets for the same attitude in their less sophisticated counterparts.

These trends have proved a disturbing challenge to the social conscience in the West, the roots of which lie deep back in the traditions of classical humanism. The voice of liberalism, drowned for a long time in the din of technological advance, whether from the Right or the Left, is beginning to make itself heard again. It is still faint and faltering because, in common with other prevalent currents of social analysis, it is overwhelmed by the present-day material miracle and unable to conceive of solutions outside the accepted premises of economic advance. Recommendations for corrective action have been of two kinds. Professor Galbraith lays stress on a re-direction of productive energy from commercial proliferation of goods to public investments in a number of relatively

neglected fields. Provision could then be made for larger services for improved education, health, transport, town planning and other social amenities and to strengthen the cultural infrastructure of libraries, museums, national parks and institutions of art, which could promote creative enjoyment by the people of their expanding leisure.

Obviously, large-scale central control of the economic process would be a necessary condition for implementing a programme of this kind. As has been pointed out, even democratic regimes are now resigned to progressive surrenders of the freedom of private enterprise, and while every further extension of the sphere of State action must be expected to meet with determined resistance, it will be from a dwindling minority and will not prove the most formidable hurdle in the way. The real difficulty is more fundamental. Mass acquiescence to central direction, whether under total or partial planning, has been demanded and rendered until now because of one final, unanswerable hard-headed argument. This is that measures of social control are indispensable for maintaining a modern economy at a consistently high level of production. In other words, the transcendent purpose of control has been always understood to be the increase of productive efficiency. All other arrangements of social life are expected to conform to the overriding requirements of technological advance. The liberal proposal implies a complete reversal of this stand. Controls are to be tightened, not in order to reach new peaks of high living, but to establish good living on the heights already attained. Such a view would be regarded as subversive of the basic principle of all established economic orders, and it is impossible to imagine that the majority of the people can be swung round to the support of such a course of action in any part of the developed world today.

It may be noted that the mechanics for

switching off the productive apparatus from continuing material accumulation are already installed in an economy which is fully planned. Yet there is no reason to think that a planned economy is intended to pursue any such course. On the contrary, the proclaimed determination of the world's most advanced socialist regime is to overtake and surpass the world's most advanced capitalist system by every standard of material achievement within as brief a period as possible. What is lacking is not the physical means or the knowledge of the technique, but the motive; and this is so, because neither the population at large nor the ruling elite in any country is conditioned to look upon any activity as productive unless it has one ultimate object and is measurable by one dependable yardstick, and that is increase in the purchasing power of the output in national and international exchange. Even health, education, leisure and other amenities are prized, not because these are desirable objectives in themselves, but for their contribution to raising the efficiency of the labour factor in production and because they are inescapable means of maintaining total outlay for stable operation of the economic machine. The liberal thesis begs the question by assuming that the validity of the reorientation it commends is already sufficiently clear for the policy to be put into practical effect. In the prevailing climate, the most effective argument might be that in the long run even the efficiency of the economic machine would be in danger if the men on whom that machine depends for its ultimate inspiration are dehumanised. Unfortunately, the liberals have become prisoners of their own wisecrack that in the long run they would be all dead, and hence that argument would cease to be of practical account.

A second way of escape from the glut of material output has received widespread attention in recent years. This way lies in

venturing outside the national frontiers of the advanced economies to develop the demand for investment and consumer goods in the poorer parts of the world. No other course could seem better suited to combine material advantage with enlightened benevolence. There is no doubt that the countries at the other extreme of the material scale are in danger of being dehumanized from an excess of want, just as some others are in the same danger from an excess of surfeit. Consequently, a more even international diffusion of wealth would be to everybody's benefit. This is not, however, a simple process of moving capital from one part of the world to another. The poorer countries have to build up their power to make effective use of the capital made available to them by structural and institutional changes in their internal regime, and the speed with which they can accomplish this is strictly limited. When they will have done so and will have launched their take-off to self-sustained economic growth, they will be set on their way to the same blight of affluence which has afflicted those who have already arrived. For mankind at large, in the tightly knit world of today, this would be no true escape from the toxins of unrestrained material pursuit. It could merely purchase a period of reprieve until the misfortune had spread to all corners of the globe.

The problem seems insoluble because it still remains to be stated in correct terms. It is not a question of efficient functioning of the economic machine and the answer cannot lie in a more rational organization of its related parts. The question is the determination of the purpose for which the machine is to be used. The answer must be sought outside the economic order itself. The issue is human, moral or ideological and not economic. The apparatus of production is itself the creation of human beings and has no other reason for its existence except to serve human ends. Yet it

has now grown to a vastness of size and complexity where it has assumed a majesty and autonomy of its own, expanding according to its own built-in accelerator of compound interest. Men are called upon to submit to the compulsions of this machine if they wish to regale themselves with the increasing material satisfactions which flow out of it. Their natural weakness, supported by the pervasive influence of an acquisitive society, makes sure of a mass response to this call. But in doing so, men have to deprive themselves of the freedom to cultivate and fulfil other needs of their nature. These needs become more significant as men grow. As one of the characteristics of this growth is the manifestation of greater differentiation and distinctiveness in people, the satisfaction of these needs becomes a matter of individual interest and pursuit. Through greater leisure and ampler facilities for education, the economic order can provide the material means to men for conducting these pursuits. But the active, creative exercise of the spirit which constitutes their essence is an entirely intimate individual responsibility. To strengthen this responsibility and assure an expanding scope for its exercise is the only way to permit the unrestricted growth of the human personality.

The advanced economies are deeply committed to their system and addicted to its rich material dividends. The people in general are getting accustomed in these countries to a life of passive enjoyment of manufactured pleasures rather than active cultivation of their innate powers and faculties. One cannot therefore expect a radical reversal of the current trend until the social deterioration spreads deep and wide enough to affect the progress of the economy itself. The newly developing countries are in a different situation. They have still to build up their edifice of modern technology and it is open to them to decide on the role they will assign to it in the

pattern of their future. Once again, the issue should be made very clear. The question is not whether or not to accept the achievements of modern science. It is to be clear about the terms on which these are to be adopted. Are they to be harnessed for liberating men for creative activities in pursuit of the many-sided growth of their personalities? Or are they to be installed for unrelenting multiplication of physical assets which must doom men's faculties to gradual atrophy and decadence?

It may be asked whether the choice is so simple; whether the acceptance of advanced equipment and processes and the relations of production, consumption and commerce which govern their operation must necessarily give rise to the social and psychological situation which it is desired to avoid. There should be little doubt about the answer. The economy has no moral significance in itself and is endowed with no malevolent purpose of its own. It is created by man and can be regulated for his benefit. It fails to be operated to this end now for historical and not logical reasons. In the earlier stages it was built up in separate pieces by the efforts of individuals and groups, each concerned with the efficient working of a particular piece. In time, there began to emerge a comprehension of the total complex made by the interrelation of the different parts. The possibility then arose of managing the economy as a whole. But while this prospect began to be dimly recognized and acted upon by men in power, the idea of working it for any object other than increase of material satisfactions was considered admissible only in the event of a war. At the same time, the economy became so large and so complicated so fast that its total comprehension and direction became a mystery denied to ordinary men. They were overwhelmed into submission to what struck them as massive, impersonal forces. The imputation of a social, moral or human purpose is still

regarded as an unwarranted intrusion in the field of economic planning unless it is demonstrably in furtherance of economic advance itself.

This situation has a number of lessons for those who are on the threshold of modernization. Wealth is a necessary means to accomplish well-being, but by itself it is not sufficient to achieve this end. Equally indispensable is the wisdom to direct and use wealth for this purpose, and every further step in material advance must be inspired by this steadfast purpose if men are to make sure that it does not lead them astray. The need for economic planning is now widely recognized. Its technique is beginning to be mastered. But economic planning eschews all concern with the ultimate purpose for which it is used. Its object is threefold: to install the apparatus of modern production as quickly as possible; to work it to its maximum capacity; and to keep working it and improving its efficiency and output with the minimum of friction. Experience should now teach that this is not enough. Economic planning has to be subsumed to planning for human growth by subordinating it to a moral purpose. This is a realization which comes simply and naturally in the earlier stages of economic development. It is then evident without any special effort that what men are exerting their energies to produce has but one final purpose, which is to serve the manifold needs of their nature in a balanced manner. It is only when the expansion of the economy begins to outstrip the growth of average comprehension that it becomes impossible to keep track of this purpose through the intricate correlations of its multiplying specialized parts. The way to avert this is to adjust the pace of economic development to men's grasp of its process and, in consequence of that grasp, to the increase of their capacity to use its fruits for their own all-round improvement.

This thought should give pause to the countries straining for their economic take-off. The temptation is to beg, borrow and buy the complete outfit of modernized production for transformation of the economy overnight. The desire arises from what is called the 'demonstration effect' of the material attainments of the advanced economies and the prestige and power which go with them. The temptation is now held in check only by the realization that the new technology cannot be worked until the necessary infrastructure, the technical skills and the operating capacity have been developed. There is, however, a deeper limitation, if moral benefits are to be assured at the same time as material gains. The condition that needs to be fulfilled is that the people retain their mastery over each stage of development, so that they can use it to stimulate their inner potential for growth. This is a matter of liberal and humanistic education, rather than training for particular technical vocations, demanding a grasp not of the mechanics of one segment of the operation but of the system as a whole and, beyond that, of its larger impact on social behaviour and attitudes. This is also a matter of the widest democratic participation in the organization of economic development, because only this direct involvement in the process of planning and management can give people the needed insight. Obviously, the spread of such education and the building up of this experience will be slow. The pace of material change must be adjusted to it. There are two processes of change involved, human and technical, and they are interacting, each giving a push forward to the other in their alternating advance. Every step ahead in techniques is a new jolt to the mind, which wakes up, appraises the change and then makes use of it. Having mastered it, the mind, in its turn, is ready to modify or improve on it by introducing a further innovation to move further for-

ward towards the goal it has in view. But if the progress in understanding and in the capacity to dominate the development is to be general, no step in advance must be so big that it is incomprehensible to large numbers, who merely submit to be carried along without exercising any responsible judgement. As the process continues, men's grasp becomes surer and keener and they are ready to move faster than before. With their growing maturity, they can be also expected to turn progressively to the cultivation of a freer, ampler and more intense life of imagination, emotion and intellect by devoting an increasing proportion of their leisure and wealth to this end. In due course, sooner, perhaps, than can be now imagined, they can then take all that the most advanced technology has to teach and more, yet not take it blindly, but with discrimination, adapting and adjusting it to suit the human ends which they will have learnt to keep steadily in view.

To hold to this course is not impossible for the newly developing countries. The physical factors which limit the speed of their economic advance have been previously noticed. They already tend to slow down advance. Consequently, at the earliest stages of economic planning, the level of their current technology is not too far ahead of the capacity of the people at large to understand and organize it for their own benefit. This may not be true of certain sections of urban industry and commerce which have already felt some impact of modernization. But these will comprise a small part of the economy. The overwhelming majority of people will be engaged in the simple practice of agriculture, which will still constitute to them a whole way of life rather than only a means of earning. Retarded by the massive backwardness of the rural areas, even the urban sector of the economy will have made but little progress. In these circumstances, it is feasible to establish a pattern of develop-

ment in which economic change is deliberately aimed at fostering the growth of the people and geared to the speed with which they can mature in their grasp and organizing capacity. It is in the sphere of rural development that this line of advance can be most easily discerned and worked out. Rural communities can be inspired to organize undertakings of mutual help for their common benefit in which improvement of agriculture and local crafts expands and strengthens the material base for improvement of other aspects of living. But once started, the process is not meant to be contained within the bounds of rural society. An increasing volume of supplies and services which are required to sustain it have to come from the more developed sectors of the economy. These are induced to adapt and adjust their pattern to conform to an expanding and diversifying rural demand. The gap between urban and rural economy and living is thus progressively narrowed until there is advance on a more even front of a more homogeneous people, who become progressively capable of giving a more purposive lead to their own growth.

The prospects of such a course of development depend upon two eventualities, neither of them impossible of fulfilment. The first of these is internal to the countries themselves. Its negative aspect is the capacity of the leaders to restrain their impulse to drag the people to precipitate economic advance before they are ready. Its positive feature is to initiate economic planning only on the basis of the widest democratic participation in its purpose and process. The second set of conditions is external. While refraining from hustling the new countries to premature take-offs, the advanced economies can stimulate their inner potential for growth by coming forward with the right kinds of assistance in the right measure. It is in the long-range

interest of the advanced countries themselves to do so, although for a somewhat different reason from what is usually supposed. As the regeneration of rural society can remove the blocks to overall progress in an underdeveloped country, so the initiation of the process of healthy growth at the poorest end of the scale can have beneficial repercussions on the affluent, which they could not have generated by their own efforts.

The last point calls for a little elaboration. Affluence can be of two types. The one of which we have present experience stultifies growth; but there can be another, which, by reason of being securely geared to the development of people's capacity to turn it to good use, can contribute to the balanced growth of human personalities. Each type of affluence gives rise to its own parti-

cular pattern of demand for goods and services. If the course of development in the new countries can be assisted to conform to the second type, the demand for imports into those countries will be more for the equipment and know-how required for truly creative activities than for the frills and gadgets of living for shallow pleasures, more for books and ballet, for instance, than for colour television and rock-n'-roll discs. This will still provide an expanding market for the increasing productivity of the advanced economies, but will induce a healthier change in the pattern of their present production. There is little prospect that this change will occur through an internal reorientation of the advanced economies themselves. It can, however, be induced by the impetus received from outside.

ELLEN ROY

QUEST has learnt with profound sorrow of the sad and sudden death of Mrs. Ellen Roy. It was a violent death that was inflicted upon her at her residence in Dehra Dun. The motive of the crime is still shrouded in mystery. It is difficult to say that the murder was the act of a mere burglar. It is possible that there was a political motive behind the heinous act.

Ellen Roy was an intimate and close collaborator of her famous husband, the late Mr. M. N. Roy. She played a prominent part along with him in the development of the Radical Humanist Movement. She was besides a thinker and writer in her own right. She was editing after her husband's death the weekly *Radical Humanist*, and was engaged at the time of her death in editing and arranging the publication of the unpublished writings of Mr. Roy. She was also the Secretary of the Indian Renaissance Institute.

Mrs. Roy was a valued friend of QUEST. She contributed to the journal from time to time. QUEST pays its respectful tributes to the memory of a person who had dedicated her life to the cause of freedom and higher human values.

The Re-assessment of Modern Societies

By GEORGES FRIEDMANN

A SERIES of changes occurring at different rates ever since the beginning of the industrial revolutions of modern times has resulted in the appearance in certain parts of the world of what we have agreed to call 'modern societies'.

An unprejudiced observer, in examining these transformations historically and in making a sociological analysis of the results to which they have led, will have to acknowledge that whatever the value of the interpretations made by the great system-building social thinkers of the 19th and 20th centuries—and they are far from obsolete—their ideas do not provide a comprehensive interpretation of the complex constellation of technological economic, social, psychological and cultural facts, which are characteristic of the industrialised modern societies of Europe and North America in the second half of the 20th century. For anyone who does not have automatic belief in the universal and timeless value of these ideas, a dogmatic commitment to the super-temporal value of these ideas, or a mystical devotion to prophetic, trans-human wisdom, these limitations are quite obvious.

They are to be noted, to cite only a few names, in the work of Saint-Simon, as well as in the work of Comte and of Durkheim. They are to be found as well in Simmel, Tönnies and Pareto, or even in the work of Marx and the theoretical writings of Lenin. Each of us can, according to our personal interests, find suggestive, and sometimes even extraordinarily revealing insights in one or another of these great systems of thought. Nonetheless, neither the law of the three stages, nor the anti-

thesis of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* nor the categories of 'elite', nor the determinative 'economic factor', nor the concepts of 'super-structure' and 'infra-structure', of the 'proletariat', and the 'class struggle', nor 'imperialism as the final stage of capitalism', will permit us to do justice to the fundamental facts which the contemporary social sciences, and above all sociology, economics, demography, social psychology and cultural anthropology, lay bare in the contemporary world.

This is the justification for a re-assessment of modern industrial societies, in the light of the still very fragmentary results of these disciplines. It is obvious that I am not going to lay claim in this brief paper to a complete and comprehensive re-assessment—it would be ridiculous to claim to be able to do so. All I wish to do here is to clarify in a necessarily simplified and, in accordance with my instructions, 'provocative' manner, some points which appear to me to be especially important. Other equally important points will certainly arise in the course of the discussion.

I

Technical Environment and Technical Civilization

It is indispensable, if we are to grasp the fundamental features of contemporary industrial societies and to re-assess them, to discuss the two fundamental concepts: technical environment and technical civilization.

In most Western European civilizations which preceded the age of the machine,

that is, those societies which existed until the end of the 18th century, there was an omnipresent *natural environment* which prevailed in the towns as well as in the countryside. The designation of this environment as a natural one is justified by the fact that the societies, past and present, of which we speak, utilised only natural energy for the production of the power, which moved objects through space or transformed their condition, (for example, the muscular power of men and animals, wind and water).

Since the end of the 18th century the rate of technical progress has become accelerated and the disjunction *vis-a-vis* the past has become very pronounced. The industrial revolutions of our time have replaced modes of power depending on natural energy by forms of power which derive from thermal, electrical and atomic energy. The magnitude of the transformations has given rise to new institutions, and to new forms of organisation of production. They have, in fact, produced a qualitatively new kind of civilization. The technical advances of the human race up to the end of the 18th century were, of course, numerous and showed a great richness and diversity of inventive imagination. Nonetheless, the extraordinary development of the mechanical exploitation of new forms of energy, and the upsurge of applied science, constitute a new stage in the development of man's environment; it leads to the technical civilization, which is now emerging.

An extraordinarily extensive and dense technological network characterizes the new environment in which man lives in industrialized society. The mechanical system of industrial society, that is, the total complex of machines and systems of production which fill workshops and offices, is only a part of the whole thing. The technological environment is also made up of the total constellation of productive, transport, communication, leisure and orga-

nisational facilities which have already transformed man's mode of life. It penetrates into every aspect of his existence and reaches into more and more spheres, such as the spheres of labour, and the household, and even into leisure time activity, in which it previously played no part. The individual human being is thus subjected to a host of opportunities and instigations which had been practically unknown in the past. The total complex of these techniques engenders, establishes and intensifies the set of situations, practices and mechanisms, which constitute the technical environment.

The technical environments of the most divergently organized societies have common features both in the functioning of institutions and in the behaviour of individuals. The complex aggregate of what Mauss called the 'facts of civilization' defines a civilization. Today, the ensemble of these 'civilisational facts' (for example, the scientific organization of work, the production line, the mass media, advertising and consumption orientations, mass tourism, leisure time activity, etc.), which are common to the very different industrial societies of the present age, form what we call here a technical civilization. There have been civilizations in the course of human history which have lived and died in complete isolation from the technological developments taking place in other contemporaneous civilizations. Henceforward, however, throughout the earth such isolation has become practically impossible. Technological civilization, with its extraordinary means of diffusion, is now almost entirely dominant throughout the world; it possesses the ascendancy in nearly every society.

The emergence of the technical environment, despite differences in scope, intensity and rate among various countries, is a world-wide phenomenon. It is not just a function of urbanization; one can see it in rural areas as well. It has emerged with especially powerful repercussions in under-

developed countries where, until recent years, human beings have lived in a fairly constant natural environment. In this environment, agriculture, burdened by unfavourable conditions of soils and climate, by the shortage of water, by traditional attitudes unfavourable to efficiency and by a vast demographic swell, has been unable to protect them from famine. The poverty of the countryside and phantasies of the miraculous benefits of industrialization have driven great numbers to the towns, to Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, Casablanca, Bombay and to many other great cities, which have been quite unable to absorb them. These crowded cities are surrounded by slums, like the *bidonvilles* and *gourbivilles* of North Africa, the Chilean *callampas*, the Brazilian *faveles*, the Indian *bustis*, the shanty towns of South Africa. In all of these, the tastes and styles of a technical civilization, as they are made known by mass communications, find a very speedy reception. Masses of uprooted human beings separated from the natural environment in which they grew up and not fully at home in the new technical environment of modern society, often have their first contact with our technical environment through the film, the wireless, the television and the sensational picture magazines—often on a very low level—while other elements of this environment, such as better housing, foodstuffs, dress and education, which are integral to it, remain unknown to them.

A re-assessment of modern societies must deal with a fundamental question: What does modern technical society make available to the ordinary man and woman (a) as a consumer and (b) as a producer?

II

Modern Society and the Consumer

We should begin with a distinction bet-

ween the consumption of material goods and the consumption of cultural goods.

a) The rational organization of work, the increased use of exact, reliable and speedy machinery, both in agriculture and in industry—all that we mean by industrialization—have greatly increased the volume of available consumer goods. The various social strata have all benefited from these developments, even though they have done so unequally. The ordinary member of a modern society benefits quantitatively and qualitatively, from technological progress; he has more and better housing, foodstuffs and clothing. Even in the working classes and the peasantry, many members of modern societies possess much of the modern machinery of comfort—automobiles, refrigerators, washing machines and the whole range of household equipment which makes life easier and more convenient. Of course, in these societies too, there still remain underdeveloped sectors, who might be called the 'underprivileged', the 'lumpen proletariat', the slums-dwellers, the insulted and injured ethnic minorities, but by and large, the balance is very definitely positive.

Even if we grant that there has been genuine progress in the functional quality of the objects available to the consumer, their aesthetic quality is not unambiguous. There is, however, an increased awareness of this problem (e.g. 'industrial design', Institutes of Industrial Aesthetics, campaigns on behalf of 'useful form' etc.). Genuine progress has been made in this sphere too.

b) The picture is rather more complicated and a bit less gratifying as a whole, when one examines the typical member of modern society as a consumer of cultural goods.

General education with State support has been widely extended. Elementary education above all and also secondary and higher education are, of course, very much

more widespread—although in Western societies there is still much room for improvement in the democratisation of the two latter. The access to these is much too restricted because of financial difficulties, or because children of the working class and the small peasant proprietors are reluctant to enter (as a result of the pressure of social traditions).

At this point we should stress the equivocal character of mass media in their relation to the technical environment. On the one hand, they are capable of providing for the spread of information, of arousing curiosity, of stimulating new interests, of improving education, expanding horizons, integrating the individual into his region, his country and his planet, developing his taste and his artistic and intellectual culture, as well as his musical appreciation. A good ballet performance on television might well have the lasting effect of awakening or strengthening in the mind of a spectator his interest in choreography or in the history of the dance. In certain regions of France the agricultural sociological enquiries show that peasant proprietors who had never left their village have been deeply moved and enriched by a film on the exploration of the upper Niger.

The mass media are, however, also capable of brutalising those who are exposed to them. When we consider the cultural consumer goods made available by the mass media of industrial societies, we should do so sympathetically and without any trace of condescension; we must accept the possibility of a new 'mass culture' quite different from the humanism inherited from graeco-Roman culture which is the frame of reference for most intellectuals. If we consider the actual ways in which a very great proportion of the population in our societies occupy their leisure time every day—that is, films and television broadcasts, variety shows on the wireless, popular periodicals, which, as their producers say, are

'adapted' to the masses and which in their turn, are 'attractive' to them—the anarchy in the commercial production of these goods is certainly a great danger, which we should consider further. Dictatorial regimes, (such as the Third Reich and Fascist Italy, etc.) or regimes with an official ideology and a single party, with their aspirations towards the total manipulation of the mind by the State, have shown that the centralized control of the mass media, abused by the state in order to impose doctrines and beliefs, representations and ideologies on the individual so as to mould him into a pre-fabricated form according to its own interests, is certainly no less dangerous. We should bear in mind in this connection that the mass media constitute an instrument of terrible manipulative powers capable of exercising great influence over the consumption of material goods and of cultural goods as well. The individual can be intellectually and emotionally manipulated so that he will accept a war, submit to a dictator, buy a new product, develop a new need. (The mass media can, with a predictable certainty, instigate new needs). On the eve of the Second World War in Detroit, technical experts in the commercial branches of General Motors and Ford told me that they were certain that they could re-condition (or condition) a growing number of Americans to change their car at least every two years. The facts have not subsequently contradicted them. I have also seen in both Negro and white children's schools the rapid growth of the need for a television set at home.

Another aspect of the consumption of material goods should be mentioned here; the young working man, once he has left his factory in Pittsburgh, Billancourt, Frankfurt or Milan, tends to see that same film or television performance and to hear the same shows on the wireless, the same songs, the same jazz records, to thumb the pages of the same periodicals, as the son

or daughter of his superior, of his engineer, of his supervisor and more generally as the 'bourgeois' offspring of the middle class. More and more often he is found during his paid holidays in the same organized holiday clubs on a sunny beach. The social relationships and the conflicts and tensions which are created by the work situation persist beyond the walls of the factory, the workshop and the office, but outside the place of work, exposure to the mass media dissolves 'proletarian culture', and 'class consciousness'. The working man, once he leaves the gate of his factory, becomes a consumer like millions of other members of industrial society. This is a definite fact, more and more weighty and more and more influential in shaping the future of our societies. I should add that during several recent journeys to Yugoslavia and beyond the Iron Curtain in the Soviet Union and Poland, I was able to observe how many of the young people there were influenced and even completely formed by this 'mass media consumer goods culture', which originated in the West. It is a universal property of contemporary technical civilization which is not affected by the structure of property relationships in the different modern societies.

III

Modern Society and the Producer

How are we to re-assess modern societies from the point of view of the producer when there are constant changes arising from technological development. Here too, the effects are not unequivocal.

1) It is commonplace but nonetheless pertinent to insist on the benefits which technological progress has brought to man as a producer. They are too often forgotten today by many intellectuals who are scarcely familiar with the realities of modern labour or who are nostalgic for an

idealised handicraft which constituted a sort of Golden Age of humanity. (In a great Parisian weekly one could recently read some absolutely astonishing statements by Jean Giono along these lines). Technological progress in industrialized societies has almost entirely eliminated the painful drudgery of heavy physical labour. It has enabled us to eliminate the labour of young children.

It has made places of work more salubrious, diminished the danger of accidents and of occupational diseases. There is still, of course, a very great deal to be done, but for anyone who knows even a little about the actual conditions of work in metal works, in textile works and even in the mines, it is sufficient to compare them with those which have been described by factory inspectors in the past century to know what progress has actually been made. We need do no more here than point out the very considerable diminution in the length of the hours of work (which in France were about 15 hours a day in the cotton industry for male and female workers and often for children, around 1834), and the great increase in the per capita income, and above all the increase in purchasing power of the various classes of manual workers.

Nonetheless, if the physical burden has been reduced by the progress of mechanisation, nervous fatigue caused by the rhythm of the machines, particularly by continuous or intermittent attention, and by responsibility for expensive equipment etc., has greatly increased. The intensity of work has greatly increased, although today many semi-skilled tasks in which the individual man is no more than a mouth-piece through which the machine expresses itself is being replaced by automation.

But taken all in all, the balance of modern society as far as work is concerned, is positive.

2) From other standpoints, however, the situation is much less positive. In a famous

paper the great German psychologist, Otto Lipmann, who subsequently became an exile from the Third Reich, emphasised more than thirty years ago the diminution of the 'role of the individual in production' and the suppression of creativity (*entseelung*) in the operations of the ordinary workmen in industrial society, with the multiplication of the labour force in industrial society,⁹ the 'scientific' organization of labour imposes repetitive and segregated tasks which require only a very short training period and which demand little initiative, technical intelligence or direct contact with the primary material (such as metal, wood, leather, textile fibres, etc). The tasks are standardised, interchangeable and not amenable to the intrusion of any personal or individual qualities. There is often no possibility of either a promotion in status or a sense of personal achievement or realisation, or for that matter, of intellectual and emotional attachment to a collectivity. The tasks which modern industrial society assigns to the individual workman do not permit his commitment, and still less the flowering, of the deeper dispositions of his personality.

Strict specialisation along the lines of highly subdivided tasks, rigorously delimited and continuously repeated, is found at the most diverse occupational levels and its psychological effects are unqualifiedly injurious. In Paris I met a specialist in bone surgery who, having established himself as a master of the technique of an operation on club feet, had just celebrated (with utter boredom) his 300th operation on this deformity.

The manipulation of the consumer by mass media is paralleled by the manipulation of producer by the psycho-technical

specialists who are unfortunately not always guided by moral scruples in the service of the private enterpriser or the State.

In modern societies, the path which leads towards the multiplication of repetitive and segregated tasks, runs parallel to a path which moves in the opposite direction, that is, in the direction of the creation of new highly skilled occupations. This latter tendency is constituted by the demand for supervisors and above all for the various specialists skilled in the repair and maintenance required by automation and particularly by electronic machines.

IV

The New Sisyphus

There is little ground for hope in the light of these considerations, that, in the coming decades, despite the progress of automation, modern societies will be able to make available to all their citizens occupational tasks which permit them to express their deeper personal dispositions and to derive real satisfaction from their work.

Even though we admit that the automation of production might one day eliminate from industry all those manual tasks which are akin to those which have characterised human labour for millenia, a very serious problem will still have to be faced. Indeed it has already begun to be visible. As Freud has emphasised, work is something more than a disciplined activity performed in the pursuit of practical ends; when it involves the personality (which is far from always being the case) it is an important factor in the development of the individual, helping him to establish his connection with reality and particularly with collectivities which range from the working team to the total society. Technical progress is thus capable of exercising a disequilibrating influence on the psychic economy of many individuals by depriving them of vital

⁹ In the United States to-day the number of industrial workers is clearly decreasing in relationship to the tertiary sector. The same will certainly happen soon in other advanced countries.

activities while at the same time it does not afford them either a substitute or even the possibility of the enrichment of personality in their leisure sphere.

But the picture is even more complicated. The prophets of automation who already see hours of work reduced to 30 and even 20 a week, are convinced that the worker, during the '4 Sundays' of the week, will devote himself to the pleasures of genuine culture, music, painting, the great authors of the past and present, and to travel to the great centres of art and culture. Our recent experience, however, shows that, for a great variety of reasons, in prosperous societies like the United States, Great Britain and France and in the impoverished societies like Poland and Jugoslavia, or in the partially under-developed countries like the Argentine, there are workers who devote their leisure time—to work. One result of the great reduction of the number of hours of work is the curious phenomenon of the 'double job'. In the modern societies which concern us particularly at this meeting, the workman who lives in an atmosphere of social 'models' which he seeks to emulate under the impact of constantly emerging new or reinforced needs, seeks to obtain more money in order to increase his comfort, to improve his domestic conveniences, his household etc. An enquiry conducted in 1958 in Akron (Ohio), a centre of the American rubber industry, has shown that about 17% of the workers, outside their regular factory job, have second fulltime jobs, and about 40% of them have a second part-time job and very often a tertiary or 'service' occupation e.g., in a hairdressing establishment or in an estate agent's. In France, 'black' work has increased to such an extent that during the winter of 1958-59 it called forth a protest from the Association of Skilled Artisans.

Now in this infernal cycle of production and consumption, the ordinary man in modern society, even with the benefits of

automation, is in danger of becoming a new Sisyphus, condemned to push uphill a mighty load which constantly falls back on him and which crushes his capacities for thought and culture, which exposes him during his free time—like a wild ass's skin, tattered and worn by constantly proliferating 'needs'—to the anarchic reign of the uninhibited mass media.

V

Final Observations

Every assessment of modern societies, which is no less than a judgement on the whole technical environment and its impact on the individual, demands from our side a strenuous effort which goes beyond the conventional standpoint of the humanistic intelligentsia. The re-assessment of modern societies must be undertaken in a spirit completely free of snobbery and of prejudiced disdain *vis-a-vis* the possibilities of a new type of culture which may be now in the process of formation.

Technical civilization—is it really a civilization—is one step in the promethean adventure which has been in preparation for millennia and into which our species has been thrust for the last 150 years with a growing intensity. One might say that the situation which we face is the adventure of the human race undertaken amidst and even against the products of its own genius.

It is characteristic of this adventure that incessant technical changes are taking place in societies which are more or less emancipated from tradition. Many North Americans who have lived for a long time in Western Europe say frankly that their fellow-Americans lack even today the true 'art of life' and the capacity to amuse themselves. There is some truth in this observation. It should not, however, be a

source of self-congratulation for Europeans, who are confronted with similar problems which they themselves have not yet resolved. Europeans, no more than Americans, have mastered the art of life in this new technical environment. If the former do a little bit better than the latter in this new context, it is thanks to older traditions of the pre-industrial society of the West rather than to any individual achievements of contemporary Europeans.

We need not emphasise these matters here, since other papers in this group are devoted to mass culture in modern society. We may conclude this effort at a comprehensive re-assessment by counselling a strictly objective attitude vis-a-vis the cultural and material concomitants of the consequences of technical progress. We must equally avoid melodramatic abuse and naïve and uncritical apologies. The mastery of these burgeoning techniques, which is a fundamental condition of their humanisation, requires that man, in the second half of the 20th Century, re-establish the equilibrium which has been broken by the extremely abrupt expansion of his powers. He can do so, not by some 'spiritual increment' in a Bergsonian sense, but by an increment of his awareness and his moral powers. Intellectuals who are steeped in the humanistic ideal or in the experimental attitude of the exact sciences must themselves be both the agents and the living examples of this heightened awareness and expansion of man's moral powers. It must be with this intention that the social sciences approach the social-psychological state of the techni-

cal environment, drawing it to the attention of young investigators and the growing public, and heightening among their contemporaries the awareness of the hidden and ever present dangers which play such a fundamental role in our society. Modern societies in which the number of persons engaged in the tertiary sector (commercial, government, administration and services of all sorts are increasing in proportion to the agricultural and industrial occupations, take the form of a dyptich. On one side, mechanised and automatised production, using more and more elaborate and ingenious machines, demands a smaller and smaller working week. On the other side, leisure, once we have passed through the pathological phase of the 'double job', will provide the centre of gravity and the basis of dignity and happiness for many men.

Can modern societies realise this harmonious conjunction, this magnificent possibility in a regime of liberty which is neither totalitarian nor a commercial anarchy permeated by the mass media? Will it be necessary for the State to practice a sort of enlightened despotism, that is a despotism guided by a deeper knowledge of the technical environment and its repercussions? In either case then the tremendous development of the exact sciences which brought them so much prestige will, I am personally convinced, have to be accompanied and controlled by a comparable progress of the social sciences and by their prudent and wise application to the problems of the individual and the groups to which he belongs.

On Caged Chaffinches and Polyglot Parrots

By JYOTIRMOY DATTA

BIRD SONG — Experiments are being made in various parts of the country to find if birds inherit or learn their music. The method is to keep the bird, generally a chaffinch, in isolation from the time it emerges out of its egg and to make a graph of its song. These isolated chaffinches have songs without the characteristic final flourish, but they improve when tape recordings of the natural song are played to them. Groups brought up in isolation evolve slightly different songs of their own. But no captive bird has the full range of sounds of the wild songster Dr. H. Kalmus, Reader in Biology at University College, who has taken a leading part in the experiments, thinks it quite possible that there are bird dialects varying from place to place, and that nightingales may sing more beautifully in Provence than elsewhere. . . .

THAT, I exclaimed as I hit upon this gem hidden in that ocean deep, Whittaker's Almanack, 1960, is true of our Indo-English writers too! Marooned in this sea of 360 million people, they are like isolated chaffinches—or, maybe, even nightingales. It is possible, I thought, these nightingales do not sing as well as those in Provence (Great Britain) but how can they help singing, and singing in their natural language? Granted, being isolated these songsters have a stiff task and, the opportunities for learning being limited, they cannot help being repetitive. But no nightingale can, nor should, sing like chaffinches, nor chaffinches like nightingales—though by changing places Cs could go one up in the social ladder of birds.

If English comes naturally to a person, no threat nor lure should be able to deter him from writing in English. There could be no dispute about it and yet, I was surprised to notice, there was. And, strangely, writers in English joined in the debate, writing long letters to editors of magazines in the fashion of the outraged taxpayers of Dum Dum or the members of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Otters.

The attempt to give reasons for their writing in English seemed strange to me

because I felt that a poet or a novelist did not choose a language; if anything, it was the language that chose him. One can argue only when from among many alternatives he selects one; then his judgement, if questioned, can be defended with reasons cogent or false. I had supposed that all who wrote in India did so because they had to; it might be a misfortune for them but it was unalterable. Therefore, I thought, while those who asked them to defend what was none of their doing were being unfair, they themselves were guilty of irreverence towards English. No language is too poor for those who are born to it because it is possible to write a masterpiece in whichever language that comes naturally to one. But the Indo-English writers seemed to say that it was not enough for English to be one's own language, one had also to prove that it could do this or that which served the cause of Indian unity and world culture before one could write in it. Poor English!

If any one asks—hybrid as our culture is, some do—why do I write in Bengali, all I can do is to stare at him. It seems to me the questioner has never written a line of verse or prose himself. My experience is that one does not first have a feeling or

idea waiting to be translated into whichever language is best suited to it, but the feeling or idea takes shape as the words arise, suddenly and unbidden, in one's mind, words that seem to have been dictated to one at the unlikeliest time and place. That is the genesis; of course there is scope for planning and contrivance later. But be the genesis in Bengali, or English, or Swahili or any other language, I fail to see how one could switch on later to another language. The inner voice dictates to me in Bengali and therefore I write in that language. I admit no possibility of choice. I do not tell my tormentor that Bengali is a more musical language than most; it may be, but that is not why I write in it. I do not tell him that as most Bengali words end in vowels, it is a language so rich in rhymes that I am saved from rhyming 'blood' with 'brood' and 'freezes' with 'Jesus'; I recognize that though rhymes are of the utmost importance, great poems have been written in rhyme-short English, and, anyway, Hawaiian has even more vowels than Bengali and yet I do not even dream of trying to write in Hawaiian. The market for Bengali books is bigger than for those in Oriya. True. But Chinese books should sell even better. Bengali is an international language spoken in two countries. Fact. But Hebrew is spoken throughout the world. Bengali is a more developed language than, say, Pustu? Bah! No language is more developed than another for writing good poems. There is absolutely no reason for writing in one language in preference to another except that the language of imagination is part of one's basic makeup; it precedes—not follows—choice. So, all that one can do is to accept one's fate and try to make the best of it silently and alone. There are many burning issues which need collective action, many bad choices (H-bomb, totalitarianism, the Beat cult) of which men must be warned, and good ones (free love, A.I.D., referendum for

Algeria) which people must be persuaded to accept, but the language one dreams in can hardly be the subject of controversy.

Surprised by the reaction of my fellow writers in English, I did a little bit of research. The results were startling. There were few Eurasians, very few, indeed, on the list of Indo-English writers. Some, just a few more than as many as one would call very few, though born of Indian parents, spoke no language but English. Many spoke English only just as well as one, or two, other Indian languages. But most knew an Indian language better than English. And, most of them being dexterous in the use of more than one language, HAD ACTUALLY AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE! They may have chosen wrongly; their judgement may have misled them; maybe they were not good at reasoning, but we must admire them for daring to plan their destiny, to choose what their reason told them was the language best fitted for their aims.

Bastilled by 360 Million

Before going into the reasons for their choice, I would like to pay tribute to their heroism. They chose the most terrible sort of exile; the walls of their Bastille were 360 million people; like the fires of Dante's hell, these 360 million gave them no feeling of warm comradeship but intensified their sense of isolation. If only they had chosen silence too, they would all have been ideal Joycean heroes. But they could not be silent because they yearned for companionship; their attempts to persuade others to join them, their attempts to prove how Indian they were, their little booklets—miniature masterpieces of the bookmaker's art—through which they communicated with one another over the heads of the separating millions, did show they were uncomfortable in their role of lonely heroes. But they were heroes all the same, and in

our India ruled by the unlovely god, Demos, who can repress his admiration for them!

But Demos is a god who extracts his tithe even from unbelievers. The Indo-English writer claims he is the most Indian of us all. How? Because, says he, since English is the language of no particular Indian group (what about the Eurasians?), it is equally close (equally distant?) to all the groups and hence is the only language which is capable of expressing the spirit of all of India. English is today, claims the Indo-English writer, what Sanskrit was centuries ago: the language of the cultured elite throughout India. While Tamil poetry of the eighth century gave expression only to the Tamil spirit, Sanskrit poetry has influenced all the later vernacular writers. A similar role could be played by English, a most necessary role since India never had a greater need of unity than now.

I hope the Indo-English writer had not looked up the dates before advancing such an argument else he would be guilty of suppressing damning facts. The glorious age of Sanskrit poetry was simultaneous with the existence of Sanskrit as a living language; when the period of glittering decadence set in, Sanskrit was being gradually replaced by the vernaculars; Kalidasa is not the first of the great Sanskrit poets but the last; in the millenium between the sixth and the sixteenth century—when Sanskrit at last became the language of only the elite—no great poem was written in Sanskrit. English is today what Sanskrit was during that arid millenium. With the rise of the vernaculars Indians became once again unilingualists—as were the contemporaries of Valmiki and Vyasa and the Upanishadic sages—and once again could create great literature which would not be mere treatises parodying the style of the ancients, mere mummies wrapped up in rules of grammar and rhetoric.

I cannot imagine writing in any language

which I do not hear from living lips. Bengali is spoken in its purity by people all around me, purity which each moment is becoming impure—that is, archaic,—and changed by the people and poets. It is an exciting experience for me to feel that through my efforts, and those of others, it is being continually changed. There is no use of my language which is too daring for me because what I write today need not be modelled on past usage but is likely to be a model for the future just because I have written thus. Nothing is too sacred for me to change; nothing too profane for me to use. It is my language, my very own, and no one can dispute my use of it.

Song of the Printed Page

English is not even the language of the educated few in India; it is used only to describe facts, figures and things, to give commands; not to suggest feelings but chart courses of action, not to explore new ideas but to communicate readymade ones. In schools and colleges children are taught dead formulas for the use of certain words in set situations, but rarely do the students hear English spoken. As for English as a spoken language, there is not one but many such lingos because on the lips of Tamils it sounds like Tamil and when spoken by a Bengali, like Bengali. The Indo-English poet, even if he speaks English as it is spoken by those whose language it is, is locked up within himself, and though the inner music may sound enchanting to him, what a struggle must he put up to shut off those barbaric sounds that ceaselessly bombard his eardrums! And it is not only hard on his nerves, it deprives his imagination of the stimulus of living speech. The characters in his fiction seem wooden because the dialogue is dull and literary; the music of his verse too obvious, the lilt brazen, because his ears have been trained to listen only to the printed page, or, at best, to

gramophone records of other poems. Novels feeding on past novels, poems springing from other poems—what a nightmare of sterility have our writers in English created for us!

'But our works have no relation to the language and literature of Great Britain,' protests the Indo-English writer. 'We do not wish to speak or write like Englishmen. Our language is new; only that it happens to share certain words with English but the way we use them is entirely our own. Ours is not an offshoot of English but as independent and autonomous as American literature. It is INDIAN literature. Our poems and novels should not be compared with English literary models but with the INDIAN reality, with the life of educated INDIANS living in towns, the all-INDIA reality which only an all-INDIA language can express.'

But is there any such thing as Indian English? Many examples of bad English, debased English, ungrammatical English, and baboo English come to mind but I have yet to come across a single specimen of Indian English. There is of course that magnificent example of baboo English, the autobiography of Onokool Chandra Mukherjee, and the stories by Mr. Hamdi Bey with their eccentricities of grammar. But the grammatical lapses of Onokool Chandra and Mr. Bey's delightful juggling with the tense are literary curiosities and have nothing in common with the way English is spoken or written in India; their style is as individual as Joyce's.

Maybe, I am misinterpreting the stand of the Indo-English writers. Though their language may not be distinctively Indian (it need not be), the content of their poems and novels may be so. If the sonnet can be used by a Bengali poet to express sentiments unknown to Petrarch, why should English be incapable of expressing Indian themes? Of course English can, Bengali too is capable of expressing feelings and ideas

not yet grappled by its poets and novelists. But the question is not whether an English poet living in India could describe our tropical landscape and write good English poems about Indian problems, but whether the Indian who speaks a different language can and should do so.

The answer to this question given by the Indo-English writer seems so perverse to me that I am afraid if I give it in my own words, people will suspect me of having invented it. I have not. One who is perhaps the most talented Indo-English poet, P. Lal of *The Parrot's Death*, declares in Writers Workshop No. 2: 'Without trying to be facetious, I should like to suggest that only in English can real Indian poetry be written; any other poetry is likely to be Bengali slanted or Gujrati biassed, and so on. Only the Indian writing in English can hope to attain the Indian flavour which is a cosmopolitan flavour. I cannot imagine a Punjabi writing Bengali poetry, or a Maharashtrian writing Hindi poetry. But there are Tamilians, Bengalis, Punjabis, Gujratis, Jews, Goans, Sikkimese—all Indians—writing in English on Indian themes for Indian readers.'

Fact. There are many such people. It is also a fact that during the nineteenth century many Bengalis wrote in Hindi on Hindi themes for Hindi readers. These facts have never been disputed. The dispute is over whether those Bengalis were able to use Hindi creatively and whether the 'Tamilians... Punjabis... Jews... Sikkimese' who write in English have created good poems and novels. Mr. Lal cannot imagine 'a Punjabi writing Bengali poetry'. I can conceive of such a miracle happening. I would not say that a Punjabi can never never compose good poems in English but the chances seem to me negligibly small. They should appear infinitesimal to Mr. Lal who cannot even imagine 'a Punjabi writing Bengali poetry', but I am not sure whether he would be willing to apply

to English the laws he has framed for mere Indian languages.

But be the chances one in a billion, or none at all, why should a Bengali or a Tamil write in English instead of his own language? 'Since Bengali literature is Bengali-slanted,' answers the IEW*, 'and Gujrati literature Gujrati-biassed, we cannot write in these "regional" languages. We want to write not about the limited reality that is Bengal or Gujrati but India—which is the bigger reality.' One cannot but sympathise with this desire to bite off as large a slice of reality as possible. That is what philosophers have been, and physicists are, trying to do, but such a desire is bound to remain unfulfilled in a poet because in literature the only way to express the universal is through the particular and the universe through the tiniest possible grain of sand. A poet writes to express neither the Bengali, nor the Indian, nor the Afro-Asian, nor the world, mind. If he wishes to realize any flavour, it is the flavour of himself. If he tries to express anything, it is himself. If he wants to be true to anybody, it is himself. If he tries to write about the BENGALI, or THE INDIAN, or about MAN, he would be true to no man. These are so obvious as to be platitudes and yet I am forced to jingle these old (but gold) coins because the IEW does not seem to realize how true they are. The IEW's attempts to snatch the largest possible slice of experience is most likely to end in no genuine experience at all. And, anyway, if the IEW is really after universality, why must he stop at the borders of India? Why not Afro-Asia? Or Afro-Eurasia? The world? Or even the solar sys-

tem for how can we forget the poor Martians?

IEW and Universality

And what is this all-India 'flavour' that the IEW is after? If someone asked me what was Europeanism, I would reply that though Europeanism was difficult to define, it was a real quality. There is a group difference—what exactly I cannot say—between Chinese, Japanese, Persian and Arabic poetry and poems in Latin, English German, French and Russian. The 'European' quality is not the monopoly of Latin literature; if at all, it is more marked in, say, modern German poems than in medieval Latin lyrics. German poetry has a German-bias, but I have yet to hear—even Ph.D.s have not made this accusation—that its Germanic qualities take away from its Europeanism. If Goethe, with his 'world-hunger' and universal mind, had acted according to the IEW's beliefs, he would have written in French, the then pan-European language which he knew at least as well as our IEWs know English, and robbed his poetry not only of its Teutonic qualities, not only of its poetic qualities, but also of its Hellenic and European 'bias'. No one was a better European because no one was a truer German. Similarly, if Pushkin had written in French, or if Turgenev also had—whom the Russian nationalists damned as a westerner,—they would not have been better Europeans but only no artists at all—as Pushkin's school-boy effusions in French prove. And which of the IEWs, I ask, which of the IEWs are more Indian than Madhusudan Datta (who wrote his first poem in English) or a better citizen of the world than Rabindranath Tagore?

The assumption that because English is spoken by a number of people in many Indian towns and all the Indian cities, it must be more representative of India than

* The Indo-English writer must forgive me if, for brevity's sake, I call him IEW from now on. IEW is inelegant, I agree, but so is 'Indo-English Writer', or 'Indo-Asian Writer', or 'Anglo-Indian Writer'.

the 'regional' languages is quite as false as it would be if someone claimed that Hebrew, which after the Dreyfus affair became the international Jewish language, is more of a 'world' language than French because it is spoken in all major commercial centres of the world. Hebrew literature, if it exists, is only the literature of the Hebrew-speaking people. The literature written by English-speaking Indians will be representative of only such people and—if it is good—indirectly also of India and the world. Many Tamils, Punjabis, Jews, etc., would, of course, be able to read IE literature, but how could the number or the geographic distribution of its readers affect its own nature? Many Britons and Germans read Valery in the original; all that this fact could indicate would be that these people might have been changed by having read Valery, but the poems themselves remain unalterable and immortal and are only as representative of the all-European reality as, say, the poems of Rilke.

Underdeveloped Languages

What other reason could there be for an Indian to write in English? One reason was suggested to me at a Writers Workshop meeting which I remember with both sorrow and pleasure. Pleasure, because the host was gracious, the beautifully furnished room a delight to (and the soft light soothing to) the eye and the Workshop members not only well-informed and intelligent but such eager defenders of their cause and so sure of conquering the world that I felt grey and withered in face of their innocence. But why sorrow? Sorrow, because these very likeable persons were contemptuous of most of the Indian languages. One of them remarked that it was all right for me, a Bengali, to say that an Indian need not write in English but most Indian languages were not as developed as mine

was, and, therefore, those who spoke the less developed languages were forced to write in English. Can anyone blame me for being shocked?

If there is one lesson to be drawn from the history of literature it is that the quality of writing does not depend upon the 'development' of the language. Rather, the early masters have an advantage over those who follow them. If the worth of works of imagination increased with the growth of a language then Homer would have been a lesser poet than Eurypides, Dante than Unagaretti, Shakespeare than Eliot, Goethe than George and Pushkin than Akhmatova. Greatness comes easier in the infancy of a people and its language. What the Indo-English poet thinks is a disadvantage is the best bit of luck that one could wish for. If only the Anglo-Hindi, or the Anglo-Punjabi, poet realized what a tremendous opportunity he was throwing away! If, instead of staking his all on an impossible 1-to-1,000,000,000 gamble, he had accepted what a kind fate had thrust upon him, he could have been what Dante was to Italian, Pushkin to Russian and Madhusudan to Bengali. It would be a great day for themselves, for their own 'underdeveloped' languages and for English when the IEWs (who, it is obvious, are very talented people) returned to the languages they have treated so shabbily so far. Good for themselves because instead of being the darlings of their own insignificant coteries, lioncels of little literary cells, they could be true poets, initially read only in limited regions of India but later—it is not impossible—translated into all the languages of the world. Good for their own languages because no language can develop unless it has its Dante. And good for English because... well, the reasons are obvious.

There is one overwhelming reason for writing in English I have avoided mentioning so far. That supreme reason is—money. I have heard it said that an IEW got \$2500

for a single novel in English. An even luckier IEW got almost as much from *The New Yorker* for writing 10,000 words of filth about India, and these 10,000 words being only a twentieth part of a book he is supposed to have written. Imagine how much he will get for his entire garbage bin! To one like me who is paid no more than 25 rupees (not dollars) even if he manages to get into *Desh*—and that is princely for a new writer—the amounts that the IEWs get are astronomical. Never before did so many tourists visit India, never before were so many Western glasses focussed on this 'key-area in the battle for bread with ballots', never before did the West ask for so little in return for so much. Therefore, Indian 'material' fetches fabulous prices in the U.S. book 'market'. The right to make money through legal means is guaranteed in our Constitution, and I do not see why it should be denied to writers. Least of all can it be denied to the IEW who regards language as merely a tool—and a tool is merely a tool, valuable not for what it is but what it does.

But are there not just a few among all the IEWs who write not chiefly for money, nor recognition abroad, but because they must? Of course there are. There must be some, just a few more than as few as one would call very few, who cannot but write in English. They are the caged chaffinches

who have all my sympathy in their stiff task. There is of course no way to tell the chaffinches from the parrots because the only test that one could propose is such that its results could never be known. But the IEWs themselves could carry it out in their imagination. It would convince no one except themselves, but, then, the true poet has no need to prove to others why he must write in the language he writes and in that alone. The test is to imagine oneself marooned on an island far off the sea lanes. There is no hope of rescue. The poet broods gloomily for he lacks a pencil to put down the lines that rise in his mind. He totters down to the beach and writes on the sand. He does not care if the tide washes it away. He knows that even if he wrote on parchment no human eyes would be able to read his poems. Fame? The poet shrugs his shoulders as the thought—too, too familiar to him in the past—flits across his mind. Money? A faint smile crosses the face of the poet who is of course an introvert and therefore cannot climb coconut trees. 'Could money buy me those nuts in the trees, quite as far, as unattainably far, from me as the moon?' He still writes. He writes because there is a strange disturbance in him that cannot be got rid of except by writing. And whichever language he writes then is the true language of his soul.

Presumption

An Analysis of the Failure of de Gaulle's Algerian Policy

By RAYMOND ARON

ALL the French factions, in metropolitan France and in Algeria, have rallied to General de Gaulle, but not one of them has abandoned its convictions, its prejudices or its myths. Soustelle, Amrouche, Mauriac, Bourguiba, the King of Morocco, M. de Sèrigny, the Generals in Paris and the Colonels in Algiers are all looking to de Gaulle, relying on him to keep Algeria French or to grant it independence, to treat Tunisia as a friend or as an enemy, to reactivate democracy or to liquidate it. Only a nation of sceptics can have such faith in miracles... The question is, whether the previous policy has a chance of success if pursued by General de Gaulle; whether it is possible for the new government to adopt a policy by means of which the leaders of the Fourth Republic, too, could have restored peace; or whether peace with honour can be secured for everyone by an intermediate policy—which weak governments could conceive but were incapable of resolutely pursuing — if it is taken up by a strong government?

I wrote the above in June 1958¹, just after General de Gaulle's return to power. Two years have elapsed since the press conference of September 1958 and the offer of 'peace between the brave.' Confusion has been dispelled. Soustelle is in opposition, M. de Sèrigny is awaiting trial, Colonels and Generals have been transferred. But peace has not been restored. Which of the three policies I regarded as possible — the continuance of pacification, negotiation with the F. L. N., or the search for an inter-

mediate policy — did General de Gaulle choose, and with what result?

The old policy, if pursued by the new government, would not be successful — such was my forecast, a sufficiently obvious one. I doubt, however, whether an assertion of French determination will be enough to shatter the determination of the Algerian nationalists. It is obvious that the F. L. N. is not going to capitulate — in other words, that it will not consent to lay down its arms, to take part in elections organized by the French army, and to renounce its dual claim of independence for Algeria and recognition of itself as representative. Events have confirmed that it is practically impossible to reach a solution by force of arms. It is true that there has been progress on the strictly military level; I never denied that there might be. But, I added, 'the goal would recede even as its deluded pursuers believed themselves to be drawing closer to it. For as rebellion grew weaker within the Algerian frontiers, free Algeria would grow steadily stronger outside those frontiers. Free Algeria would become more extremist as it lost its bases in the *maquis*. Once all prospect of an understanding with the French had vanished, Algeria would stake all its hopes on Cairo, or even on the Communist bloc. And Tunisia would inevitably be drawn in its wake.' That is precisely what has happened. The F. L. N. is weakening in Algeria, and is preparing — or at least some of its leaders are preparing — to play the Chinese card.

The second policy was that of negotiation with the F. L. N., either direct or

¹ *L'Algérie et la République*, Plon, Paris, 1958

through Tunis or Rabat. I maintained that there were two conditions essential to the success of that policy — 'in Paris a government able to overcome the resistance which may be expected from Algiers, and on the other side men able to accept a compromise, the establishment of the Algerian State by gradual degrees, the continued presence of the French army at least for a considerable period.' At the time I doubted whether this was a practicable policy, because 'General de Gaulle is not necessarily the prisoner of those who have brought him to power. But he cannot do exactly the opposite of what his supporters want... Even on the assumption that General de Gaulle can recover unquestioned authority over the army in Algeria, I doubt whether he can choose the course of negotiation with the F.L.N.' Today I should be less positive about one of these points; General de Gaulle *could* perhaps negotiate with the F.L.N. if he were firmly determined to do so. But as we shall see presently, he is not.

All hopes, I went on to say, must be concentrated on the third possibility: 'Compromise has been impossible up to now, because the F.L.N. hoped to tire out French resistance and the leaders in Paris had their hands tied. A compromise would spare both sides from capitulation. Is General de Gaulle capable of devising and imposing a compromise, and will the F.L.N. be induced to accept it?' What would be the nature of such a compromise? I felt certain that General de Gaulle's dream would be to convert the F.L.N. to peaceful activity in the new Algeria, to transform its leaders and soldiers into a group of parliamentary representatives and an electorate. 'If the elections were really free, if the F.L.N. co-operated in them, if Ben Bella and Krim Belkacem were elected, the problem would be almost solved. General de Gaulle would have achieved his wish to embark on direct discussions with all the Algerians, including the nationalists.' Unfortunately it was to be anticipated that 'the F.L.N. would boycott

any election that would not bring forward authoritative representatives.'

It was evident from the very inception of the Gaullist Republic that the President of the Republic regarded integration as 'against nature'. It is not possible to turn millions of Moslems into Frenchmen in the middle of the twentieth century, when all the African peoples are turning with one accord against the colonial system. The idea of integration once dismissed, the only alternative to outright independence was some kind of autonomy and association, by which the Algerians would enjoy the privileges of fully-fledged citizens while running their own administration. The Algerian Algeria of 1960 is a direct deduction from the hints given as early as 1958. Neither integration nor renunciation, neither Soustelle nor Mendès-France; like M. Guy Mollet and the Fourth Republic, General de Gaulle chose the middle way. He recognized the individuality of Algeria, he did not deny the strength of Algerian nationalism, he wanted to discuss matters with the nationalists. But he claimed the sole right to dictate the conditions for a discussion—as though the F.L.N. could lay down their arms on the strength of mere promises.

'Will the maximum that General de Gaulle is able to propose be as much as the minimum of what the Algerian nationalists demand? What will his maximum amount to—an administration elected by the single-list system, which would become an Algerian administration in the event of free elections? A Round Table at which all the Moslem and French groups in Algeria would be represented? Or secret talks with the F.L.N. about the means of arriving at a settlement? I refuse to give way to despair, but it must be admitted that the problem is incredibly difficult.' The concessions offered by General de Gaulle fell short of the F.L.N. demands, even after those demands had been reduced. Grounds for hope are even slighter now than they were then. But let us try to understand what has happened in the last two years,

and why a perfectly clear policy has so long been regarded as mysterious.

General de Gaulle's policy is obviously conditioned by two refusals — the refusal of integration and the refusal to recognize the F.L.N. as representing the Algerian people. M. Guy Mollet, too, had set up these two boundaries between which French policy must thread its way. The three-point programme of cease-fire, elections and negotiation was the logical consequence of the two principles thus enunciated: the future status of Algeria was not to be discussed with 'the external organization of the rebellion'; the fiction that Algeria was an integral part of the national territory, like Brittany or Provence, was not to be maintained.

How did the misunderstanding arise? From the fact that no reply was given to the question that everyone regarded as decisive — the question of how to create an Algerian Algeria which would not be the same thing as 'papa's Algeria'. How was peace to be substituted for war? Since the first press conference he devoted to the Algerian question, in September 1958, General de Gaulle has followed consistently in the footsteps of M. Guy Mollet by inviting the external organization of the rebellion to begin discussions with a view to putting an honourable conclusion to the hostilities and deciding 'the fate of the combatants and the destination of their weapons'. But General de Gaulle has always specified that discussion would be confined to the method of arriving at a cease-fire. Talks about the future of Algeria or the methods of achieving self-determination would not be contemplated until that was achieved. Why did observers continue to speculate and to argue about the interpretation of different phrases in the General's speeches? Because his policy, thus defined, seemed to be no more generous — though more adroit — than that of M. Guy Mollet, and doomed equally, in the long run, to perpetuate the struggle and encounter the same ultimate failure. We were reluctant

to believe that a man of that stature could be so blind.

Whether the subject is elections or self-determination, the difference is verbal rather than actual. M. Guy Mollet used to talk about the 'indissoluble bonds' between Algeria and France; if the elected representatives had been in favour of Algerian independence, those indissoluble bonds would have been swept away like straws by the tide of nationalism. General de Gaulle leaves the Algerians free to decide their own future, but hints menacingly that if they opt for 'secession' the country will be partitioned.

The policy of 'peace between the brave' — of self-determination — would have differed from that of the three-point programme only if it had allowed of *talks with the F.L.N. covering, at least, the conditions to be laid down for self-determination*. Since it did not, General de Gaulle, as a worthy successor of all the Fourth Republic governments, is perpetuating their demand that the F.L.N. shall admit defeat, shall lay down arms with no further security than the word of a man who, however great, is nevertheless mortal. It was so obvious that the F.L.N. would not agree to this, that everybody — liberals and ultras alike — suspected a ruse, regarded by one party as sublime and by the other as fiendish. It seems that both parties were mistaken. General de Gaulle is a liberal if we mean by that a man who considers it inevitable for Algeria to progress towards the status of a nation, regards this as consonant with twentieth-century ideas and compatible with the protection of French interests. But he is an 'ultra' if we mean by that a man who refuses to parley with an enemy in the field. Independence is to be reserved for those who ask for it politely. Algeria may possibly be independent a generation from now, but the army will continue to hunt for weapons if they are not handed over voluntarily.

We were reluctant to believe that this could be the policy of a great man; and we were wrong.

For some the Gaullist policy of pacification in the name of self-determination is alleged to be incompatible with the requirements of a subversive war. How are the Moslems to be convinced that France is not going to pull out, if we conjure up a picture of an Algerian Algeria and leave to leaders who are to emerge after free elections the responsibility of deciding the final status of that bloodstained territory? The advocates of subversive war maintain that only an uncompromising display of iron resolution can bring over 'the *attentiste* masses' to the side of law and order.

Others, including M. Jacques Soustelle, not only consider it impossible to win a war waged in the name of self-determination, but declare that an Algerian Algeria, autonomous and associated with France, could not survive. M. Soustelle has declared over and over again, by word of mouth and in writing — beginning as long ago as the days when he was Governor-General of Algeria and used to send in reports to the then Prime Minister, M. Edgar Faure — that the establishment in Algiers of an elected Assembly — not to mention a government — would inevitably result in independence. General de Gaulle's formula discourages our friends, leaves the issue in doubt, and if and when applied would lead to secession — the very thing the war is trying to prevent.

Equally shrewd criticism pours in from the other side. What is the use of declaring that we shall respect the will of the Algerian people when we are refusing to respect the combatants? The law of the Tommy-gun, we are assured, is not a proper substitute for the authority of the ballot. The Minister for Cultural Affairs can hardly have forgotten a statement he once made in the Palais-Bourbon, amid great indignation: 'Freedom belongs in the first place to those who fought for it.' But we need not argue about the relative claims of the Tommy-gun and the ballot. Unfortunately there is an insurrection in progress, and there has been for the past six years. Anyone who asks the rebels to lay down their

arms — in other words to surrender what, in the event of negotiations, would be their only card — in exchange for a promise of self-determination a few years hence, is either entirely ignorant of the psychology of revolutionaries or, more probably, is deliberately forcing them to keep up the fight.

Beyond the French frontiers little attention is paid nowadays to the arguments put forward by General de Gaulle. People are prepared to admit that the status of Algeria shall not be determined by negotiations between the external organization of the rebellion and the French government: one of the principles of self-determination is that the final decision rests with the electorate. But the conditions of self-determination have to be settled by agreement between the parties. It is illogical for General de Gaulle to recognize the Algerians' right to cease to be French, yet refuse point-blank to discuss the circumstances in which their wish is to be expressed. But with whom can discussions take place, except with the leaders of those who are fighting, those who have obliged the French Government to make a belated offer of full-fledged citizenship and self-determination? Elections supervised solely by the French army would not be genuine (neither would elections supervised solely by the F.L.N.). Obviously General de Gaulle must have known that the F.L.N. would not agree to a freedom of choice which had the presence of the French army as its only guarantee.

This being so, what are the intentions of the head of the French State? The question is not so difficult to answer now as formerly: his intention is to create an Algerian Algeria, working with the F.L.N. if it consents to a cease-fire, or without it if it persists in its ambushes, attacks on civilians and sniping. Algeria is already being transformed under the Constantine plan, Moslems are being admitted in large numbers to the Civil Service and more schools are being provided. The beneficiaries do not yet constitute a third force, not

all of them are representative figures, many of them were already in the administration, the best of them are in contact, directly or indirectly, with the F.L.N. But the Moslems will gradually begin to perceive the facts, which speak for themselves — the improvement in the standard of living, the training of administrative staff, autonomy in local government. At the same time, on the military level, pacification is progressing, the men in the *maquis* are growing weary, very few weapons are finding their way through the barrage. Sooner or later the F.L.N., or part of it, will realize that there is a place for the Algerian nationalists in an Algeria associated with France, whereas guerilla warfare and propaganda, help from Cairo and Peking, can lead to nothing. If France does not give way the F.L.N. will be bound to do so, more especially as France has finally granted the legitimate item in the insurgents' demands — the right to Algerian nationality. General de Gaulle's policy, thus defined, is a cross between what, in June 1958, I defined as policy no. 1, and what I called policy no. 3. Like the former, it demands unconditional surrender without political negotiations and envisages an intermediate solution—autonomy and association—between integration and independence. But instead of reserving this intermediate solution for the future negotiations or for the phase which will follow the restoration of peace, General de Gaulle is trying to give it practical application right away—the social transformation of Algeria, in conjunction with military action, being a decisive means of compelling the F.L.N. to transform itself into a party playing the democratic game.

The President of the Republic himself laid down the lines of the Melun talks, foreseeing, if not actually hoping, that they would come to nothing. The instructions given to the French representatives, the manner of presenting the plans for the proposed negotiations, all revealed the intention to bring about a rupture by stressing, instead of glossing over, the aspect in which a purely military cease-fire must

inevitably appear to the F.L.N. — that of an admission of defeat. At his press conference, General de Gaulle, adopting the tone of a *grand seigneur* insulted by unworthy suspicions, declared that he could not meet the envoys of the 'external organization' while fighting was still going on and women and children were being shot down by assassins. It is not customary for military operations to be halted previous to a cease-fire, nor for a cease-fire to be proclaimed before a political settlement has been discussed. Besides, if there can be no talks in the presence of drawn knives, might not the F.L.N., too, have had some wishes to put forward? For example, that capital punishment be discontinued, torture no longer practised, etc. No, General de Gaulle is really too shrewd and too generous-minded not to have foreseen the results of the tactics pursued.

General de Gaulle did not wish to grant a kind of recognition — moral if not political — to the external organization. He is willing for Algeria to become an associated State, perhaps even, one day, an independent State; but he is prepared to carry on the war for years, if need be, and to destroy the reforms he has striven to introduce, rather than meet, on an equal footing, men who had the impertinence not to capitulate immediately the French Government recognized that their cause was a legitimate one. Let us pause here for a moment. Anywhere else than in France — in the English-speaking countries, for instance — such a state of things would be downright inconceivable. France has conceded the essential point, the F.L.N. has been promised that its essential claim will be met; yet the two sides are further apart than ever before. I can understand the F.L.N.'s refusal of the semi-capitulation demanded from it; a revolutionary party cannot capitulate, even if its leaders know that an apparent military defeat would be a step towards political victory. But what about the French Government? What are its reasons for refusing to discuss matters with the adversary at the very moment

when the latter is prepared to accept the solution contemplated by France — an Algerian Algeria? I am afraid General de Gaulle's mentality is typically French, that he is actuated by pride. France is a great lady who grants favours, but does not permit them to be wrested from her. Ho Chi-Minh, for instance, put himself out of the running by the attack he launched on 19 December 1946. The longer the war dragged on, the weaker grew the French position, until the ultimate independence of Viet-Nam was no longer even in doubt. The only question was to whom — to what man or what party — that inevitable independence was to be granted. It was granted to Bao Dai, but it remained a mere fiction, for the war still continued and the rulers of the State of Viet-Nam had neither sufficient public support nor sufficient determination to make an effective use of the power transferred to them.

The Algerian policy of General de Gaulle is not an exact parallel to Bao-Daism; there is no ex-Emperor in Algeria and the Europeans, together with a small proportion of the Moslem masses, are as fiercely hostile to the F.L.N. as the latter is to colonialism. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities between the two cases. The Government is prepared to grant the adversary's original claim, on which the conflict still turns; but it intends to select the recipient of its favours, granting them to those who are fighting on our side, not to those who are fighting against us. (Though there is one sign of improvement — General de Gaulle agrees that the F.L.N. militants shall have their place in the future Algeria.)

Unfortunately this kind of strategy is meeting with scant success. Ten years ago the F.L.N. did not exist and the G.P.R.A. Ministers were shadowy figures, if not entirely unknown. Nowadays, whether we like it or not, the G.P.R.A. is the symbol of Algerian nationalism. The road to peace must lead through negotiation with it. Refusal to negotiate leads to pacification — in other words, to war. Once a national movement has become symbolized by a

particular man or group of men, and the symbolism has been confirmed by events — by the shedding of blood — it is useless for the former colonial State to hunt for an alternative symbol; it will not find one. It has a better chance of converting the leaders of the revolutionary movement to moderation than of finding moderate leaders who will be acceptable to the nationalists.

Such a policy is justifiable in logic only if we take the view that the alternative policy — negotiation with the F.L.N. regarding the conditions of self-determination, or better, regarding the status of an Algerian Algeria associated with France — is either impossible or disastrous. Can General de Gaulle negotiate with the F.L.N.? Perhaps he can no longer do so, having solemnly and publicly sworn that he never would. Even at the beginning of February 1960 it was perhaps impossible for him to negotiate *publicly*. But secret negotiation was conceivable and practicable then, and may be so even now. If the army tried to overthrow the Government of the Republic it would become hopelessly divided against itself. In 1960 France is not to be ruled by bayonets.

The facts of the matter are quite different. If General de Gaulle agrees to negotiate with the F.L.N. he will alienate many of those who supported him in 1958, he will offend a section of the public and, in particular, a section of the army officers. In order to do this he needs the backing of liberal opinion. In short, it is unlikely that any of the groups hostile to a negotiated peace is strong enough to stop him or overthrow him; but if he decided to parley he would have to rely on a different majority and make a frank appeal to the nation. He would cease to be a king who works miracles or the embodiment of all France, and sink to the level of an ordinary statesman. If he refuses to do this, his downfall will come just the same. The continuation of the Algerian war has thrust him back into the line of the Prime Ministers who preceded him in the days of the Fourth

Republic, and the old saying, 'it wasn't worth changing the regime' will travel round France, greeted more quietly but no less sincerely than the President of the Republic when he goes on his Tours of the provinces.

Does the President consider that in the event of a negotiated agreement with the F.L.N. all would be lost? Does he feel that the F.L.N. is already in the clutches of Cairo and Peking? Does he take the view that an Algerian Algeria built up in co-operation with the F.L.N. would, if the F.L.N. did not first admit defeat, lead only to a disastrous secession, followed by massacre and civil war? Would security in the Mediterranean, oil supplies, the survival of the European minority and all France's other interests be hopelessly impaired by a sincere attempt to induce the F.L.N. to take a hand in building the new Algeria? If that is General de Gaulle's belief, the conclusion is obvious — the difference between the Fourth and Fifth Republics with regard to this fundamental problem is even slighter than one was tempted to suppose. Both regimes confess their inability to make peace with the Algerian nationalists or to reconcile the policy of decolonization applied to Tropical Africa with the policy of pacification so stubbornly pursued north of the Sahara.

By committing himself to formulae which are unacceptable to the adversary, General de Gaulle has lost control of events. However much the A.L.N. may have been weakened, the French army will be obliged to remain in Algeria because thousands of Algerian fighters are out of reach in Tunisia and Morocco and because Cairo, Peking and even Moscow will give the G.P.R.A. what it needs — arms, money and hope — in order to prevent the wound from healing.

It is impossible to foresee what will happen. Action by Tunisia, a Chinese intervention, or mediation by the French-speaking African Republics may extend the hostilities or offer a way out. Partition may some day provide a temporary solution. Catastrophe — in the form of compulsory

internationalization following upon intervention by the Soviet block — is not yet certain. But in 1958, 1959 or 1960 General de Gaulle could have guided events without going back on his word. Now he must either accept the consequences of other people's decisions, or break his solemn pledges.

It was necessary to the reputation of the head of the State that he should bring the Algerian war to an honourable conclusion. Failing which the record of the Gaullist Republic is, to say the least of it, open to question, except for its praiseworthy reform of the public finances and the nation's position on the foreign money market. No-one knows how much respect is felt for the Constitution. The French public may tend to bear in mind the right to insurrection, proclaimed by Senator Michel Debré, rather than the national unity to which Michel Debré the Prime Minister is fond of referring. In Tropical Africa the Fifth Republic has shown a better style in leading the African Republics towards independence. The opposition of those who govern us was the only thing that could have prevented the Fourth Republic from doing the same. Turning to the construction of Europe and the Atlantic Alliance, we find that French demands have grown even more rapidly than our reserves of foreign currency. And the walls of the Pentagon have not fallen at the sound of the Gaullist trumpets.

What strikes one, in both instances, is the contrast between ambitions and facts. In 1958 General de Gaulle seemed to believe that the face of the world would be changed by his becoming Prime Minister or President. Swimming alone against the tide of History, he tried to halt the advance of the African Republics towards sovereignty. Proudly, he proclaimed that they must choose between the Community and secession; and to the devil with M. Sékou Touré and Guinea, who had shown disrespect for France and for the embodiment of France. Two years later the presumption of this is plain to see. Independence has become

compatible with membership of the Community.

Two years ago, in September 1958, the famous memorandum was sent to the British Prime Minister and to the President of the United States, calling for a three-member directorate with authority over the whole earth. Two years later, on 5 September 1960, General de Gaulle is still inveighing against 'military integration' in NATO and calling for the extension of the alliance beyond the area covered by the Treaty. He has no better success than his predecessors of the Fourth Republic. Our European partners are hostile to the idea of a directorate and in favour of military integration. Why should the Americans give France full control of nuclear weapons manufactured on the other side of the Atlantic? If they did so, the Soviet Union would have greater difficulty in resisting the demands of China, and they themselves would be likely to receive demands from Italy and the Federal Republic. Seen from Washington, the Fifth Republic looks very much like the Fourth. It may have the responsibilities and certainly has the ambitions of a world power, but it does not have the resources of one.

General de Gaulle wants to build up the Europe of the fatherlands. He suggests constant cooperation between the various governments, assisted by a permanent secretariat. But our partners are annoyed or disturbed by the intention he harbours, or is rumoured to harbour, of asserting French predominance and making France more independent of the United States. What would be the role of this continental group within the Atlantic Alliance? Why should the United Kingdom be excluded, if the question of supra-nationalism is no longer involved. In the last resort, hopes of European unification rest on certain supra-national institutions, which, though despised by General de Gaulle and unable as yet to make important decisions, are already promoting common legislation.

These obstacles are nothing new. All recent Prime Ministers have encountered

them. The United States wants to retain a monopoly or semi-monopoly of atomic weapons. It does not wish to involve itself, outside Europe, with the ex-colonial nations of Europe. Our friends on the old continent attach more importance to the presence and protection of America than to their own greatness. They are quite ready to leave the question of general security to the Americans. American opinion is anti-colonial. The Soviet Union does its utmost to exploit the troubled circumstances that attend the emancipation of the former colonies. The new States are apt to be better at invective than at organization. The United Nations puts fictitious States on the same footing as genuine ones. In the name of liberation, the Congo is delivered over to anarchy and bloodshed. It is easy to denounce Soviet imperialism, the fanaticism displayed at Cairo and in other places, American blindness and the exorbitant pretensions of the Afro-Asian bloc. But is it not rather presumptuous for France to lecture the rest of the world, after being bogged down for the last six years in the Algerian war? Is it advisable to make an open display of resentment against our potential enemy and against our too-powerful ally? We are offered a twopence-coloured picture that shows France as united, determined, confidently following its chosen path, indifferent to the clamours of propaganda and to the clash of arms; but are things really like that? Has not the head of the State set himself up in the place of the country he so firmly believes himself to embody? He, rather than France, is his own master. But not the master of the universe.

Is he even his own master, to the extent he would wish? Can it be that his serenity is somewhat of an affectation? It was General de Gaulle's passionate ambition to put an end to the Algerian war. He has elected to spend several years in the pursuit of pacification. He wanted to build up a community, as a compromise between the former colony and secession. It lies in ruins. He wanted to reform the Atlantic Alliance,

restore France to military autonomy, and take a share in decisions affecting the whole world; he can look forward to being in possession, about 1965, of fifty *Mirages IV* of — to say the least — doubtful utility. This spells failure only in contrast to the presumption that went before; but it stings, for all that. So France, united and serene, pours out a torrent of accusations and remonstrances — more elegantly phrased, it is true, than those of the Soviet Union and the Africans, but carrying less weight. Once again France takes the view that the rest of the world is out of step.

When the A.L.N.'s envoys came to Melun I hoped — unreasonably, I admit — that General de Gaulle would make the few

symbolic gestures which could have permitted discussion, followed by peace. Imagining peace in Algeria as a follow-up to the independence of the African Republics, I mused pleasantly on the relationship between Ruse and Reason. The insurgents of 13 May had precipitated the very thing they wanted to prevent. The Fifth Republic was beginning like the Republic of the dupes, and not like the Third, the Republic of the dukes. I realized, too, that if the talks led to nothing, if the President of the Republic insisted on the conditions he had laid down, the war would gain fresh impetus and continue indefinitely.

Republic of the dupes or end of the great illusion? The Gaullist illusion has almost had its day.

B. S. Mardhekar

Modern Marathi Poet

By V. A. SHAHANE

IN his triple role as poet, novelist and literary critic Bal Seetaram Mardhekar is regarded almost an 'event', a new 'phenomenon' in Marathi literature after the 2nd World War. It is perhaps pre-eminently as a poet that he has made the most signal and valued contribution to modern Marathi literature. To his admirers, as well as to his detractors, he is as much an 'event' as he is a 'problem'. The problem Mardhekar presents to students of literature is, partly, a reflection of the problems of the modern age in relation to its literature and culture.

A genuine assessment of B. S. Mardhekar as an author is rendered rather difficult owing to the elusiveness, ambiguity and complexity of his work. The three epithets are interlinked and revolve round Mardhekar's moral and aesthetic vision. The complex moral and aesthetic patterns of Mardhekar's writings, particularly his poetry, are perhaps associated with the innate complexity of modern civilization itself. The peculiarities of his philosophical and aesthetic attitudes, and his new and strange experimentation with form and technique have been often criticised. On the other hand, the difficulties generally associated with the evaluation of contemporary literature stare us in the face in gauging his work.

Mardhekar is neither a minor literary curiosity, nor a merely skilful aesthetic innovator who can be fitted into hackneyed categories. His art has an enduring quality which ensures him a prominent place in the history of modern Marathi literature. His

readers, even after his premature death and the resulting adulation, constitute a select minority, and though he may gain a wider literary reputation in course of time, he is unlikely ever to become the poet of a majority of the Marathi reading public. Yet Mardhekar has now grown into a leading light among intellectuals. The critical assumption that his work lies beyond the reach of the majority has induced persons seeking to acquire literary refinement to attempt to appreciate him. He thus becomes a precious study in misunderstanding. Literary connoisseurs vie with one another in setting out to interpret or misinterpret the meaning of his complex writings. He stimulates intellectual curiosity as well as individual and social snobbery and therefore, reading him, if not knowing him, has become almost an intellectual necessity. Critics and commentators have decried his work as absurd and immoral, tortuous and obscene, incomprehensible and incongruous, ugly and unbalanced. His worshippers proclaim him a founder and forerunner of a new type of Marathi poetry, distinguished from the old by a new sensibility, a fresh and original content, and by radically modern modes of expression. To some he is a Lucifer fallen from heaven; to others he is a demigod speaking a new language.

Born in 1909 Bal Mardhekar was educated at Dhulia and Fergusson College, Poona. In 1928 he graduated with honours in English language and literature. Though he was a son of a primary school teacher, he was ambitious. Aspiring to join the

Indian Civil Service, he went to England. The irony of fate was that he just missed the selection by four marks; he topped the list of unselected candidates. His stay in England and his work under his tutor at King's College, London, made him aware of the new sensibilities in English poetry at close quarters. Mardhekar was an accomplished scholar of English literature and philosophy, as well as of Indian classics, specially ancient Marathi poetry. On his return to India, he worked as Lecturer in English in many colleges in the Bombay State. Later he joined the Bombay Station of All-India Radio as its Assistant Director. He died in harness in 1956.

Perhaps it is advisable to trace, as briefly as possible, the background of twentieth century Marathi poetry in order to judge the quality of Mardhekar's contribution. Ancient Marathi poetry, like its counterparts in other Indian languages, was mainly preoccupied with ethical, religious, and devotional ideals. It retold, with minor variations, the stories of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and other Indian epics and folklores. The poet was thought to be a sage and a teacher of morals. Marathi literature, like other Indian literatures, has a very rich tradition of devotional lore. The great saints of Maharashtra—Dnyaneshwar, Namdev, Eknath, Tukaram, Ramdas and Moropant—are well-known for the profound qualities of their devotional poetry. The Marathi language reached its glory in the works of Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram. Tukaram was a lord of language; his words come hot from the furnace of his mind and create their own pattern. But this inner vitality degenerated in course of time into formalism and conceit.

From about 1885 onwards Marathi poets broke through the rigidities of old themes and techniques. They transcended the traditional Bhakti attitudes and orthodox moral themes. Some of them became more inward, more inclined to look into their

own selves, and to dwell on their personal pains and pleasures. Marathi poetry became more subjective, romantic and lyrical than before. Other poets, though subjective in tone, were greatly affected by social evils and injustices and gave vent to their zeal for social reform. Ancient saint-poets sang of the Lord Krishna, Vithoba and divine love. Modern poets substituted love between man and woman for divine love, social conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed for the moral conflict between good and evil. Thus a radical change was effected in subject-matter, which in its train brought about a change in technique and mode of expression. Poetic diction became simpler and more direct in the Wordsworthian manner. It was democratised. Romantic and lyrical poetry became more sensuous and passionate. It dwelt on the poet's intransigent beloved; alternatively it sang of the romantic ideals of liberty and individualism.

Keshav-sut ushered in a new era in Marathi literature and effected a radical change in form and content. This new era is named after him. The whole attitude to life and its problems underwent a revolution. Individualism became, as in nineteenth century English life and letters, a great social and moral force and brought about a sea-change in human relationships, social institutions and values. It created the phenomenon of the 'New Woman'. It made angry young men decry unjust social institutions e.g., child marriage, widowhood, dowry system, etc. Keshav-sut thus paved the way for Govindagraj, Tambe and Balkavi, who in their turn created their own vogue. Tambe's dramatic lyrics constitute the finest casket of Marathi poetry.

By about 1920 a new group of poets known as 'Ravi Kiran Mandal' began to give a new direction to the literary revolution already ushered in by Keshav-sut. These poets—Madhav-Julian and Yeshwant among them—concentrated on the personal

note of love and frustration and further simplified poetic diction and forms. The sonnet, the short lyric, and also the *Gazal* became favourite metrical forms of expression. Newer currents of elegiac, satirical and humorous verse mingled with the main stream of poetry. This group was fond of public recitations, and Kavi-Sammelans became the fashion of the day.

Again in about 1930 a still younger generation led by Kusumagraj began to strike a new note of revolt against social and economic injustices, particularly against alien rule. They called themselves, following in the footsteps of Shelley, the sons of light. They were romantic in spirit, rebellious in approach, challenging in tone. Yet they were not quite conscious of the large unexplored areas of individual and social frustrations which threatened to engulf society. They were perhaps too conscious of their individual selves to realise the full implications of the deep frustration and of the cleavage between cherished ideals and rigid actualities. Every decade appears to express a sense of revolt against its immediate past, and a constantly moving cycle of convention and revolt characterises the growth of modern Marathi poetry.

Against this social and literary background Mardhekar arrives on the post-War literary horizon. The post-War phase is marked by an acute dearth of positive values and of a spirit of affirmation. T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*, 1923, is considered symbolic of this phase of English literature. What T. S. Eliot perceived in 1923, Mardhekar experienced in the post-1945 phase. Marathi poets, in the age immediately preceding Mardhekar's, visualised the world through the consciousness of the individual. They gave precedence to sufferings of the self over those of society. They narrowed down the scope of social awareness to individual consciousness. Mardhekar reversed this process and widened the area

of individual consciousness so as to make it commensurate with social awareness. He dramatised and socialized the individual's feelings and ideas and made them symbols of a wider reality.

It is Mardhekar's search after a wider reality culminating in a deepening of experience and in the discovery of its emotional equivalence in a poetical form that constitute the true elements of his greatness. Mardhekar the literary critic and Mardhekar the poet are two truly allied and mutually contributory facets of one whole genius. In this context, Mardhekar recalls to one's mind, in a limited way, the many-faceted genius of T. S. Eliot. Mardhekar wrote in English a study of aesthetics entitled *Arts and the Man*, which is indeed remarkable for its many fresh and original ideas. He, as critic, believes that the primary function of poetry is to establish emotional equivalences between the poet and the reader; between characters, events or atmosphere in a poem and the reader. Science aims at quantitative equations in terms of empirical facts; poetry aims at qualitative equivalences in terms of the human spirit. The language of poetry therefore differs from that used for purely scientific purposes. Poetry is symbolical in content and metaphorical in expression. It speaks, as Aristotle pointed out, the language of simile and metaphor. The poet's mood is reflected in his symbols. Symbols must be understood, not in terms of their dictionary word-meanings, but in the light of the metaphorical extension of meaning they acquire in the context of the poet's mood. Thus Mardhekar's criterion for judging poetry is twofold: context and symbol; intention and allegory. He stressed the significance of the context in the use of words and their meaning. He strongly defended this point of view in regard to the function of poetry in the famous case instituted against him by the Government of Bombay. The Government of Bombay

prosecuted him on charges of obscenity and immorality pertaining to his two poetry anthologies *A Few Poems*, 1947, and *A Few More Poems*, 1950. He put up a spirited defence, which was upheld by the Bombay High Court and the prosecution case was dismissed. Mardhekar restated I. A. Richards' Context Theorem of Meaning which laid emphasis on the mood or intention for which the words were used and not on the actual dictionary meanings of those words. The obscenity or the lack of it in a poem is to be judged *not* by the words employed, but by the mood which the poem intends to convey. The emphasis is not on words, but on their context. Mardhekar writes: 'Words, even when they indicate a sex organ, are in themselves no more obscene than pebbles or quinine pills . . . Sometimes the secret of obscenity is suggestion. A half-naked person is obscene, a nude is not. The suggestion in the first awakens curiosity and serves to prolong a state of vicariously pleasurable sex excitement. The nude does not do any of these things. On the contrary by its complete revelation of the human body, it deepens awareness of human form in its fullness. This is true of all creative work. Half-truths are not merely dangerous in such work; they are obscene. The full truth, so far as one may be able to see it, is, like the nude, beautiful or ugly. Only the half-truth, like the half-naked figure, is obscene. The one evokes deep love, the other excites shallow love-making.'

The dominant mood of Mardhekar's poetry is one of tortured revolt and revulsion at the ugliness, physical suffering, mental disequilibrium, hollowness and moral chaos engendered by a machine-ridden society. Like Hamlet, he finds the world sadly 'out of joint', divided by conflicts and contradictions. Practices conflict with precepts, facts contradict ideals. Mardhekar thinks that 'every reading of the alphabet of life has gone wrong.' The sense

of meaninglessness in life is his most dominant mood, and finds expression in his poetry in various ways. The earlier Mardhekar was a romantic poet, bred in the spirit of nature-worship of 'Bal-Kavi' and fed on the fare of modernity of Keshav-sut. Mardhekar's first anthology *The Coming of Autumn*, 1939, (*Shishiragam*) reveals his romantic attitude and feeling for nature.

I do not know why

With the reappearance of Autumn sky
When the branches are laid bare of
leaves

Tears come into my eyes;
The birds which built their nests
In the branches of these trees
Where will they seek refuge now?
Quivering with cold and hunger
The leafless branches tremble.

At this stage Mardhekar seems to be attempting to discover his true self, his real attitudes. By about 1947 he seems to realise that the world is too full of prosaic aridities and inhuman cruelties to allow his thirst for beauty to be quenched. As a romantic poet, he seeks the good and the beautiful but finds piles of corpses instead. He finds the world dominated by machines which emit soul-destroying flames. The cruel contradictions of the Atomic Age bring home to his mind a grave sense of disillusionment. Advancement in science may enable a maimed person to fly over the Himalayas and cross Mount Everest. But it has also made human life precarious and cheap. The trader, dressed in spotless khaddar and having implicit faith in *ahimsa*, is found quite eager to secure contracts for the supply of war material. He is also eager to gain control of the levers of political power. Man seeks to know Truth and Beauty, but he is made to experience the boredom and horror of an Atomic Age. Nagasaki and Hiroshima are symbols of the extinction of humanist values. Mardhekar conceives a situation in this world torn by conflicting loyalties in which one soul is seen tele-

phoning to another and 'does not connect'. The poet persists in saying 'Hullo! Hullo!' but finds that he has got a wrong number and is curtly cut short.

Mardhekar, though he wrote some romantic poetry in the initial stages, grows into an arch-enemy of romanticism. His diction, like the undressed hair of Draupadi, is without ornament. It also symbolises Draupadi's vitality and determination. Mardhekar concentrates on transmitting experience in all its sensuousness:

Let my lust and passion be consumed
And the hate be frozen;
Let the soul of *Draupadi*
Live in the body of my language!

His diction is unornamental, vigorous and almost bare. The accent is on experience, in all its live reality and naked horror, rather than on niceties of expression. Mardhekar speaks about himself:

Thou art the Master of meaning
Thou art bountiful and generous;
I am a poor carrier of words
There is no end to my quest.
Let my hard core break
And the sourness of my heart disappear
Let my tongue vibrate
With your favourite tunes.

The poet's principal notion of meaninglessness is expressed through the medium of contrast between the real and the ideal. The famous song in Marathi eulogising the sunrise is parodied in terms of the crowded, mechanical civilization of modern times. The original song is sweet and devotional:

O beauteous God! O cloud-coloured
Krishna!

The Sun-god ascends His throne!
Mardhekar introduces the shrill note of modern industrialised society in this pure devotional theme:

O beauteous God! O Krishna!
The mills shriek their siren!

He prays the all-powerful Shiva to destroy the unholy and ugly elements of modern civilization:

O God! O Shankar! O Simple-minded!
Do open Thy third eye

And shatter all these standing skeletons!
The dehumanised modern life is exposed in all its naked horror. A few critics have condemned this exposition as immoral, in-aesthetic and obscene. Others have hailed the 'crusading' spirit behind it.

Mardhekar is deeply conscious of the various contradictions of the modern world, particularly those created by scientific and technological advancement:

Invalids can cross the high Himalayas,
Submarines delve the deep seas,
Yet in this Atomic age

Men are disposed of in a clearance sale!

Mardhekar's mind works on a principle of contrast which characterises his poetic mood as well as his diction. He follows the metaphorical practice of modern English and American poets of *Activity transfer*, in which the functioning of one realm of work is explained in terms of another. In Tambe's great love lyric the beloved speaks to the lover:

Your eyes are exceedingly tyrannical
Don't stare at me!

Mardhekar parodies the romantic element in this enchanting love poem:

Your eyes are like those in film-land
Don't cough and look at me!

Mardhekar's diction, like that of many western modern poets, is characterised by *semantic rejuvenation*. Hart Crane, while describing the thundering sound of the underground train, calls it *galvothemic*. The gathering shadows of evening are described as *graduate opacities*. The adjective *graduate* denotes the effect gathered in successive degrees, and *opacities* is the Latin equivalent of thicknesses. Emily Dickinson often achieves poetic effect through etymology:

Tell the truth but tell it slant,

Success in circuit lies. . .

'Circuit' means 'a going round', Mardhekar,

too, is fond of odd, circuitous modes of expression:

At the punctured rubber night
The rubber dogs bark!

The use of the word *chakrapani* is an instance of Mardhekar's attempt at *semantic rejuvenation*. *Chakrapani* in Sanskrit means one who holds the wheel, often alluding to Lord Krishna holding the *sudarshan*. But Mardhekar's 'chakrapani' is a mill worker who works on the wheel and whose warm, saltish sweat drops on the machine below. The appeal of such specialised diction is often limited to intellectual readers. The appeal of T. S. Eliot's diction, cited below, seems to be limited to an educated audience. He is describing the experience of a 'descent into darkness' caused by a sterility of the spirit:

Dessication of the world of sense,
Evacuation of the world of fancy,
Inoperancy of the world of spirit;

Inoperancy (a failure to work) is an example of prefixing negative signs to positive words. Other examples are *unfulfil* (John Crowe Ransom); *unfractioned* idiom (Hart Crane). E. E. Cummings specialises in this usage. He inserts a negative particle in the middle of the word *mankind*, thereby coining a new word *manunkind*, which has two shades of meaning. *Manunkind* is the converse of *mankind* and also signifies man's unkindness to man.

Mardhekar, too, coined new words and expressions e.g. 'crystals of sins', the 'mantra-recitation of machines', the 'circle of consciousness'. He aimed at a synthesis of the old and the new in his diction. He is deeply conscious of the values of the eternal:

The shield of transcience
Will break on the sword of eternity!
Through these smiles and sorrows
And the phases of life and death
Will rise the fists and fingers of eternity!
Although he is deeply affected by the hollowness of modern civilization, yet

Mardhekar is not blind to the values of piety and beauty:

The sky melts in the river,
The boundary between good and evil
vanishes;
The yellow wind of Buddha-Gaya
Blows swiftly over.

Mardhekar, in rare inspired romantic moods, grows lyrical over the description of woman's beautiful eyes:

How to hold the mercury
Of the pomegranates in her eyes!

The immovable Himalaya was moved by
her purity
And created in the centre of her chin a
little curiosity!

From very many quivering lips rose
A delicate restlessness and centred on
her eyebrows!

The 'modernity' in Mardhekar's poetry assumes various shapes and forms. Modern poetry, unlike the traditional verse, apparently lacks a continual chain of meaning. It groups together the most significant expressions of poetic emotion and expects the reader to fill in the prosaic blanks between one poetic utterance and another. Mardhekar's mode of expression is characterised by this new outlook, and his imagery—scientific image, broken image—is influenced by it. His poetry therefore is to some extent obscure. He concentrates on transmitting the extraordinary elements of his experience to the reader in words and imagery which are apparently disconnected and unclear.

Mardhekar, as a novelist, breaks new ground in Marathi literature. He is a pioneer in Marathi in practising the stream-of-consciousness technique in his novel *Night Turned into Day*. He is obviously influenced by the works of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson. In the preface to *Night Turned into Day*

Mardhekar dwelt on the changes in syntax and grammar consequent on the adoption of the stream-of-consciousness technique. The slipshod, broken, involved and apparently disconnected and irrelevant way of writing, says Mardhekar, truly reflects the formative phases of reality. It tries to describe the raw moment of a liquid reality—before it is solidified in a process of consciousness. Mardhekar in *Red Soil*, 1943, and *Water*, 1948, also attempted to incorporate elements of the stream-of-consciousness technique in a limited way. *Red Soil* and *Water* are both symbolic. The

black soil is turned red by the sacrifice of a peasant family. The symbol of 'water' in various forms—river, dam, sea and the puddle below a public tap—is used to depict the vortex of emotions and sensibilities.

The poet, the novelist and the aesthetician in Mardhekar form one integrated whole of exalted intellectual power and creative ability. Future historians of Marathi literature will accord him a permanent place in their histories not merely as an innovator of new forms and ways of expression, but also as an artist of enduring and distinctive qualities.

In order to avoid unnecessary delay all contributions (except book-reviews) and correspondence regarding these should be addressed to **The Editors, 5, Pearl Road, Calcutta 17.** Book-reviews, books for review and all correspondence concerning business matters are to be addressed to **The Business Manager, Quest, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.**

Notes on Some Asian Folk Tales

By AAMIR ALI

IT is a commonplace to say that Asia is a storehouse of folk stories, but it is not easy for the general reader to get hold of them. Several notable collections of tales from various countries are out of print and difficult to obtain. Such are the *Folk Tales of Bengal* by the Rev. Lal Behari Dey (Macmillan & Co., 1883), *Folk Tales of Kashmir* by the Rev. J. Hinton Knowles (London, Trubner & Co., 1888), *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon* (Vols. I & II, collected and translated by H. Parker, Luzac & Co.) and the folk tales published in the *Indian Antiquary* in the latter part of the last century which were collected by F. A. Steel, Putlibai Wadia, Pandit Natesa Sastri, M. N. Venkataswami, G. H. Damant and others.

There are, however, several collections of Japanese and Philippine folk stories, notably those by Iwaya Sazanami and Yuri Yasuda, and Laya and Ramirez. For Thailand there is the collection of Reginald le May, and more recently, that of Kasem Sibunruang. There are also the volumes of the *Contes et Légendes* series, published by Fernand Nathan, Paris.

That many of the stories from the different languages groups in India should have a great deal in common, or that the same stories should exist in varying forms, is only to be expected. But it is less often realised that the stories from the different countries of the region often have a basic similarity, with many themes and incidents in common. It is useful to remember that the Buddhist *Jataka* tales and the two great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, are the common heritage of many of these countries.

As may be expected, it is the traditional fairy stories of princes and princesses, demons and magic, that bear a strong

family likeness. The purely local folklore, often embodied in humorous stories or tales with no supernatural element, is more apt to be different. In passing, it is also interesting to note that Japanese folk stories are in general of a different pattern to those found elsewhere, including China.

In certain respects, folk stories from Asia are no different to folk stories from anywhere else. They possess many common features: wicked demons and demonesses, cruel stepmothers and jealous step-sisters, magic rings and incantations, the power to become invisible or to change one's shape, heroic deeds and the triumph of good over evil, handsome princes and beautiful princesses ultimately marrying and living in perpetual bliss.

But there are certain other elements, occurring frequently in Asian folk stories, which are not generally found elsewhere. For instance, one rather charming attribute of a beautiful young maid is the capacity to shed golden flowers with her speech or laughter. Thus, in the Siamese story *Phikool Thong*—which literally means 'a golden flower'—the young princess sheds golden flowers when she talks. In a story from Kashmir, a yogi's daughter has similar powers. She sheds golden flowers when she laughs, pearls when she weeps, and her footprints turn into gold. Little wonder that she ends up marrying the king. In another story from Maharashtra, the maltreated Devki Rani is given a boon by the god Iswara, who says, 'You will cast your radiance wherever you go, shed pearls for tears and throw out rubies with your laughter.'

Demons and demonesses, called rakshasas and rakshasis, abound, and, very properly, always come to a sticky end. In Ceylon and Cambodia, these monstrous

creatures are called Yakas. They are usually enormous, ugly giants, with great protruding teeth, and feed on quantities of animals and human beings. They have the power to change themselves into other less disagreeable forms, and rakshasis often masquerade as beautiful maidens in order to trap their victims. It is also quite common for them to take a pretty young girl under their protection, preferably a princess whose family they have devoured, and keep her as a sort of domestic pet and slave. When they go out, they put their captives into a deathlike trance, reviving them when they return.

There are several ways of doing this. A frequent method is for the rakshasa to have two wands, one of silver for putting the captive to sleep, and the other of gold for reviving her again. In other cases, the same wand serves both purposes. Or perhaps there are two necklaces, one for the feet and one for the neck; when their order is reversed, the victim dies, and when they are reversed yet again, she revives.

Usually these monsters cannot be killed in any ordinary way. The secret of their life resides in some extraneous object, such as a parrot, or bee, or dove, and it is only by killing this object in the prescribed manner that the rakshasa can be killed. In a number of stories, the hero learns the secret of the monster's life through the captive princess. The commonest approach, by which the princess learns this secret, is for her to weep softly to herself in the evening, so that the rakshasa is moved to inquire into the cause of her sorrow. 'What will I do when you die and leave me alone and unprotected?' asks the princess. 'The other rakshasas will eat me up.' 'Have no fear,' replies the rakshasa. 'I can only die when someone kills the two bees that are in the wooden box in the heart of the fish that swims in the tank,' or some equally remote thing. 'There is no chance of anyone being able to do that, and so I

will never die.' The princess reports this to the hero the following morning, and he promptly kills the prescribed object and rescues the princess. Little need to add that he marries her and they live happily ever after.

Thus, for instance, in a Kashmiri story, the lives of the father and mother rakshasas are contained in a spinning wheel and a pigeon, the lives of their seven sons in seven cocks, and of their wicked daughter, who has assumed a beautiful shape and persuaded the king to marry her, in a starling. In a Bengali story about the boy with 'the Moon on his Forehead', the rakshasa's life is contained in two bees shut up in a wooden box at the bottom of the tank in the garden. These two bees have to be killed without letting any of their blood spill on the ground, and when this is done, all the rakshasas of the region die. In another Bengali story, 'The Silver Tree', the rakshasa comforts his captive by saying, 'It is impossible that we rakshasas should die. I will tell you why. Your father has a tank, and in the tank there is a pillar of crystal, a great knife and a bitter gourd. Now, in a certain country, there is a king who has a queen named Duha, and she has a lame son. If this lame prince were to come and cover his eyes with a cloth folded seven times, and lift these things out of the tank at one dive, and cut through the crystal pillar at one blow, he would find the gourd in the middle of it. Inside the gourd are two bees. If the lame prince were now to smear his hand with ashes, and catch the bees as they fly away, and squeeze them to death, then we should all die. But if a single drop of the blood of these bees were to fall to the ground, we would become twice as numerous as before.' Despite the complexity of this task, the lame hero accomplishes it successfully with the aid of the princess, and the rakshasas are killed.

In other cases, the lives of various

rakshasas are contained in a parrot in a golden cage hung high up on a small island, or in a parrot hung high up on an iron shaft in the middle of the 'seven and seven seas', or in a milk-white dove.

Rakshasas are not the only creatures to have their lives contained in other objects. In one Bengali tale about a sadhu who was striving for perfection through a series of peculiar rites, the hero plants a tree before he goes off into the forest with this sadhu, and says to his twin brother, 'Watch that tree. If it is flourishing, you will know that I am well and happy. If it begins to wither, you will know I am in trouble. And if it dies, you will know that I am dead.' When, after some days, the tree begins to droop, the brother hurries into the forest and is just in time to rescue the hero from the clutches of a rakshasi.

In another story, the life of Prince Dalim Kumar is contained in a golden necklace which lies in a wooden box in the heart of a *boal* fish in the palace tank. The wicked queen, his stepmother, discovers this secret and obtains the necklace. When she puts it on, Dalim Kumar dies, and whenever she takes it off, he comes to life again. Thus he lives at night and lies dead during the day. In a story from Punjab, the life of the Princess Baigan (which means Egg-Plant), is contained in the 'Nine Lakh' necklace which is kept in a box inside a bee which lives in a fish in the river. The jealous queen gets hold of this necklace, and, whenever she puts it on, the princess dies.

Another convention, born of the belief in reincarnation, is that though the heroine is killed, she lives on in another form. For instance, in the Cambodian story, 'The Sandal of Gold', (which, incidentally, has a very Cinderella-like episode with the sandal), the heroine Kjong, married to the king, is drowned by her jealous stepmother and stepsister. The wicked stepsister Hulek then offers herself to the king as replacement, but the king continues to mourn for

his lost love. One day, when out hunting, he comes to the shores of the lake where Kjong was drowned, and he feels strangely affected. He orders his men to find what there is in the lake that so strongly moves him, and they find a golden tortoise. The king takes this back with him and builds a special tank for it, spending hours in its company every day. Hulek grows jealous and kills the tortoise. Kjong is then reborn as a robin and the king passes hours listening to its song. Hulek kills that, too, and throws the feathers out of the window. From these feathers a grove of bamboos springs up, and the king finds comfort in visiting it. Hulek cuts down this grove, but from the roots there grows a large tree which bears one fruit. This fruit drops into the basket of a passing woman, who takes her basket home and discovers Kjong inside it. After a further series of adventures, Kjong is finally reunited with her husband.

The heroine of a story from Western India undergoes similar tribulations. The handsome hero manages to win the hand of the beautiful Rani Jhahani. While he is taking her home, a wicked old potter-woman, the one-eyed Kani Kobai, pushes the bride into a well and tries to pass herself off as the bride. The hero, in his search for his lost love, finds a ball of beautiful flowers floating in the well. He takes these home, and spends most of his time smelling their fragrance. The wicked Kani Kobai destroys the ball of flowers and throws the petals out of the window. From these petals grows a sweet-smelling plant, and the hero finds comfort in spending his time near it. Kani Kobai tears up the plant and boils the roots in water. She then throws the water away in the garden. A mango tree springs up at that spot, and the hero spends his time under its boughs, finding comfort in its company. One of the gardeners takes a particularly beautiful mango off the tree, and when he and his wife cut

it open, out comes a tiny Rani Jhajhani, who soon grows to her proper size.

There is a somewhat similar transformation in a popular Japanese fairy story. An old man has a dog named Shiro, whom he loves dearly. One day, Shiro leads his master to a hoard of buried treasure. The old man's wicked neighbour learns of this and borrows the dog. When Shiro fails to produce more treasure, the neighbour kills the animal and buries him under an elm tree. Shiro's master is heartbroken, and as a souvenir he buys the elm tree under which Shiro is buried and makes a mortar and pestle out of it. This mortar and pestle have wonderful qualities. Not only do they produce the most delicious *mochi* (or dumplings) imaginable, but they go on producing them without ever exhausting the dough. The wicked neighbour borrows the mortar and pestle, but mud oozes out of the wood and spoils his dough. He chops up the mortar and pestle and burns them. Shiro's owner mourns the loss of his mortar and pestle, but takes home the ashes as the only souvenir left of his dog. These ashes possess a miraculous quality. When they are sprinkled on a tree, no matter what the season or time of year, the tree bursts into blossom. The old man gains great fame and renown as the Old Man Tree Blossomer.

Animal stories, after the model of those in the *Panchatantra*, are common everywhere. One particular favourite seems to be that of the race between the hare and the tortoise, in varying forms. In a Cambodian version, it is a snail that challenges the boastful hare to a race round the lake. Before the race, the snail places his friends at regular intervals along the shore. During the race, whenever the hare calls to find out where his competitor is, the snail immediately in front of him answers. The hare, puzzled that a mere snail should so easily outpace him, runs as he has never run before, but when he arrives at the finishing point, the snail is already there.

In the Philippine version, it is a buffalo that runs a race with a snail, with the same strategy and the same result.

Some stories have obviously travelled from one country to another, acquiring local variations on the way. A good example is the story of a rakshasi who became queen, as it exists in Kashmir and in Cambodia. In the Kashmiri version, there is a king who has seven wives but no son. He meets a rakshasi, disguised as a beautiful woman, who promises him that, should he marry her, all his seven wives will bear sons. The king marries her willingly, and by and by his seven previous queens become pregnant.

Now the rakshasi has to feed on the king's animals in order to meet her demon's appetite, but she persuades the king that it is really his seven other queens who are depleting his stables and that they are really rakshasis. The king, horrified at this discovery, orders the seven women to be blinded and thrown into a well.

They would have starved, but as their babies are born they divide them up and eat them. The youngest queen saves her portions, however, and when her son is born she refuses to kill him, offering the portions she has stored to the others, instead. The son grows into a handsome young man and gets employment in the king's palace.

The rakshasi queen realises who he is and persuades the king to send him on a series of dangerous missions, hoping to get rid of him. With the help of a fakir, however, the young man accomplishes all his tasks successfully. Then the queen sends him to her grandmother with a letter, asking the old rakshasi to kill the young man instantly. The fakir changes this letter to read, 'Look after my beloved son well and teach him all the magic he wants to know.' The old rakshasi teaches the young man how to restore sight to blind eyes, and reveals the secrets of her life and that of her daughter. The hero is thus able to

restore sight to his mother and the six other queens, and to tell the whole truth to the king. The rakshasi wife is immediately killed and the other queens restored to their proper state.

The Cambodian version is more elaborate. A poor woodcutter and his wife have twelve daughters. Unable to provide for them, they leave them in the forest, hoping that some kind spirit will look after them. They are found by Queen Santhomea, queen of the Yakas. She takes them home and brings them up with her own daughter Neang Kang Rey, intending to eat them when they are fully grown. The girls are warned by a friendly mouse and flee into the forest, where a courtier befriends them and takes them to Angkor, the capital. The king falls in love with them and marries them. By and by, all twelve queens become pregnant.

When Queen Santhomea learns of this, she is furious. She disguises herself as a beautiful woman, so that the king falls in love with her and marries her. Queen Santhomea persuades the king not to have anything more to do with his other wives, and gives secret orders for them to be blinded and thrown into a well. This is done. But the youngest sister, Neang Pou, manages to present her left eye twice to the executioner and thus saves one eye. She, therefore, has the task of looking after her blind sisters.

The poor sisters live by eating their babies in turn, but Neang Pou saves her portions. She shares these out when it is the turn for her baby to be eaten and thus saves her child. He grows up into a handsome young man who looks after the twelve sisters.

One day, Queen Santhomea recognises him, and, wishing to get rid of him, orders him to take a message to her daughter, Neang Kang Rey. The message reads, 'Kill the bearer of this letter immediately.' A friendly monk realises what is happening,

and changes the letter to read, 'Marry the bearer of this letter immediately.' Princess Neang Kang Rey is only too happy to follow these instructions, as the two young people fall in love with each other at first sight. The princess is quite unlike her demoness mother, being a beautiful and gentle creature.

The two live happily for some time. Then the young man, Ro Thi Sen, discovers the twenty three eyes belonging to his mother and her sisters, hidden in a jar. He knows it is his duty to take them back and restore them to their owners. He sets off in secret, but his loving wife, learning of his departure, begins to follow him. Ro Thi Sen hears her calling after him and longs to go back to her, but his duty comes first. Feeling unable to resist her calling any longer, he throws down a magic staff he has been given to ward off pursuers. Immediately, a great lake, the Tonlé Sap, forms behind him, separating him forever from his beloved wife.

Ro Thi Sen restores the eyes to the twelve sisters, then kills the wicked Yaka Queen and reveals the whole truth to the king. The king is horrified at what he has done and immediately restores the twelve sisters to their rightful place.

Poor Ro Thi Sen mourns for his lost wife and retires into the forest to become a monk. But the gods are kind, for he is reborn as a banyan tree on the shores of the lake, while the princess Neang Kang Rey is reborn as a spirit of the lake. They are thus together again. But their happiest time is when the water of the lake rises in its annual flood and embraces the tree. It is then that the lovers find happiness in each others' arms.

The folk stories of Asia certainly have one great advantage over those of most other countries. If the protagonists fail to achieve the state of 'living happily ever after' in this life, they always have another chance in their next incarnation.

Strike in Essential Services

Clarification In Government Policy Needed

By C. L. MIGLANI

THE growth of civilisation has been marked by better recognition of the people's role and greater participation by the people in determining the national destinies. In every important stage of social evolution the relation between individuals, both at social and political levels, manifested rather drastic transformations. And every new phase brought forth the utmost significance of the people's role in determining the social purposes of that community. Whatever the system of political ideology a nation may follow, one thing is quite clear, and that is if that pattern of political thought ignores the contribution of the masses in national reconstruction, it sows the seeds of its own destruction.

The opening of the 20th century heralded the recognition of human worth and dignity and the importance of harmonious industrial relations both for industrial efficiency and for the workers' happiness. The democratic spirit invaded most of the nations and the subsequent off-shoot of this new phase was its extension to the industrial level. Freedom of speech and of forming associations became the accepted ideals, and resulted in the rapid growth of Trade Unions.

These developments did not, however, always have happy results. Such associations quickly gathered such numerical strength that at times they unduly exploited their newly won rights and privileges against the interests of the nation or the people in general, and began to paralyse economic growth and normal life. Both the State and the employers as a class found it increasingly difficult to cope with this uphill task of conciliation, especially when

the Unions went on piling up their demands and insisting that they were all 'just demands'. Some solution had to be found. And a rather drastic solution was to declare the ill-considered and anti-national activities of the associations illegal and punish the offenders.

One of the best bargaining tactics, which was generally employed by such associations, was that of strike. In view of the tremendous national loss these strikes resulted in, the government armed itself with various laws either to settle the dispute in its own way or to break the strike by force instead of watching silently the tussle and its repercussions.

In every State there are certain essential services which must be maintained smoothly and at all costs in order that the general public may enjoy the benefits of a peaceful and orderly existence. These services are, for example, Posts & Telegraphs, Railways, Defence Services, and so on. Disturbance in any one of these creates chaos and brings life to a standstill. The fact that people employed in these services have an equal right to use the strongest form of bargaining tactics in order to compel submission to their demands is more a mockery of the democratic spirit than its rightful use. It is one of the foremost duties of every responsible government to maintain law and order for the public, and it must exercise its power to exact obedience from those who dare to defy its rules, in order that these 'minimum' objectives of a peaceful life may be realised. One per cent of the population can never be justified in paralysing the life of the

remaining ninety-nine per cent for realising its particular demands.

A peep into the existing systems of labour regulation in some countries will throw more light on the subject. In the U.S.A. the famous Taft-Hartley Act expressly forbids any individual employed by the Government or the Government Corporations to participate in any strike. In Japan the National Public Service Law of December 1948 prohibits government employees from striking or engaging in delaying tactics subject to penalties ranging upto 100,000 yen fine or three years' imprisonment. Even now strikes and slowdowns are prohibited in their Public Corporations and National Enterprises. Recently the Japanese Government punished 124,000 postal workers for a strike against the government. One should know that the above steps were taken in view of post-war reconstruction of Japanese economy, which was practically shattered by defeat in war. If government employees were left free to take any step they chose, Japan would not have recovered to such an extent, nor led Asian countries in industrial development and national uplift. Something like this can be witnessed also in the Indian field.

In Indonesia too, the approach to labour relations has not been any different. Prior to military control in 1957, though there was no prohibition of strikes in vital services, the system of compulsory arbitration was so strictly and extensively enforced that it hardly left any margin for the success of strikes. With the threat of rebellion in 1957, a state of war and emergency was declared, followed by a 'no-strike' ban in essential plants.

In India we have a very peculiar situation to study. The rapid growth of industries, besides bringing the Indian working class together, is giving them the so-called 'Proletarian Unity' which is frequently exploited by vested political interests. Our government, though conscious of this dormant

giant, has failed to evolve a dynamic and clear-cut policy for regulating labour in Public and Private Sectors. We suffer from vagueness and conflict. On one hand our constitution guarantees the right of association, which has resulted in the formation of Trade Unions in all the Private and Public (except Defence and Police Services) establishments, on the other the strikes can be declared illegal by the government in 'essential services' through a special ordinance. But in private establishments no such provision applies. Things would not have been so bad if the public sector list had been reasonably drawn or the definition of 'essential services' clear.

Some assert that the government loses its significance as possessing any special power in the matter of industrial relations when it 'steps into the shoes of an industrialist'. To some extent this may seem true in a democratic economy and particularly for avoiding 'double-standards' of employer-employees relations. But it is only a partial truth. The people running the public utility services have a responsibility—and a great responsibility—towards the community's welfare, just as the community has the right to press its own demands. And by all reasonable standards the former's responsibility overrides the latter's rights. The status of a government employee is described as a part of the government itself. And if the right to strike is frequently exercised in too many public utility services, one can easily foresee the disastrous consequences. After independence the government in Indonesia, being the larger employer of labour, tended to encourage Trade Unions (including Unions of government workers) to hold meetings and to strike, but soon strikes became such a threat to the whole economy of Indonesia that in February 1951 an ordinance was issued prohibiting strikes and lock-outs in vital undertakings. Something similar can be repeated in India too, inspite of so many preliminary conci-

liatory steps, if the government dispenses with the use of special ordinance.

The paradox of the situation in India is that we are not clear as to what constitutes 'essential services'. Are we to consult the public sector list, or is the term a variable one, changing from time to time and situation to situation? Some hint can be found in the following legislation.

The Essential Services Maintenance Act came into operation in 1957 in view of the threat of strike by postal employees. The Act declared a strike in Railway, Telegraph and Telephones as illegal with fine and imprisonment for violators. The latest ordinance promulgated by the President because of the strike of the Central employees sought to add some other items to the list of essential services. The ban included, besides the above, defence installations, operation and maintenance of aircraft and aerodromes, loading and unloading at ports, customs, the mint and the Security Press. In addition, the government reserved the right under the ordinance to declare any other service, whose closure may inflict hardship on the community at large, as essential, in which case stoppage of work in that service would also be prohibited. Now this clause of 'any other service' inflicting hardship on the community connotes such wide implications that practically all the industries in the Public Sector can be suddenly labelled 'essential'. If this situation occurs one wonders how the right of freedom of speech and association is defended. The public sector list is increasing at a quicker rate, especially as the policy of the State is directed towards the establishment of a socialistic pattern of society. A part of the list covers, for instance, three steel plants, L.I.C., the State Bank of India, sizeable interests in the production of chemical fertilizers, ship-building, machine tools and telephone equipment manufacture, locomotives and rolling stock construction, the nationalised Kolar Gold Mines,

forests, afforestation and timber, etc., etc. Possibly all the above services can be termed 'essential' at various times, subject to being covered by ordinances. Thus the gap between Socialism and Communism may be quietly narrowed to a vanishing line.

It is said that the main consideration behind current thinking on State-ownership of enterprises is that the private enterprises are usually based on motives of profit and power and it is considered unsafe for the State to allow the basic industries to be left to the private sector. This argument begs two questions. First, what do we understand by basic industry? Secondly, is the motive of profit the sole ground for blaming private enterprise? Are we to understand that officials in the public sector have clean slates in matters of favouritism and what not? And has not the government armed itself with so many restrictive legislations, social security measures, heavy taxation and so on, thereby lessening the profit to a sufficiently low level?

It is good that the recent strike of the Central employees fizzled out; but that is hardly a solution or a matter of great consolation. What would have happened if it had taken a serious turn both in becoming more widespread and in resulting in picketing? Besides a tremendous loss of life and property, it would have cracked governmental machinery and national economy. During the last year we witnessed the strike of the State Bank employees, serious labour disorder in Bhilai Steel Project, the threatened strike of Dock and Ports workers (happily averted by the Prime Minister's intervention) and above all the recent paralysing strike of the Central Government employees. If we are earnestly set for greater economic output and wish that similar situations may not flare up again, what we need is clearer thinking and attempts at resolution rather than suppression of differences.

The Meaning of Tet

By D. L. PHAM-XUAN-LUONG

Dear Mr. Abu Sayeed Ayyub,

Since Tet, our New Year Festival, will be coming shortly, I am sending you this modest contribution of mine with the eager and sincere wish that it will be generously accepted by QUEST as a token of goodwill and as a small key that will open the portal of mutual understanding between our two cultures.

Sincerely yours,

D. L. PHAM-XUAN-LUONG

We publish this brief contribution with our warm greetings to Mr. Pham-xuan-Luong and the people of Vietnam who are celebrating the happy festival of Tet.

EDITORS

TET, the Vietnamese New Year, is the most characteristic traditional festival of our country. You cannot, therefore, hope to gain insight into the essence of our culture unless you have fully understood the subtle meaning of Tet.

The origin of Tet goes back to remote Chinese antiquity. But as time went on, its rites underwent many changes and lost their original significance, so that gradually Tet became one of the main features of our civilization.

As regards the importance of Tet, Confucius, in his Five Classical Books, looked upon it as one of the compulsory periodic celebrations.

Should the King have failed to celebrate it, his Kingdom would have been subjected to dreadful calamities.

From the dawn of our history up to the present time, Vietnam has been known as an exclusively agricultural country in which the family is the basic social unit, the fundamental communal cell.

Tet is the yearly occasion on which members of a family gather together under the same roof to celebrate the great seasonal renewal of nature. So, it is a sort of family reunion. Impregnated with Confucianism, our people consider the cult of their an-

cestors as a religious obligation of the highest importance. Tet is an occasion on which each home seems to send out a silent call for all the members to gather before the altar of their ancestors. It is a sort of bond that ties the living with the dead.

Tet is also the festival of expectation and of greeting. On the threshold of the New Year, all the vestiges of the Old Year should be wiped out. Hatred and rancours should be buried under the ashes of the past. Worldly worries and griefs should be thrown aside, for it is commonly believed that a New Year brimming with hope, begins anew and has no link with the old. That is why Tet not only marks the end of the year but heralds the return of Spring — Spring in lovely Nature and Spring in every heart.

Because Tet comes round with the Lunar Calendar, it is different from the Western New Year's Day. According to the Gregorian calendar, the year begins its circle when nature is yet in deep slumber, while Tet returns when Spring is fully reborn. Another difference should be pointed out. Western people celebrate their New Year only in a single day, while the users of the Lunar Calendar — the Far-Eastern people — enjoy their New Year celebrations over a

long period. Sometimes it lasts as long as a month and is considered a vacation of compensation. It is not difficult to find the reason for it. The urbanized Western people have their Sunday, as prescribed in the Bible, as a weekly holiday. Before Eastern civilization came in contact with Western civilization, they did not have any conception of the week. They laboured all the year round tilling their lands, harvesting their crops. And, consequently, they made up their minds to choose the return of Spring as their rest time. This is just the occasion on which they can relax, 'eat well and sleep well' to recover the lost strength and vigour so that they may be strong

enough to face the New Year with all its challenge.

Tet is, moreover, a period of concord and hope. Worries and sadness are all dispelled by good wishes for Happiness, Longevity and Wealth. People return to each other the same words of greeting. Perhaps it is a common belief that the oftener the wishes are repeated, the sooner they must come true.

In short, with its fire-crackers, its apricot-tree, its narcissus with its incense of sacred aroma and its warm atmosphere of serene joy and expectation, Tet is a festive season of the highest solemnity. A brief study of its significance will enable you to dive deep into the depths of our age-old Eastern culture.



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LETTER FROM NEW YORK

By WILLIAM PHILLIPS

BY the time this letter appears we should know more exactly what the United States policy will be under its new president, but at this moment, right after the victory of Senator Kennedy, there is a feeling of expectancy in the air, as though we were about to enter a new era; and though the future is still not very clearly defined there is at least the conviction that we will not face it with the clichés of the past. Of course, there are many obvious things to be said about the election, most of which already have been said; and we can be sure that every aspect of the election will continue to be drenched in words and pictures, as the analysts now swing into action, and the experts who are already straining at the leash solemnly begin to lend their authority to what everyone already knows. But I should like to limit my comments to what I think is the mood of the country as reflected in the election, and to some of the questions that have remained unanswered up to now.

For some time it has been clear that the differences between the two candidates, and their parties, lay not so much in their disagreement on specific matters of domestic and foreign policy, though that was there, as in a difference of tone and of outlook. Kennedy really symbolized, even in his youthful charm and vigour, the merging of both the political and the intellectual discontent that have been growing more or less separately in this country. Usually, these two attitudes have little to do with each other, but in times of stress, as in the thirties, they come together in the form of

something like a national mood. The intellectual discontent is mostly a reaction against the peculiar combination of conservatism and philistinism that arose after the war: the conservatism made for limited horizons in literature and politics, the philistinism took the form of idealizing the values of commercial and middle-class culture. The political discontent was also made up of two elements: a dissatisfaction with the stale notions that go by the name of political thinking today, and a shocked recognition that the official, optimistic ideology of the country has more to do with soothing us than with solving our problems. It is of course this last feeling, the feeling of floundering and of crisis, that pulls the other moods together and gives them a political force. I am tempted to describe these new tendencies together as a radical wave, though they do not seem to add up to anything more radical than the New Deal; perhaps less so, because they do reflect the impulses that normally make for a break with outworn ideas and a search for new forms and new beliefs. It is no secret that the disillusionment with the communist regimes has inhibited the development of any serious radical movement, and the impulses that often go in that direction have recently cropped up in various forms of literary rebellion, political disenchantment, and general grumbling and restlessness.

Some of the political dissatisfaction shows up in the form of 'underground' questions, questions that are rarely asked

and more rarely answered, though they are always just below the surface of political life. These questions are sometimes restricted to the fate of the United States, as people are wondering how the United States permitted itself to sink into military parity with Russia, and whether this country will be able to hold its own, militarily and politically, in the next few years. But other questions, going beyond purely national considerations, ask whether the *laissez-faire* democracy of the West can hold back the communist tide, whether both West and East might not change in some radical way because of pressures from inside as well as outside, whether the 'balance of terror' might not be altered suddenly to favour one side, and, not least, whether atomic war can be averted and at what price. Some of these questions show a speculative detachment, regarded by some as a luxury in time of crisis, particularly by those who confuse nationalism with freedom and regard thinking about history as the occupational disease of intellectuals. But without going into the questions themselves, it is clear that they reflect not only the long-standing concerns of an intellectual minority but also the anxiety of a growing number of people who are awakening to the fact that neither peace nor freedom is guaranteed by a blind faith in ritualized ideas and institutions.

Who knows what will come of all this discontent, of all the rebellious stances? But one good thing is already evident: people are losing confidence in the 'professional' political leaders and thinkers, who usually preside over stable periods, when stupidity cannot do much harm, while the 'amateurs', the dreamers and impractical men, who are called on only in critical times, are now beginning to be heard. Some of the 'amateurs' will probably have a part in the new administration; others are just freelancers. But it is certainly a good sign that

practicality is no longer identified with lack of vision.

Unfortunately, literary life is much duller at the moment than politics, though the same forces—less directly—are at play. Two of our liveliest figures, Mary McCarthy and Dwight Macdonald, are temporarily expatriated—Miss McCarthy in Rome and Macdonald in London. But I think the exodus of the last decades to the hinterland has stopped. After the war it became fashionable for universities throughout the country to modernize themselves by inviting writers to teach literature and 'creative' writing, or to be 'in residence', which meant being on exhibition—domesticated works of art. The result, inevitably, was that the universities became slightly less academic, the writers much more so. Another result was that many intellectuals, who were once defined by Koestler, if I remember correctly, as that group which thinks independently, began to find all kinds of hitherto concealed values in small towns and academic communities. Fortunately, no tendency lasts very long in this country, and recently there have been signs of boredom and restlessness in the provinces, and the first contingent of ex-professors is on the way back to the East coast.

Though one cannot prove it and it is even difficult to give examples, I think most people are fed up with the gentility, respectability and smugness of the last decade. This period was truly an 'age of respectability'. It was a period given over to the claims of tradition and the rewards of responsibility; it was a time of complacency and stability, full of gratitude for what we have and fear of change, novelty, experiment. It showed itself in such things as the academic turn of criticism, in the overtime efforts of the sociologists to glamorize the *status quo*, in the hustle for money and position, in the general lack of controversy. There were of course notable

exceptions, many good things were written, but on the whole it was not an exciting time.

But the tide is turning. One can smell a new radicalism in the air. It is not the old political radicalism; it is rather a revolt against smugness and philistinism, sometimes against the very idea of responsibility, often against politics, left or right, though inevitably veering toward the left. It is often bohemian and anarchic, and, running true to form, it is libertarian in sex and politics. On the whole, the new radicalism might be described as 'literary', in the sense that it is made up of attitudes rather than programs, and it has become clear that even the most conservative have nothing to fear, for the new 'radicals' really want to change nothing but themselves.

The most dramatic example, of course, was the 'beat' movement which, for all its noise, never broke the political rules, and never questioned the form of the society it was trying to crash. The furthest it ever went was to flirt with juvenile delinquency and dope, but even criminality in this country has very little to do with dissent. The beat movement was an extreme and up-to-date version of bohemianism; it literally exploded because the bohemian urge had been bottled up so long in this country, and it caught fire among the young people because it served as an outlet for all kinds of rebellious feelings about society that could not be expressed in any other way. Like any other movement it had a few genuine talents, like Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Kerouac at the center, surrounded by hordes of fellow-travellers, whose intelligence and seriousness thinned out as they got further from the center of the group. And like other movements, it is beginning to peter out, as its more talented figures join the 'establishment', while the hangers-on continue to have fun as they wait, with their membership cards all made

out, for the next movement to form. Beat has been actually more of a social than a literary phenomenon; the fact is it has had little effect on American writing, and aside from the few gifted poets, it led to only one interesting work, *The Connection*, a remarkably well-paced stylization of the in-and-out theme, in the form of a jazz play about junkies.

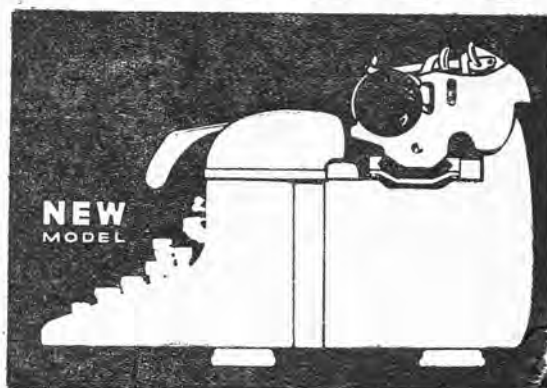
Other less off-beat works that have made some stir recently are Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd*, Harold Rosenberg's *The Tradition of the New*, Norman Mailer's *Advertisements for Myself on the Way Out* and Robert Lowell's *Life Studies*, all very different books, but all striking a new note. Paul Goodman, who for years has been regarded as the *avant-gardist*, suddenly finds himself being taken quite seriously as a responsible critic of society. As Kenneth Galbraith acutely pointed out in a review of Goodman's new book, most critics of society write in the same terms as those who praise it, while Goodman speaks in an original voice. The book, I might say in passing, has many echoes of the Marxist critique, but it has the sound of someone who makes his own observations and who cares. Harold Rosenberg's book is a collection of his essays on art, literary and political subjects. I think his main quality is a seductive, free-wheeling intelligence, and perhaps one of its most important effects is to encourage speculative boldness. Norman Mailer is trying to act like a young writer who is not famous; and, whether conscious or unconscious, this is very shrewd for he knows that the way to mine his talent is to push in the direction of novelty, violence and truthfulness. Like Mailer, Robert Lowell began in a more traditional way, but he is now the boldest and most exciting poet in the country. Only a careful reading of his new poems can indicate how remarkable is his achievement of letting loose his entire

personality without breaking down the discipline of the medium.

The most successful cultural commodity at the moment is sex. I say cultural, because sex always had a certain sales value in an advanced society, but only recently have the taboos been relaxed sufficiently to permit sex to invade those areas normally reserved for cultural morality and hygiene. I am not sure just why this has happened, but novel after novel, movie after movie is full of the kind of raw sex that in the past served only to provide censors, postmasters, ministers and judges with busy work. One could cite various causes for this flowering of sex: the country is finally growing up; the puritan influence is on the way out; sex is profitable and profit is not so squeamish as sex; we are running out of subjects; this is really the ultimate triumph of realism; the spread of popular psychoanalysis has broken through the sex barrier; and so on. I tend to think the main reason for this Roman feast—of the senses, as there is no evidence sex, itself, is on the increase—is that the country has been so shaken up by the new startling developments in science and in politics that we seem to have been cut adrift from history; and in such a period of dislocation the first thing to go is always conventional morality. Maybe this means that politically we need some sense of purpose and direction, and maybe this is another reason why Senator Kennedy, who gives the impression of having moral and political will, was elected. But when it comes to sex and culture, I still think we would do better to take our chances with license rather than restraint.

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POETRY

PERSPECTIVE

Saints, who thought the voices heard in cell
Or grove implied Authority, were told
By priests and lawyers that the Prince of Hell
Can speak of Love, although his heart is cold.
They say his call to serve is all pretence,
Who pushes you ahead, then falls behind
While you are tortured, pleading innocence:
The shadow you have chased was of your mind.

And yet, the body's movement in the dance
Is what the walker dreams of, on the hill
At dawn or nightfall, with an inward glance,
And hears a voice insisting. Find. Fulfill.
Diverted from the safer paths of men,
He rides into a marsh to see the Grail,
Or hopes to earn a living with his pen
Who reads the language of the world like Braille.

Reluctant creatures of a solitude
Whose deeds or poems haunt the human night,
Forgive yourself the springing of the blood,
The sad illusion of perpetual light.
Mark the places visited, turn the sod
With deeper thrust, for better or for worse,
And leave the rest to Darkness or to God:
The prospect of a blessing or a curse.

NISSIM EZEKIEL

POET, LOVER, BIRDWATCHER

To force the pace and never to be still
Is not the way of those observing birds
Or women. The best poets wait for words.
The hunt is not an exercise of will
But patient love relaxing on a hill
To note the movement of a timid wing;
Until the one who knows that she is loved
No longer waits but risks surrendering—
In this the poet finds his moral proved,
Who never spoke until his spirit moved.

The slow movement seems, somehow, to say much more.
To watch the rarer birds, you have to go
Along deserted lanes and where the rivers flow
In silence near the source, or by a shore
Remote and thorny, like the heart's dark floor.
And there the women slowly turn around,
Not only flesh and bone but myths of light
With darkness at the core, and sense is found
By poets lost in crooked, restless flight,
The deaf can hear, the blind recover sight.

NISSIM EZEKIEL

MEN AT WORK

Caught in flame the rose endures,
But feel the sun, that unthinking
Searing flame, compelling the blood
In flowers, spill forth
On the broad heaving backs of men,
Who fear death and cry,
 "This is no time to sing
 Or praise the goodness of the Earth:
 The Earth's our body,
 The sickness in the soil our mind,
 And on our backs rivers of sweat
 Spew their tortuous tender way;
 Feel, feel the sun."
Lambent the long day unwinds
Separate, unfeeling, a long way off,
Here is now, the dogged,
Unwearying jigsaw of arms and backs.

PRADIP SEN

THE VULTURES

(for friend Lal)

black prayer-wheels from Tibet
 watering the blue fields of death,
 vultures sit, with desires wet,
 draining the very air of its breath.
 they arrive in season,
 unearthly with beetle eyes,
 riding our doomed years,
 to trade in small fears,
 to hold the heart in treason
 and then to hang it with political lies.
 when the body surrenders its fabric of sin,
 vultures, welded to God-given pleasures,
 rip open religiously skeletal treasures,
 and, digesting the day's destiny, turn to next sun.
 scavengers from the sky whom no man pays,
 (schooled by God in their natural ways)
 they do justice to lonely bones, widowed flesh
 and orphaned skin, all with the same relish.
 who would expect them to do all this,
 watching them march priestly in a black mass?
 they do their job quietly and well,
 concealing in winged modesty their skill.
 gorging on other deaths, distorting original precisions,
 they must live till they die, possessed by holy visions.

K. RAGHAVENDRA RAO

A VALEDICTION

The hands of the clock have stopped at midnight.
Now is the time for all farewells,
time which is not yesterday, today, tomorrow;
release my hands, turn your face away
from mine, before you see me die
the coward's thousand deaths: this is the true valediction.

Go your way and let me go mine
each with our comfortable catchwords upon our lips,
knowing too well that we shall return
to the event and its moment in memory and time,
with the true knowledge of love's lost pride and passion,
and the last remembrance of love's compassion.

This is the true valediction: not merely a sense of loss
nor occasion for romantic tears and sighs;
but a knowledge that informs our lives
who know that living in time
is a separation from each moment we have loved.
What seems final and permanent
is the aftermath of such parting;
like a life just ended, or a life just begun.

F. R. STANLEY

Indian Tradition and Contemporary Architecture

By MADHAO B. ACHWAL

IN dealing with certain types of subjects, it is sometimes very advantageous not to begin at the beginning, and to proceed in a leisurely manner hoping to reach the beginning somewhere in the middle. A straight line has no particular virtue attached to it, except probably in geometry. A circuitous route might avoid all sorts of awkward pitfalls, not the least inconvenient of which is getting bogged down in tiresome definitions.

It is not very clear what we mean by Indian tradition. Whatever the meaning may be, we must remember that the revival of the past is not the right way of respecting tradition. We must also remember that every art, and particularly the art of architecture, is related to the social conditions of a time and to the aspirations of a people; and that it should be alive to the contemporary materials and modes of their usage. These are attitudes on which there seems to be a general agreement among all manner of people who choose to opine on architecture. Even the critics of modern architecture, while paying tribute to the past, concede this, though a little grudgingly one suspects. On the other hand, the 'avant-garde' choose these same planks to deride the revivalist architecture.

The layman, looking at the picture of contemporary Indian Architecture, notices two distinct trends. There is the work which is supposed to express the Glorious Tradition of India, by which is usually meant an odd mixture of all styles—two spoonfuls of Moghul arches and domes, two of Indo-British grandiose style, half a spoon of Ajanta, and not infrequently a Gopuram thrown in for good measure. Sometimes to this are added some cantilevers and sun-breakers (the accepted vocabulary of modernism), and the whole diluted by a lot of talk on 'adaptation of Indian tradition to contemporary design'. The 'Authority', with a few exceptions, is still solidly behind this trend. The semi-government organisations,

the public trusts and corporations sit on the fence and, while trying to show a little liberality outwardly, remain thoroughly conservative at heart. It is only in the field of industry and private building activity that the signs of change are visible, and here the other trend is noticed. These works seem to be more concerned with scoffing at the first, by their conscious attitude of violent denial of everything Indian as sentimental rubbish. At best these works strike the lay observer as pieces of perfect craftsmanship, but they leave him confused, failing to draw any emotional response from him. They seem to speak in an altogether different language, and this language makes no sense to him. There are, however, some works which treat him with more respect and sympathy, and appear to him to be products of mature minds. These are few and far between.

The purpose of this article is not to criticize, but to examine these trends, to inquire into the motivating forces behind these expressions, and to focus the discussion on aspects of architecture which seem to be most significant not to the architects but to the lay observer to-day.

Seen in this perspective, the dilemma of contemporary Indian architecture, it appears to me, is the dilemma of communication. Architecture is expression; it is also a language in which the creator, the architect, is trying to communicate something. He tries to communicate his specially felt sense of the covered space, made significant in its role as a shelter of human activity and as a symbol of both the 'human' (in its total sense) and the 'activity'. It is therefore connected on the one hand with the aspect of shelter, which deals with function and is conditioned by the nature of activities performed and the exigencies of the environment (location-climate-materials-finance), and on the other hand with the personalities of the human beings, who are themselves the pro-

duct of a culture. It is therefore functional and symbolic at the same time. To consider architecture in any one of these aspects exclusively is to do injustice to it, both as a creative expression and as a symbolic language of communication.

A language, as ordinarily used, is an arbitrary set of symbols which derive their meaning by being accepted as a medium of communication by a society. The symbols in architecture are the covered space-forms; but these, like symbols in any art, are not arbitrary. They are rooted in the fundamental relationship between forms and emotions, and come into existence in art, through the intuitive realisation of this relationship by the creative artist and his struggle with the problem of human shelter which he has to face in his own time. This is what makes them expressive and gives them a capacity to evoke response from anybody who comes into contact with them. The society, unacquainted consciously with their derivations, comes to accept these forms themselves as the fabric of which its tradition is made. The tradition of a people is thus the collective, communal experience of such symbolic expressions in life and art, and it is in this light that the Ajanta arch, the Gopuram, the Moghul *chattries* and domes, and such other motifs come to be identified with the Indian tradition.

The dilemma of contemporary Indian architecture is related both to that which is to be communicated and the struggle to express this in the media available to-day. The first refers to the excessive preoccupation with 'Indianness' and the second refers to the consciousness of the completely changed social structure, fields of activity, materials and their modes of usage.

A little probing into the psychological factors which create this dilemma may not be out of place here. Independence brought with it a sense of release, a feeling of freedom from foreign yoke. But it also took away the supports, as even domination provides psychological security because of the fact that somebody else

is always doing the thinking or taking decisions. The sense of confidence which threw off the foreign yoke is not in itself capable of giving the strength to build. The realisation of the loss of supports comes when one starts building, and the loss is felt much more acutely because the needs of the hour are rather urgent. There is the psychological necessity of declaring, at the top of one's voice (so that the whole world may hear), the essential nationality of the new-born State; there is also the need to declare that vaguely felt internationalism, which is to be the creed of this new state. There is the need to provide psychological security for our countrymen by convincing them that, though new, the state is stable and can take care of itself. All these needs are, in their very nature, discordant with facts, in the sense that the nationality (or that other feeling of internationalism) is yet to come into its own; the security is yet to be achieved. In every field of activity, including architecture, this, then, becomes a dramatic situation in which the tone has to be raised, the language is necessarily of rhetoric, and the gestures exaggerated. The language of the immediate past is entirely unsuited for it, because of its altogether undesirable associations; forging a new language requires deep introspection and experimentation, which the state is not exactly in a mood to undertake at that moment, and communication in it would also be difficult, as it would have yet to acquire its patterns of meaning. Psychological props are then hunted from the past, as, after all, there is no language more suited to the needs of the moment than the language of the past: it has all the symbolic associations necessary, it has a wide choice of tonal variations which are just apt and, well, it conveys the Message, doesn't it?

This state of affairs is seen more clearly in the architecture of the period than in any of the other arts, as it is this art which the state takes a hold on, to express itself. And it is thus that one comes to the spectacle of a revolutionary Russia abandon-

ing all experiments of the constructivists and the futurists in arts, and taking recourse to the traditional Tzarist architecture; of leading architects like Walter Gropius leaving Germany, as the nation accepted old classical architecture as its own (and having common sources of inspiration these two nations, which are so different in all respects show an identical face in Architecture; of even the democratic first-settlers in America copying Georgian mansions, though they had so strongly rebelled against the Georgian attitude; and of almost everything (with some few exceptions) that is state-owned in India, from the Ashoka Hotel to the merest exhibition pandal, trying to look monumental and Indian with a vengeance.

It is this consciousness of and excessive preoccupation with declaring one's identity that is responsible for much of the bad design in the contemporary architecture of our own country. This consciousness has driven a wedge between the creator and his creation. It has destroyed his open mind, his intuitive feel of things, and directed his creative talents in altogether irrelevant channels. It has created a split-personality within himself, the counterparts of which are constantly at loggerheads with one another. He is obsessed with the idea of being 'Indian', and would have been so, if left to himself, but is less so now that he tries to be so. A living tradition is the total response of a people who have *subconsciously* assimilated their past and adapted it to the situation in which they find themselves; but here the predominant characteristic is the *consciousness* of one's tradition.

And it is in this fact that the roots of a mistaken interpretation of tradition lie. Instead of searching for the principle which creates the form, particularly the form in such an art as architecture, one is tempted to take the form itself as the essence of tradition. The mistake lies in equating the outward expressions of a culture with the force which made it what it is. Emphasis is laid on the fact that these forms convey a

meaning and speak in a language that people understand. It is certainly true that the forms do have a certain value, as associations have come to be attached to them, and the architect working today has to keep a creative contact with them by understanding their relationship with the fundamental language of forms, to be able to communicate at all. This is understandable, but what one finds instead, is a tendency to catch on to the forms themselves, which, with simplification and adaptation, offer ready-made solutions, and it is this tendency which has characterised the bulk of contemporary architecture today, and is behind the first trend noted earlier.

But this line of thinking creates its own machinery of reaction. Impatient with these hybrid examples which pass off as new architecture and are glorified as the Indian Renaissance, the younger generation violently reacts to it and condemns it as reactionary, false and sentimental rubbish. So far, they would be right; but in their crusading enthusiasm they go to the other extreme of reducing architecture to the role of a glorified craft which provides solutions to problems of function, construction and abstract aesthetics. In denying altogether the importance of social responses to architectural symbolism (in which tradition does play a part, and a very important part), they deny its role as communication itself, and then it becomes an individualistic-esoteric art which fails to evoke any response whatever, because the common ground is missing, and has to be sold with a lot of tall talk on the 'philosophy of modern architecture'. Architecture is primarily a sensual language of communication and must evoke its responses directly; if it cannot do that, then manifestos are not of much help. And it is here that certain misconceptions are created and take root. 'Function' is taken in an altogether literal sense, meaning serving a utilitarian purpose. This is putting the cart before the horse. Architecture, like all arts, is primarily symbolic expression, and in all great works, the necessity of creat-

ing a symbolic expression has come first and the function (in the sense given), materials or construction, had to catch up with it. In fact, it is the first which had exerted a pull on the others, and has made their progress (in terms of architectural environment) possible. The idea that architecture belongs to its times, would be perfectly valid if related to the state of technological progress at a given time. But it is interpreted in such a way as to make architecture a mirror in which a time is to find its reflection. Architecture is an art, and an architect a poet. He may or may not choose to belong spiritually to the time in which he exists. A Lewis Carroll creates his own wonderland, plumb in the middle of a 19th century. A romantic creative genius like Frank Lloyd Wright did not belong to his times; he brought round time to belong to his creations. The truth of the architect's work is entirely to be judged by the emotional chord that he can strike in the hearts of people who see his work and live in it. 'Honesty of Expression' is taken to mean the exposure of the structural skeleton of a building and the materials of its construction. Honesty in art is integrity to one's aesthetic concept, and has nothing whatever to do with honesty as normally understood. The artist, in being true to the illusion that is finally to be his creation, is at complete liberty to be entirely dishonest and may beg, buy, borrow or steal as he thinks fit. What he chooses to do is entirely determined by what he is trying to achieve. While not denying the considerations of economy in a poor country like ours, let us not be led into making calculations as to how many houses could have been built if a certain structure had cost less, not because that particular structure justifies the expense, but because a dangerous line of thinking is involved here. One remembers here the Chinese philosopher who, when he had two pice with him, bought bread with one, so as to live, and a flower with the other, so as to give him a cause for living!

One could understand the manner in which the architecture of our country

shaped itself in its stock responses in the early period after independence. But the time has come, it seems, when a clearer picture should emerge. The country has now settled down to serious construction, after the initial spurts of enthusiastic deification of Indian tradition on the one hand and an equally violent reaction to it on the other. The state of consciousness out of which these arose should now be over. The hunger for Monumentality is rather out of date, and its equation with scale more so. The tone can now be lowered as there is no more need for the dramatic or the rhetoric. The attitude of calling upon architecture to play the tune like a court-jester is the one single factor which has done the greatest harm to contemporary Indian architecture. The 'Authority' can contribute very much, if it really so desires, by leaving the architects alone, and not bothering overmuch whether the buildings created by them are in keeping with its own interpretation of the Indian tradition. The cause of architecture does suffer by indifference or neglect, but sometimes it suffers much more by overglorification. It is rather unfair to call upon architecture to Lead Mankind to its Glorious Destiny. Architecture will crumble under such a prophetic role. All that an architect desires is to be able to experiment, to be able to create and to communicate. He knows his social responsibility, but he is not consciously interested in enriching his tradition.

As in all creative arts, the worth of his creation will be determined by his own creative abilities. Once this is accepted, we might have good or bad buildings, but at least they will be created by us, and not by the ghosts of our ancestors, or the living ghosts of contemporary geniuses sitting over our shoulders and directing our pencils. When we are thus truly ourselves, we might possibly regain that intrinsic poise and tranquillity which characterised the best in Indian tradition. We might regain it, because then it would have grown out of us as a tree out of its soil, utterly without effort and without consciousness.

SHORT STORY

Ghost House

By ANITA DESAI

IT is during the monsoons that they grow truly frightened—the family in the old house. Hearing the wind tear at the loose shutters, the rain rattling down on the brittle fan leaves of the palms, watching the brief glare of lightning pick out a water-heavy lily, a clean washed bone in the garden, hearing the water drop steadily through the ceiling, once ornate, gilt, now warped, leaking—they grow afraid. Tremble even, draw together, shrink into themselves, not daring to confess their fears. Pitiful. Pitiful, for that is the season when they have least cause for fear. We have no time for them then, and no inclination to diversion. Loving the rain, we watch it fall, listen to it, smiling. All night we pace in its sweet spray that drifts into the great open corridors upon wings of night wind, and up in the high turrets that are windowless—have been, for fifty years—and leave the moaning and the sudden unexplained clash of doors and falling paintings to the wind, the wearing drip of water and the mysterious pool of water on the staircase to the storms. 'It's them again,' says the daughter-in-law, whose face has grown lined in the seven years that she has lived in our house, and we are sorry: we mean her no harm and, in the season of storms, leave her alone to nurse her nerves. But she dares not go down to the cavernous storeroom to fetch rice from the great sacks upon the shelves, and at night she sits up in her bed and listens to the shutters banging, banging.

But we—we love the rain, the monsoon. It is our time for resting, and dreaming, when the unfolding coils of rain slide like mercury across the slanting plantain leaves,

and on rainless nights when fireflies rise out of an unknown goblin region beneath the saturated lawns and weave a counterpoint of light through the soft, murky mist that veils the sleeping trees. Our time for dreaming, remembering. There is much to remember, after all. Two hundred years, very nearly. By now they ought to know us, the family—they have lived here, generation upon generation, for these two centuries, in this great house, and they ought to know us at last, and know how we hide up in the locked spare rooms to watch the rain by our lone selves, and then, when the hot sun comes burning through great cream billows of cloud again, how we step out, as the children do, to join in the kite-flying. When the boys collect new kites from the shop down at the end of the long street, and race up the narrow stair-case to the roof-top with them, we come too; silently, swiftly we come too, and laugh with delight to see the wind crash ferociously into the diamond of fine scarlet paper held in the trembling hands of young Khokon, and raise our heads eagerly to see it go sailing up, up into the sky, into the clouds and further up, into the sun itself, leaving the rain-washed palms, the muddy, swollen river, and the flat roofs of Chandernagore all down below. Impossible to resist mounting them, riding them, these swooping, buoyant sails, and we fly with them, shaking our garments when they rustle, turning and swirling and soaring as they do. Or, enthralled, we watch from the parapet, watch a kite of singing emerald green with a corner diamond of black battle with a kite of red and white marquee stripes, and cut it with a slash of

its glass-sharp string so that it goes twirling, like a last leaf from a forlorn tree, down to the earth where fifty waiting urchins clamour for it with waving hands.

How we enjoy it. But they do not understand, and are unfair. We were accused when Khokon of the peaked face, the *kohl*-ringed eyes, walking backwards across the parapet, unfolding the string from the bamboo handle between his hands, tilted his face up so that the sun dazzled his eyes, and he began to stumble backwards, a despairing exultation upon his rabbit face, as though he had had a vision — not of the sun, but of something rarer, stranger than light; had had a vision, yes, a fearful one, and so he backed, and backed further, screaming like a siren gone berserk, till he stumbled, came to the edge of the parapet, fell backward, fell ...

He did not 'die' — yet they blame us. He sits now, white-faced, cavern-eyed, dully in the corner room behind the hall where his grandfather's dancing-girls once danced. He sits there silently, a look of blank amazement on his idiot face, his mouth still open as it had been at that moment. 'Khokon, eat,' his mother coaxes him, and places a ball of rice, a slice of banana in that wide mouth. 'Khokon, sleep,' his old nurse begs him, stretching out his crippled limbs and laying him on the bed. 'Sleep,' she begs him, and sings him a song that only keeps him awake longer. He cannot sleep. His eyes stare wildly, as they had at that moment when his eyes were torn from his scarlet kite to something higher, something closer ... Yet surely it was not one of us he saw? Could we have flashed, brilliantly, momentarily, upon an eyeball rendered, for a split second, hypersensitive, seeing beyond the sunlight into the shadows, beyond the morning, into the night? As a mind, fully alert, shifts its consciousness suddenly from all that so far has appeared real, to a new reality beyond it, and makes the enlightened one cry out 'But

look — do you see it, too?' so he too appears stunned, troubled, frightened. But he does not see us now, poor child, sees hardly anything. Yet he sits there, on his bed, straining to see — open-mouthed, wide-eyed — once more, one more glimpse. It will come. But not just now, not yet. He is only a child, after all.

His mother blamed us, and there are more and more deep, dark lines cutting into her face, for now she thinks, she chooses to think, that what her son saw, she sees too. What her son heard, she hears too. What had he seen? What had he heard? An evil draught, a murmuring wind that blows through her room alone, tearing the frayed edges off the old Victorian four-poster's canopy, lifting bits of paper from nowhere, and showering them everywhere. At night she sits bolt upright in bed, crying that the cupboard door keeps banging in the wind. 'Close it, close it before it drives me mad!' Her husband, who eats too much at dinner, devours so vast a quantity of moist rice that he cannot, after that, respond to her most impassioned pleas, growls 'Lie down and go to sleep.' But she cries, 'Listen to the wind! There is a storm and, oh, it will break the tree down,' and she runs to the window that is shrouded by a dying jacaranda. But she finds each leaf immobile, silent in the dark. For there is no storm — it is only my pale sister who sits in the darkest recesses of the cupboard, embroidering a cloud, a little fog, a small white mist. She sits there, stitching, stitching her years away, and sometimes the garment rustles as she progresses along a hem, unfolds a little, spreads about her in billows, slips under the door to spill across the floor in a wavering shadow. And the old sweeper woman who comes sometimes to sweep away the cobwebs with her broom, makes a face and spits. 'What a foul smell!' she exclaims, croaking. 'Bah!' she says, and bangs the cupboard shut so that her mistress gives a jump and a cry.

And her husband groans at all the noise these maniac women make!

Not that he is always so composed. When he is confronted with a great gleaming tray of rice and fish curry and pickles, then, yes, smiles spread like ripples of oil across his complacent face. This, for us, who live on night air and garden odours, is too much. 'We must wipe that smirk off his face one day,' my band of companions declared, and so, one night, we made him scream and run like a woman, scream and run. His grandfather had told him, often, of the old carriage, now decaying in the stables, which the young man scorned for the town cycle rickshaws. On the night before Baisakh, he told him, it is known to go rumbling up the drive, drawn by invisible horses, lit by weird lamps, to disappear in the wilderness that was once the great stable, the envy of Chandernagore. And he would laugh, our porcine young man, and set out in a rickshaw for his evening drink at the bar that had once been a famous tavern, the most popular of all amongst the French colonists who had once lived here, and is now choked with grime gathering nostalgia. There he spends his evenings, gloriously, amongst companions who also have homes to hide from, futures to forget, pasts to recall in the reflecting pools of amber liquid. Upon returning one night, glowing with liquor, seeing through a mist of fluid, gurgling gold, he did indeed see us appear out of the high hedge of white-starred oleanders, rumble swiftly up the rutted drive between marble statues languishing upon their pedestals, and disappear in the stirring massed darkness beyond the house, the carriage lamps going out one by one, weakly, the horse hooves softening into silence.

'He has been drinking,' his mother said, when they came to lift him up from the ground and carry him in. 'You can smell his breath from here,' she cackled shrilly. 'Shh,' said the father, furtively, glancing at

the gates. 'The neighbours might be watching, the townspeople might have seen.' But the old grandfather chuckled. 'It is the night before Baisakh,' he said, chuckling till he choked. And we, too, chuckle. Sitting in the lamproom, a flight of stairs below the kitchen, we chuckle too when, at twilight, the old lamplighter comes to clean the misty chimneys, fill in oil, light wicks and carry his flickering lanterns above stairs. It is a pretty sight, a lovely tradition that electricity, which has banished its magic from the rest of the town, has not yet destroyed in our house. We crowd the steps when the hour comes, make way for the old man as he gropes his way down, bearing fire like an antic god, and watch him gleefully as he sets to work. So lovely is it, that sometimes we cannot resist blowing out a lamp in order to see him light it again, cursing us richly and roundly, for he is a brave old man and takes pride in the many years of service he has given our household, and we make way for him as he goes groaning up the stairs, a lamp in each hand, and 'Balaram! O-oh, Balaram,' he roars for help. But that miserable urchin hides beside the kitchen fire, and nothing, not even fear of a whipping, will bring him down to us after dark. And so, sometimes we even put the kitchen fire out.

They say we do not like light!

The merry fire-extinguishers are not the only pranksters of our band. There are the dancing girls who linger on, with women's devotion to memories, in the old *jalsaghar*, that oval room above the porch, where the sightless bumbling bats flit in through the windows and crash into the chandeliers, setting them tinkling. Dust falls on the marble-topped tables that hold albums and china bowls of coins, and seeps under the glass bells to the china figurines, the shells, the dolls, and settles on the gilt frames of the portraits of Queen Victoria, large dark landscapes, family portraits — one of them a photograph of Thakur-babu as a boy in

an Eton suit, (he had not *been* to Eton, no, of course not, but he had had a private tutor, an Englishman who now lies in a grave beneath a burgeoning mass of livid exotic blooms that shrouds him who had with such persistent love murmured 'Primroses.' With his lips pursed primly round the narrow syllables, 'Primroses' he had hissed at the boy in the Eton collar, in an intense effort to communicate to him the quality, the magic of those dew-brushed *prim-r-o-ses*...) Thakur-babu, the oldest living member of the family, who stands propped against a statue of a voluptuous nude, 'European,' he proudly claims, caressing the smooth marble, hearing again that hissing European voice. And the dust falls gently, even upon the dancing girls, tickling one of them so that she sneezes, laughs delightedly, sets the bells of her anklet chiming. And Thakur-babu, letting go the glass in his hand, cries out. Not in fear. He is too old for that, too knowing, but because of the jolt of blood in his veins, the sudden warmth springing up in the pit of his stomach which sets his blood tingling. 'Ah,' he whispers, 'but I thought they were dead. No, they are here,' and then, in anguish, he cries 'They are here, and won't come. I have no money left. Will they come for nothing less than money?' And he begins to weep. But she slips away. She would come for fun, for laughter, but not for tears, the dreadful, shameful tears of an old man, and she slips away under the shabby Persian rug, crawls off behind the velvet drapes and tosses her curls so that a flower falls from her coiffure. He falls upon it, slobbering, weeping, and they find him there, upon his knees, and carry him away. The sweeper, who is sent in to sweep up the broken glass, sweeps up a faded rose as well, but it falls apart into a little heap of dust the moment it is touched. The old man cannot forget, cannot sleep. All night he twists and turns, twists and tosses, for his room is next to the *jalsaghar* and he can

hear the drumming of the *tablas*, the lonely wail of the *shehnai*, the rich, perfume-drenched voice of a woman singing of love, and wine, and the high porcelain laughter of women who lived for love, for wine — and music too. All night the light of the chandeliers flickers across the crack beneath the dividing door, and he does not sleep, but watches it till it hardens to a bar of rude white daylight.

We try so hard — the kite-fliers, the carriage-drivers, the dancing-girls — to cheer them up. But they remain sad, melancholy. The old sit nursing their regrets, their dreams, and end in weeping. The young sigh over their worries, glasses of liquor beside them, and gamble the nights away, fumbling with their cards, swearing they had suddenly come across one that had not been there before, or that the trump card had disappeared, and then they curse us, crying 'Witchcraft! Devilry! Damn them all!' But their bravado does not last, and while their fortunes dwindle, their fears multiply.

What a dreary lot they are. The relations from Calcutta, ten miles to the south — to the south, to the south, where the sea is! — call them 'old fogies', and visit them only on certain holidays — there is still some property after all! — and bring them sweets, shop-made, and therefore left untouched by our proud ones. 'Crackpots!' jeer the townsfolk, peering through the iron railings into the vast gardens, slowly mouldering beneath a tangle of damp green wilderness, jeering at the drunken young men returning home at night, barked at by pariahs. 'Crackpots!' We are not so harsh, though they try us sorely. Poor haunted ones, so full of dreams of the past that the future remains a shadow in comparison to that blaze of glory that had been theirs and now is not. Dear haunted friends, we alone understand, we alone remain to watch, to entertain, to keep you in company and, at last, to draw you gently into sleep.

DISCUSSION

Imperialism or *Marx's Posthumous Martyrdoms*

By HERBERT LUTHY

IF we are not careful, my dear Sternberg, this controversy* may well become another 'conflict of the century', going on for the rest of our lives and even longer. You reproach me, practically speaking, with not having quoted your book *in extenso*; I am sorry, but a review notice has its limits: with not having added references to your subsequent works, for you are a fertile writer: with not having given your views on Clausewitz (which did not strike me by their originality), nor the military theories of Engels, who was a close student of Clausewitz: with not having remarked on the inferiority of Keynes, whom I never mentioned and whose place in this discussion seems to me doubtful, but whom you reproach, in his turn, with having confined himself to an analysis of the conditions of equilibrium in the capitalist economy of the 1930's, instead of ranging over the emancipation of the colonial countries, their relationships with the communist system, the future of Asia and so on and so forth... At that rate, why should we forget interplanetary rockets, the trial of Socrates, the organization of leisure and the state of lyric poetry in the age of television, while adding that, in order to understand all these things, we need only refer to that part of Karl Marx's work which, alas, he never found time to write?

This being so, and because I am obliged to settle this quarrel without too much regard either for our friendship or for the reader (for this article will probably be a long one), let me begin by recalling the very object of this discussion, which has become rather lost in the course of it.

In my notice of your book *The Conflict of the Century*, the original title of which, in both German and English, summoned 'capitalism and

socialism to the bar of history', I questioned the theoretical premises according to which you marshal the history of modern times: these premises are only implicit in the work mentioned, and tacitly presented by your way of linking events and making one arise from the other; however, they are always the fundamental premises you used to elaborate in your weighty theoretical works of the 1920's on 'imperialism'—which your French or English readers have not had the good fortune to find in translation.

Dogma and Fact

Your thesis in itself — roughly speaking, it is true — is fairly well-known, and I must again apologize for not giving here, in its entirety, your own very detailed version (I would rather you had explained it yourself, with the modifications that you may have made to it in the course of thirty-five years' experience): in brief, then, it is the theory which makes 'imperialism' (a term which includes both the formation of colonial empires and European economic expansion across the world, not to mention militarism, dictatorships and war) the consequence of the 'capitalist contradictions' — class hatred and conditions antagonistic to capitalist production — or, more exactly, the last method of survival open to capitalism in spite of the contradictions that have condemned it to death for over a century. In short, Marx's analysis would have been absolutely accurate, and capitalism as such would never have survived the crisis of 1857, or of 1866, or anyway that of 1873, had there not occurred, as a new factor which Marx could not have foreseen, that 'imperialist expansion' which enabled capitalism to survive from one crisis to another at the price of wars, crimes, the oppression and pillage of non-capitalist peoples,

*See *Quest*—20, Jan.-March 1959 and *Quest*—23, Oct.-Dec. 1959.

and ever more catastrophic contradictions: now, however (says the theory) — this was after the First World War, and this was a retrospective prophecy concerning the situation in 1914 — the world has been shared out, the imperialists can only cut each other's throats, and the fatal date predicted by Marx is coming, after so many confused turnings of history... I have criticized this thesis in general as a scholastic invented after the event, in order to enable the doctors of Marxist science to escape from the contradictions that exist between the dogma (pauperization of the masses, the reduction of society to an enormous mass of wretched exploiters on the one hand and a tiny handful of exploiters on the other, etc.) and the facts, by introducing, after the event, history as an outside contingency that has so far prevented the coming true of Marx's prophecies. I also attacked certain historical postulates that form the hinges of this fable, and especially the very concept of 'imperialism, last (but one?) phase of capitalism'. (The formula is Lenin's, but it also sums up your theory of imperialism).

The Last Phase, or Pre-history?

It is historically false, contradicted as it is by mere chronology, that 'imperialism' (world colonization or economic expansion) was born of 'capitalism' at a certain stage of the latter's development as a method of enabling it to escape from its contradictions. Unless, of course, you use 'capitalism' as a word that covers every phenomenon of rapacity, desire of lucre and of conquest from the primitive Stone Age horde onwards — in which case you could include under it the rabble of gold and diamond prospectors of Criquequaland who were the cause of the Boer War, but also Columbus, Pinzon and Pizarro, who were gold-diggers and empire-builders like them, or the condottieri of the Renaissance, or the merchant-adventurers of the early Middle Ages, or any other organizer of conquests and slave-trader of historical times. But if, as your books and your references to Marx seem to show, 'capitalism' means something a little more exact — i.e. an economic and social regime based on the private ownership of the means of production, salaried employment and a competitive market; the regime that resulted from the 'industrial revolution' of the 17th and 18th centuries, to which Marx's entire analysis is applied — it becomes clearly patent that this regime was only born and could only have been born within the context of what was already a world economy, an economy

which had implied the use, from the dawn of the 16th century onwards, of the resources both of the Old and New Worlds, with the maritime countries of Europe acting as motive forces behind a vast planetary movement between the silver of America, the African slave-trade and the products and foodstuffs of India and the Far East. This revolutionary phenomenon, characteristic of modern times and which we call 'capitalism' — meaning types of enterprises, men and thinking — was formed and developed on the fringes of the constituted societies of the old Europe, in the domain of doubtful adventure and anarchical freedom opened up beyond the bounds of the corporative, aristocratic and state-controlled regimes of Europe's closed, static economies. It was planetary before becoming national, conquering before being domestic, 'imperialist' and outlawed before it was ever lawful or peaceful. This inversion of the terms is not an historian's trick; in the course of so many developments, let us just recall the fact that the first industry organized along capitalist lines, in the modern sense of the expression — and one which destroyed the economic rules of the old regimes in Europe — was one whose sources of supply and markets were, from the first, on a world scale: that of the printed cottons known as 'Indian stuffs'. To suppose that 'capitalism' was a local product of Western Europe (or, more exactly, of England) which developed in isolation and which then set forth to conquer the world once Europe had become too small for it, is an insult to all historical fact: one cannot ignore centuries of an expansion that was more often bloody than peaceful and which provided the prelude and the very condition for the 'capitalist' transformation of Europe (as Marx well knew when he assumed the historian's mantle in order to describe 'the primitive accumulation of capital') and then introduce them, at a later stage — from 1850 or 1870 onwards — as a 'consequence' or 'last phase' of capitalism.

Imperialism preceded capitalism and existed without it, before it, independently of economic regimes, which only lent various colours to it. This trite evidence is known to any schoolboy who has ever opened a history-book, but it has to be repeated because a whole so-called Marxist scholasticism insists on contradicting it. A large number of good authors — such as Schumpeter in his *Sociology of Imperialism* — consider, for very valid reasons, that imperialism, national antagonisms and wars of hegemony are survivals of the pre-industrial and pre-capitalist age, the political (and psychological) leaders of which survived the

industrial revolution, putting its new wine into their old bottles. Such, too, was the opinion of liberal economists from Adam Smith onwards, who were all congenitally cosmopolitan and violently anticolonialist; such, too, was the opinion (I hope you will forgive me) of Karl Marx who saw with his own eyes, during the long period of scarcely-untroubled peace that made up his adult life, national antagonisms and state frontiers abolished as a result of the growth of industrial, bourgeois societies, the expanding international movement of goods and people and the universal interdependence of the world market, and the pre-eminence of internal questions concerning the political and social regime (the 'class struggle') over national or dynastic rivalries. Like the liberal economists, Marx built his model political economy without taking account of the survivals of a feudal or absolutist past offered by colonial empires, national protectionism and power-rivalries, which were anachronistic remains in a modern economic society, and therefore doomed to disappear.

As capitalism, organizing industrial production and world-wide markets, became the dominant economic regime in the West, it seemed likely that the old rivalries between States, military castes, territorial ambitions and the very role of state machines as sovereign powers would disappear. Colonial and mercantile wars, far from being characteristic of the capitalist, bourgeois regime, belonged to its pre-history. The British, French and Spanish colonial empires had foundered or been eaten away by the beginning of the 18th century, when the industrial and commercial bourgeoisies finally triumphed: almost the only compact mass left was that of the Indian empire, which survived like a monster from another era under the administration of its antediluvian East India Company, against which all the leaders of the liberal bourgeoisie waged a ceaseless war. Pre-historical too — to be placed under the heading of primitive accumulation — was the insolent power of the colonial nabobs during the days of Fox and Pitt, when the 'India Lobby' dominated or bribed the British Parliament and dictated its wishes to governments in a way that no colonial lobby has ever equalled since. It was not on account of the manufacturers of Lancashire or Birmingham that the Clives and the Hastingses — who were no more 'capitalist' than the Spanish conquistadors — conquered India (nor was it on their account that the viceroys of the Victorian epoch were to maintain and administer the Indian Empire; read Panikkar on the subject), and the India Lobby had no more violent opponents than

English manufacturers in general and the cotton-masters in particular — a tradition that has remained that of the English liberals and free-traders. It was understandable that classical economists — and, in this respect, Marx is a classical economist — should leave aside these precapitalistic survivals in a theoretical model of the capitalist economic regime.

We know very well that the regime thus analysed had a definitely international and a national economic system, driven solely by private interest, and its immanent antagonisms (competition between firms and the class-struggle) in no way supplanted the national States, the old power-groups, the military and administrative castes or the tradition of power politics inherited from the dynastic period. On the contrary, the 'capitalist regime' was, little by little, incorporated into the existing national States; the 'laws of the market' were falsified and perverted by national protectionism (which were practically continued without interruption by all European countries with the exception of England; it is in this connection that the English pattern, which all the classical writers thought was to be that of the future, is especially deceptive); world economy was again dislocated by a return to the system of colonial closed markets; the old imperialism drew new strength from industrial capitalism and pressed its enormous potential into the service of militarism and power-politics; former military and feudal states equipped themselves, under the leadership of their reigning castes, with all the techniques of capitalist organization, which had become the primary condition of military strength: in short, political economy had turned itself into *Nationalökonomie* and had produced regimes which one may just continue to call 'capitalist' if one makes it clear what the word means in the context, but to which it is certainly not possible to apply Marx's analysis, any more than that of the classical liberals, for neither he nor they had even dreamed of a *samurai* capitalism — or one ruled over by People's Commissars.

It is not your 'facts' that I am criticizing, but your way of interpreting them and of establishing, explicitly or covertly, a fallacious causality which consists in turning into 'consequences of capitalism' or 'antagonisms of capitalism' (that is to say the capitalism studied by Marx and the class-antagonisms described by him) everything that is previous to capitalism, that incorporated itself into it or vice versa, and that may well survive it: power politics, military castes, nationalism and national oppression, wars and tyranny; in other words, deducing the whole of political history from

a concept that has been formed without taking account of either politics or history, as though a method of production and distribution could, by its internal contradictions, have produced Napoleon, Rhodes, Iswolsky, Bismarck, Mutsuhito, Hitler... and why not Rameses and Stalin?

Capitalisms Galore

This is where your use of the words 'capitalism' and 'capitalist' becomes tiresome. Sweden, France, the United States, Japan, Austria, Holland—do you really believe that these countries, with their political and social structures, their mentalities and ambitions, can even be approximately defined by the word 'capitalist', which you apply without distinction to any more or less industrialized non-communist country? When you say that in Marx's day (he began to publish *Capital* in 1867 and died in 1883) hardly a tenth of the world's population lived under capitalist regimes, whereas by 1900 (how time flies!) one-quarter of humanity was working for this regime and capitalism was reigning 'from the triple political, economic and military viewpoint' over the other three-quarters, what do you really mean? Capitalism reigning 'from the military viewpoint': what is this curious economic regime? When the emirates of the Pirate Coast placed themselves under the protection of the British Navy, did capitalism then begin to reign over them? (To take a similar form of reasoning; Nomadism having been the economic and social regime of the Mongols, and the Mongols having conquered China at the end of the 13th century, nomadism reigned over China....)

One can draw anything at all from an abstract expression, if one has already put everything into it. Of course, everything was linked together in concrete historical evolution—the British dominion of the seas, the European colonization of America, the liquefaction of the Eastern empires, the rise of industrial economies, political and constitutional transformations, national rivalries, wars between Powers, revolutions and counter-revolutions, the expansion and suppression of the slave-trade, unequal pressure of population, victorious ideologies—and it is never possible to analyse one of these historical facts while leaving aside the rest (but is not that exactly what Marx did when, abandoning his historical explanation of the 'genesis of capitalism', he turned towards a completely conceptual and dialectic analysis of 'capitalism in itself'?). If you have put the whole history of the world during the past few centuries into a hat marked 'capitalism', it is easy for you to pull the

whole of world history out of it, leaving us open-mouthed in the face of such an amazing performance.

A Colonial Empire as the attribute of a Great Power

In his virulent polemic against the imperialist ideology propagated under the pretext of 'economic' or 'demographic' needs, Hobson, the 'naive Liberal' was far more perspicacious than the Marxist authors, who have always accepted as gospel the demagogic utterings of the Joseph Chamberlains, Ferrys and Tirpitzes, and who have believed—or pretended to believe—the honeyed tongue of Cecil Rhodes when, in order to extract himself from his ill-fated military adventure of 1896, he came to tell the Lancashire workers that their daily bread depended on the conquest of Central Africa; which was about as true as to say that the daily bread of the Ruhr workers depended on the conquest of Kilimanjaro, which is what they were told by Dr. Peters and his *Kolonialverein*. The serious fact is that it was not 'capitalism' or even 'European imperialism', which are mere abstractions, that 'conquered the world', but England, France, Germany, Russia and Italy which were carving out their empires and confronting each other as rivals, not because their economic needs dictated the taking over of Somaliland or the Sudan, but because it was urgent to run up the flag and to paint in national colours the largest possible area of the map of the world, before someone else did so. A colonial empire, even if it only consisted of sand and stones, was considered as an indispensable attribute for accession to the rank of a Great Power; that is, quite simply, the mechanism of the famous scramble for Africa of the 1880's, which corresponded so little to economic imperatives that, thirty and even fifty years later, most of these territories had hardly begun to be exploited. Of course, there were always economic interests present, and, if need be, they could be manufactured in the simplest way by distributing some phantom shares on the Stock Exchange. If you analyse closely any of the great imperialist ventures camouflaged as capitalist enterprises, from the 'Cape to Cairo' to the 'Berlin-Baghdad', or the exotic loans for the colonies and the imperial companies of Africa or Oceania which began to pullulate about 1880 and which were able to sell their charters for their weight in gold ten or twenty years later without having invested a farthing, you will find that, in nine cases out of

ten, there were strategic aims being pursued by diplomatic and military Chiefs of Staff who needed 'straw capitalists' to serve as an alibi for their seizures of territory, and not capitalist magnates manoeuvring the diplomats and generals for their own purposes.

The Great Slump in Cottons

Of course, there is always the old chestnut of literature about 'imperialism', which keeps on recurring: the cottons market, and the ruin of India by English cotton stuffs. . . I shall not display the bad taste of remarking that the British administration in India did not spend its whole time trying to ruin that country, nor of repeating that the cotton-spinners were neither responsible for the establishment nor for the maintenance of the Indian Empire. It is quite true that cottons played a great, and very spectacular part, not in the colonization of India or of any other area of the world, but in debates concerning the economic policies of European countries with regard to their colonies. This industry, with its small capital investment and its considerable, mostly unskilled and badly paid man-power, was always the first to appear in all processes of industrialization, but was always the most vulnerable, the first to see its technicians and enterprises emigrate to new underdeveloped countries where wages were low; and it has filled history with its complaints, slumps and appeals for government aid. In the 18th century, Europe was swamped with Indian cottons exported by all the India Companies, who were at war to the knife with the European spinners: after 1815, the world was swamped with English 'mechanical' cottons produced on the cheap, and this ruined the textile industry both in Europe and Asia (the Silesian cotton-workers becoming almost as poor as those of Bengal): finally, from 1860 onwards, the cottons produced by the young Indian industry pushed the English product off the Far Eastern market, before being expelled, in their turn, by Japanese cottons. And we know the rest: the *Swadeshi* movement, and Gandhi's homespun crusade; for nothing in history is unilateral. Of course, the Lancashire cotton-spinners formed an enormous pressure-group which was able to make an awful fuss about the worker's daily bread and, in the years 1880-1914, most democratically rouse Parliament and public opinion, including the trades unions, against the efforts made by the vice-regal Government of India to obtain tariffs to protect native industries — a characteristic episode in the difficult relations

between colonial administrations and European interests. But all this noise is, after all, not that made by an industry that is conquering world markets, but an old industry that has long ceased to be a dynamic factor of development and which, as regards mass-production and poor quality, is beating a retreat on all markets before 'native' competition. Popular ideas are right, if they are understood in their context. The textile industry by reason of its vulnerability and social impact, has often been a decisive factor in the growth of protectionism, retrograde economic policies and popular economic nationalisms, for it was a case of life or death for countless tiny old shops and the livelihood of the poorest representatives of the working-class (and not for the excess profits of capital and capitalists, who could always very easily go and set up their spinning and weaving mills elsewhere, and who never denied themselves the ability of doing so). Textiles were an excellent sounding-board for jingo demagoguery; but they were certainly not a significant expression of the tendencies of modern capitalism, of the driving force of imperialism, or of a general tendency.

The 'Opponent's Confessions'

Since the extraordinarily late date at which the Marxist theoreticians finally recognized the 'imperialist facts'—Rosa Luxembourg in 1912 and Lenin in 1916, whereas Disraeli, Chamberlain, Rhodes and Ferry were explaining and propagating imperialist arguments (and putting them into practice) from 1870 onwards, and the standard 'bourgeois' works on the subject, from Schulze-Gaevernitz to Hobson, date from the turn of the century — they have included in all their books, as more than sufficient proofs to show that the capitalist economy could not have survived and sold its cottons without military domination of Asia and Africa, a certain number of more or less authentic quotations and selected passages from official speeches. All this tardy Marxist science is based on the convenient procedure of the 'opponent's confessions', which absolves them from any original research—as if, when an imperialist politician invokes capitalist interests, or when a 'bourgeois writer' launches an accusation against imperialist policies, it was 'capitalism' in person that was uttering its confession through their mouths. Thanks to this admirable division of labour — on the one hand 'bourgeois science' which humbly and blindly conducts research into matters of fact, and, on the other 'Marxist science' which, by means of its geniuses, interprets these according to 'overall

'views' — the so-called Marxist theoreticians have nearly always contented themselves with writing their dogmatic glosses in the margins of other men's work; and they have been content, too, never to check these 'opponents' confessions', to remain perpetually twenty years behind in the fields of historical, economic and sociological research, and to repeat continually the clichés of their great ancestors of the 1900's.

For some time now, however, we have learnt a little more about the problems of industrialization and economic development in countries with an archaic social structure, and Nehru the statesman does not repeat, without considerable modifications, the simplified arguments he used as a militant revolutionary. Only 'Marxist science' has remained in the state of ignorance prevailing in Victorian times. It has produced no serious analysis, from start to finish, of the development of a colonial country, of colonization or decolonization; no original piece of research into the social upheaval caused by the clash of industrial techniques and pre-industrial societies; it shows no interest in the complicated web of the modifications in political, economic, cultural, legal and mental structures caused or implied by the passing from an agricultural or pastoral civilization to one based on modern economic rationalism; in fact, it has given us nothing but a monotonous denunciation of the evils of imperialist capitalism, backed up by numerous quotations gleaned from 'bourgeois' works.

'Bourgeois Science' on the move

In order to learn more on this subject, one should turn to the writings of the 'imperialist agents', the copious and detailed reports of colonial administrators like Lugard and Harman, who recognized the existence of these problems as long ago as the end of the last century, or to works like those of Farnivall on the *Dual Society* and the *Plural Economy* which, thirty years ago, put the questions that exercise our world of 1960. Since then, an enormous and valuable literature, a mass of extremely detailed and multifarious research, has been published on the conditions of economic development, on the social forms of 'primitive accumulation' (and what have been the new experiments since Marx — the Soviet and the Chinese ones!), on industrialization and its impact on structures, and on the transformation of societies and the clash of civilizations: a field of studies which already has its classical authors such as Colin Clark, Rostov, Kuznetz and Perroux, its

specialized reviews (e.g. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Chicago), its national and international research institutes and, better still, its living experimental laboratories in all the so-called underdeveloped countries. Today, we can study in the field and in a short-circuited laboratory process all the evolutionary problems that the old industrialized countries of Europe underwent almost unconsciously in the course of several centuries, and this theoretical and practical study has already thrown a completely fresh light on the genesis and history of Western industrial societies: and, among other things, on the disparities of development between the rural and industrial worlds which, connected simultaneously with the discordant rhythms of population-growth, internal and external migration and the deepest structures of society, have everywhere been a decisive and ill-understood factor in imbalance caused by growth. Whether you like it or not, 'bourgeois science' is on the march in all the fields of research whose existence you seem just to have discovered. You prefer to ignore all this and to keep on re-reading Marx, because no good can come from any other source. You are perfectly entitled to do so, because Marx — as I shall explain later — is a most interesting author. But, in that case, let us be clear: what you are doing is certainly full of merit, but it is neither writing history nor analysing our times: it is Marxology.

The War and the Crisis

Let us run rapidly over the more particular historical points about which, in the long run, our disagreement is always the same and about which it is useless to keep repeating the same arguments. I criticized, with some vehemence, your explanation of the genesis of the First World War, which, according to you, was caused by Anglo-German 'imperialist' rivalries; and I fully recognize, since you have said so, that this is not your own theory (a war due to the 'mercantile jealousy of the English' as the almost official version of right-thinking German historians used to put it; or due to the fact that the division of the colonial world no longer corresponded to the relationship of British and German forces and economic needs, as the *Flottenverein* and the *Kolonialgesellschaft* explained. The comparison of these theories with your own will anger you, and I am sorry for it, but it is no fault of mine.) I have tried in vain to find the slightest sign of the economic needs which led these great industrial countries into a war of conquest. You will reply that I have read the

wrong books and that the British economy was (very relatively!) stagnant during the years before 1914. I knew that already. So was the French economy. And, however, England and France were the mother-countries of the two great world empires, whereas Germany, with its philatelic, consolation-prize colonies, was in the full flush of industrial and commercial development. There is a marvellous proof of the fact that, in order to prosper and make progress, capitalism needed colonial possessions, and that Germany, whose products entered all countries of the British Empire without obstacles or tariff barriers (whereas British products entering Germany had to pay protective duties) needed to snatch overseas territories in order to maintain itself! Had the contrary been true; had the German economy, cramped within its own frontiers, been stagnant, and those of England and France, thanks to their immense empires, been formidably expanding, then I would understand your argument; although I would still not hold it valid. But the figures are there, and all I can understand is that a certain type of Marxist dialectic consists in the art of drawing any conclusion one likes from any choice of 'facts and figures' one cares to make: it matters little whether the statistics say black or white, they can always be twisted to fit the argument. Or, on the other hand, should we simply realize that Germany, swollen with its new-found industrial pride and strong to boot, could no longer tolerate the fact that other countries had larger empires than hers, and therefore became imperialistic in the ancient, naive meaning of the word, as every child understands it — hungry for conquests and hegemony and desirous of power, militarism and the rattling of sabres? If so, we can leave aside economic necessities, capitalist contradictions and the whole of Marxist terminology — for Poincaré said all this, and he said it better than you.

Unfortunately, even when reduced to such 'bourgeois phraseology', this explanation does not hold water. For, whether we like it or not, the war of 1914 did not break out between England and Germany; it broke out for reasons which were foreign to them both. England and Germany were, in fact, the two countries which had no reason for war, no war-aims other than conquest or revenge and — after all, we are no longer in the days of the historical pleading in favour of war-guilt which was set up by the Versailles Treaty, which no historian can read without blushing — it was the governments of those two countries which exerted themselves at the last moment to stop the infernal machine to which they

were bound by their alliances. No doubt, Anglo-German relations had deteriorated considerably since imperial Germany had entered the colonial and naval races; however, they were not the cause of the conflict, which did not break out on account of Zanzibar, Morocco, the navy, the *Baghdadbahn* or Mosul, but because of a Balkan event which only seems futile to you because this whole key-area of Europe, with its old 'feudal' machinery, its disorders and its inextricable conflicts of nationalities, cannot be assimilated into your theoretical pattern of the 'contradictions of capitalism', and because you have simply crossed it off your map of the world and deleted it from your history-book. But a presentation of the 'causes of the war' which leaves aside all the direct, obvious and hackneyed causes, which persists in treating as negligible the storm-centre in which the explosion had been ripening for decades (from ceaseless local wars to revolutions and organized terrorism: this Near East, in the broadest sense, was falling into anarchy as a result of the progressive disintegration of the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires) and which, despising these 'convulsions of backward peoples' brandishes trade statistics with no bearing on the conflict itself as an explanation of it — such a presentation of the facts does not become any more cogent for being repeated for the thousandth time. The drama of 1914 was prepared for and dealt with by the cabinets and general staffs, and felt by the enthusiastic crowds with their flower-bedecked rifles and waving banners, as though Europe were still living in the days of Charles V or Richelieu instead of the industrial age. For a thinker who only admits, as political motives and historical factors the interests and contradictions of capitalism, such a drama must, in truth, appear absurd and demented; and such, in fact, it was.

The Turning-point; the 1929 Crisis

This being said, I see that I was wrong in believing that, for you, the World War of 1914-18 was the turning-point of history; on the contrary, you hold it to have been the crisis of 1929. For, in that crisis, you find your pattern again, the immanent contradictions of capitalism; and you come back to what might be called the normality of a history without historical contingencies. I previously applauded your analysis of this 'crisis that has never been resolved'; however, I misunderstood you, and must retract. For, if you take this unique world crisis to be a confirmation of the 'law of the aggravation of capitalist crisis' (and,

as you remind your readers, of the arguments contained in your *Imperialism* of 1926), then I must disagree. One cannot prove a law by a single phenomenon. The seriousness of the 1929 crisis was not that of a cyclic crisis of the capitalist economy, comparable to other crises; it was not one of a series of constantly aggravated crises; it was not an economic crisis at all if you mean that it was the result of factors immanent in the economy and that its development obeyed economic laws: it showed, once and for all, the failure of the 'return to normal' or the return to the pre-1914, and to the conditions of that Hundred Years' Peace which, despite what were always restricted and localized conflicts, made the period 1815-1914 a century of stability and security such as history has never known before or since. Statistically analysed as a cyclic crisis—that is to say the cessation of economic expansion—no graph and no series of figures entitles one to say that the American slump of 1929 was any more serious than that of 1873; and yet we well know that there can be no comparison between the effects on the world of the one and the other. You attribute it to the 'cessation of American (territorial?) expansion' and to the 'simultaneous cessation of European (colonial?) expansion'. If that means that the American continent was already overpopulated and that the exploitation of European colonial possessions (which were intact and even richer, since 1920, in the case of the Middle East) had reached its final limits, then it is absurd; if not, it is meaningless.

So capitalist ability to expand was over, for reasons inherent in its economy or by its having reached its geographical limits at a time when 'capitalism' was only just embarking on the age of fuels, petroleum chemistry, flying, the motor-car and synthetic products—in short, what we now call modern times? Come, come! Here again, an historian is not entitled to leave human history out of account. No serious analysis of the 1929 crisis and the catastrophic mechanism of amplification that it set off can take as its starting-point anything but what—in historical fact if not to your mind—was the great, decisive, irreparable turning-point: the war of 1914-18 and its conclusion—the collapse of the political, economic and social structures of three-quarters of Europe, the Balkanization (political and economic!) of an immense area formerly integrated into multinational empires, the gigantic economic nonsense of a reparations and war-debts regime the weight of which finally crushed all the machinery of international settlements, multilateral trade and monetary stability on which the liberal

capitalist economy had been based, and the chain-reaction of autarchical policies which engulfed what had once been a world-wide economy. The historical link between the catastrophes of 1914 and 1940 is sufficiently clear and patent for it not to be attributed to any immanent contradiction within an economic system, and the crisis of 1929 simply represents, in this context, the passage from the pre-war to the post-war period. You point out that you already predicted, in 1926, the seriousness of the crisis to come; but you were in the middle of it, it was already beginning—and yet Keynes, whom you think a fool, said (he did not predict, he stated) in 1919, just after the Versailles Conference, in his *Economic Consequences of the Peace*, that the world was moving towards an economic (and not only an economic) disaster.

But Marx, all the same...

That will do. It is rather absurd to rewrite the history of the world on account of a tendentious book the originality of which—and I say this in a spirit of friendship—I believe you exaggerate. To cut a long story short, the so-called Marxist theory of 'imperialism as a condition of capitalist expansion' cannot be verified in any concrete instance and, if looked into closely, it proves to be pure logomachy: having defined in advance as capitalist all the forces that have acted in the world for the past century and a half, you irrefutably deduce that the whole of history was directed by these capitalist forces. And there you are... and our understanding of the world, of our history and of the problems that beset us has not advanced an inch.

To this you will reply, with dignity, that, all the same and despite his powerless detractors, Marx was a very great genius. And that even Schumpeter, who is not a Marxist (is this another 'opponent's confession?') says as much.

I am very sorry, but that is not what we are arguing about. Aristotle was one of the greatest thinkers humanity ever produced, and yet scholasticism, which forbade its pupils to think otherwise than by reference to him, ended in deadly sterility. Marx was a great genius; and Marxism, by constantly referring—rightly or wrongly—to Marx's sacred work, has fallen into a scholasticism worse than that of the Schoolmen themselves. It is not Marx that I am criticizing, but what you make of him. First of all, I have said again and again that Marx has no part in your so-called Marxist theory of imperialism—he never even dreamed of it. It is not Marx that I am re-

proaching with being a Victorian thinker—because he lived in that time—nor with generalizing the prototype English capitalism of 1840 into a universal model—for it was the only one he had: it is you I am finding fault with for sticking to something that was prophecy a century ago. The authoritative argument has no bearing on a discussion that pretends to be scientific. The fact that Marx was a genius does not mean that he exhausted human thought, foresaw the inexorable path of history, or was right about everything or even about fundamentals. And then—your second authoritative argument—since you evoke Schumpeter so triumphantly ('who, however, is not a Marxist') it should have dawned on you that one can recognize the genius of Marx without being Marxist, and even while refusing to embrace his doctrine or method. For you know quite well where Schumpeter places Marx's genius, which is that of the 'prophet' in the almost religious meaning of the word, the founder of an ideology that is passionate beneath the external appearance of scientific rigour, and which has become the State religion of one-third of our planet; and you know that, speaking as a theorist of political economy, he coolly places Marx very far below his master Ricardo.

Metamorphoses of the Pure Marxist Doctrine

Marx's greatness? We can easily measure it from the enormous shadow which the ideology he founded has cast on the world for a century, and which is bigger today than ever. And do not amputate the communist regime from Marx's estate, on the grounds that it has betrayed the pure doctrine. That is untrue. The Soviet regime is the direct descendant of Marx's 'scientific socialism' and of his political philosophy, or, rather, of his rejection of any political philosophy because 'class interests' alone should govern action; it descends directly from his doctrinal indifference to everything concerning Law, institutions, forms of State or government, the responsibility for power, freedom, whether individual or public; for all that was pure hypocrisy, and history, until the classless society arrived, could only be a record of violence. And the refusal to reflect on the nature of this future society which would be born of violence only to put an end to violence, and of dictatorship only to abolish dictatorships—the very prohibition (on the grounds that it would be 'petit-bourgeois utopianism') of wondering what would happen on the day of victory, the frightful, *sought-for* carelessness of a revolutionary movement furiously and

blindly hurled towards an end that it refused to think about—all that is also part of Marx's heritage. Nor must we forget the system of denouncing any contradiction in advance, since truth is a function of class interest and the contradictor could therefore only be the conscious or unconscious accomplice of the capitalist exploiters—this system is Marx's, and lies at the origin of the arrogant and sterile scholastic Marxism which rejects out of hand as 'bourgeois science' anything that does not fit into its pattern.

To think over the problems of the world anew on the scale of today and tomorrow? We are all trying to do so, by our modest lights. 'On the basis of Marx's doctrine?' But why? I am touched by your filial piety when you say, in denouncing, like everyone else, the incalculable destructive power, of total industrial war: 'It is thanks to Marx's genius (or to some trite remark by Engels) that I know this.' Your humility hides an enormous pretention: 'You who do not feed upon Marx, you cannot know anything.' In the face of this sun-dred world, a third of which already lives under the blessed regime of scientific socialism and which, here and there, has so completely deviated from all that Marx could ever foresee, haven't we something better to do, now and in the future, than to fall asleep in tears over *Capital*? Don't worry, Marx has no longer to be discovered. His essential message has already entered men's minds, and for the past hundred years his vehement, irritating, provocative and fertile ideas have made such progress, with or without their trade-mark, that they are now public property. There is a large number of men working in all the human sciences who have assimilated Marx's work and who know quite well what they owe to him without becoming Marxists in consequence, without giving up the right to put questions and seek answers for themselves and without stopping the clock on the day Marx died: and it seems to me that, through them, Marx's thought has proved more fertile than through the priests and doctors of the Marxist scholastic. As for guessing what Marx himself would have said of our present problems (this is a curiously anti-Marxist assumption: can the thinker escape from the 'conditions' of his times and society, is 'consciousness' independent of the 'real'—or is Marx himself the only exception to his own rule?), a Marx face to face with *our* reality of 1960, I honestly believe that his doctrine would in no way resemble the one he laid down a century ago, nor would it be an extrapolation of that of 1860. If you want to 'save Marx', save him from Marxism.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Personality and Science

By PUNYA SLOKA RAY

THERE is an old, persistent split in the outlook of practising scientists. It crops up in ever new shapes in every field of genuine knowledge. One type of thinking emphasises mechanism, analysis, 'nothing but', distribution, compartmentalisation, operation, impersonality. The other type of thinking emphasises teleology, configuration, 'something more', participation, integralism, personality. In physics we have abstract theory versus natural history, particle theory versus field theory, unification versus complementarity. In biology it is genetic theory versus morphology and taxonomy, causal analysis versus purposive analysis. In psychology it is association versus Gestalt, behaviorism versus phenomenology, trait theory versus character theory. In linguistics, it is descriptive grammar versus normative grammar, linear structure versus hierarchic structure. In mathematics, it is formalism and logicism versus intuitionism. One type of thinking values intellectual rigor, even to the point of rigor mortis. The other type of thinking values intuitive givenness, even to the point of given barrenness. One type of thinking relies on the formula. The other type of thinking relies on the insight. For one party, science consists in a system of tested propositions. For the other party, science consists in a consensus of trained inquirers.

Let us call them the objectivist and the integralist methods of approach.

We may use an analogy derived from political life. Just as the history of any genuinely democratic country is a record of the pendulum swings between the moderate left and the moderate right, the history of any developed branch of science is a record of the pendulum swings between the objectivist and the integralist approaches. One is the party of principles. The other is the party of common sense. There is, however, one important difference between politics and science. In politics, the moderate right has usually the more numerous chances, if not always the more numerous support. But in science, that slight edge of privilege is enjoyed by the objectivist approach, the moderate left of the scientists.

After a considerable period of relative silence, the integralist party has again found a champion to break the overweening complacency of the ruling objectivists. This time the challenge has been dressed out in a way so comprehensive, coherent and elegant as never before. Michael Polanyi is to be congratulated for having put forward the case for integralism so magnificently well.¹ Polanyi has vast experience in the

¹ *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. London 1958. Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. xiv+428.42s.

sciences. He began life as a doctor, became internationally famous and a FRS as a physical chemist, then established himself as a serious contributor to theoretical economics, psychology and philosophy. He is a worthy successor to Bergson and Whitehead.

However, it is precisely this historical affiliation which is responsible for all that is weak and unoriginal in this otherwise so powerful and original work. Polanyi is a partisan in the perennial conflict between the two parties in scientific life. As is characteristic of his party, he argues by advancing, against tightly-knit, self-conceived theories, an array of loosely-knit, second-hand facts. And some of these facts are quite certain to fail sooner or later. Even I, no expert in any science, could spot a statement, admittedly an insignificant one, on which Polanyi relied but which has been discredited meanwhile.² Professor J. H. Woodger notes another mistake in his review.³ I have no doubt that with time, many more details will be discredited and their discreditation made an argument against Polanyi's more serious thesis. This is a defect in his style. Yet it is significant that even a man of such learning as Professor Woodger was unable to find more than one very minor mistake in this huge book. As a general principle, encyclopaedism is a dangerous thing. But in this particular case at least, Polanyi has pulled off the trick with superb skill.

The strength of Polanyi's work is in the exploration of a neglected aspect of science. There is hardly a branch of science Polanyi leaves untouched, with a notable exception in linguistics. In and out of the myriad examples, he searches for a definition of science that would explain the fact that

science cannot be learnt from books alone. If science were in a set of formulated propositions or in a set of described techniques, there would be no justification for that invincible fact. Polanyi notices that although many of the late-comer countries are willing to spend large sums for science, their joint output in fundamental research is ridiculously small in comparison to even a small early-comer country like Denmark. He finds that research has taken root in no late-comer country except those in which mature scientists from old Europe have been induced to settle down and given a free hand. How to explain this state of affairs? Indian educators should be particularly interested in the answer.

Polanyi provides the theoretical answer by stressing the importance of personal contacts and their continuity. There is an art of science, a craft in the old, vague but nonetheless essential sense. True, tradition would not mean here an art of mere conservation or repetition, but rather one of discovery and growth. Yet it is a tradition in the sense that it passes on through prolonged and uninterrupted personal associations a mass of unwritten, unformulated, inarticulate knowledge. Science is not in the products of human activity, but in the human activity responsible for those products. And any human activity is disciplined and guided by other human activity, not by its products as such. Science propagates only as apprentices pick up their craft from masters.

This is certainly a very good thing to say. Still, I do not think that Polanyi has sufficiently emphasised the separateness of the scientific tradition as distinguished from other traditions. He seems to be too near the thesis propounded by Toynbee that one cannot accept science unless in the same process one accepts Europe as a whole. That, for one thing, has a rather cruel implication for us. We in India are trying to take from Europe only those traditions which

² p. 296. The only accredited case of wolf-children has been proved to be a fraud. See *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 1959, 60, 117-193.

³ *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, May 1960.

are essentially universal in scope. We want science and democracy, but certainly not all of Europe. If all traditions are integrated in one total tradition, then our efforts are fore-doomed to failure.

It is this historical integralism of Polanyi which leads him also to underestimate the real significance of the objectivist approach. He pricks the dappled balloons of contemporary positivism with a number of effectively sharp needles. He conducts a mopping-up operation in the wake of the decisive battle won by Wittgenstein. But he overlooks the historic achievement of the early objectivists of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. There was at one time in Europe a really total, unified tradition. It included all morality, all art, all culture, all knowledge, even all law, all technology, all civilisation. What we know today as modern civilisation arose as that one whole tradition was replaced by an indefinite plurality of loyalties. A modern man may be simultaneously a British citizen, a speaker of Hungarian at home, a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Roman Catholic and so on. He can inherit, maintain and pass on any number of quite different traditions. Very few combinations are outlawed as incongruous. That this happy freedom exists is something for which we should be grateful to those men who fought under the banners of 'objectivity', 'rationality', 'verification' against 'tradition', 'authority', 'intuition', and shattered the integral knowledge of the middle ages into fragments.

The problem silently present throughout

Polanyi's enquiry is that of finding a spiritual alternative to Communism. Now, Communism claims to be scientific. Yet it is totalitarian and will not accept an independent tradition, community or authority of the scientists the world over. It claims to be a total tradition in which the scientific tradition is incorporated as a subordinate, obedient part. So it looks like modern science and yet behaves like medieval religion!

The alternative need not be, as Polanyi seems to suggest, a total tradition of Western Europe, however loosely-knit and informal. It may be an indefinite plurality of traditions, mutually independent, different in kind and scope, and allowed to combine in various ways. We may agree that the usual sort of objectivism is too insensitive and narrow-minded to be a strong alternative to Communism. But must we then opt for an unformalised European Catholicism?

The most heartening thing about recent philosophy is a revitalisation of the kind of sensitive, earnest and mature thinking that was practised three generations ago by men like Green and Bosanquet, but on the basis of a far more intimate knowledge of analytic thinking and modern science than those men ever cared to possess. When we remember the work of Austin, Waismann, Toulmin and perhaps Ryle at Oxford, we find that Polanyi is certainly not swimming against the stream. Equally certainly, he is the best of the swimmers in the most significant philosophical stream today.

Talking About Books

By SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

IT seems a pity that neither Leon Edel nor Sir Harold Nicolson paid due attention to literary autobiography. A professional writer's 'looking backwards' involves a certain amount of stock-taking, a list of the occupational hazards—including of course, *angst*, the Establishment, the coloured writer and the Opportunity state—and what have you, but is not invariably nostalgic. Nostalgia, says Alan Ross in his brilliant introduction to *The Cricketer's Companion* published by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 'Went out with Cloche hats'. *The Cricketer's Companion* is wonderfully comprehensive, including Mary Russell Mitford and John Arlott. It may be, too, that the poetry of cricket is never dead. But where are the great ruminants like Edmund Blunden, for whom the greensward was golden and whose vision of a cricket field—the pigeons cooing on the Weald, the thrushes and blackbirds hopping busily on the dew-soaked lawn—was akin to Keats's vision of the Grecian Urn. Even the evocative prose of Neville Cardus and Robertson-Glasgow has less and less place. The good days were the days in the sun and there is less sunlight now.

The autobiography of the professional writer does not always reflect this awareness. Of three recent autobiographies, only one is properly sensitive to the lost and gone. But then, Peter Quennell is a critic with not only singular preferences, but singular merits. His *The Sign of the Fish* published by Collins is ostensibly a study of the writer and his world, as Charles Morgan would have called it. He is really reminiscing all the time. He emphasises his ambivalence, the normalcy, in his case, of *Odi et Amo*. His experience is very similar to Baudelaire's, and it may be that this friction and tension is essential to the creative writer. I remember Peter Quennell slating John Brophy, a malicious critic who is always repeating the highly uncritical and prejudiced views of Leavis and Edmund Wilson on Maugham. And his *Four Portraits* provides a fine signpost to the eighteenth century, a century identified with elegance and the art of living by F. L. Lucas and soon to be interpreted by Sir Harold Nicolson.

Peter Quennell's poetic instincts and affiliations are all Georgian and he describes his 'retreat from Parnassus' with characteristic honesty. The era of spurious poetry and of log-rolling was emerging by the time he had become a fellow-practitioner of

Davies, Graves, Blunden and de la Mare. He could not get on with those literary dilettantes, the three Sitwells; and one rather feels Edith Sitwell must have got in his hair. All he says, however, is that the Sitwells' literary method was eclectic (which emphasises the pastiche character of Sitwelliana) and their controversial strategy pugnacious and bellicose (which is an euphemism for shockingly bad manners). But although he does not get on with Dionysiac poetry either, he admits the honesty of Dylan Thomas. I share his relief and belief that 'engaged writers' have had their day.

Peter Quennell is not an 'engaged' but an engaging writer. Among his other engaging traits are a tolerance for the literary hostesses like Lady Ottoline Morrell and Nancy Cunard (John Lehmann is the only other person I recall alluding to them with affection). Lady Ottoline Morrell was at her best in Garsington but not in Gower Street where nonentities outnumbered celebrities. It seems to me though that the inclusion of Sir Edward Marsh among the 'Camp followers' has been unkind. Christopher Hassall's book is merely a late reminder of the vanished glamour of the Poetry Bookshop. Paul Selver in *Orange and his Circle* published by Allen and Unwin resurrects another cross-section of literary London. I saw a good deal of literary London. But I should think better of London if it still had the *New Age*, the *London Mercury* and the Poetry Bookshop.

And Peter Quennell is with the stylists in literature. Some styles that would seem false and meretricious to others ring the right bells for him. Cases in point are George Moore and Henry James. Style to him is the writer's essence but also an overplus. Hence his impatience with H. G. Wells who wrote effective prose but disdained style and with Cyril Connolly who seemed to imply that 'mandarin prose' was a modern form of Euphuism. Hence, too, his mild dissent from Joubert ('*Il y a une sorte de netteté et franchise de style qui tient à l'humeur et au temperament, comme la franchise au Caractère*'). Perhaps, in the beauty of prose, he finds a password to the miracle of life in which wisdom is a will-o'-the-wisp and (as Omar Khayyam found) amazement like ripeness is all.

Sir Harold Nicolson told me at the 'Albany' that one of his regrets was that he had grown out of

one of his former loves, Swinburne, and could no longer read him. I feel that I have grown out of the *New Signatures* poets of the thirties. Some of them seem quite minor poets to me. One of them, Cecil Day Lewis, has, however, written a splendid and moving autobiography, *The Buried Day*, published by Chatto and Windus. Day Lewis rummages through his youth without rancour, without self-pity and without exhibitionism. He is reasonably reticent about his poetry and about his role in the literary movement of the 'thirties. One feels he could not spread himself a bit, even if he wished to. A 'verray parfit' English gentleman.

His childhood reminds one of Edmund Gosse's problem in *Father and Son*. Day Lewis's problem was not excessive religion but excessive affection. The early loss of his mother made his father deposit the whole weight of his love upon his son. That love was as much a sign of the father's basic insecurity as of his wish to protect, and in adolescence it must have been embarrassing. Day Lewis learnt quite early that one cannot reclaim one's past without the aid of 'pietas'. Memory retains, but it also rejects. Day Lewis recalls the idyllic summers at Eastbourne or Sherringham, and remembers only the smells of wallflowers and asphalt in the sun and the toffee smell of gorse. He remembers no tiffs, tears, disappointments which must have been there but have been blotted out. There was 'time enough' in the deep lanes glowing with campion and betony.

Sherborne school brings to mind Alec Waugh's *Loom of Youth*. (The pornographies, the best-sellers and the roses of yesteryears are, alas, much of a muchness.) Day Lewis's account of that school is similar, with the same titillations about the 'facts of life', the sexual fantasies, the totems and the taboos. Times have changed and probably Day Lewis's name will not be struck off the roll of old boys as Waugh's was. His memories of Edwinstowe are linked up with his step-mother and are an interlude between Sherborne and Oxford.

'Oxford' provides the highlights. Restlessness is the leitmotif of his Oxford memories. I remember the huge copper beech in Wadham garden which makes him so nostalgic. One of the delights of an autobiography is the discovery of similar and identical responses. And so I am thrilled to find that like myself, Day Lewis's ideas of Oxford were derived from Sir Compton Mackenzie's *Sinister Street*. Incidentally, he too was introduced to Lady Ottoline Morrell and Garsington, and this brings me to another common admiration—Sir Maurice

Bowra. The kindness of Sir Maurice Bowra must have meant much to him and he pays just tribute to his scholarship and galvanising personality. Some of his references to Sir Maurice Bowra ('the most worldly person', 'at once endearing and alarming' and 'best taken in smallish doses') I am unable to endorse. They seem to be lacking in 'pietas'. He partially makes up for this, with a clean hit at an enemy of pietas, promise and good form: 'Prof. Bowra urged me to read *The Waste Land* at a time when, according to Dr. Leavis, Dr. Leavis was the only teacher in any English University to have acknowledged the genius of T. S. Eliot'.

Day Lewis studied classics which provide a better intellectual discipline than the English course, now alas, larded with linguistics and loaded with palaeography. His other Oxford memories are largely sunlit—the kindnesses of L. A. G. Strong and Robert Graves, the friendship of Rex Warner, the flowering trees of Banbury Road, punting along the Cherwell, the tulip and judas trees in Wadham garden. The curious thing is the absence of any tender elegiac note. 'Alas, when the mallows in the garden perish, or the curling anise or the pale-green parsley, they are renewed and they bloom again next year.' Alas, for Bion, though. As Proust showed, the only possible Paradise for certain people is Paradise Lost. And the 'kind of regret' we call nostalgia is, for Day Lewis, a 'feeling for things we should like to have been so than for what has been'. *The Buried Day* is a moving book, with a mysterious family-album quality. He has caught the perfection of a buried day, as succory holds the gem of halcyon ray.

Sylvia Beach's *Shakespeare and Company* published by Faber and Faber is the testament of a common reader (in the best Johnsonian sense) and an uncommon booklover. In the 'twenties she founded a bookshop on the Left Bank in Paris and had the happy idea of associating it with Shakespeare's name. This bookshop will always be associated with the name of James Joyce. Sylvia Beach had the courage to publish *Ulysses* when the authorities and other publishers felt it was too 'hot' (in rather different senses of the word). The obvious wisecrack on Sylvia Beach's name was anticipated by Joyce.

I encountered Jack Kahane in the 'thirties. Kahane, a friend of Sylvia Beach, established the Obelisk Press on the Left Bank in the 'twenties and this book resurrects the memory. Kahane was an enterprising man who made a corner in banned and salacious books. Sylvia Beach's interests were

different and she showed equal courage of a different kind in turning down *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. She did not find it pornographic, she found it tedious and inferior (very much what Maugham felt about *Lolita*). She found it difficult to convince others that she was not interested in the surreptitious sale of salacious stuff, not a publisher of erotica. Even Aldous Huxley who had come on Lawrence's behalf was sceptical.

Contemporary patrons had their niches in the literary world—Ezra Pound, Ernest Hemingway, George Moore, Andre Gide, Scott Fitzgerald and Paul Eluard are only a few of them. Her crack at George Moore ('One of those famous invitations to lunch in Ebury Street') will be lost on most readers, but all English writers of a certain milieu and past their sixties will relish it. Moore's invitations to lunch were offhand, indefinite and not very literally meant. But *Shakespeare and Company* is not a gossip book about the eminent. It is the evocation of an arty decade, the Paris equivalent of the books of Douglas Goldring and Noel Anaan, and a gallimaufry of the heartaches, encounters and recreations of a booklover.

I was distressed to read of the death of the poet, Frances Cornford, whom I met in Cambridge in October, 1959. She belonged to a generation which prided itself on its rationality and its quiet personal relations. Leonard Woolf in his *Sowing*, published by Hogarth Press, resurrects the same Cambridge, the Cambridge of the Apostles and of the future Bloomsbury group. It has been argued that Leonard Woolf does not convince the readers of to-day why the Cambridge of Lytton Strachey, Clive Bell, and J. M. Keynes was such a wonderful place. It may be, E. M. Forster hinted to me, that Leonard Woolf is too much wrapped up in himself. One of my regrets is that I had no time to visit Rodmell. But I certainly would not say that he cannot communicate charm or atmosphere.

'We were intellectuals', writes Woolf, 'intellectuals with three genuine and profound passions; a passion for friendship, a passion for literature and music, and a passion for what we called the truth.' The leader of the Apostles was G. E. Moore and his *Principia Ethica* was read with a closeness and avidity one only associates with the Bible and Marxian literature. But were the Apostles as anti-Victorian as Woolf makes out? Were not he and his friends rather trying to erect a rival Nonconformist Establishment? Perhaps time alone can tell, but it will not be unfair to say that some were and some were not.

Among the true Apostles, those who valued ideas and sensations and spurned mundane success,

were G. Lowes Dickinson, to whom Cambridge was the modern Athens, and Sir Desmond MacCarthy. It is Leonard Woolf's supercilious reference to Desmond MacCarthy that makes his retrospect slightly suspect. Why should Desmond MacCarthy's career be considered one of failure? Because he did not produce a log-rolled, puffed-up masterpiece? This is not the Cambridge ideal one gleans from G. E. Moore and of which Desmond MacCarthy, whose mind achieved a lasting harmony, was a truer exponent than Leonard Woolf. One cannot be ambivalent about success and admass, and that is precisely what one suspects Woolf of being. But, if one has done the sowing, before the locusts came, some regret is permissible. But not recriminations.

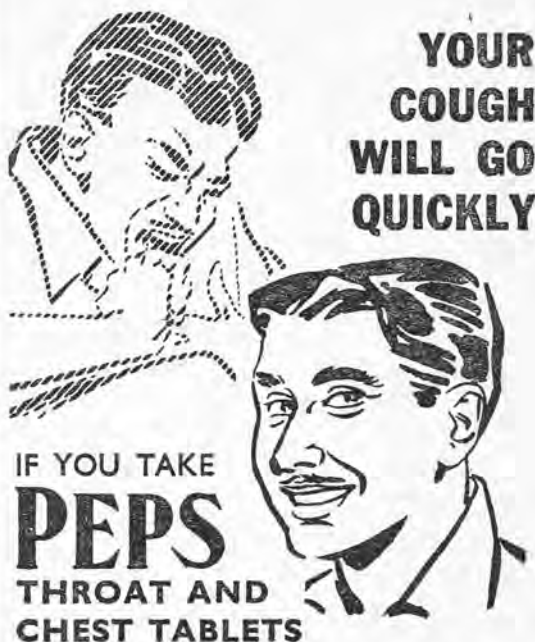
Despite all this, *Sowing* is a splendid book and should revive the stocks of the Bloomsbury group. They are low at the moment and even E. M. Forster seemed anxious to repudiate them. This mischief is partly due to a one-man Establishment run by a Cambridge lecturer. One person who has resolutely withstood it is F. L. Lucas. Lucas's essay on 'Books' included in his *The Greatest Problem and other Essays* published by Cassel is the mellow, humane document of a more civilised age than ours. The essay which gives the book its name deals with population. I recall with pleasure that the essay was published in the *Daily Telegraph* the very day I had a sumptuous tea at Prof. Lucas's place. Mrs. Lucas very kindly gave me a copy of the paper. The essay smacks of Ritchie Calder but I still think that Prof. Lucas's finest and noblest side is in his autobiographical, reminiscent essays. When he remembers with nostalgia the quiet of Buckinghamshire, the sunlight among the firewoods above Woburn sands, or the blaze of bluebells in Duncombe wood, he is unforgettable. One is back, not in the Cambridge of the Apostles, but in the still finer Cambridge of 'Q' and of A. E. Housman. His essay on the personality and poetry of Housman is quite the best in the language. In springtime, the cherry-trees of Trinity toss their white arms like a Greek Chorus of Dryads. Lucas feels that their carefree forgetfulness always reminds him of the lonely, gifted, unhappy man who planted them there.

A very bad English reviewer suggests that despite Prof. Lucas's wide reading, his opinions are downright. Nothing could be falser. Prof. Lucas has resisted, in his quiet way, the onrush of specialisation and all forms of hysterical surrender to unreason. Nothing hurts him more than the unhappiness of others: '*Il y a horriblement de mal sur la terre.*' He has brought more happiness by his

chaste, elegant, Attic prose than he probably realises.

It is rather late in the day to praise so indispensable a book as *A Companion to Shakespeare Studies* edited by Granville-Barker and Harrison, and published by the Cambridge University Press. The highest standards of critical acumen and scholarship are expected and ensured when George Rylands writes on Shakespeare's poetry and A. W. Pollard on Shakespeare's text. Bonamy Dobrée analyses the influences, not only of the University wits, but of Dekker and Heywood. The essay on Shakespeare's sources might perhaps be recast a bit in the light of the researches of Prof. Kenneth Muir and Prof. Bullough. The reaction against disintegration has not been dealt with fully in Attwater's essay. And the weak point of the book is the chapter on Shakespearean criticism. Admittedly a vast subject, but neither T. S. Eliot nor Prof. Isaacs seem to be even aware of it. T. S. Eliot reveals his prejudices, and little else, when he ignores the brilliant work of Hazlitt, Lamb and de Quincey. Prof. Isaacs's essay, good perhaps in 1934, has dated sadly. No one can survey modern Shakespearean criticism without a reference to Wilson Knight and Peter Alexander.

Graham Hough's *Image and Experience* published by Duckworth just misses being a seminal book. It is a very important book by any tests. His case is that in modern poetry the image has been overvalued at the expense of discourse, so that 'the most important tradition of all, that of a natural community of understanding between poet and reader, has been lost.' But why, he asks, should the hangover of the 'twenties continue till the 'sixties? A long hangover, when we recall what was 'modernist' in 1914 — Eliot, Pound, Hulme and Lewis — should still seem modernist to critics with undergraduate minds. Unfortunately, Hough is only faintly aware that 'the authentic torch has been borne by writers of a more traditional cast — shall we say by Robert Frost, Robert Graves and E.M. Forster?' Imagism is not a by-blow from symbolism but a belated, alien incubus. And already, contemporary English poetry has discarded its esoteric overtones. Sir Maurice Bowra shows that modern literature is a heritage of symbolism, not imagism. What the undergraduates of the 'thirties called the specifically 'modern poetry' is alien to the English spirit, and the English spirit — as manifested in the poetry of Edmund Blunden, Thomas Hardy and Masfield, de la Mare and Robert Graves — will reassert itself. Hough is aware of this when he admits that the irony of *Prufrock* has faded and Eliot's poems of 1921 seem quite insecure.



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BOOKS

Gone Astray

GONE AWAY: By Dom Moraes. Heinemann, 18sh.

THIS book baffles me, and I am frankly at a loss as to how to review it. It has passages of startling beauty: the Devkota episode in particular has come in for heavy praise. Glittering metaphors, poetic touches, quick insights are here. There are memorable imagist strokes: "Factories spout like whales . . ." "the bird-clear voices of girls . . ." "The spider city winked its neon eyes." "A thin small rain is falling . . ." "... a rim of mountains stood, helmeted in cloud." "... his most professional, most dentist-about-to-extract-a-tooth-ish smile." The speed of the writing is breathtaking: people sketched with brisk, clean brush-strokes, a landscape suggested in a line, a nuance in a phrase. Not a dull page anywhere . . .

And yet . . .

The uneasy feeling remains that much of this might be façade. Almost every review has been captivated by the verve of the writer and the gloss of the writing. It would be easy to add to that chorus, but I feel this account of Mr Moraes' Indian escapades deserves to be looked at from a slightly different, though unflattering, angle.

One does not go about the business of running down a book without some trepidation; and a book which is so well-written as this creates further problems. What will I do with a fine speaker, wrote Carlyle, if it is not the truth he is speaking? — and Phocion, he thought, was better than Demosthenes, though Phocion kept his mouth shut and Demosthenes enjoyed all the applause of a *matinée* idol. In fact, my first impression about *Gone Away* was precisely that large chunks of it were insincere,

or at least fabricated, or, if not fabricated, larded with lyrical makebelieve (Mr. Moraes, as his poems show, is good at that). Mr Kingsley Martin, reviewing it in the *New Statesman*, thought it only 'partly truthful' (which is as sweetly euphemistic a way of describing a cooked-up thing as calling a lie a 'terminological inexactitude!'). Mr Martin further softened the shock by saying that 'Dom muddles fact and fiction', though he added that this is unjustifiable as art, fun or journalism.' Of course only Mr Moraes can tell us exactly how much of his book has been concocted and how much is incontestable fact. The internal evidence is devastating.

On the strength of such internal evidence, and chiefly because I think it is necessary to expose the bona fides or lack of them in a book that has been selling like hot cakes in England and presumably giving English readers a muddled view of Indian life and personalities, I wrote to almost all the people mentioned in *Gone Away* in contexts that indicated that the celebrities concerned were chummy with Mr Moraes and spoke out freely to him on a variety of subjects. Since Mr Moraes is in a state of acute befuddlement throughout the book (Mr E. M. Forster was so good as to note that 'On the opening page of the book brandy is mentioned twice, whiskey three times, and this continues until the reader longs for a non-alcoholic edition'), it is quite possible that he did not always know what he was writing; charioted by Bacchus and his pards on the viewless wings of Poesy, he might even have thought his composition to be verse. It is worse; and worse than worse the fact that a responsible firm like Heinemann should not have seen fit to vet the scandalous personal comments and gross misrepresentations with which

Mr Moraes has liberally sprinkled his unpleasant 'Indian Journal'.

This technique reaches near-caricature in the pages where Professor Buddhadeva Bose features. About Tagore, of whose work this Bengali critic and poet certainly knows more than many, he has Professor Bose say: 'He was our first great novelist: he wrote about eighty novels.' In its context, Professor Bose says that this 'is slanderous in intentions', as it suggests that he knows little about Tagore; 'I never did nor ever could have said that.' On page 162, he makes Professor Bose say: 'I was a boy when I started it (*Kavita*, which Mr Moraes spells *Kobita*).' 'This I know I could not have said, 'because it is just not true.' Nothing is beyond Mr Moraes: he attributes 'a mischievous giggle' to Professor Bose; he describes an elderly philosopher, a brilliant economist, a teacher of literature and others who gathered at Professor Bose's place for a friendly talk as 'six grave young poets' who stared 'pityingly' at him.

The chapter on Nehru — 'The Still Centre' — is a little masterpiece of cunning self-advertisement. There is nothing wrong of course with a slick journalist taking off his tinsel halo and giving it a careful polish in public. There is something wrong, however, in such behaviour when it is done at the expense of others. Mr. Moraes does it first at the expense of 'a very peccant' ambassador who, poor man, is waiting for the Prime Minister (as Mr Moraes is, but Mr Moraes waits with hope). At 11.23 Pandit Nehru walks in; everybody in the room jumps up 'like clockwork. The ambassador, who seemed to have swallowed a finger-nail, choked.' Naturally Pandit Nehru 'lifts his stick' to Mr Moraes, 'with a smile.' So far so good. 'Then he looked coldly at the ambassador.' It was exactly 11.23! 'I can spare you seven minutes precisely,' says Pandit Nehru. The ambassador, 'sheepishly', follows. 'The secretary winked at me.' At 11.30 'sharp', adds Mr Moraes — the mahogany doors swung open and 'ejected' the ambassador. Follows a charming half-hour

tête-à-tête between Mr Moraes and the Prime Minister, who quotes two lines from *A Beginning*... 'I was flattered,' says Mr Moraes. Inconsequential, rambling monologue from Pandit Nehru, witty interruptions from Mr Moraes... The clock says twelve. 'I'm sorry if I've kept you, sir,' says Mr Moraes. And Pandit Nehru replies, 'Parliament can wait for a few minutes.' The minutes pass, a chaprasi comes and picks up a few files, 'No, no, my dear chap. Glad to see you,' and Mr Moraes is patted on the shoulder and given 'a limp hand-shake.' The interview is over, and we emerge with the impression that Mr. Moraes can weave circles around a digressing, reminiscent, kind old man who has a taste for poetry but no time for it.

I did not think this fair, and wrote to Pandit Nehru asking if he might care to clarify that startling remark about Parliament being made to wait for a few minutes because Mr Moraes happens to be the honoured guest in Parliament House. The reply, charming, evasive, characteristically Nehruvian, says that he 'has not seen Dom Moraes' book *Gone Away*. In fact, he has no recollection of any 'casual remarks' that might have been made to Mr. Moraes. 'It is possible' that he might have said, 'Parliament can wait for a few minutes,' but he is 'not quite sure.' In case he did make that remark, 'it did not mean that Parliament would be kept waiting', but that he would go there 'a few minutes later.' Much virtue in 'if', said Touchstone! And also, we might note, in 'in case...'

'Drinks at Narayana's' (Dr Narayana Menon, nearly three times Mr. Moraes' age, but then, even Dr Mulk Raj Anand is, to Mr. Moraes, a guy called 'Mulk'; Mr Malcolm MacDonald is, happily, 'MacDonald', though 'Mac' should be only a matter of time, one supposes). After drinks, the talk veers to *A Passage to England*, and Dr. Narayana Menon is quoted as saying, 'I found I couldn't finish it.' This apparently harmless remark acts as a prologue to a pretty nasty comment on Mr. Nirad Chaudhuri's Anglophile attitudes. I am not

quoting that remark because I find it in bad taste and also because Dr. Menon assures me in a letter that the one thing he is certain of is that he did not say that he could not finish the book; in fact, he found it 'readable' and finished it. Dr. Menon adds that he is 'not altogether happy at some of the statements attributed to me nor are they altogether accurate.'

Though I am not a great admirer of the way in which Mr. Nirad C. Chaudhuri goes about deflating what he considers to be the various phoneyesses of Indian life, I consider him an eminently sincere and serious writer. Fun can be poked, perhaps, at the obsessiveness of his ideas and the alienness of his ideals, but these are no reasons to laugh at the man himself (specially when the man concerned shows that he can have a good joke at his own expense: vide the passage in his new book where he describes his curious experiences in Delhi buses). Mr. Moraes here goes quixotically haywire, tilting his lance in a manner one normally associates with the techniques of the gutter press. I am referring to the incident of his and Ved Mehta's meeting with Mr. Chaudhuri, 'the Bengali Babu' of Kashmiri Gate. Again, I shall refrain from giving details: *Quest* should not retail, even at second-hand, the wretched envy of an undergraduate. But I should like to say that Mr. Chaudhuri recalls how Mr Moraes and Mr. Mehta 'came to see me at my house for a few minutes last year, and I received them courteously, and then I had two casual meetings with them. I did not know then that they would put their social life to use for the sake of pelf.' He adds that 'this is not the kind of literary activity' he practices or 'approves in others,' though he feels flattered that someone has thought him important enough to be able to trade with his name.

It is charitable of Mr Chaudhuri to think it is all so simple as to be just a petty attempt to trade on his name. Of the people to whom I wrote, only Dr. Mulk Raj Anand has said that 'substantially' Mr. Moraes has 'reported what I said, correctly.' (Except

for a minor point: 'The village from which the untouchables have been evicted is not near Khandala, but in Gurgaon District, near Delhi.') Some have asked me to let sleeping dogs lie: sufficient unto the day... I hope I am not wrong if I suggest that *Gone Away's* besetting ugliness is not that it cashes in on big names (Mr. Moraes is the pet child of the English Establishment), but that it trumps up the alleged bigness of Dom Moraes himself, in a style loud as neons and brassy as puja drums. Mr. Moraes, bless him, is puja-ing himself for all he is worth, and the massive demy 8vo photograph of himself on the back of the dust jacket is the largest that this goggle-eyed reviewer has seen since Miss Kathleen Winsor spread herself across *The Lovers*. If Mr. Moraes is his own lover-boy-and this book is constant proof he is—is he the right type to go about dissecting others' frailties, not noticing the beam in his own eye?

He recalls that he never really liked India. 'In the streets of India I felt uneasy, knowing neither the language, nor, because of not having come into contact with Indians who were not far from an English background, the people.' He came to India in August-September 1959 because he had 'fallen in love properly at last,' and wanted to be alone, 'to think about what loving somebody involved.' Surely that is not the reason; what loving somebody else involves is clear enough from his poetry: suffering, sacrifice, a sense of sin:

I shall keep warm above
The valleys hazed and far
For these days I find love
In poem, wind and star.
Wiser than I am wise,
You have lent me your eyes.

(*'From Tibet': Poems*)

The angel took him up in hands of fire,
Plying wings above him like a giant dove,
Till he, grown gentle and beyond desires,
Locked in his tower of bones, yet still
alive,

Through terror and the fire came to love.

(*'A Man Dreaming': A Beginning*)

A young man in love is not peeved all the

time. The Sikh who who travelled with him in the plane from London to Zurich says, 'India is full of crooks.' The lady in a sari next to Dr. Anand's flat says, 'You should never listen to people's directions in India. They are always wrong.' Bombay is 'the worst place in the world' (though Mr. Moraes finds all the bootlegged liquor he wants). In a Bombay college he finds the Principal 'a worried man' and 'huge dismal classes packed with noisy students' (he reported them to a curious Pandit Nehru). Indian students call Negro classmates 'hub-shees' ('nigger', says Mr. Moraes' triumphant footnote). The Dalai Lama is crudely caricatured. 'Very pretty Nepalese girls without any clothes on' are supplied by the Rana who acts as their host (this takes some believing), but Ved Mehta drives them off saying both he and Mr. Moraes have 'a contagious disease'. An Indian Professor of Literature loaned to the Government of Nepal complains, 'You have no idea how badly paid we teachers are in India.' Interesting history is supplied about Rana customs: 'You see, the custom is, when the Rana wants to pass a motion, he will clap his hands, and one of the concubines comes running with a silver pot. Into this the Rana- ah- passes his motion. In the old days they used to do it while receiving guests. It was very irritating for the guests.' (Mr. Moraes no doubt finds this bloody funny). In the 'spider city' of Calcutta, a sailor with two girls accosts the two friends in a nightclub ('Why not let's all go to bed together? The five of us?'), a taxi-driver offers 'Very clean girls, English French, German Nepalese, African...' another driver mutters what is supposed to be Hindi ('*Uske umer bahuth uper the*': 'They were aged girls, nearly thirty'), pimps and prostitutes and nautch-girls follow...

It is all so sickening, a beautiful poet's morbid mind laid bare. A testament of the times, perhaps: the sour fruits of rootlessness. But the pity of it! The greater pity because Indian reviews haven't all cared to look behind the fanfaronade of crisp, sleek writing. 'He has written a book,' said the

Statesman, 'not many at his age could have written.' (He has also written one no one at any age should write.) Mr. A. M. Abraham, writing in *Thought*, has pointed out how Mr. Moraes' account of the Nepalese concubines-in-bed incident differs from the account given by Mr. Ved Mehta in his book, *Walking the Indian Streets*. (What is truth, said Pilate?). Mr. Sham Lal has put it excellently well in the *Illustrated Weekly*: 'At the end of the journey, the interviews all done and the drinks all over, the reader has an oppressive hangover. What an expense of talent on mere trifles!'

'I sowed my wild oats,' says Mr. Moraes,
Before I was twenty.

Drunkards and turncoats

I knew in plenty.

Most friends betrayed me.

Each new affair

Further delayed me.

I didn't care.

(*'Song': Poems*)

Mr Moraes couldn't care less. But this book suggests that he has only begun sowing his wild oats. These are now in their second edition and have proved a fine cash crop.

P. LAL

The Arts

THE EROTIC SCULPTURE OF INDIA.

*Text and Photographs by Max-Pol Fouchet.
Translated by Brian Rhys. George Allen and
Unwin, London. pp. 96 35s.*

THE momentum of world interest in the heritage of Indian art and thought is still increasing rapidly. From Moscow to Montreal, from Sydney to Sao Paulo, the imagination of scholars and laymen is being captured by India, past and present. More books on one or other aspect of Indian life may now be expected from foreign writers. Some of these books will be symptomatic of a trend rather than serious contributions to the subject. It is particularly necessary to be wary of those who are attracted by two themes which dominate Indian civilization: mysticism and the Kama Kalpa. Both lend themselves to

unbalanced interpretations and to commercialisation.

The Occidental mind is today hungrier than ever for expressions of human culture which appear to supplement its own historic achievements. Remaining essentially provincial, in the modern international context, despite its obvious brilliance, this mind is still capable of grappling with conceptions of truth alien to its own, with unfamiliar forms of art, with esoteric manifestations of emotions far removed from it in time, space and spirit. Beneath the fashionable swings of enthusiasm from Yoga to Zen, a deeper current of study and assimilation is always at work and for this one can have nothing but respect.

Max-Pol Fouchet's book *The Erotic Sculpture of India* belongs to this current. It has the stamp of learning, serious enthusiasm and live intellectual curiosity. It is beautifully laid out, the photographs are sensitive and the printing (in Switzerland) is perfection itself. The general introduction is followed by short essays on Sanchi, Mamalapuram, Ajanta, Elora, Elephanta, Orcha, Puri, Bhuvaneshwar, Konarak and Khajuraho. Many of these, together with the illustrations seem unrelated to the subject of the book. The latter are familiar images of Indian temples and sculpture, not specifically erotic. The most engaging feature of the author's lucid prose is the evocation of life and landscape surrounding the monuments, a successfully poetic evocation despite its occasional sentimentality.

One or two critical comments seem called for. When the author says, 'The Hindu artist mirrors Truth', or, 'Over the land of India spreads the sky as man over woman', one has the uneasy feeling that he has surrendered to the charms of his theme rather than mastered it. Does not the Occidental artist mirror Truth, even if it be a very different Truth from that of the Hindu artist? Does not the sky of Italy or France spread over those countries, as man over woman? (The erotic image here is not at all sensible). Sometimes Fouchet

writers too self-consciously for an audience that is presumed to be not very knowledgeable about the Hindu way of life. The presumption is correct but the attitude to which it leads is faintly embarrassing to an Indian reader: 'Need we repeat that representations of amorous embrace signify the union of separate principles, and are to be regarded as symbolic of oneness with the Divine?'

The sceptical doubts expressed after this rhetorical question, on pages 75-76, are not resolved in the book. And it is unlikely that the long quotation from Krishnamurti ('one of India's present-day thinkers') in answer to the question whether sexuality is a 'problem' for the Hindu conscience will satisfy many Indian readers. Krishnamurti has his followers but his are hardly the definitive answers to puzzling questions about sex in Indian civilization.

NISSIM EZEKIEL

THE KARNATAK THEATRE by Dr. H. K. Ranganath. Published by Karnataka University, price per copy ordinary binding Rs. 3.00 Half Calico Rs. 5.00.

IT is, if not always an education, at least a delight to hear fire-side stories about the youth of old men, the past of present things, and here is an attempt to present the picture of what has been. The first book of its kind in English, *The Karnatak Theatre*, supplies a long-felt need, particularly intensified by a general attempt all over India at the serious, systematic, and truthful re-introduction of the country's past to the present generation.

Dr. Ranganath has been very diligent in his researches, as is evidenced by the extensive bibliography filling thirteen pages at the end, though one cannot help doubting the validity of a few of them—like lectures and public addresses—as supports of a thesis.

The opening chapter (if one can forgive the title hanging loosely like an article of dress worn for fond sport) traces briefly, the inspiration that the Karnatak theatre

gave to, and the influence it exerted upon the theatrical life of the neighbouring provinces and introduces the thesis that 'the theatre of Karnatak remained a potent institution of art in its three branches developed in the three different regions of the land' and that 'its independent characteristics indicate its being an indigenous institution with an antiquity of its own.'

In the second chapter, after a discussion of the antiquity of the Karnatak theatre,—the term 'theatre' is used all through the book in a wide signification to include all forms of activity involving entertainment—the oldest written play being traced to the last phase of the 17th century, the author investigates the many references to the theatrical activity of the land found in the literature of the past centuries, and builds up an imposing mass of evidence to testify to the existence of an active theatre in distant times. A very interesting aspect of this study is the intelligent and sensitive exposition of various modes of theatrical activity native to the genius of the people of Karnatak, like *Dasavatarada Ata*, *Nadadigala Ata* and so on, which describe the antecedents of the modern Kannada theatre.

The Folk theatre of Karnatak is undoubtedly its most rich and vital phenomenon, with a long range from the crudest form of rustic performances based on superstition and ghost-worship generally prevalent all over the countryside, to the complicated artistic modes like *Yakshagana*. The author makes a very able survey of this vast, variegated field. A complete and well-connected account is given of the origin of this branch of the Karnatak theatre in ancient rituals and its fascinating career through varieties of shape and form, conditioned by the geographical and the social circumstances of the area of its development. And the chapter ends with a detailed study of *Yakshagana*, one of Karnatak's richest contributions to world art, in all its diverse aspects like theme, mode of presentation, costume, craftsmanship, its different schools etc. and of

Kathakkali with which it has a close relation.

The professional stage, which in Karnatak is of recent origin, the traditional theatre being kept scrupulously clear of commercial considerations by the religious atmosphere surrounding it on the one hand and the royal patronage protecting and nourishing it on the other, grew with the development of the middle class in society, which became its own special region, as the Folk theatre had the common people and the temples, and the Court theatre royalty and the palaces for themselves.

Dr. Ranganath, in the fourth chapter, traces its origin in the different parts of Karnatak under different challenges and different stimulations, and surveys its speedy development through all its numerous stages and conditions. The eighty pages of densely packed matter dealing with this history contain an absorbing account of the numerous companies and the many talented people, actors and writers and managers, who altogether achieved in the span of a hundred years a great status to the professional theatre of Karnatak. The personal touch heightens the tone of the account, enriching and diversifying the narration with interesting anecdotes about men like Varadachar, Peer, Siddaramappa and Hirannayya, to mention a few among actors, and Shantakavi, Basavappa Sastry and Garud among playwrights, who by their love and devotion to the art and zealous service, carried the stage from achievement to achievement.

A fine analysis, a sensitive understanding of men and their work, a balanced estimate of their contribution mark this part of the survey.

The fall of the Professional stage was partly due to what Dr. Ranganath regards as the second external influence, the growing importance of the amateur stage, the first being the advent of the films. Though hardly a century old in India, and in Karnatak not even four decades, the amateur stage has had a quick growth and

a very rich achievement to its credit. Inspired by the Western theatre, stimulated by a desire to liberate the stage from the influence of commercialism, and answering to the changed tastes and demands of the hour, the amateur stage grew to meet another class of people, the intellectuals and the western educated. It brought in new forces, new themes, a new sense of theatre-craft, new ideas about acting; and before long, with its social themes more appealing than the hackneyed mythological or historical stuff of the professional stage, and with its new talent, it grew immensely successful and popular.

With fine penetration and sound judgment the author reviews the work of the numerous writers and actors who have contributed to the growth and achievement of the amateur stage. The notes on individuals are brilliant and revealing, the examination of the different modes of amateur activity is scholarly.

This book with an attractive get-up, a well-documented study involving painstaking research, ends its elaborate survey with a pious wish for a regeneration of this ancient theatre of the land based on a keener appreciation of the art, and a wide general support.

Yet the total impression of the book seems to be that of a bird's eye-view, the bird of course perching for some length of time on a branch now and then; a quick flitting through a vast flowery field very often escaping the vital flow beneath the rocks.

Extensive and minute as the survey is, one misses a digging up of the roots that go farther down, an uncovering of the underlying realities, and in the final picture one gets a sense of undeterminedness, probably the result of the enormity of the material impossible of organisation into a single unified shape in all the infiniteness of its ramifications. But certainly a singleness of perspective, a better arrangement and system would have been preferable.

Quite often it reads like a mere report,

and the theatre in those pages refuses to come to life. Drama is a living branch of social activity, and one expects, in a book of this type, a higher plane of approach, a deeper search, showing how the thought and the life of the people influenced and shaped the character of their art, and a powerful appraisal of values and significances within.

And very frequently one misses scholarly care, too, and the proof-reader's pains. These blemishes, and a few other heavy marks of a Ph.D. thesis the book bears in this print, can be overcome in a revised edition, and a glossary added at the end, explaining the technical Kannada words, considering that the book is meant for non-Kannada readers, should be included.

T. R. RAJASEKHARAI AH

Literature

HOMAGE TO CLIO by W. H. Auden, Published by Faber and Faber, London at 12s.6d.

THE outstandingly poetic and the whimsically donnish predominate in this amorphous collection. But it is fortunately in the major poems on the subject of the inscrutability, the silence and the whole philosophy of history that the poetic and the donnish are successfully combined. In other places, notably the addendum, only the donnish survives — and one scarcely feels that the standard of these efforts is worthy of the some-time Regius Professor of Greek, to whom the book is dedicated.

Throughout the poems that deal with history, and all the others which are more than trifles of the Senior Common Room, technique and perception are superb. Indeed, 'Homage to Clio' itself is a superlative poem. Auden takes the problems of inter-communication between man and man and regards them from another viewpoint, namely man and his past; and yet obscurity and formlessness are nowhere — only a freshness of perception and urbanity of expression worthy of Horace, marred only by a certain tortuous syntax which takes a little getting used to. Read aloud,

however, 'Homage to Clio' trips off the tongue with an easy grace and the rhythm and happy imagery combine to clear, delicate effect. For example, it would be naive simply to suggest that birds have no sense of history, but to use this image to make the point that man is not only endowed with reason but also with a sense of history, and then to examine with masterly imaginative perception the paradox of knowing present realities (through the five senses) and little more about the past than its inscrutability (through some other sense) is to conduct as delightful a tour around the statue of history as one could wish for.

Apart from its purely descriptive aspects, the poem hints, at least, at a moral philosophy of history, which is quaint and homely rather than new and provocative:

'But it is you, who never have spoken up
Madonna of silences, to whom we turn
When we have lost control, your eyes,

Clio, into which
We look for recognition after we have
been found out".

"Forgive our noises,
And teach us our recollections"
History gives us another chance:

'Clio,
Muse of Time, but for whose merciful
silence
Only the first step would count and
that
Would always be murder."

But one could go on and on drawing out the images of this extraordinarily fecund and technically delightful poem which stands head and shoulders above anything else in this collection.

There are other charming, amusing and occasionally moving things, the poem called 'Hands' for example, — a lyrical and light-hearted exercise which nonetheless returns to the theme of history relying on the shades of memory and the present on tangible facts:

"Were handwriting, like a memory,
A fact we could unwish.

There are some pieces such as 'On Installing an American Kitchen in Lower

Austria', which are the sort of exercise which one can imagine a man of Auden's genius writing waiting for a train — when you or I would be struggling with the Times Crossword. In fact, in the whole of the first half of the book the theme of history is interlarded with much more inconsequential stuff — one piece is "inspired" by the fact that A NUBILE TRAM is an anagram of TAMBURLAINE. In the second part there are some examples of impenetrable obscurity — 'Dame Kind' for one, 'Bath-tub Thoughts' for another. Again the poems with a historical theme are much the most satisfactory.

In the middle there is an interlude entitled 'Dichtung und Wahrheit'. It is described as an 'Unwritten Poem'. It is just as well.

BARRY BARKER

STUDIES IN WORDS by C. S. Lewis Cambridge University Press 21s.

WHEN I use a word', Humpty Dumpty said, 'it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.'

Few of us are as high-handed or confident as Humpty Dumpty about our use of words, in fact rather the reverse. We use them tentatively, trying through them to express our ideas, and in reading to reach those of the writer. English is a very rich language, and in this we are lucky, but such a flexible language may mislead, particularly in reading literature of the past.

Professor Lewis in his new book sets out to show what a living, changing organism the English language is, and how careful we should be in our reading to understand correctly the writer's meaning. The book is a scholarly study of the semantic history of no more than eight words—'Nature', 'Sad', 'Wti', 'Free', 'Sense', 'Simple', 'Conscious' and 'Conscience'.

'As everyone knows, words constantly take on new meanings. Since these do not necessarily, nor ever usually, obliterate the old ones, we should picture this process... on the analogy of a tree throwing out new branches, which themselves throw out subordinate branches; in fact as ramifica-

tion.' Study of the life of a word involves knowledge of other kinds of history—social, religious, philosophic and literary; so it is not surprising to find that Professor Lewis' examples of the complicated semantic changes which words have undergone range through classical, Anglo-Saxon and English literature, throw new light on all these fields of study.

If you study a word as if it were a tree, you begin with the roots. In some cases the roots are three- or four-pronged, and the resultant shoots will grow up parallel, twine together and throw off separate branches. Such a word is 'nature', the first and perhaps the profoundest study in the book. It developed from Latin alongside of 'kind' from Anglo-Saxon and 'phusis' (whence 'physical') from Greek. All three words have a common meaning, i.e., what a thing is like—the *nature* of the soil, 'what *kind* of person is he'—and each has influenced the other through the centuries; but it is illuminating to learn that 'kind' did not mean 'compassionate' or 'beneficent' until comparatively recent times. Instead it meant 'hereditary' or 'proper' or 'normal', or 'dutiful' in a filial manner, or 'noble'. Apply this in your next reading of Shakespeare and you will gain fresh understanding.

'Nature' and 'natural' have one predominant meaning nowadays but, as with all the other words discussed in this book, this meaning is not the one intended by the writer of the past; so this sense is called the 'dangerous sense' which may mislead us, and against which we are warned to be on our guard. Thus 'sad' in Anglo-Saxon meant 'full up' and thence 'heavy' (still in use, as a 'sad' cake—a cake which has failed to rise) 'solid', 'sound', 'stable'; 'sad' meaning 'melancholy' is the 'dangerous sense', only in use from the late 16th century.

One is tempted to give more examples; instead I would advise anybody genuinely interested in the English language to read the book. It is intended for students, but has a wider appeal, is written with assurance, great clarity, and is skilfully put together. After all, everyone uses words,

and although usually semantic changes occur irresistibly from below by the agency of people who neither know nor care, one must agree with Prof. Lewis that 'it is well we should become aware when we speak, of the ancient, fragile and immensely potent instruments that words are.'

V. M. GOATLY

Politics

PROBLEMS OF MAHARASHTRA : *Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom; 1960; pp. 197; Price Rs 10.*

IN recent years 'seminar' has become a dirty word in this country. Tired government officials meet fossilised experts, and ministers with an eye on publicity preside over them. Venues of meetings, haziness of discussions and platitudinous conclusions and suggestions which emerge from them make one wonder whether they are worth the money spent on them.

As opposed to them the Seminar held in Bombay in the summer of 1960, soon after the bifurcation of the composite Bombay State, was of a radically different nature. Its organizers succeeded in getting together nearly eighty prominent persons. The participants consisted of university teachers, judges, lawyers, public-men, trade union leaders, journalists, social workers etc. They put their minds together in order to bring within the focus of inquiry the problems confronting the infant state of Maharashtra. The papers presented for discussion at the Seminar were of a high calibre. In order to thrash out various issues the participants divided themselves into three groups: economic, educational and political. These papers along with various speeches and reports have been ably introduced by Shri Gangadhar Gadgil and have been published by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom under the title of *Problems of Maharashtra*.

While going through the pages of this volume what strikes one most is the appeal made to the intellectuals of this country by the leading men. Shri Y. B. Chavan earn-

estly appealed to the intellectuals to come forward with concrete suggestions and help the government in the colossal task of raising the standard of living and providing a clean and efficient administration. A Seminar of this nature, he thought, would help in 'bringing into the main stream of national progress the intellectual classes who have hitherto... somewhat stood apart, isolated and self-sufficient unto themselves.' Dr. C. D. Deshmukh thought that 'the Seminar vindicated the place of the intellectuals in public life.' Further, he said, 'I particularly appeal to the university men that shall we say, without being arrogant, as being leaders in the class of intellectuals, they should study public affairs and whenever it strikes them that they should express their views fully and frankly and yet with all possible courtesy, they must do so and not lie low.'

Still there were others who expected much more from the Seminar. Shri S. M. Joshi expressed the view that an intellectual gathering of this nature could lead to the establishment of a non-party moral tribunal for the new State which would ensure political fair-play. Rao Saheb Patwardhan on the other hand thought that such a group might eventually bring about a greater degree of understanding among the various social groups and political parties. Still another view was expressed by Shri P. Y. Deshpande that a group like this, along with artists philosophers and men of letters, could provide a frame of restraints to public-men and thereby serve as an effective check to the rapidly declining public morality in this country.

Among the economic problems of the new State the participants concentrated their attention on the problem of a well-balanced industrialisation of Maharashtra. Although Maharashtra is the second most industrialised State in India most of her industries are concentrated in Greater Bombay. Other parts of Maharashtra should therefore be equally developed. In this Maharashtra must receive a fair share, (on the basis of area and population,) of investments in the public sector. Some of

the participants felt that there was not any hope of developing the industrially backward areas of Maharashtra through the private sector. That the Maharashtrians lacked business acumen and their genius was suited to having a planned socialist economy. 'If this is so', they argued, 'the field of Public Administration is properly the field of Maharashtrians and by creating a sound administrative structure in the new State we shall have rendered a valuable service.'

Among the social problems of Maharashtra the problem of casteism received the greatest attention. The participants felt that the Harijans and the neo-Buddhists must be made to feel economically secure in the new State. That their feeling of insecurity led to the intensification of reactionary and communal politics. While socially caste was relaxing its hold, it was felt, is still played an important part in politics.

Shri S. R. Dongerkery presented a very able paper on the problems of higher education in Maharashtra. He maintained that eventually Marathi should become the medium of instruction in the universities of Maharashtra. The case of the Bombay University, on account of the cosmopolitan character of the town, he thought, was different. The problem of text-books, technical vocabulary, trained teachers etc., he maintained, could be solved by means of adequate planning and co-ordination among the universities of Maharashtra.

Professor N. R. Deshpande, who contributed a paper on the political problems of Maharashtra, maintained that the very creation of the new State was an achievement for democracy. Public opinion had succeeded in convincing the ruling party, through democratic means, regarding the need for the creation of the new State. It was now the responsibility of the people of Maharashtra to remove the fear and grievances of the people of Vidarbha and Marathawada.

In spite of the fact that the scope of the topics discussed at the Seminar was pretty

wide, it did a great service in making the intellectuals of Maharashtra take an interest in the problems of their own State. For this the organizers of the Seminar deserve to be congratulated. A. H. SOMJEE

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE NAGY AFFAIR

*Published for the Congress for Cultural Freedom
by Martin Secker & Wanburg Ltd. London 1959
35s.*

THIS book has been published by the Congress for Cultural Freedom at the high price of Sh. 35/-. It tries to show that the trial of Imre Nagy staged after the unsuccessful Hungarian Revolution in 1956 was a farce, the charges being ridiculous and the verdict a foregone conclusion. It succeeds.

So what?

Albert Camus in his preface tries to answer this. The truth must be stated clearly so that no one may be tempted to say 'Perhaps Nagy was guilty after all.' Secondly, a book such as this might embarrass those who rigged the trial and accordingly temper any subsequent attempts to repeat such a perversion of justice.

The second reason is not impressive. Past experience has shown that very little embarrasses a successful regime. The Nazi tyranny was fully exposed in book after book; few would believe that its wilder excesses were tempered to any great extent by embarrassing publications. What of the first reason? Who is to be deterred from doubts of Nagy's innocence? Presumably, not the Communists; very few of those who read the book would think it anything other than capitalist propaganda. Again, presumably not the intelligent anti-communist for whom the book states the obvious.

So the book is aimed at the English-speaking man-in-the-street living in a non-communist country. But he is not going to buy this — not at this price. And it is far too unattractive to tempt him on a library shelf. And is it not too late anyway? Who cares about Hungary now? 1960 has brought the Congo to worry over. There might have been a case for publishing in 1956 a cheap easy-to-read paper back on the lines of a

Penguin special; which would have had a chance of reaching a mass audience. There seems no reason whatever for this expensive, difficult and out-of-date propaganda.

The poor old West has never been very good at propaganda and this is not a particularly inept example. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, for example, suggests earnest bespectacled ladies and weedy bearded men, turning out books like this in the daytime and doing a little genteel folk-dancing at night. No doubt it is to the West's credit that propaganda has been difficult for it: to embark on a propaganda campaign is to try to convert other people to a different way of thinking; but the western creed of the sanctity of the individual includes his right to hold fast to his beliefs against all opposition. The element of brainwashing in propaganda is on that account repugnant to the West. No wonder its attempts at propaganda are half-hearted and ineffectual.

Propaganda has its value for those nations who see nothing paradoxical in its use, and it is unfortunate for the West that the opposition has no difficulty in using it.

It is also hard to believe that the West realises its importance. JOHN SMITHARD

THE SOVIET DEPORTATION OF NATIONALITIES *by R. Conquest 30 sh.*

SOVIET imperialism is worse than Western imperialism. That is the thesis of Mr. Conquest. His book deals with the fate of the seven minority nations who were deported from their homes during the Stalin era and the five which were rehabilitated in 1957. These unfortunate people, in order of deportation were the Volga Germans, Karachai, Kalmks, Chechens and Ingushi, Balkans and Crimean Turks.

It is Mr. Conquest's central thesis that this inhuman deportation of these seven minority nations was responsible for destroying these nationalities—for Mr. Conquest argues, . . . 'there are other ways of destroying a nation. To remove it, in circumstances of 'misery and suffering' from its homeland and to scatter it widely over

an alien territory, with a minimum of economic resources, deprived of civil rights, of cultural opportunities and education in its own tongue.' And it is Mr. Conquest's conclusion that this same brutality and disregard for human life and ideals characterise (as the blurb puts it) not only Soviet national policy, but a good deal else in practice.

Mr. Conquest, in a singularly painstaking manner, sifts through much documentary evidence to demonstrate the truth of his thesis. He laboriously records how minority nation after nation were deported, harassed and victimised during the early period of the war. Then comes Stalin's death. And then the New Era. Mr. Conquest pictures the 'new' Russians, partially discarding their inhumanitarian ideas and the rehabilitation of some of these extremely unfortunate people.

But what does all this mudslinging prove? That, in the Stalinist era, all Russians were a bestial race, but under the comparatively more enlightened rule of Mr. Krushchev, a more humanitarian approach was being developed. Surely Mr. Conquest would only expect fools and cretins to believe that. But unfortunately, the book ends without a surprise punch and one is left feeling like a child after his first visit to the zoo. Very tired and a little disappointed.

Mr. Conquest has his facts correct. At the end of his book he is kind enough to give a chronological appendix. That is the only positive achievement of his book—a fairly readable schoolboy history of seven unimportant pockets of the Soviet Union.

But it is his interpretation which has gone awry. For Mr. Conquest has never tried to analyse the exact reason for these drastic actions. He forgets hard times for the nascent Soviet State which was battling for survival, not only on ideological but on political grounds, with the mature force of capitalism and the militant force of fascism. This was no time for timid, half hearted moves, but for direct action. Maurice Dobb, probably the greatest expert in the West on Soviet economic growth shows the urgency

of this era and the need for action in the paragraph reproduced below:

'In such a situation the rules and habits of normal continuity are rudely broken . . . (for) when we add to this the sense of urgency aroused by the sudden recrudescence of the war-danger, we can appreciate better the temper of the years when Soviet economy seemed to stake all on beating the clock, and to take risks which seemed to defy the dictates of reason. We may even feel that what the onlooker at the time may have seen being unreasoning, in retrospect is to be appreciated as one of those acts of faith and courage without which history is not made.'

Mr. Dobb is not an apologist for Soviet Russia. He is a realist. Mr. Conquest, on the other hand, has seen no connection between the act and its motive. Therein lies the real tragedy of book, not in its subject matter.

SIDDHARTHA SEN

WHERE THE LION TROD — Gordon Shepherd, Macmillan, 18 sh.

THE GREAT CONTEST — Isaac Deutscher, Oxford, 10s 6d.

'Why do you show me this. . . . Another yet? A seventh! I'll see no more: And yet the eighth appears'

AND so we go on with bright, chatty, semi-friendly books about what the British left in India and what the Indians are doing with it. I often wonder who reads them? It can't be the upper ranks of the heaven born, the defence services or big business. They now know what asses they made of themselves as brown replicas of the ruling race and don't like being reminded of it. Their occasional nostalgia is really only regret at the power that is gone, not for the social duties that went with it. It can't be the new generation, either British or Indian, for they just don't understand this sort of book. Perhaps they are read by some of the old guard who swept out in 1947 and now reminisce, between washing up the supper dishes and watching the telly, about Abdul, Ramaswamy and the old, grey mare.

Anyway, who reads them is only partially a reviewer's business. As a book of this sort goes, Gordon Shepherd has produced something quite reasonable and must have had great fun doing it. He takes us through the normal gamut of Brindian spectacles; from the last remains of the old Raj, now slowly disintegrating in the plantations of Kerala, to the battle of tongues raging between North and South. En route we see a Darjeeling Public School, the remains of Clubland threatened both by temperament and prohibition, Sikkim and Chinese problems and, of course, the old cemeteries which showed how prolific our past rulers were. We have the author's views on all these and many other subjects but he disarms criticism by admitting in his preface that there is no more authority behind any of his opinions than that provided by a superficial, four month tour. This is about one-eighth of the average span of research spent on his previous books. This admission takes care of some minor inaccuracies, which is perhaps a good thing as otherwise a good story or two would lose its point. The illustrations by John Verney are charming.

The next book is in a much more serious vein and Issaac Deutscher is an expert on his particular subject. 'The Great Contest' is a compilation of four lectures delivered by him last year in Canada. The lectures survey from various angles the changes that have occurred in the Soviet Union and its policies since Stalin's death. The last lecture is on the implications of co-existence and the author's summing up of this vital problem can perhaps best be expressed by quoting directly from what he has to say

'The West still has tremendous assets. It has an industrial start over the Soviet bloc: after all, it is still the Soviet aspiration to catch up with the United States.'

. and

'If only the West learns to face the future instead of clinging to the past, the challenge will hold no threat to it; and — who knows? — competitive co-existence may yet change from the bitter competition it is into co-operative emulation. This

certainly is the only hope. The alternative may be mutual extermination.'

In view of the changes that have taken place since 1959, when the lectures were delivered; changes such as differences within the Communist block, missile superiority and even a democratic victory in the U.S.A; the book seems to be good history but poor prophecy.

'SANJOY'

STUDIES IN THE PROBLEMS OF PEACE,
by K. Satchidananda Murty and A. C. Bouquet.
Asia Publishing House, 1960, 8½ x 5½ Rs. 21.00.

THE book consists of three parts. Part one is a historical survey by Bouquet. Part two is called the phenomenology of peace and is written entirely by Murty. The third part is an epilogue in which the authors take turns with the chapters but which unfortunately does not add anything to the value of the book.

Bouquet's basic instincts are correct. The distinction between the desire for peace and organisation for peace is both serious and real. Yet when he comes to doubt the efficacy of Panch Sheela as having very little operational significance and its signatories being factually left free to act as they otherwise would, he seems to be on very doubtful ground. Bouquet's primary generalization, namely, that 'Western culture has from the beginning laid great stress upon the importance of right organisation, of a proper code of international law, of a court for settling disputes, a secretariat, and so on. Eastern culture has not on the whole laid so much stress upon organisation,' (p. 115) and that it is characterised by a 'relative formlessness' is too Toynbeesque in its sweep to be of any great value in the understanding of the total situation. Besides, it is not quite certain that the United Nations with all its organisational formalism has been any more successful as compared to Panch Sheela in committing the member states to the basic principles. The problem involved in organising for the realisation of an ideal is not a simple one-way phenomenon. It is as easy to miss the ideal because there are

no organisations to institutionalise it as it is to set up an elaborate organisation which fails entirely to enshrine the ideal. There is no East or West about the basic difficulty.

Bouquet's essay would have been much more readable if he had managed to exclude the lengthy excerpts from the United Nations Charter. His emphasis on organisation is important. But his failure to get behind the Charter makes these excerpts more or less pointless. After all, there is a great deal to be said against the current usage of considering a nation as a natural unit for any world organisation, when, in fact, 'nation' may mean as different an entity as Monaco or India. The insistence on a national democracy at the United Nations' General Council makes the *bonafides* of the Anglo-American nations backing the United Nations as much suspect as China's participation in the Panch Sheela, and renders the two organisations equally ineffective in preserving world peace. If it is true that 'until conflict between the two ideologies is brought to an end, the world will be precariously poised between peace and irreparable disaster', and if 'the real battle to be fought is a spiritual and intellectual one that involves the synthesis of two ways of life which at present seem to stand in hopeless antithesis' (p. 122), can there be a general effort to organise until at least the synthesis begins to assume some shape?

Bouquet's running through the history of peace-making has all the grace of a four-miler. The very nature of his effort, however, forces him to leave too much out and, in effect, peace-making is not really tied up with anything else in the socio-political reality of the historical background. The lengthy quotations from Mo Ti (pp. 22-23), nevertheless, stand out like a diamond in a graphite mine.

Murty, in contrast, does a really brilliant job with his bit. While he more than makes good Bouquet's failure to get behind the nation as an organisational concept, he lets his co-author down badly by exposing

the one-sidedness of his historical survey. For systematic thinking, this is all for the best. His willingness to criticise Indian traditions and institutions is very refreshing indeed. His 198 pages are certainly one of the best and most cogently argued pieces of writing that have come to the notice of the reviewer in recent years. In spite of this remarkable effort one feels a little doubtful about the final outcome. Perhaps there is a little more of a solicitor summing up his case in Murty's writing than a philosopher probing his way about. In places he does over-argue. 'This (Pax Mauryana) never happened in Indian history even subsequently, possibly because the theory that the interest of the kings is mutually exclusive was deeply ingrained in our thinking.' (p. 161). This is sticking to primacy of ideas with a vengeance. And then what does all this lead to? 'It seems to me that the stoic doctrine of human brotherhood reinterpreted and enriched so as to suit the modern mind can provide a basis for the world community, of which all peace lovers are in search.' (p. 325). If, however, the stoical human brotherhood is not quite so much a part of man as his head, how much of it can hope to survive in a clash with the totalitarian state which wants marionettes and not men as its citizens (p. 236)? Admitting that war is not innate to human nature and that it is a way of life culturally adopted, the very plasticity or formlessness of human nature as such becomes a double-edged tool. Doesn't it look plausible that stoical human brotherhood is as much a culturally imbibed way of life as pugnaciousness itself? However negative the findings of sociology in general, there does not seem to be anything in sociology to substantiate that freedom for the individual is best attained by merely harping on it, and that even the desire for human freedom is not better attained in certain types of social organisation as compared to others. Thus when the concept of absolute primacy of thought is importance. Murty cannot be accused of

not knowing the answer any more than anyone else. But is it fair to argue it away?

K. MUKERJI

Fiction

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD by Harper Lee
(Heinemann 16/- net.)

ONE is apt to pick up a novel about the Deep South with a sense of forboding. Will it begin with a fragile Southern Belle exclaiming 'Why Mr. Beauregard, Ah do declare!' as she fans herself under the magnolia tree, while Mammy in the kitchen fixes short'nin bread. Or will it simply start off with a lynching?

'To Kill A Mockingbird' by Harper Lee is a book of timeless and haunting charm that fits into neither of these categories. Life in a small Alabama town in the Thirties is seen through the sharp eyes of Scout, an eight year old child who shows little sign of becoming a Southern lady and prefers, to her Aunt Alexandra's dismay, to settle all arguments with her fists. She and her elder brother Jem are the children of scholarly and charming Atticus Finch, a lawyer who decides to defend a negro wrongly accused of raping a white girl—a decision that has far-reaching effects on his young family. The kindly neighbours they have known all their lives become antagonistic strangers, and the friendly town is friendly no more.

Scout, Jem and Scout's fiancé — for she and a little boy called Dill have decided to marry in some twenty years time — play endless games, with unfeeling gusto, called 'Making Boo Radley Come Out.' The unhappy Boo had been hidden in the Radley House by his family many years before, after a local scandal, and never seen again. Hidden he remains, in spite of their efforts to lure him from the dark house, and yet not unaware of the playing children, as they later discover in a time of stress.

When the trial for rape begins at the Courthouse, the children forget their games and, unbeknown to their relatives, attend the Court. The jury unanimously bring in a verdict of Guilty against the innocent

negro, but it is only to the children that it comes as a shock. To a child, injustice is still unbelievable.

The story is by turns sad, dramatic and funny; when Scout most unwillingly attends her Aunt's Missionary Tea, it becomes hilarious. "Ladies in bunches always filled me with vague apprehension and a firm desire to be elsewhere," sighs Scout, who preferred men no matter how much they cussed and drank and gambled and chewed.'

B. A.

WHEN THE KISSING HAD TO STOP:
By Constantine Fitzgibbon: Published by Cassell: Price 16 sh.

"WHEN The Kissing Had to Stop", is a cautionary tale with terrifying implications, but Constantine Fitzgibbon has deftly handled it with a light and entertaining touch that makes it more effective and disquieting. The scene is set in England in the near future—an England become so demoralized and effete through soft living and lack of conviction that it falls an easy prey to the determined onslaught of the Soviet regime. Signs of moral disintegration are everywhere; nude shows abound and the police have to resort to force to control the many thugs and prostitutes. Politically, also, it has degenerated; the climate is ripe for a change and following an anti-nuclear bomb agitation and a protest meeting against American bases, there is a complete *debacle* of the ruling Conservative Party and an extreme Left-Wing Government, consisting largely of woolly idealists, is swept into power. Leonard Braithwaite, the leader of the anti-nuclear bomb campaign, becomes the new Prime Minister and chooses as his Foreign Secretary and henchman, the opportunist, Rupert Page-Gorman. The latter allows the Russians various concessions and they come into England in large numbers, ostensibly as scientists and technicians but actually as expert military tacticians. In the meantime American bases have been closed down and the U.S. look on aghast at the turn of

events in Britain, but their policy prevents them from interfering.

Shortly afterwards Braithwaite is conveniently liquidated while on a goodwill visit to Russia and Rupert Page-Gorman becomes Prime-Minister. Neither the hero of the book, Patrick, sixth earl of Clonard, nor Felix Seligman, the underground leader, has much luck stemming the red tide, for the new P.M. proclaims a state of emergency and removes all those who had formerly opposed him. (Incidentally the situations in this book are more credible than the characters. It is particularly difficult to believe in the overdrawn villain—Rupert Page-Gorman). The time is now opportune for the Soviets to take over and Rupert is strategically removed to Soviet Russia and ends his days in a Labour Camp. O'Mahony, an Irish communist agent, is now appointed the Prime Minister and the once strong England disappears behind the Iron Curtain.

The significance of the book lies in its extreme plausibility. It could so easily happen anywhere. It is a strong indictment of woolly thinking and the misguided, muddled behaviour of would-be Socialists who do not realise the danger of flirting with Soviet Russia and thereby play into communist hands. Though events like this are unlikely to happen in England, with its firmly entrenched love of individual freedom, conditions in India are far more favourable for this kind of *debacle* to occur, almost unwittingly. Therefore it is important that every freedom-loving Indian should make a study of this book and try to avoid the pitfalls so cleverly pointed out by Fitzgibbon. With more and more Ministries in the Centre in India becoming Socialist, it is imperative to see the issues clearly and thereby stem the tide of foggy idealism that leads to disaster.

INDIRA TALYARKHAN

OUR REVIEWERS

V. M. GOATLY studied languages at Oxford. She was in the Wrens during the war and is now married to a British Council official.

'SANJOY' was educated in Calcutta and London. He holds a high and responsible Government position and is a voracious reader and an occasional writer.

BARRY BARKER studied classical Greats at Oxford and is interested in poetry, plays and literature in general.

BARBARA ASTINGTON is a well-known writer of reviews articles and "mid-dles". She is a frequent contributor to "The Times" and "Illustrated Weekly".

JOHN SMITHARD is a very talented amateur actor and producer and is keenly interested in the arts.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

Shri Vinod Sena's assessment of the Indian intellectual's attitude, in contrast to that of Prof. Shils, is grounded in certain clichés so common in our thinking. The bases of his argument seem to be: (1) that tradition, undefined and in our social milieu looming large in every tiny social act, is something we should cling to however injurious its impact may have been; (2) that everything Western should be contained and resisted, though for the sake of keeping up an appearance of tolerance we should not say so explicitly; (3) that we have something rather special in us — the so-called quality of spirituality that would suffer by technological advance which is said to inculcate the so-called trait of materialism.

1. This reservation about tradition is the worst impeding factor in widening our intellectual horizons. Shri Sena himself indicates at one place that 'social conformity, poverty and oligarchy' are the ingredients of this tradition. Is there anything commendable about any of them? Social conformity leads to regimentation — ours is a highly regimented society, so regimented that every individual struggling against it is squeezed out of existence, not necessarily physically, but certainly intellectually. Poverty leads to a wearying of the spirit. The masses are so concerned with the struggle for existence that they can have no time for social thinking. This suits the traditional intellectual who would thereby have no opposition to his views and could continue to ride roughshod wherever he liked. Oligarchy ends in social tyranny — a type of totalitarian domination of the weaker sections of society. If in these conditions, the Indian masses appeared to be happy — I say *appeared* deliberately — it was a type of bovine contentment. Should we encourage this type of unthinking acceptance of their lot? This is something like saying that because people in a slum have got used to their insanitary environment and are quite happy — I find children in slums frisking about quite gaily — let us not do anything to remove that insanitariness. They are quite happy anyway; slum-dwelling is *traditional* to them. Moreover if the slum is to be improved, there will be a temporary dislocation in their lives. So let the *tradition* of slum-dwelling grow. We have come such a long way from our traditional think-

ing that Shri Sena may be quite horrified at this suggestion that the slums may be left untouched. But mention the slums of our traditional thought — oh, well, we don't see their insanitariness — and Shri Sena may not be quite ready for their rehabilitation. This slight improvement in the Indian intellectual's attitude towards environmental insanitariness is itself a result of the Western impact.

2. But the Indian intellectual of Shri Sena's conception cannot bring himself to admit the undoubted benefits of the British impact. It may be good patriotism to say that the British were culturally also imperialistic, but it is not true. They were in no such undue hurry to impose their culture; but if they did impose their culture at all, it was richly compensated for by the fact that it was only some of their scholars who revealed the treasures of our glorious past. They not only spread knowledge about our literature and art abroad, but even in our own country threw open the gates of knowledge for the people at large. *Higher education and scholarship, which was a close preserve of a hereditary few was made the common heritage of the country.* Shri Sena accuses the British of 'ethnocentricity'. Perhaps they were ethnocentric. But what about us? Are we not ethnocentric? Are we not quite boastful of the fact that Indian culture conquered the countries of South-East Asia? Even our attitude towards Western culture smacks of ethnocentricity. It does not become us to speak of this when from the days of Alberuni our own record has not been quite straight. I think it is time we are honest enough to admit the importance of the Western cultural interlude in our history. Except for apologists of caste and superstition and philosophic cant, everybody will be frank about this.

3. It is claimed that with the Western cultural impact, we have become less spiritual than before. If that were truly so, I am frankly glad. When we were very spiritual, we practised rigorously caste and untouchability. Now that we are supposed to be less spiritual, we take more kindly to our fellowmen. Even the intellectual in India, who has less of such spirituality, has more of humanity in him. Such intellectuals are in the worst of doldrums in our country where a certain religiosity is a *sine qua non* of virtue; Prof. Shils's view about religiosity is quite near the truth.

In all, Prof. Shils's views have not suffered

from his having observed the Indian intellectual from the outside. His reach has been greater, though there might have been some blurring of details. The one fact on which our rejection of his views should not be based, is that he does not

belong to the society that he has assessed. I hope the Indian intellectual gets over this prejudice. But I am not too confident.

Yours truly,
'SANJAYA'

Dear Professor Ayyub,

It is with great interest that I read the most recent issue (autumn 1960) of *Quest*. I particularly liked it because I felt it to be in touch with those problems which are of urgent interest to all of us.

However, one passage of B. G. Verghese's reportage deserves to be corrected:

Mr Verghese writes: '... In the seminar on social progress, participants from Asia and Africa were puzzled to find so many of their distinguished colleagues from the West bitterly lamenting the consequences of prosperity and warning them of the perils of affluence. The washing machine, the automobile, television, advertising, book clubs, the glossy magazines and 'popular' music were all assailed in various degrees for debasing 'the good life'. The existence of pornography was accepted in pained silence. Only one American author digressed to describe contemporary Western literature as 'the mirror on the ceiling of a whorehouse'.

In other words, Mr. Verghese says that one America author described contemporary literature in the terms just quoted. Now this was not all the

bearing of Mary McCarthy's remark. What she said was something quite different.

Speaking of writing production with the specific purpose of mass consumption, she described a certain kind of literary production in terms which I can quote to you exactly from the recording made in Berlin. She described 'the lonely intellectual who is lying on his couch in a darkened room looking at television. Then, he finally turns off the set and takes up a tabloid; he has long ago given up reading, he is not reading serious books; he has given up writing, he is now looking at television, reading the tabloids to find out about mass culture for his article.'

What Miss McCarthy said was that *this* kind of writing, *this* kind of fallen literature is like 'the mirror on the ceiling of a whorehouse.'

Time Magazine made the same mistake in its July 4th issue and I think it important that such mistakes be corrected.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
NICOLAS NABOKOV

We deeply regret the mistake.

—Editors

The following is a personal letter from an unknown person writing from a little-known island far out in the Indian Ocean. But we thought it might interest our readers —Editors

Dear Bhai,

I was so glad to see the Autumn number of your Review and it gave me real pleasure to read it. You will forgive me if I am blunt but it was for the first time, since the death of Tagore, that I really came across an Indian literary production whose appeal was irresistible. Perhaps it was my fault that I lived in the dark but somehow or other I was out of touch with the contemporary mind in Bharat Mata. In the 'thirties I used to write very often for the *Modern Review*.

After Independence, the line of intellectual communication got broken somehow. I am the Editor of the *Indian Cultural Review*, but it is not easy to combine literary interest with a senior position in the Civil Service, with the result that I have not found it possible to publish the journal regularly. Twenty years ago, we used to get contributions from Ramananda Chattopadhyaya, Indira Chaudhrani and others, and I still cherish the original of the English translation of *Krishnakali*,

which Tagore sent to me in the very early years of our Review.

I was particularly interested to read the letter of P. Lal and others and your own reply. I have always held that though there is a case for Indians writing in English, I doubt if ever we will be able to produce any enduring work in a foreign tongue. The oft quoted example of Conrad is beside the point. Malraux gave the real explanation when he wrote of him 'qu'il avait atteint le sommet de son art dans sa propre langue'.

I am asking my office to place an order for a regular subscription to *Quest*. I will ask the Public Libraries of the Colony to do the same. It was indeed a breath of fresh air reading *Quest*. Incidentally, did you come across my paper on Mauritius which was published in the last issue of the *March of India*?

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
K. HAZAREESINGH
Port Louis, Mauritius

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

SUSHIL DEY, an ex-member of the Indian Civil Service, is at present a director in the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. He writes: "the ideas expressed in the article are entirely my own and are not meant to represent the views of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, which I am serving."

GEORGES FRIEDMANN is the Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes at the Sorbonne, one of the most eminent contemporary French sociologists, the author of several books on the sociology of work and a study of Leibnitz and Spinoza.

JYOTIRMOY DATTA is a poet and critic in the Bengali language and a journalist in English.

RAYMOND ARON is a noted French political philosopher, Professor at the Sorbonne and author of *The Century of Total War*, *The Opium of the Intellectuals*, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, he is currently teaching at Harvard University.

V. A. SHAHANE has published a book of short stories and a collection of critical essays in Marathi. He holds a Ph. D. from Leeds University.

AAMIR ALI is the author of *The Story of the Buddha* and *Folk Tales of Asia*, both published by the Oxford University Press.

C. L. MIGLANI worked for some time with the Principal of Delhi School of Social Work in a research project of that school.

D. L. PHAM-XUAN-LUONG is in the Faculty of Pedagogy, Saigon, and edits *Youth*, the journal of the English section.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS is a well-known writer and the editor of the distinguished American quarterly *Partisan Review*. He will be contributing 'Letter from New York' for every alternate issue of *Quest*.

NISSIM EZEKIEL is an eminent Indo-English poet and an ex-editor of *Quest*. His latest book of poems *The Unfinished Man* was published last spring.

PRADIP SEN is a Bengali but he writes exclusively in English. His first book of verse *And then the Sun* came out last year.

K. RAGHAVENDRA RAO, poet and co-editor of *Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry* teaches Politics at Karnatak University, Dharwar.

F. R. STANLEY is Lecturer in English, Madras Christian College, Tambaram.

MADHAO B. ACHWAL is a practising architect, and teaches architecture in the M. S. University, Baroda; a literary critic and essayist in Marathi.

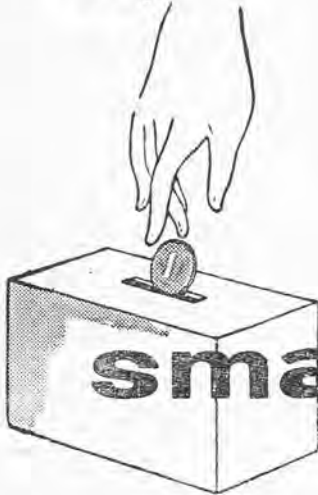
ANITA DESAI has published short stories and book-reviews in various Indian periodicals.

HERBERT LUTHY, historian and essayist, is generally recognised as one of the foremost journalists of Europe. He hails from Switzerland and has recently published a volume on modern French politics.

PUNYA SLOKA RAY holds a Doctorate in Philosophy from Tübingen. He was on the teaching staff of Utkal University and is at present doing advanced studies in Linguistics at the University of Chicago.

We regret the error in introducing Mrs. Lola Chatterjee in our issue No. 26 (p. 100).

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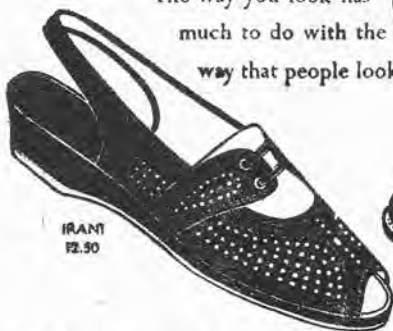
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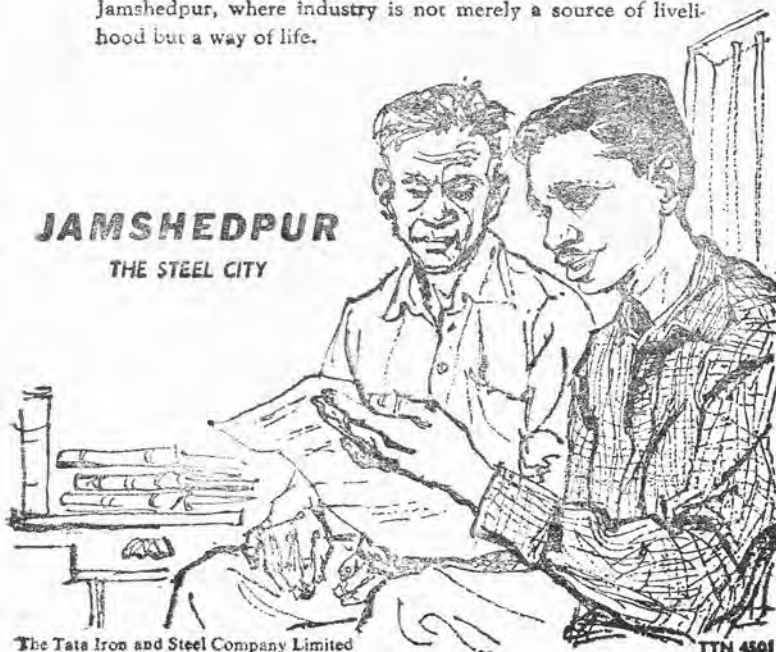
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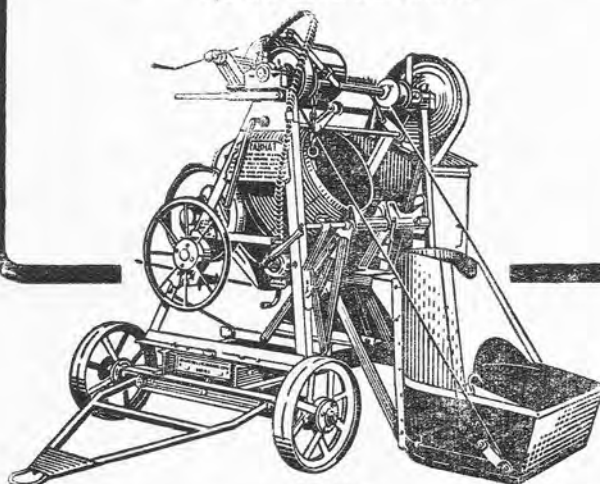
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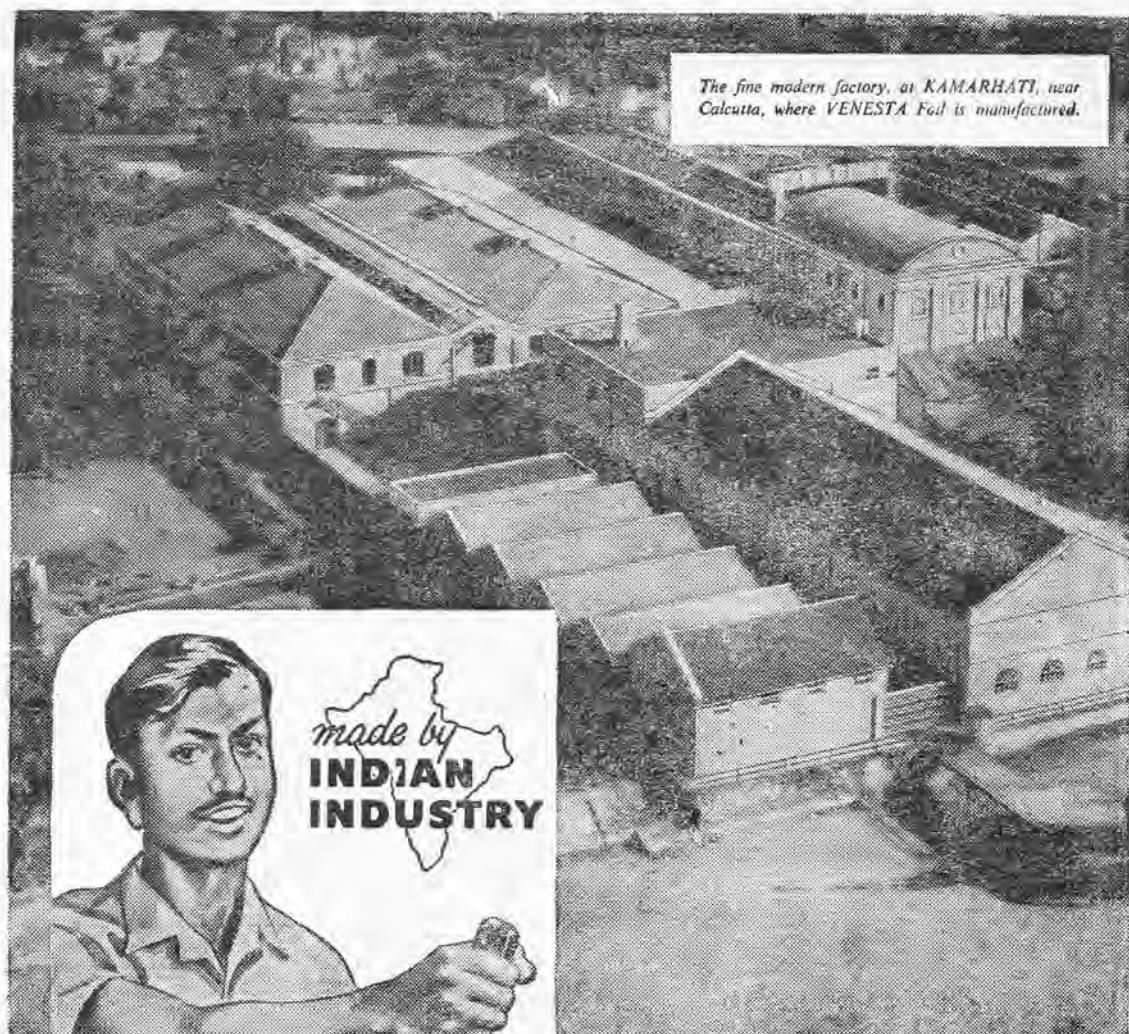
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Extract from a Burmah-Shell publication

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